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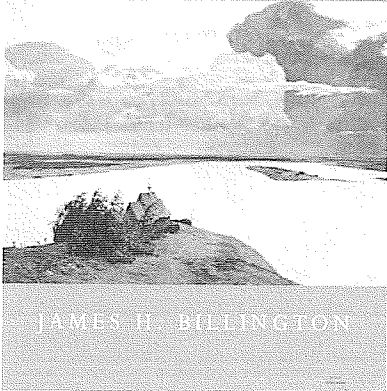
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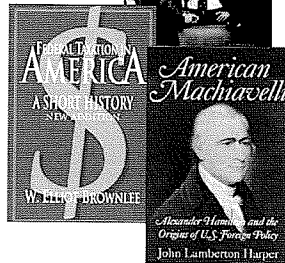
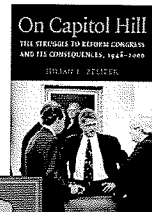
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# WQ

SPRING 2004

## THE WILSON QUARTERLY

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*Martin Walker • Saad Eddin Ibrahim • Daniel Brumberg • Haleh Esfandiari*

It's one thing to hope for the spread of liberalism and democracy in the Middle East, and another to make it a key goal of U.S. foreign policy. Is there any foundation for liberal democracy in the Middle East? What choices and obstacles face those who seek to advance the cause of freedom in the region?

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*By Bruce Bawer*

The 1960s are remembered as a decade of protest and upheaval in America. But those subversive "Sixties" aren't the whole story.

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COVER: An image of Ayatollah Khomeini looms over a Tehran street. Design by David Herbick.

The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

# Editor's Comment

Shortly before the invasion of Iraq last year, I sat transfixed in a Washington audience as the former 1960s European radical Daniel (“Red Danny”) Cohn-Bendit debated the Bush administration’s Richard Perle, chiding the administration for “revolutionary” rhetoric about democratizing Iraq and the Middle East. The words of Cohn-Bendit, now a leader of the Green Party in the European Parliament (and no knee-jerk anti-American), had special resonance because of the odd parallels between him and the founders of the neoconservative movement, which has put forward the most sophisticated arguments for democratization. Like many of them, he’s a former radical, albeit from a later era, and like them, too, he emerged from the experience of revolutionary politics a more skeptical and penetrating thinker.

So a touch of skepticism informs this issue’s cover “cluster” of essays. The making of a more liberal, democratic Middle East is a goal that appeals to America’s best instincts. And it’s probably essential if the scourge of terrorism is to be snuffed out. Yet there are questions: How liberal? How democratic? How fast? As always, the *WQ* is concerned less with immediate questions of policy than with the deeper cultural and historical forces that ought to shape our understanding of the present. We’re particularly pleased to have an essay by Saad Eddin Ibrahim, a 65-year-old Egyptian scholar and an intrepid democracy activist whose beliefs recently cost him nearly a year in an Egyptian jail. His unshaken confidence in the strength of liberal ideals in the Middle East is an inspiration to supporters of liberal democracy everywhere.

Congratulations to *WQ* senior editor Robert K. Landers on the publication of his new book *An Honest Writer: The Life and Times of James T. Farrell* (Encounter).

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## The Front Lines of Shopping

I would like to respond to "Shopping and the American Way of Life" [WQ, Winter '04]. I am one of those rare academics from a working-class family, but I have not left my working-class roots behind by any means. Earning a Ph.D. from UCLA did not save me from membership in the working class. I am currently a sales associate for a giant American retail conglomerate. I have worked in retail for more than 10 years, first for Sears, then for a modest, family-run department store driven out of business by my current employer, so I can perhaps offer some insights into "shopping in America."

Your articles indicate that Americans are ambivalent about their shopping urges and

guilty over their eager, limitless consumerism, but I would suggest that the situation is much more complicated than that. What you have at American malls are not just Americans pursuing a shop-till-you-drop activity but people from around the world spending, spending, spending. Observe any large American mall and you will find immigrants spending with as much—if not more—enthusiasm as native-born American citizens. The immigrants rarely share the Puritan values of Anglo-Saxon Americans, but they do have a similar eagerness to buy, buy, buy, and to return, exchange, and undo purchases made on impulse, especially if they can turn a profit in the bargain.

At the mall where I work in San Jose, a sales associate encounters shoppers with varying

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## Correspondence

approaches to spending and with very different mentalities. The sharpest difference is between those of Western European descent, who tend to take the price of an item as more or less set in stone, and those even more avid shoppers from Asia or the Middle East who come ready to bargain and haggle.

None of your articles deal with the fact that much of what is purchased is later returned. At times, it almost seems as though people are buying things so that they will have something to return, as if the return's the thing, not the original purchase. Actually, purchase-and-return reminds me of a dance of some sort, an intricate *pas de deux* between the company and the customer. What essentially goes on in this dance is this: The customer initially tries to buy an item at the lowest possible price; some will even go so far as to damage the item in some way in order to drive the price down and get an additional discount on stuff that is already heavily discounted. In nearly every case, the quality of the item is simply beside the point; the quality is uniformly poor, but that does not matter to the customer or to the company. Meanwhile, the company is trying its damndest to get top dollar and, if possible, to persuade the customer to open a company credit account and charge the item. (With finance charges of 23 percent, a department store credit card ensures that the company will reap maximum profits.)

When the buyer suffers remorse or—more likely—decides to turn the tables on the company, the positions of the two dancers reverse: The customer is now the seller, the company the buyer. The customer will now do everything—and I mean everything—possible to get maximum dollar back on his or her original purchase; anything goes in this scenario. The company is expected to fork over maximum value when in fact it wants to pay as little as possible. Over and over this scenario plays out, with the sales associates trying to navigate through these stormy waters. Eventually, they give in, but whenever possible turn the whole thing over to a manager so as to avoid a scene and an unnecessary expenditure of energy.

As I have suggested, this scenario is not uniquely American—any more than shoppers are uniquely American. No, it's more of an international free-for-all in which returns are the thing, the means to wealth. It's just that American (over)abundance gives everyone the

opportunity to play, to plunk down money and then try to get even more back in return.

The ultimate exercise in this game is the Big One, Christmas, a time in which most retail establishments make at least 25 percent of their yearly profits. A bad Christmas season is a sure-fire way to end up in bankruptcy, while a great Christmas season brings maximum profits to the management bigwigs. From a sales associate's point of view, Christmas is a real bummer: The store fills with all sorts of people who are bent on finding the perfect gifts and don't seem to have a limit. These people turn hostile and even violent at the drop of a hat, and then they gear up to bring it all back, demanding pricey returns and exchanges, and even a bargain head start on *next* Christmas. I reckon they spend so much time buying and returning and buying for next year that they miss out on any joy and happiness for the current season.

Lanae Isaacson  
San Jose, Calif.

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### *Wilson Diagnosis*

I found the late Kenneth S. Lynn's article on Woodrow Wilson ["The Hidden Agony of Woodrow Wilson," *WQ*, Winter '04] both engaging and disturbing. As a physician with over 50 years' experience in medical practice, research, and academics, I found many of Lynn's ideas unrealistic and ill informed. One is his suggestion that Wilson's difficulty in learning to read in his youth might have been due to a small, unrecognized stroke. Although this is not completely outside the realm of possibility, it is highly unlikely in a young child unless that child is afflicted with some rare, inborn cardiovascular or clotting disorder. In that case, survival to the age of 68, at a time when no diagnosis or treatment was possible, would be so rare as to make it incredible. Edwin Weinstein, professor emeritus of neurology at Mount Sinai Medical School in New York, wrote a detailed medical and psychological biography of Wilson—*Woodrow Wilson: A Medical and Psychological Biography* (1981)—in which he diagnosed the cause of the youthful Wilson's difficulty in reading as developmental dyslexia.

Perhaps more disturbing is the thematic innuendo in the article that Wilson was derelict in his civic conscience for not revealing his history of hypertension and small strokes to the

public when he ran for public office. The author makes the common mistake of judging past actions in the light of present knowledge and principles. Little was understood about hypertension in Wilson's time, mostly because there was no practical instrument available for measuring blood pressure in patients until sometime after 1905. The author even mentions one of the most prominent works on the subject, by Dr. Walter Alvarez, which was not published until 1960.

Having received my medical education in the 1940s, I am also cognizant of the difference in professional philosophy in the past as compared to now. Prevailing medical ethics then sanctioned and promoted selectively withholding information from patients, if it was felt to be in their interest to do so. Usually, the closest relative or friend would be fully informed, and asked about his or her preferences with regard to informing the patient. In Wilson's case, this would have been his wife, Ellen. It is Ellen whom the author quotes when he infers that Wilson knew that he was "dying by inches." If the physician used those words in the presence of Ellen Wilson, it is very unlikely that Woodrow Wilson was present. I find it very plausible, when Wilson referred to the "neuritis" that plagued his arm, that he really was ignorant of the fact that his problem resulted from a stroke. Even if he was informed of that probability, it is highly likely that the full implications would not have been discussed with him. It is also possible, but less likely, that he was adequately informed, but that he unconsciously engaged in the very common practice of self-deception. That phenomenon is especially common in self-reliant, energetic, goal-oriented people such as Wilson.

Finally, the author implies that the blame for the failure of the League of Nations could be laid to Woodrow Wilson, who was too emotionally and mentally impaired as the result of his strokes to make the right decisions and compromises that were necessary to achieve the support of Congress. I believe that history has made it quite clear that our European allies were responsible for scuttling a lasting peace and the effectiveness of the League of Nations, and that that would have been the case even if the United States had been a part of it. Before the war was over, the European allies had already arrived at secret agreements to exact the severe

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retribution from Germany that fueled the rise of Hitler. All of this is treated much more realistically in Edwin Weinstein's biography of Wilson. In Kenneth Lynn's relentless pursuit of an organizing theme for his book, it appears that he was guilty of the same single-mindedness of which he accused his subject.

I believe that science and history have served to establish what a remarkable person Woodrow Wilson really was. The principles for which he stood again and again are the very ones that were instituted with lasting and salutary effect after World War II. The real problems that Wilson had were that he was a man of principle and was ahead of his time.

Roger K. Larson, M.D.  
 Fresno, Calif.

### *The Korean Revolution*

David Ekbladh, in "How to Build a Nation" [WQ, Winter '04], states that "South Korea by the 1970s was billed as a triumph and a model to be emulated—and all the more important as such because of the failure of American-spon-



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sored development in South Vietnam and Iran." Such is the American point of view. We helped and guided; South Koreans grew an economic miracle.

A Korean point of view, expressed by South Korean president Park Chung Hee in *Ideology of Social Reconstruction* (1962), adds some yin to the American yang: "Taking a lesson from the failure of the imported (from the U.S.) democracy to take root in the soil of Korea's realities, we have to strive to build the groundwork of a Koreanized form of welfare democracy. A nationwide movement must be begun to train the people in the sound ethics required by democratic citizens."

During my years of involvement with South Koreans, I was witness to what Park called a "human revolution." It changed people's way of thinking from Yi dynasty feudalism and Japanese colonialism to an early-stage capitalist economy and toward what Park called "democratic ideals."

What brought success in South Korea (and is just now dawning in Vietnam and Iran) is leadership strong enough to overthrow traditional ways of thinking and ignite a grass-roots, human revolution among the people to whom we offer goals, values, opportunities, and financial and technical assistance.

Is South Korea "a model," as David Ekbladh suggests? Yes, if we focus more upon the revolutionary changes in opinion, attitude, outlook, expectation, creativity, self-motivation, and self-reliance that occurred among the South Korean people to empower them to accept, absorb and take advantage of the opportunities and guidance the United States had to offer.

Donald L. Miller  
*Irvington, Va.*

David Ekbladh provides an interesting survey of America's early involvement in Korea, but it is incomplete in several ways.

First, it tells the story almost entirely from the American point of view, omitting Korean perceptions, attitudes, incentives, and capabilities. Second, it makes economic development the primary objective



## FROM THE CENTER

One of the fascinating aspects of the Internet is how its uses evolve over time. What began as a complicated network has become a simple tool that people can use to go shopping, talk to one another, pay bills, or organize political campaigns. Indeed, what makes the Internet so revolutionary is its ability to adapt to peoples' needs like a piece of clay that can be shaped into infinite forms. Here at the Wilson Center, our own website, [www.wilsoncenter.org](http://www.wilsoncenter.org), reflects these many developing methods for bringing people and ideas together, and disseminating information to the public.

When the Wilson Center's website was launched in the mid-1990s, it had no images beyond some black text on a white background. Today, the website—managed by editor Lauren Crowley—is a world unto itself, offering textual information, audio and visual materials, and one-stop shopping. A visitor to our site can keep track of programming and events at the Center, find information about our scholars and fellows and the work they're doing, watch live webcasts of speeches and conferences, listen to archives of our award-winning *dialogue* radio program, submit a customer service question to the WQ, buy the latest books from the Wilson Center Press, read through summaries of Center events and research, or e-mail one of our staff or scholars.

Even the most seasoned Internet travelers find compelling reasons to spend time on our site. For instance, our Cold War International History Project maintains a "virtual archive" of thousands of recently declassified and translated documents from the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China. Here you'll find transcripts of conversations between Mao Zedong and Nikita Khrushchev at the height of Sino-Soviet tensions, minutes of Politburo meetings in the Kremlin when the decision was made to invade Hungary, Soviet intelligence on U.S. military capabilities, reports from communist embassies in Pyongyang about their reclusive and unusual North Korean ally, and even a KGB memorandum on preparations for a

memorial service for John Lennon.

There is also no shortage of analysis. In the past, if you were curious about Mexico, you would go to a library card catalog. But now you could start by going to the homepage of the Wilson Center's Mexico Institute, which has detailed reports on conferences and events, working papers, whole books that you can download, and links to other websites in both Spanish and English.

Each of the Center's programs—organized by country, region, and topic—have similar homepages, and readers will be happy to know that the WQ maintains a home on our website at [www.wilsonquarterly.com](http://www.wilsonquarterly.com). Here you can

purchase back issues or read recent articles, and subscribers can access an archive of essays dating back to 1997.

Indeed, our website

offers an easy-to-navigate "virtual library" of top-notch scholarship and writing.

Beyond providing untold amounts of information, the Internet also changes the way we think about geography. Of the more than 60,000 individual visitors to our site each month, 25 percent come from beyond our shores. Haleh Esfandiari, the director of our Middle East Program, frequently reports back from trips to her native Iran that people follow events at the Center through our website. When you consider the bitterness and mistrust that exists between Iran and the United States, the fact that the Internet provides this kind of instant and unfiltered connection between peoples is hugely gratifying, a hopeful precedent for the future of globalization.

As an institution dedicated to Woodrow Wilson's belief in the power of dialogue and the need for international understanding, we could not imagine a better ally than the Internet. Wilson once said: "When we know each other, we cannot hate each other." Our ever-adapting website provides unprecedented opportunities for people to get to know and understand each other. Wilson would log on, and he would be proud.

Lee H. Hamilton  
Director



## Correspondence

of American aid policy when it was secondary until 1961. Finally, it says nothing about the reigning doctrine of economic development of the time and how it influenced American policy.

Having spent three years (1961–64) in the American Embassy in Seoul, as U.S. Treasury Representative, I was struck by the pride of the Koreans I knew, who felt themselves full-fledged members of East Asian civilization. Literacy in 1945 was widespread in Korean and Japanese, and it expanded rapidly, to the point that, by 1960, not only were 80 percent literate at the primary level, but a substantial proportion had completed high school and attended universities as well.

During 1945–50, the major problem was not reconstruction, but organizing a government and an army. South Korea had escaped serious damage in the war, but it was riven by conflicts between the returning exiles and the indigenous resistance groups and between landlords and socialists and communists. Americans helped with technical assistance, land reform, political advice, and foreign exchange. Turning the government over in 1948 made the situation more chaotic.

The Korean War turned South Korea from a country “beyond America’s sphere of interest,” according to a speech by Secretary of State Dean Acheson, early in 1950, into one we were prepared to support at all costs. The major determinant of aid in the period 1953–61 was the South Korean army’s wage bill. Since the aid came in dollars but soldiers were paid in local currency, the South Korean government was determined to keep the exchange rate as overvalued as possible to maximize the number of dollars it would receive. Overvaluation made exports unprofitable, encouraged domestic investments based solely on cheap foreign exchange, and promoted corruption in the sale of import licenses. Korea was regarded as a basket case because nothing would change as long as the United States was prepared to pay.

The 1960 student revolution brought into power South Korea’s most democratic government, one that was interested in economic development, unlike its predecessor, and prepared to work with the United States to further that goal. It agreed to a realistic exchange rate and a series of measures that would provide incentives for development. But democracy also unleashed various protest movements,

especially on the left, and this “disorder” furnished General Park Chung Hee (ironically, an ex-communist) the opportunity to bring off a coup d’état in 1961. Ekbladh quotes, correctly, Ambassador Samuel Berger’s enthusiastic comment on Park. But this opinion was not shared by Washington. The Kennedy administration planned to reorient the aid program from defense toward economic development and the support of democratic governments. South Korea was a target, therefore, for aid reduction.

In the fall of 1961, Park agreed to hold elections within two years, and the United States agreed then to make additional loans for good development projects. We also cut a significant grant by 40 percent.

The election pledge, which was very controversial within Park’s ruling council, and the reduction of grant assistance, when Park had been arguing for an increase, were shocks that determined the shape of future development. The first five-year plan, promulgated in early 1962, was based on the doctrine of import substitution, then popular with developing countries and the American aid agency: Increase the economy’s capacity to produce by substituting domestic output for imports, and eventually the balance-of-payments deficit would diminish.

The uncertainty of future U.S. aid forced Park’s economic ministries to search for loans and to promote exports. The credits came from Europe and Japan. South Korea, *de facto*, adopted the Japanese model of subsidizing exports by allowing a small number of firms to make excess profits on imports.

The South Korean government’s efforts were effective but wasteful. By early 1964, with the elections out of the way, a high rate of inflation and the exhaustion of exchange reserves compelled Park to agree to an American-designed stabilization program and a new devaluation. That set the stage for a further advance.

What are the lessons for nation-building? The first is that the government must take economic development seriously. The second is that it must have the political power and administrative competence to carry out its plans. The third is that the application of foreign aid must be pragmatic. Sometimes Washington’s ideas need to be modified to meet local conditions.

*Edgar J. Gordon  
Bethesda, Md.*

# Findings

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## A Letter Ends

The late British journalist Alistair Cooke might have ended up a less debonair David Niven, a more tranquil Ian Carmichael, an orthodontically correct Terry-Thomas. During a two-year fellowship at Yale University in the early 1930s, Cooke began reviewing New York theater for the London *Observer*, and then persuaded an editor to assign him a series of Hollywood profiles—including, Cooke writes in *Six Men* (1977), “the most famous man on earth,” Charlie Chaplin. Chaplin and Cooke became friends, collaborated on a script about Napoleon, and talked of bigger projects. If Cooke would move to Hollywood, he could be assistant director of *Modern Times*, Chaplin said, and then “I’ll make you the best light comedian since Seymour Hicks.” Despite the lure—Hicks was at the time “as adroit a light comedian as any on the English stage”—Cooke declined.

Instead, he attained a degree of stardom through transatlantic journalism. Back in London, Cooke found that “the only thing people were reading from America was drivel about gangsters and movie stars.” He moved to New York, became a U.S. citizen, and, just after the war, began broadcasting a 15-minute “Letter from America” each week on BBC radio.

Initially planned as a 13-week series, “Letter from America” lasted nearly six

decades, through Cooke’s years as host of *Omnibus* and *Masterpiece Theater* on TV. The 95-year-old Cooke announced his retirement in early March. He hadn’t been able to leave his Fifth Avenue apartment for two years, he told *The New York Times*, and arthritis had made it increasingly painful to compose scripts on his manual typewriter. Four weeks after retiring, he died.



*Alistair Cooke performing with a lookalike puppet on CBS’s Omnibus variety show during the 1950s.*

In his first “Letter from America,” in 1946, Cooke talked of World War II rationing and black markets; in his last one, 58 years later, he discussed the impact of Gulf War II on 2004 presidential politics. The essays were conversational, meandering, and, in recent years, often nostalgic. “To both British and American fans,” *The Economist* remarked upon Cooke’s retirement, “he represented what was best about the BBC, but not much of

that is left. The days of unhurried radio talks and graceful prose are, sadly, gone.”

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## Sweet Relics

Before T-shirts and mousepads, candy bars commemorated events, innovations, and personalities. In *Candyfreak* (Algonquin), Steve Almond reports that Americans once chomped candy bars honoring Charles Lindbergh (the Winning Lindy), Clara Bow (the It bar), and Al Smith (the Big-Hearted Al), as well as Dick Tracy, Amos ‘n’ Andy, airmail, the Pierce-Arrow, and the 18th Amendment. And then there was the Vegetable

## Findings

Sandwich, “a bar introduced during the health craze of the 1920s,” writes Almond. “The wrapper showed a bright medley of veggies—celery, peas, carrots, cabbage. The legend read: A DELICIOUS CANDY MADE WITH VEGETABLES. Dehydrated vegetables, to be exact, covered in chocolate. There is no need to elaborate on the wrongness of this product, though I feel duty bound to report that one of the manufacturer’s taglines was WILL NOT CONSTIPATE.”

## Errata

• For Lewis Carroll and Alice Liddell, July 4, 1862, remained forever fresh in memory. “I can call it up almost as clearly as if it were yesterday,” Carroll wrote in 1887: that “golden afternoon” when, beneath “cloudless blue,” he had spun a tale for the Liddell girls, a tale that ultimately became *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. It was a “blazing summer afternoon with the heat haze shimmering over the meadows,” the elderly Alice Liddell Hargreaves remembered in the 1930s; even after seven decades, she retained a “distinct recollection.” Just one problem, notes Will Brooker in *Alice’s Adventures: Lewis Carroll in Popular Culture* (Continuum): Weather records indicate that the day was cool, overcast, and, by mid-afternoon, rainy. The stormy night of *Frankenstein’s* birth, so far as we know, remains unchallenged.

• In its February 2004 issue, the British hiking magazine *Trail* explained how to descend Britain’s tallest peak, Ben Nevis in Scotland, but omitted a crucial turn in the path. Editor Guy Procter told *The Guardian* he was “quite gutted at this mistake,” but he was sure the magazine’s astute readers wouldn’t heed the misdirection and plummet a thousand feet into Gardyloo Gully. “Still,” observes *The Los Angeles Times*, “it’s not the best way for a publication to maintain its circulation numbers.”

• In *Fat, Dumb, and Ugly* (Simon & Schuster), Peter Strupp reports that 19 percent of Americans count themselves among the richest one percent of the population.

## Empty Sound

At Apple Computer’s online music store, you can buy and download a half-million songs for 99 cents apiece, including “Silence,” by Bill Schaeffer; “Silence,” by Ciccone Youth; “One Minute of Silence,” by Project Grudge; and three different Slum Village tracks titled “Silent.” All are, indeed, silent. In most instances, according to the tech news service CNET (news.com), the musicians placed a pause between songs on the CD, and the record company—unwittingly? greedily? puckishly?—told Apple to treat it as a separate track. “For those looking for the best value,” reports CNET, “Schaeffer offers nearly two minutes of silence, almost twice as much as any of the other tracks.” Equally alluring, though, Slum Village’s silent tracks come in both explicit and child-safe versions.

## Empty Space

In a much-publicized fracas last year, judges ordered the removal of a 2.6-ton Ten Commandments monument from an Alabama judicial building. Soon after, backers of the monument filed suit contending that the now-empty rotunda “establish[es] a religion in violation of the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment”—the vacant space tells all who pass that “adherence to the religion of nontheistic beliefs is a prerequisite or an advantage to those seeking justice in Alabama.” In March, the judges of the federal Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals rejected the contention. If the plaintiffs were correct, the court noted, the constitutional rule would be nullified: Every judicially ordered cure of an establishment of religion would itself constitute an establishment of religion.

“Form is void and void is form,” a Buddhist sutra teaches, a sentiment that may comfort the plaintiffs, or else help them craft a new legal argument.

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## Mao's Glow

During the Cultural Revolution, China printed an estimated 2.2 billion Mao Zedong posters—three for every citizen. Failing to display Mao prominently could brand you a counterrevolutionary. But the images held aesthetic as well as ideological appeal, Stefan R. Landsberger writes in *Chinese Propaganda Posters* (Taschen). With Mao's face “painted usually in red and other warm tones, and in such a way that it appeared smooth and seemed to radiate as the primary source of light in a composition,” the posters helped “brighten up the otherwise drab places where people lived.”

Nowadays, though, consumerism trumps ideology in China, according to Landsberger. “There are still some political posters available, but only collectors from China and the West seem to be interested in them,” he writes. “The images that once defined the image of China have disappeared.”



*An example of the once-ubiquitous Mao poster, now a popular Western collectors' item.*

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## Gen X-1

The anomie-clutching characters in Douglas Coupland's *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* (1991), it turns out, weren't the first Generation X. In *GenXegesis: Essays on Alternative Youth (Sub)Culture* (University of Wisconsin Press), John Ulrich tracks Generation X back to 1949, when Robert Capa proposed a photo essay on people born around 1930—“this unknown generation, The Generation X.”

*Holiday* magazine, which published some of the photos in 1953, explained Generation X as “our tag for what we believe to be the most important group of people in the world today—the boys and girls who are just turning 21. These are the youngsters who have seen and felt the agonies of the past two decades, often firsthand, who are trying to

keep the balance in the swirling pressures of today, and who will have the biggest say in the course of history for the next 50 years.” And now? Gen X-1, meet AARP.

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## Kafka's Sins

“There are two main human sins from which all the others derive: impatience and indolence,” Franz Kafka observed in a 1917 journal entry, which appears in *The Blue Octavo Notebooks*, newly back in print from Exact Change. “It was because of impatience that they were expelled from Paradise; it is because of indolence that they do not return.” At this point in his musing, Kafka reconsidered. “Yet perhaps there is only one major sin: impatience. Because of impatience they were expelled, because of impatience they do not return.” Indolence, it seems, isn't so bad after all.

Kafka's meditation is headed: “October 20. In bed.”

# The Case for Congress

According to opinion polls, Congress is one of the least esteemed institutions in American life. While that should come as a shock, today it's taken for granted. What can't be taken for granted is the health of representative democracy amid this corrosive—and often unwarranted—distrust of its central institution.

by Lee H. Hamilton

Several years ago, I was watching the evening news on television when the anchorman announced the death of Wilbur Mills, the legendary former chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. There was a lot the newscaster could have said. He might have recounted the central role Mills had played in creating Medicare. Or he might have talked about Mills's hand in shaping the Social Security system and in drafting the tax code. But he did not. Instead, he recalled how Mills's career collapsed after he was found early one morning with an Argentine stripper named Fanne Foxe. And then the anchorman moved on to the next story.

One of the perks of being chairman of an influential committee in Congress, as I was at the time, is that you can pick up the telephone and get through to a TV news anchor. Which I did. I chided the fellow for summing up Mills's career with a scandal. And much to my surprise, he apologized.

Americans of all stripes like to dwell on misbehavior by members of Congress.

They look at the latest scandal and assume that they're seeing the *real* Congress. But they're not. They hear repeatedly in the media about missteps, but very little about the House leader who goes home on weekends to pastor his local church, or the senator who spends one day a month working in a local job to better understand the needs of constituents, or the many members who labor behind the scenes in a bipartisan way to reach the delicate compromises needed to make the system work.

I don't want to claim that all members are saints and that their behavior is always impeccable. Yet I basically agree with the assessment of historian David McCullough: "Congress, for all its faults, has not been the unbroken parade of clowns and thieves and posturing windbags so often portrayed. What should be spoken of more often, and more widely understood, are the great victories that have been won here, the decisions





*Americans once recognized their great legislators as statesmen. Henry Clay (speaking), John C. Calhoun (in back, third from left), and Daniel Webster (seated at right) here debate the Compromise of 1850.*

of courage and the visions achieved.”

Probity in Congress is the rule rather than the exception, and it has increased over the years. When I arrived in Congress, members could accept lavish gifts from special interests, pocket campaign contributions in their Capitol offices, and convert their campaign contributions to personal use. And they were rarely punished for personal corruption. None of that would be tolerated now. Things still aren’t perfect, but the ethical climate at the Capitol is well ahead of where it was a couple of decades ago. And, I might add, well ahead of the public’s perception of it.

During my 34 years in the House of

Representatives, I heard numerous criticisms of Congress. Many seemed to me perceptive; many others were far off the mark—such as when people thought that as a member of Congress I received a limousine and chauffeur, or didn’t pay taxes, or was entitled to free medical care and Social Security coverage. When people are upset about Congress, their distress undermines public confidence in government and fosters cynicism and disengagement. In a representative democracy such as ours, what the American people think of the body that’s supposed to reflect their views and interests as it frames the basic laws of the land is a matter of fundamental

importance. I certainly do not think Congress is a perfect institution, and I have my own list of ways I think it could be improved. Yet often the public's view is based on misunderstanding or misinformation. Here are some of the other criticisms I've heard over the years:

**C**ongress is run by lobbyists and special interests. Americans have differing views of lobbyists and special-interest groups. Some see them as playing an essential part in the democratic process. Others look at them with skepticism but allow them a legitimate role in developing policy. Most, however, see them as sinister forces exercising too much control over Congress, and the cynicism of this majority grew during the recent wave of corporate scandals, when it was revealed how extensively companies such as Enron and Arthur Andersen had lobbied Congress. The suspicion that Congress is manipulated by powerful wheeler-dealers who put pressure on legislators and buy votes through extensive campaign contributions and other favors is not an unfounded concern, and it will not go away, no matter how fervently some might try to dismiss it.

That said, the popular view of lobbyists as nefarious fat cats smoking big cigars and handing out hundred-dollar bills behind closed doors is wrong. These days, lobbyists are usually principled people who recognize that their word is their bond. Lobbying is an enormous industry today, with billions of dollars riding on its outcomes. Special-interest groups will often spend millions of dollars on campaigns to influence a particular decision—through political contributions, grassroots lobbying efforts, television advocacy ads, and the like—because they know that they'll get a lot more back than they spend if a bill contains the language they want. They're very good at what they do, and the truth is, members of Congress can sometimes be swayed by them.

But the influence of lobbyists on the

process is not as simple as it might at first appear. In the first place, "special interests" are not just the bad guys. If you're retired, or a homeowner, or use public transit or the airlines, or are concerned about religious freedom, many people in Washington are lobbying for your behalf. There are an estimated 25,000 interest groups in the capital, so you can be sure your views are somewhere represented. Advocacy groups help Congress understand how legislation affects their members, and they can help focus the public's attention on important issues. They do their part to amplify the flow of information that Thomas Jefferson called the "dialogue of democracy."

Of course, Congress often takes up controversial issues on which you'll find a broad spectrum of opinions. Public attention is strong, a host of special interests weigh in, and the views of both lobbyists and legislators are all over the map. In such circumstances, prospects are very small that any single interest group or lobbyist can disproportionately influence the results. There are simply too many of them involved for that to happen, and the process is too public. It's when things get quiet—when measures come up out of view of the public eye—that you have to be cautious. A small change in wording here, an innocuous line in a tax bill there, can allow specific groups to reap enormous benefits they might never have been granted under close public scrutiny.

The answer, it seems to me, is not to decry lobbying or lobbyists. Lobbying is a key element of the legislative process—part of the free speech guaranteed under the Constitution. At its heart, lobbying is simply people banding together to advance their interests, whether they're farmers or environmentalists or bankers. Indeed, belonging to an interest group—the Sierra Club, the AARP, the Chamber of Commerce—is one of the main ways Americans participate in public life these days.

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When I was in Congress, I came to think of lobbyists as an important part of the *public discussion* of policy. I emphasize “public discussion” for a reason. Rather than trying to clamp down on lobbying, I believe we’d be better off ensuring that it happens in the open and is part of the broader policy debate. Our challenge is not to end it, but to make sure that it’s a balanced dialogue, and that those in power don’t consistently listen to the voices of the wealthy and the powerful more intently than the voices of others. Several legislative proposals have been made over the years that would help, including campaign finance reform, tough restrictions on gifts to members of Congress, prohibiting travel for members and their staffs funded by groups with a direct interest in legislation, and effective disclosure of lobbyists’ involvement in drafting legislation. But in the end, something else may be even more important than these proposals: steady and candid conversation between elected officials and the people they represent.

Members of Congress, I would argue, have a responsibility to listen to lobbyists. But members also have a responsibility to understand where these lobbyists are coming from, to sort through what they are saying, and then to make a judgment about what is in the best interests of their constituents and the nation as a whole.

**C**ongress almost seems designed to promote total gridlock. People will often complain about a do-nothing Congress, and think that much of the fault lies in the basic design of the institution. When a single senator can hold up action on a popular measure, when 30 committees or subcommittees are all reviewing the same bill, when a proposal needs to move not just through both the House and the Senate but through their multilayered budget, authorization, and appropriations processes, and when floor procedures are so complex that even members who have served for several years can still be confused by them, how can you expect anything to get done? This feeling is magnified by the major changes American society has undergone in recent decades. The incred-

ible increase in the speed of every facet of our lives has made many people feel that the slow, untidy, deliberate pace of Congress is not up to the demands of modern society.

It is not now, nor has it ever been, easy to move legislation through Congress. But there’s actually a method to the madness. Basic roadblocks were built into the process for a reason. We live in a big, complicated country, difficult to govern, with enormous regional, ethnic, and economic differences. The process must allow time for responsiveness and deliberation, all the more so when many issues—taxation, health care, access to guns, abortion, and more—stir strong emotions and don’t submit easily to compromise. Do we really want a speedy system in which laws are pushed through before a consensus develops? Do we want a system in which the views of the minority get trampled in a rush to action by the majority? Reforms can surely be made to improve the system, but the basic process of careful deliberation, negotiation, and compromise lies at the very heart of representative democracy. Ours is not a parliamentary system; the dawdling pace comes with the territory.

We misunderstand Congress’s role if we demand that it be a model of efficiency and quick action. America’s founders never intended it to be that. They clearly understood that one of the key roles of Congress is to slow down the process—to allow tempers to cool and to encourage careful deliberation, so that unwise or damaging laws do not pass in the heat of the moment and so that the views of those in the minority get a fair hearing. That basic vision still seems wise today. Proceeding carefully to develop consensus is arduous and exasperating work, but it’s the only way to produce policies that reflect the varied perspectives of a remarkably diverse citizenry. People may complain about the process, but they benefit from its legislative speed bumps when they want their views heard, their interests protected, their rights safeguarded. I recognize that Congress sometimes gets bogged down needlessly. But the fundamental notion that the structure of Congress should contain road-

blocks and barriers to hasty or unfair action makes sense for our country and needs to be protected and preserved. In the words of former Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn, “One of the wisest things ever said was, ‘Wait a minute.’”

**T**here’s too much money in politics. When people hear stories about all the fundraising that members of Congress must do today, they come to believe that Congress is a “bought” institution. I’ve often been told that in our system dollars speak louder than words, and access is bought and sold. By a 4 to 1 margin, Americans believe that elected officials are influenced more by pressures from campaign contributors than by what’s in the best interests of the country. But in fact, the problem of money in politics has been with us for many years. It’s become so much more serious in recent years because of the expense of television advertising. The biggest portion of my campaign budget in the last election I faced—\$1 million, for a largely rural seat in southern Indiana—went for TV spots.

Having experienced it firsthand, I know all too well that the “money chase” has gotten out of hand. A lot of money from special interests is floating around the Capitol—far too much money—and we ignore the problem at our own peril. To be fair, many of the claims that special interests can buy influence in Congress are overstated. Though I would be the last to say that contributions have *no* impact on a voting record, it’s important to recognize that most of the money comes from groups that already share a member’s views on the issues, rather than from groups that are hoping to change a member’s mind. In addition, many influences shape members’ voting decisions—the most important of them being the wishes of their constituents. In the end, members know that if their votes aren’t in line with what their constituents want, they won’t be reelected. And *that*, rather than a campaign contribution, is what’s foremost in their minds.

Still, it’s an unusual member of Congress who can take thousands of dollars from a particular group and not be affected, which

is why I’ve come to the view that the influence of money on the political process raises a threat to representative democracy. We need significant reform. We have a campaign finance system today that’s gradually eroding the public’s trust and confidence. It’s a slow-motion crisis, but it *is* a crisis. It’s not possible to enact a perfect, sweeping campaign finance bill today, and perhaps not anytime soon. Yet the worst abuses can be dealt with, one by one.

**Y**ou can’t trust what members of Congress say. People generally give their representatives high marks for being informed about the issues and quite strong approval for their hard work. In fact, three out of four believe that most members of Congress work hard at their job. Yet there’s an even higher proportion—a full 86 percent—who agree with the statement that most members of Congress will lie if they feel that the truth might hurt them politically. That’s a lot of Americans who don’t trust their elected representatives.

What’s interesting to me is that the level of trust within Congress—that is, among the senators and representatives who work together day in and day out—is far higher. That’s because on Capitol Hill, trust is the coin of the realm; pretty much the worst thing that can happen to a member of Congress is to have word get around among your colleagues that you cannot be relied upon. In order to do their job, legislators have to work with others: They cut deals; they agree to support an ally on one issue in exchange for support on something more urgent to their own constituents; they rely on one another to move legislation forward or to block a bill they oppose. I would be hard pressed to come up with more than a few instances over 34 years when I thought fellow members lied to me.

Of course, my relationship with them was as legislator to legislator, not voter to politician. And the truth is, you can understand why there might be a wider gulf between the public and their representatives: Politicians make a large number of speeches; they issue public statements; they give countless media interviews; they respond to letters and inquiries; they hold

forums and meetings; they meet constituents in cafés and VFW halls. It's hardly surprising that in the course of all this, they would sometimes be inconsistent, or even contradictory. But I don't think a blanket criticism that you can't trust members of Congress is fair. Where does that criticism come from?

Part of the fault lies with members of Congress themselves. They are usually quite skillful with the use of language, and parse their words carefully; after all, they want your support, and do not want to antagonize you. A politician can often find a way to glide over his or her precise beliefs without actually lying. So it's crucial for members of the public to listen very carefully, and ask hard follow-up questions if they find too much wiggle room in an answer.

But it's also true that what might appear to be an inconsistency or a lie is just the result of an honest politician's struggling with the complexities of public policy as it moves through different stages of development. For one thing, the circumstances under which a legislator commits to a certain position often change. Think about national security, for instance: The answers our political leaders were giving to questions on security issues on September 10, 2001, were probably very different from the ones they've given since then. By the same token, legislation can take months, if not years, to work its way through the process, and quite often it looks very different at the end from how it started out. So a legislator may initially support a particular bill, and tell that to his or her constituents, but eventually vote against it because amendments made the bill unpalatable. Votes are, in the end, a blunt instrument: They're yes or no, up or down, and they simply can't reflect all the nuances of a member's thinking, the changes in a bill, or the complexity of the issues.

**E**ven if a politician can convey all the nuances, conditions, and qualifications that make up his or her position, voters often forget them. Certainly, I've had the experience of a constituent's assuring me that I said such-and-such a year ago, when I knew quite well that what I'd said was more qualified.

I don't want to say that members of Congress never lie. But they do try to be careful with their public statements. They realize that there are a lot of people out there—political opponents, watchdog groups, reporters—who might like to catch them lying or making inconsistent statements. As former Illinois senator Everett Dirksen, known for his flowery oratory, would say, "I must use beautiful words. . . . I never know when I'll have to eat them."

**P**erhaps Americans' cynicism about their representatives' truthfulness and the workings of Congress generally is just part and parcel of living in an age when public service is looked upon skeptically. Perhaps Americans embrace broad-brush criticisms of Congress but still trust their own particular representative; certainly, the high rate at which members of Congress win reelection suggests that they enjoy the support of their constituents. But even if only the institution as a whole suffers from distrust, that's a serious problem for representative democracy. Congress is the most important link between the American people and their national government, the institution whose job it is to address the many views and needs of the people. It can't operate—at least not legitimately—without Americans' trust and involvement.

Congress can work effectively only when there's a conversation between legislators and citizens. Legislators have to be able to educate their constituents—illuminate issues, explain their own thinking, make clear that most issues are not black or white. And citizens have to be able to educate their representatives. Cynicism and indifference are driving too many Americans to opt out of that conversation. Only about one in every seven writes letters to members of Congress, and one in eight attends political meetings. Yet, as I can attest from my long career in Congress, constituents are heard—and to a degree many would find surprising—when they speak up.

Congress may have its work cut out for it, but America's ordinary citizens must take a share of responsibility too. Their active participation and engagement in public affairs is an essential part of the solution. All of us—politicians and voters alike—need to work harder at improving the public dialogue. □

# McLuhan's New World

Marshall McLuhan (1911–80) was an unlikely prophet of the information age. One of those who first saw the truth in the vatic pronouncements of this obscure academic was a talented young journalist named Tom Wolfe, who helped champion McLuhan's ideas in the 1960s. Here, Wolfe reflects on the unexpected sources and continuing impact of McLuhan's vision.

*by Tom Wolfe*

Come with me back to the 1990s:.....and the Silicon Valley:.....and the Internet euphoria:.....and the two www.saintly-souls who first prophesied the coming of the World Wide Web:.....

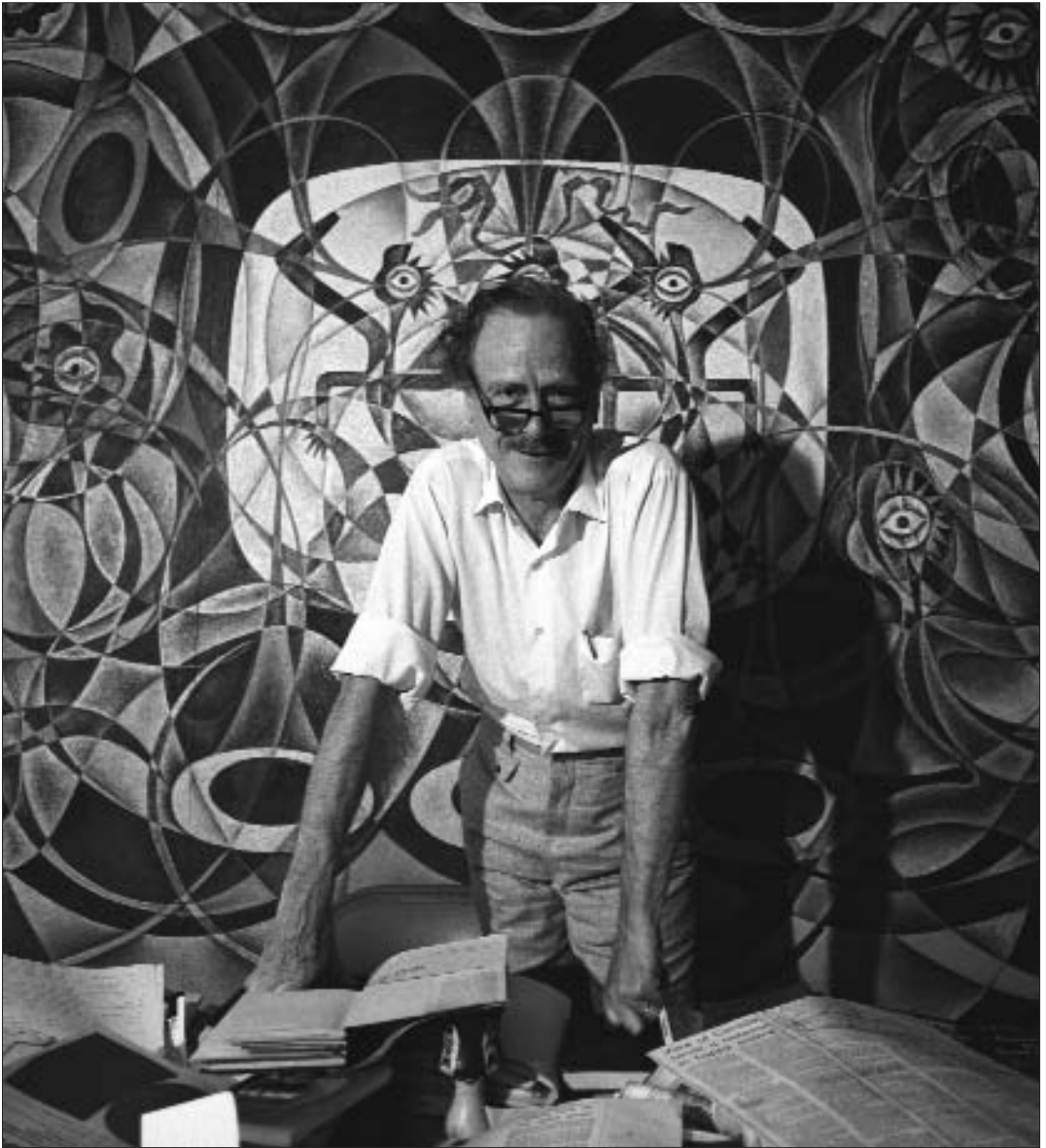
It was November of 1999, and I was in Palo Alto, California, the Silicon Valley's de facto capital. Right here in the Valley the computer industry had produced 14 new billionaires in the preceding 12 months. I saw billionaires every morning at breakfast. *Every morning*; the Valley's power breakfast scene was a restaurant called Il Fornaio, which happened to be on the ground floor of my hotel, the Garden Court. I loved the show. You couldn't have kept me away.

The billionaires you couldn't miss. They all came in wearing tight jeans or khakis, shirts with the sleeves rolled up and the front unbuttoned down to the navel, revealing skin and chest hair, if any, and leather boating moccasins without socks, baring the bony structure of their ankles and metatarsals . . . even the ones up in their fifties who had wire hair sprouting out of their ears above lobes that sagged as badly as their shoulders and backs, which were bent over like the letter *n*. They looked like well-scrubbed beachcombers. Their clothes were so skimpy, there was no way they could have been carrying a cell phone or even a beeper, let alone a Palm Pilot, a BlackBerry, a RIM

pager, or an HP-19B calculator. Walking behind every billionaire would be an aide de camp, probably worth no more than 60 or 70 million, wearing the same costume plus a sport jacket. Why a sport jacket? Why, for pockets in which to carry the cell phone, the beeper, the Palm Pilot, the BlackBerry, the RIM pager, and the HP-19B calculator. Billionaires in baby clothes! You could get high in Il Fornaio on secondhand euphoria.

But much of the sublime lift came from something loftier than overnight IPO billions and the like, something verging on the spiritual. Cyberspace had its visionaries, and they were telling everybody in the Valley that they were doing more than simply developing computers and creating a new wonder medium, the Internet. Far more. The Force was with them. They were spinning a seamless web over all the Earth that would forever render national boundaries and racial divisions meaningless, and change, literally transform, the nature of the human beast. And everybody in the Valley believed it and dressed the part. Faithful devotees of the Force didn't go about in dull suits and pale, blah shirts with "interesting" Hermès neckties and cap-toed black oxfords with shoelaces, the way the dreary, outmoded Wall Street workaday investment donkeys did back east.

The Web—the W was always capital-



*Medium master McLuhan in his Toronto office in 1976.*

ized—was the world of the future, namely, the Digital Universe, and the Force had its own evangelical journals. *Upside* magazine's editor, Richard L. Brandt, said (September 1998) he expected "to see the overthrow of the U.S. government in my lifetime," not by revolutionaries or foreign aggressors, however, but by Bill Gates's Microsoft. The software Gates and Microsoft provided for the World Wide Web "will gradually make the U.S. government obsolete." Compared with that, Gates himself was Modesty in sneakers when he wrote that he was part of "an epochal change" that "will affect the world seismically." *Seismically*

means like an earthquake. Evolution used to be measured in units of at least 100,000 years. But computer scientist Danny Hillis wrote in *Wired* magazine that thanks to "telephony, computers, and CD-ROMs," today "evolution takes place in microseconds. . . . We're taking off. . . . We are not evolution's ultimate product. There's something coming after us, and I imagine it is something wonderful. But we may never be able to comprehend it, any more than a caterpillar can imagine turning into a butterfly."

Euphoria, as I say, a Millennial vision—and all of it had been inspired by a Canadian lit-

## Marshall McLuhan

erary scholar who died years before the Internet existed. His name, unknown outside Canada until he published the book *Understanding Media* in 1964, was Marshall McLuhan. By 1996, the cyberfaithful were looking to McLuhan's work and prophecies as the new theory of evolution.

I can't think of another figure who so dominated an entire field of study in the second half of the 20th century. At the turn of the 19th century and in the early decades of the 20th, there was Darwin in biology, Marx in political science, Einstein in physics, and Freud in psychology. Since then, there has been only McLuhan in communications studies or, to be more accurate, McLuhan and a silent partner. It was the silent partner who made McLuhanism what it was: a scientific theory set upon an unseen, unspoken, taboo religious base.

McLuhan had been raised as a Baptist in, to all outward appearances, a family typical of the settlers of the vast Canadian West. They were Scotch-Irish Protestants who said *howse* and *about* for house and about. His father's forebears were farmers. His father himself was an insurance salesman. But his mother, Elsie Hall McLuhan, was another story. She was the cosmopolitan, the cultivated easterner from the Maritime Provinces, English in background, well educated, an elocutionist by training, a flamboyant figure in theater circles who toured Canada giving dramatic readings. Despite her many absences, it was she who ruled the family, and it was she who steered both Marshall and his younger brother, Maurice, who became a Presbyterian minister, toward intellectual careers. Since not even star elocutionists, much less so-so insurance salesmen in western Canada, made a lot of money, the McLuhans lived modestly, but Elsie McLuhan would make sure, in due course, that her son Marshall, the academic star, was educated abroad. In 1920, when he was nine, the family moved from Edmonton to Winnipeg, and he went to high school and college there, graduating from the University

of Manitoba, which was about a mile from his house, with a bachelor's degree in 1932 and a master's degree in English literature in 1933. His mother, however, had grander credentials in mind. At her prodding, he applied for and won a scholarship to Cambridge University in England.

At this point McLuhan was very much the traditional young scholar, "the literary man," a type he would later ridicule as smugly ignorant of the nature of the very medium he studied and labored in, namely, print. As it turned out, in the 1930s the literary life at Cambridge, at Oxford, and in London was anything but traditional. This was the trough of the Great Depression, and British intellectuals had begun to take an interest in the lower orders, "the masses," many as Marxists but others as students of what would later be called popular culture. McLuhan was drawn to the work of Wyndham Lewis and the Cambridge scholar F. R. Leavis, who were treating movies, radio, advertisements, and even comic strips as a new "language."

These were also the palmy days of Catholic writers such as Hilaire Belloc and G. K. Chesterton, whose wit and sophistication had suddenly made Catholicism exciting, even smart, in literary circles. One of the most brilliant and seemingly cynical of the London literati, Evelyn Waugh, embraced Catholicism in this period, and so too did Marshall McLuhan. He became a convert to the One Church—and to the study of popular culture. Although almost nothing in McLuhan's writing was to be overtly religious, these two passions eventually dovetailed to create McLuhanism.

After receiving a second bachelor's degree from Cambridge, he began his teaching career in 1936 in the United States, at the University of Wisconsin. He returned to Cambridge in 1939 and over the next three years received a master's degree and a doctorate in English literature. After Wisconsin, he taught only in Catholic institutions, first Saint Louis University, then Assumption University in Windsor, Ontario, and finally

> TOM WOLFE's most recent books are *Hooking Up* (2000) and *A Man in Full* (1998). This essay is excerpted from *Understanding Me: Marshall McLuhan Lectures and Interviews*, edited by Stephanie McLuhan and David Staines, and published in the United States by MIT Press. Reprinted by permission from McClelland & Stewart Ltd.

the Catholic college of the University of Toronto, St. Michael's, where he joined the faculty in 1946.

By this time, Marshall McLuhan was 35 years old and the very embodiment of Elsie McLuhan's appetite for things intellectual—and for the center of the stage. He was known both as a literary scholar, an expert in 16th- and 17th-century English literature and the work of James Joyce, and as a charismatic figure who captivated groups of students and faculty with his extracurricular Socratic gatherings devoted to “the folklore of industrial man,” as he called it, in which he decoded what he saw as the hidden language of advertisements, comic strips, and the press. He would show a slide of a Bayer Aspirin ad featuring a drum majorette wearing a military helmet and jackboots and carrying a baton the size of a mace. The caption reads, “In 13.9 seconds a drum majorette can twirl a baton twenty-five times . . . but in only two seconds Bayer Aspirin is ready to work!” What is the true language of such an ad, he would ask? What does it really convey? Why, a “goose-stepping combination of military mechanism and jackbooted eroticism,” the wedding of sex and technology, a recurring advertising theme he christened “the mechanical bride.”

That was the title of his first book, published in 1951, when he was 40 years old. *The Mechanical Bride* had the conventional antibusiness bias of the literary man, aimed, as it was, at liberating the public from the manipulations of the advertising industry; but it also led McLuhan into the orbit of his colleague at Toronto, the economic historian Harold Innis. As McLuhan himself was quick to point out, it was from two books published by Innis in 1950 and 1951, *Empire and Communications* and *The Bias of Communication*, that he drew the central concept of McLuhanism: namely, that any great new medium of communication alters the entire outlook of the people who use it. Innis insisted that it was print, introduced in the 15th century by Johann Gutenberg, that had caused the spread of nationalism, as opposed to tribalism, over the next 500 years. McLuhan published his first major theoretical work, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, in 1962, when he was 51. He called it “a footnote to the work of Harold Innis.”

His master stroke came two years later, when he brought the Innis approach forward into the 20th century and the age of television with *Understanding Media*. McLuhan theorized that print had stepped up the visual sense of Western man at the expense of his other senses, which in turn led to many forms of specialization and fragmentation, from bureaucracy, the modern army, and nationalistic wars to schizophrenia, peptic ulcers, the cult of childhood, which he regarded as fragmentation by age, and pornography, the fragmentation of sex from love. In the second half of the 20th century . . . enter television. Television, said McLuhan, reverses the process and returns man's five senses to their preprint, preliterate “tribal balance.” The auditory and tactile senses come back into play, and man begins to use all his senses again in a unified “seamless web” of experience. Television, McLuhan maintained, is not a visual medium but “audio-tactile.” This was the sort of contrary utterance he delighted in making, contradicting common sense without bothering to explain or debate. The world, he said, was fast becoming “a global village,” that being the end result of television's seamless web spreading over the Earth.

The immediate effects of television on the central nervous system, said McLuhan, may be seen among today's young, the first television generation. The so-called generation gap, as he diagnosed it, was not ideological but neurological, the disparity between a print-bred generation and its audio-tactile, neotribal offspring. McLuhan was observing the new generation up close. In the summer of 1939 he had been in California visiting his mother, who was teaching at the Pasadena Playhouse, when he met an American actress, Corinne Lewis, fell in love with her, proposed to her then and there, married her on the spot, and took her off to Cambridge, all in such a short order that she had to wire her parents to let them know she was now Mrs. McLuhan. Marshall and Corinne McLuhan had six children, four daughters and two sons. Personally, McLuhan had little patience with television or any other electronic medium, but he looked on with awe as his children seemed to study for

## Marshall McLuhan

school, watch television, talk on the telephone, listen to the radio, and play phonograph records all at the same time. The new generation, he was convinced, was bound to sit baffled and bored in classrooms run by print-bound teachers. This, he argued, meant the educational system must be totally changed.

But then the new sensory balance was going to bring about Total Change—he used a capital T and a capital C—in any case. Just as the wheel was an extension of the human foot, said McLuhan, and the ax was an extension of the arm, the electronic media were extensions of the human central nervous system, and these nervous systems would be brought together in an irresistible way. His predictions were not tentative. Human nature would now be different. Nationalism, the product of print, would become impossible. Instead: the global village. In the global village, he predicted, it would no longer be possible to insulate racial groups from one another. Instead, all would be “irrevocably involved with and responsible for” one another. McLuhan warned that the global village was not a prescription for utopia. In fact, it might just as easily turn out to be a bloodbath. After all, he asked, where do we find the most accomplished butchers? In villages. The global village could bring all humanity together for slaughter as easily as for anything else.

Yet he also believed the new age offered the possibility of something far more sublime than utopia, which is, after all, a secular concept. “The Christian concept of the mystical body,” McLuhan wrote in one of the few explicit references to his fondest dream, “of all men as members of the body of Christ—this becomes technologically a fact under electronic conditions.”

And here we see the shadow of the intriguing figure who influenced McLuhan every bit as much as Harold Innis but to whom he never referred: Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Teilhard de Chardin was a French geologist and paleontologist who first made a name for himself through fossil-hunting expeditions in China and Central Asia. At the age of 30, in 1911 (the year, it so happens, McLuhan was born), he became a

Jesuit priest, and taught geology at the Catholic Institute in Paris. His mission in life, as he saw it, was to take Darwin’s theory of biological evolution, which had so severely shaken Christian belief, and show that it was merely the first step in God’s grander design for the evolution of man. God was directing, in this very moment, the 20th century, the evolution of man into a noosphere—that was Teilhard de Chardin’s coinage, a noosphere—a unification of all human nervous systems, all human souls, through technology. Teilhard (pronounced Tay-yar, as he was usually referred to) mentioned radio, television, and computers specifically and in considerable detail and talked about cybernetics. Regardless of what anybody thought of his theology, the man’s powers of prediction were astonishing. He died in 1955, when television had only recently come into widespread use and the microchip had not even been invented. Computers were huge machines, big as a suburban living room, that were not yet in assembly-line production. But he was already writing about “the extraordinary network of radio and television communication which already links us all in a sort of ‘etherised’ human consciousness,” and of “those astonishing electronic computers which enhance the ‘speed of thought’ and pave the way for a revolution in the sphere of research.” This technology was creating a “nervous system for humanity,” he wrote, “a single, organized, unbroken membrane over the earth,” a “stupendous thinking machine.” “The *age of civilization* has ended, and that of *one civilization*”—he underlined “one civilization”—“is beginning.” That unbroken membrane, that noosphere, was, of course, McLuhan’s “seamless web of experience.” And that “one civilization” was his “global village.”

We may think, wrote Teilhard, that these technologies are “artificial” and completely “external to our bodies,” but in fact they are part of the “natural, profound” evolution of our nervous systems. “We may think we are only amusing ourselves” by using them, “or only developing our commerce or only spreading ideas. In reality we are quite simply continuing on a higher plane, by other means, the unin-



errupted work of biological evolution.” Or to put it another way: “The medium is the message.”

Privately, McLuhan acknowledged his tremendous debt to Teilhard de Chardin. Publicly, he never did. Why? For fear it would undercut his own reputation for originality? That would have been very much out of character. After all, he acknowledged his debt to Harold Innis openly and on his knees in gratitude. The more likely reason is that within Catholic intellectual circles—and we must remember that McLuhan was on the faculty of the University of Toronto’s Catholic college, St. Michael’s—Teilhard de Chardin was under a cloud of heterodoxy. Decades earlier, the church had forbidden him to teach or publish his theory of evolution, since he accepted most of Darwinism as truth. None of his six books on the subject was published in his lifetime. But among intellectuals at St. Mike’s, as they called St. Michael’s College, there was a lively underground, a Jesuit samizdat in Teilhard de Chardin manuscripts, especially after he moved to the United States in 1951. McLuhan was fascinated by Teilhard, but he presented a problem. Even in death he remained out of the bounds of Catholic theology, and McLuhan took his faith very seriously, all the more so because he was a convert from Protestantism teaching in a major Catholic institution.

But Teilhard presented a secular problem as well. McLuhan was living in an age in which academic work with even a tinge of religion was not going to be taken seriously. Inside the church, Teilhard may have been considered too much of a Darwinian scientist, but outside the church he was considered too much of a Catholic mystic. When *Understanding Media* was published in 1964, it was loaded with Teilhard de Chardin, but it would have taken another Teilhard enthusiast to detect it, and a subtle one at that. Not a single theological note was struck.

Indeed, *Understanding Media* exploded upon the intellectual world in the mid-1960s with a distinctly earthly brilliance and immediately caught the attention of many of the most devoutly materialistic and practical minds in commerce and industry. In part it

was the deceptively simple title, *Understanding Media*, which came across as a challenge: “You people who use the media, who own the media, who invest millions in the media and depend on the media—you don’t begin to understand the media and how they actually affect human beings.” By late 1964, corporations such as General Electric and IBM were inviting McLuhan to the United States to talk to their executives. Their attitude was not so much “He’s right!” as “What if he is right? (We’d better find out.)” McLuhan informed General Electric that they might think they were in the business of making light bulbs, but in fact they were in the business of moving information, every bit as much as AT&T. Electric light was pure information, a medium without a message. IBM he somewhat condescendingly praised for having finally realized that it was not in the business of manufacturing equipment but of processing information. He excelled at telling powerful and supposedly knowledgeable people they didn’t have the foggiest comprehension of their own enterprises. He never adopted a tone of intentional shock, however. He was always the scholar, speaking with utter seriousness. He had a way of pulling his chin down into his neck and looking down the nose of his long, Scottish-lairdly face before he delivered his most Delphic pronouncements. He seemed to exist out beyond and above them all, surveying them from a seer’s cosmic plane.

But what turned Marshall McLuhan from a University of Toronto English professor with an interesting theory into McLuhan, a name known worldwide, was the curious intervention of a San Francisco advertising man, Howard Gossage. Fascinated by *Understanding Media*, Gossage took it upon himself, at his own expense, to become McLuhan’s herald, bringing him to the United States in 1965 and introducing him to the press and the advertising industry on the West Coast and in New York. It proved to be a brilliant campaign. Magazine articles, newspaper stories, and television appearances were generated at an astonishing rate. Late in 1965, both *Harper’s* and *New York Magazine* published major pieces about McLuhan. In the single year 1966 the num-



*McLuhan drew some of his key ideas from a seemingly improbable source: the Jesuit geologist and paleontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, shown here on a dig in 1936.*

ber grew to more than 120, in just about every important publication in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. The excitement was over the possibility that here might be a man with an insight of Darwinian or Freudian proportions.

As his fame grew, so did the ranks of his detractors, particularly among literary people, whom he regularly wrote off as hidebound, reactionary, and oblivious of how even their own medium, print, actually worked. Scientists, meantime, didn't know what to make of him one way or the other. The heart of his theory, the concept of the human "sensory balance," falls within the field of cognitive psychology or, more broadly, neuroscience. Today, neuroscience is the hottest subject in the academic world, but even now there is no way of deter-

mining whether or not any such balance exists or whether or not a medium such as television can alter one individual's nervous system, let alone an entire society and the course of history. McLuhan treated any and all critics with a maddening aloofness. He was not trying to create a self-contained body of theory, he insisted—although in fact he probably was—he was a pioneer heading out into a vast terra incognita. So little was known, and there was so little time. His mission was to explore, to make the "probes," to use one of his favorite words, to open up the territory. Others, those who came after, could conduct the systematic investigations, run the clinical experiments, organize the data, and settle the disputes. He dismissed all opposition as what Freud called "resistance," a reluctance to let

go of the comfortable notions of the past in the face of brilliant new revelations about the nature of the human animal.

In the wake of all the excitement over *Understanding Media*, McLuhan established the Centre for Culture and Technology at the University of Toronto. This was an imposing, laboratory-like name for what was, in fact, little more than a letterhead, a desk, the lined paper on which he wrote, by hand, and his amazingly fertile and facile mind. In this respect, McLuhan was like Sigmund Freud. Very little of what Freud had to say has survived the scientific scrutiny of the past half-century. In hindsight, we can see that he was a brilliant philosopher of the old school who happened to live in an age in which only science was accepted as gospel truth. So by night he led his philosophical speculations in through the back door of his clinic, and in the morning he marched them out the front door as scientific findings. Thus also McLuhan at the Centre for Culture and Technology. At bottom, McLuhan remained, through it all, a literary man in the grand tradition of Samuel Johnson, Thomas Carlyle, Matthew Arnold, and G. K. Chesterton, with the gift of brilliant flashes of insight into the era in which he lived.

He never endeared himself to literary people, however, because so many of his wittiest, Chesterton-like sayings were at their expense. Asked to comment on the headlong rush of writers and scholars into protest movements during the 1960s, he said: “Moral bitterness is a basic technique for endowing the idiot with dignity.”

In the mid- and late-1970s, the mocked had their revenge. McLuhan didn’t seem to realize that an academic celebrity, if he wants to maintain his worldly eminence, is compelled to act oblivious of, or at least utterly aloof from, the journalists, show biz folks, and publishers who so merrily magnify his reputation to star status. Freud and Einstein understood this very well. In 1922 the *Chicago Tribune* offered Freud \$25,000, the equivalent of \$300,000 today, to come to the United States and provide psychoanalytical commentary the *Tribune* could run during the trial of the “thrill-killers” Leopold and Loeb. The beard-

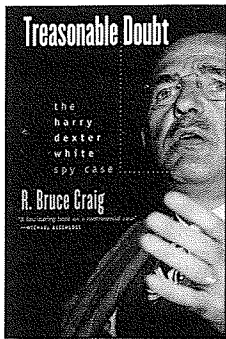
ed one wasn’t about to. He came to the United States only to give an abstruse lecture at city desk-proof little Clark University in Massachusetts. McLuhan, in contrast, published cowritten books with jokey titles such as *The Medium Is the Massage* and let Woody Allen put him in the movie comedy *Annie Hall* playing himself, in cameo, as a pun-cracking, recondite theorist. By the time he died, at the age of 69 in 1980 after a series of strokes, his critics, chiefly New York intellectuals, had successfully nailed him as “not serious” and therefore over and done with.

Yet McLuhan had introduced a notion that the fin-de-siècle’s fast-proliferating breed of young computer techies would not let die, namely, the idea that new media such as television have the power to alter the human mind and thereby history itself. In 1992 came—bango!—a new medium, computers linked up to telephone lines to create an Internet. The Internet lit McLuhanism up all over again, and the man himself was resurrected as something close to a patron saint. He was certainly that to the edgiest and most prominent of the new dot-com journals, *Wired*, which ran his picture near the masthead in every issue.

Dear God—if only Marshall had been alive during the 1990s! What heaven those 10 years would have been for him! How he would have loved the Web! What a shimmering Oz he would have turned his global village into! Behold! The fulfillment of prophecies made 30 years before! The dream of the mystical unity of all mankind—made real!

Of course, no sooner had the third millennium begun than the dot-com bubble burst and McLuhan’s young Silicon Valley apostles awoke with a shock. They shook their heads to clear them and tried to refocus their vision of the future. Many could not. But a Gideon’s army of the young could make out a tiny halogen bulb, no bigger than a traveling-size toothpaste cap, still burning . . . and its light shone ‘round about them . . . and they say it still does.

New communications theorists will arise, as if from straight out of the asphalt, the concrete, the vinyl tiles, or the PermaPour flooring. But one thing will not change. First they will have to contend with McLuhan. □



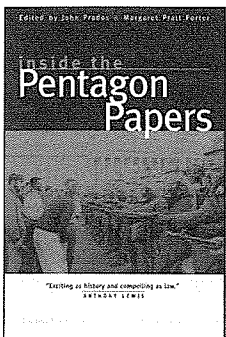
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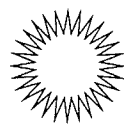
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# READY FOR DEMOCRACY?

Decades of authoritarian rule have created dark gardens of terrorism and religious extremism in parts of the Middle East. The region has largely escaped the healthy political and social change that's transforming other portions of the globe. No matter who wins this fall's presidential election, the United States seems certain to begin a major effort to promote reform. Is the Middle East ready for change?

Does the United States have the means to help bring it about?



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# The Democratic Mosaic

by *Martin Walker*

**T**he administration of President George W. Bush has been defined by the war on terrorism, its response to the appalling terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. But it wants to be remembered for a grander and more positive strategy, as unveiled by the president at the National Endowment for Democracy in November 2003 and further elaborated in his State of the Union address this year. This “forward strategy of freedom in the greater Middle East” seeks to promote free elections, free markets, a free press, and free labor unions to advance democracy and opportunity in 22 Arab countries, stretching from Morocco on the Atlantic coast to Oman on the shores of the Indian Ocean. The inhabitants of those countries number some 300 million, speak diverse Arabic dialects that are often mutually incomprehensible, and have long endured violence, poverty, and arbitrary rule. The United States has little choice but to attempt this daunting challenge, said Bush: “As long as the Middle East remains a place of tyranny and despair and anger, it will continue to produce men and movements that threaten the safety of America and our friends.”

The grandly ambitious project is inspired partly by the Helsinki treaties of 1975, which gave crucial breathing room to human rights groups in the old Soviet bloc, and partly by the success of American policies after 1945 that led to democratic governments in Japan and West Germany. To be sure, 59 years after victory in World War II, American forces remain deployed in those two countries, and the new strategy for the Middle East may similarly depend, in part, on a U.S. military presence.

But merely to prescribe democracy is not to settle the matter, because democracy comes in such a bewildering variety of forms. There are parliamentary monarchies without any written constitution (Britain), highly centralized presidential democracies (France), federal democracies (Germany), democracies with separated powers and a venerable constitution (United States), and democracies that seem to flourish despite an effective one-party system (Japan). There are new democracies (South Korea and Taiwan), and democracies that maintain most of their essential freedoms despite the strains of war and terrorism (Israel). Some democracies have survived and deepened despite poverty (Costa Rica), violent separatist movements (modern Spain), recurrent wars (much of Europe), and deep ethnic divisions (Brazil). India’s democracy has flourished despite all those challenges and the further complications of a debilitating caste system.

There are democracies so decentralized that the “central” government is almost impotent (Switzerland), and democracies so young and fragile that they exist only by means of a powerful and intrusive outside authority (Bosnia-Herzegovina). There are democracies restored from within (Spain and Portugal) and democracies born in the defeat of military dictators (Greece and Argentina); in Chile, a vigorous democratic movement eventually ended the military rule of General Augusto Pinochet, who had led a coup in 1973 to topple the elected government of Salvador Allende.

Democracy, however defined, has scored some stunning advances since Allende’s fall. According to Freedom House, which for 30 years has published an annual survey of political rights around the world, democracy’s reach has grown ever more extensive. In 1972, the year of its first survey, Freedom House rated 43 countries as “free,” 38 as “partly free,” and 69 as “not free.” The 2004 Freedom House survey rates 88 states as free, 55 as partly free, and 49 as not free. So the number of free countries has more than doubled over the past 30 years, the number of partly free states has grown by 17, and the number of repressive (i.e., not free) states has declined by 20. (The absolute number of states has grown over the same period.)

DEMOCRACY’S STUNNING  
ADVANCE HAS BYPASSED THE  
ISLAMIC WORLD.

Democracy has proved so diverse over the past half-century that it confounds easy definition. It’s a strikingly robust plant, capable of almost infinite variety. But in the Islamic world, democracy struggles on unfriendly soil. The Freedom House survey of the 47 nations with an Islamic majority found only nine electoral democracies, none of them in the Middle East. But even the electoral democracies often lack fundamental rights. Of states with an Islamic majority, Freedom House ranks only two, Senegal and Mali, as free. Why should this be? India’s example suggests that the influence of colonialism is not an adequate explanation. Nor is poverty, which, in any case, is not an issue in the oil-rich states. The explanation must lie elsewhere.

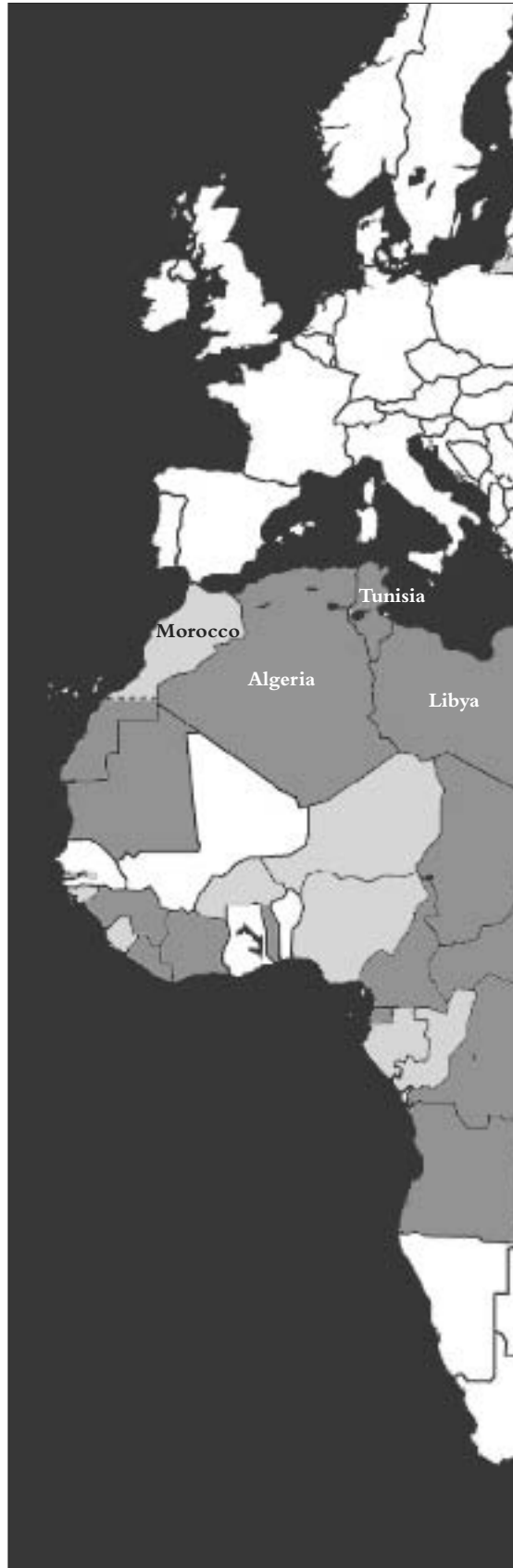
**M**ost political theory about the key components of democracy focuses on three important preconditions: the role of certain key state institutions, the strength of civil society, and socioeconomic and cultural structure. The key institutions include elections, in some form, with a secret ballot; reasonably free speech and media; and the rule of law, as administered by a tolerably independent judiciary to protect the rights of minorities. The rule of law is critical. (Without it, Thomas Jefferson’s somber definition of a democracy as “nothing more than mob rule, where fifty-one percent of the people may take away the rights of the other forty-nine,” might well discredit the enterprise.) It should extend to all citizens, and cover commercial as well as criminal matters; otherwise, property rights and the sanctity of contract are at risk. But the rule of law can take many forms. The countries of the European Union, for example, manage to function with fundamentally different legal systems. Most Continental nations prefer variants

of the French system, in which a state-employed magistrate acts as investigator and as prosecutor before a judicial panel. The British retain trial by jury and an adversarial system in which the Crown presents the prosecution and the defense then tries to refute it.

But such distinctions between the legal forms of Western democracy are mere details by comparison with the gulf that separates Islamic law, sharia, from Western concepts of law. Although democracy can function with a state-established religion, as in Britain or Israel, the question of whether it can emerge in the shadow of sharia remains open. The difficulty is less the hudud, the stern code of punishment for fornication (flogging), theft (amputation), and adultery (stoning), than it is sharia's fundamental objection to any separation of church and state. Nor can there be much freedom of individual conscience when the penalty for converting from Islam to another religion is death. This is not to say necessarily that democracy cannot prosper under sharia, but finding an accommodation will be difficult, and is unlikely to be peaceful. It took centuries of war and dispute—and eventually the Reformation—for medieval Europe to resolve a similar clash of prerogatives between the canon law of the Roman Catholic Church and the secular law of earthly sovereigns.

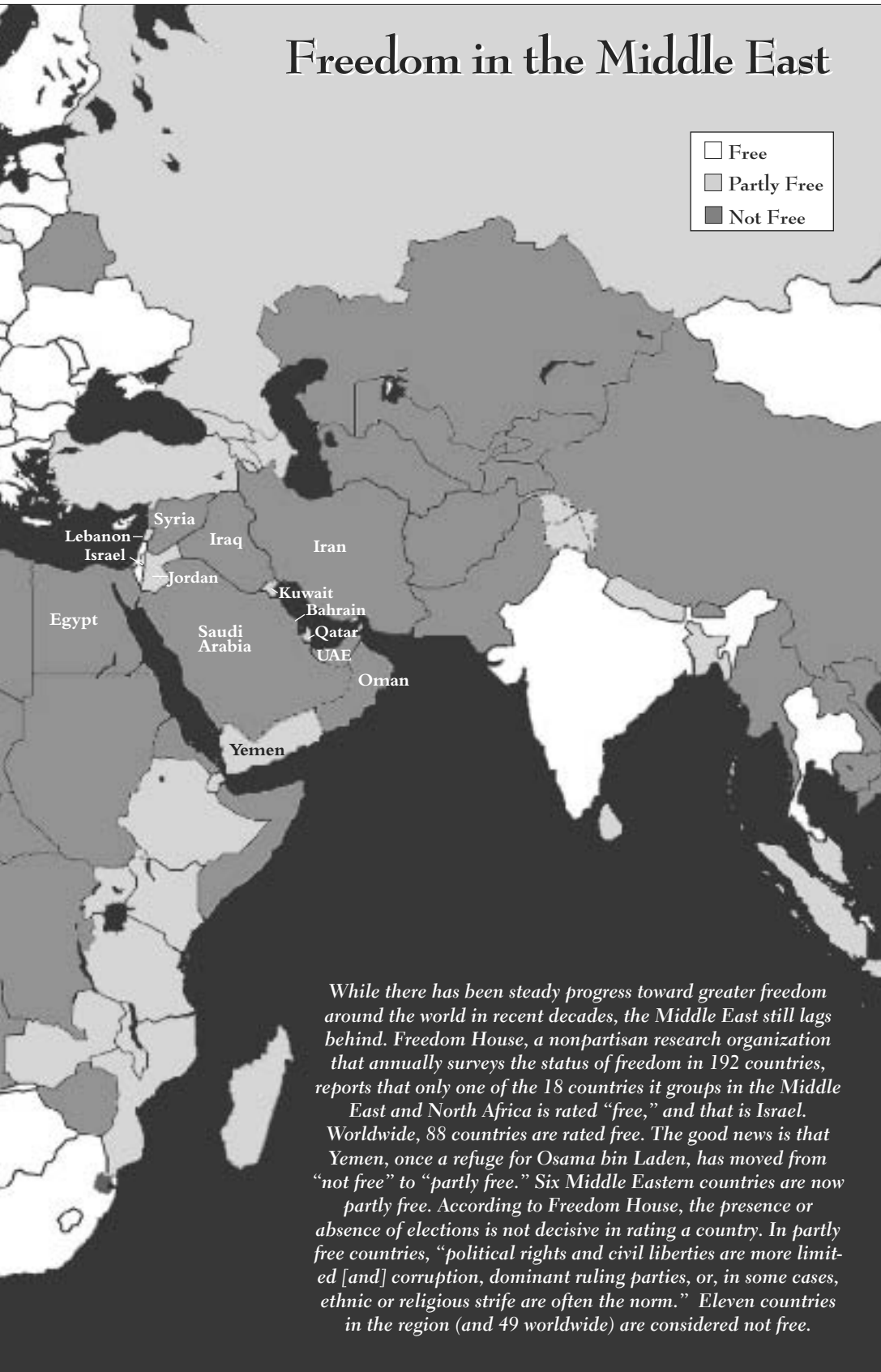
**T**he importance of civil society in the emergence of democracy has long been recognized. “Among the laws that rule human society,” Alexis de Tocqueville suggested in *Democracy in America*, “there is one that seems to be more precise and clear than all others. If men are to remain civilized or to become so, the art of associating together must grow

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# Freedom in the Middle East



*While there has been steady progress toward greater freedom around the world in recent decades, the Middle East still lags behind. Freedom House, a nonpartisan research organization that annually surveys the status of freedom in 192 countries, reports that only one of the 18 countries it groups in the Middle East and North Africa is rated “free,” and that is Israel.*

*Worldwide, 88 countries are rated free. The good news is that Yemen, once a refuge for Osama bin Laden, has moved from “not free” to “partly free.” Six Middle Eastern countries are now partly free. According to Freedom House, the presence or absence of elections is not decisive in rating a country. In partly free countries, “political rights and civil liberties are more limited [and] corruption, dominant ruling parties, or, in some cases, ethnic or religious strife are often the norm.” Eleven countries in the region (and 49 worldwide) are considered not free.*

and improve in the same ration.” Samuel Huntington, in his seminal *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1969), saw the insufficient development of this art as explaining the problems of “the modernizing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America, where the political community is fragmented against itself, and where political institutions have little power, less majesty and no resiliency, where in many cases governments simply do not govern.” Huntington discerned in the countries being destabilized by rapid change “a lack of civic morale and public spirit capable of giving meaning and direction to the public interest,” and concluded that “the primary problem of politics is the lag in the development of political institutions behind social and economic change.”

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To give life to those political institutions, a civil society is needed, in the form, for example, of sports and hobby clubs, labor unions, cafés, and other nongovernmental and political entities within which people can gather and argue and cooperate outside state structures. All of

these—and an increasingly independent news media spurred by satellite TV and the Internet, charitable bodies, and women’s groups—exist throughout most of the Arab world. Not all of them are organized through the mosques, and many thrive despite political repression, the customary restraints upon a public role for women, and the competing tug of tribal tradition. In countries that are making significant steps toward representative government, such as Morocco, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait, civil society is blossoming fast. Those five countries, all monarchies, have sovereigns who seem prepared to enlarge the political space for their subjects. The prospects for “the art of associating together” in these states are promising, in part because long-established royal dynasties with their own religious credentials do not seem intimidated by the Islamist clerics.

Civil society is inextricably linked with socioeconomic structure, but the economic circumstances of successful democracies are widely divergent. India is an obvious example of democracy unimpeded by poverty, as is Costa Rica, with a long and exemplary record of representative government in Latin America. In the most populous countries of the Arab world, wealth is actually distributed more equitably than in the United States.

Economists measure income distribution in a state by means of the Gini index (named for Corrado Gini, the Italian statistician who devised it). The lower the index, the more evenly income is distributed in a country; the higher the index, the greater the share of wealth owned by the rich. So a fully egalitarian society would have a Gini figure of 0, and a soci-

## Wealth and Inequality

<i>Country</i>	<i>Gini index</i>	<i>Per capita GDP (U.S.\$)</i>
Japan	24.9	25,130
Sweden	25.0	24,180
Yemen	33.4	790
Egypt	34.4	3,520
Britain	36.0	24,160
Jordan	36.4	3,870
Morocco	39.5	3,600
China	40.3	4,020
United States	40.8	34,320
Russia	45.6	7,100
Mexico	53.1	8,430

*Parts of the Arab world may enjoy less income inequality than the United States. A low Gini index connotes low levels of income inequality.*

ety in which the richest person owned everything would have a figure of 100. The table gives the Gini figures for selected countries, with gross domestic product (GDP) shown in purchasing power parity. It's important to note, however, that figures for the Arab world are notoriously unreliable, and that, for the oil-rich states, a Gini index is almost meaningless because of the extraordinarily high proportion of foreign workers.

Income disparities are a crude indicator, concealing both regional differences (a low income in New York City can be relatively high in Mississippi) and many social subtleties. But the figures suggest that democracy can flourish in countries with sharp disparities of income, and survive even in countries such as Brazil, where the disparities tend toward the acute. If reasonably even levels of income distribution are a useful predictor, then many Arab countries are in promising shape.

Incomes may not be a helpful indicator, however, in analyzing a particularly distinctive characteristic of democracies—the middle class, which plays a stabilizing political role. The middle class is hard to define because income is only one factor in its measurement; social origin, education, career, and lifestyle all contribute to the making of a middle class. Nonetheless, there are common features. Members of the middle class have homes and savings. They make some provision for their old age. They invest in the education of their children. Thus, they have a stake in a stable future, and that provides a strong personal incentive for them to be politically

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active—to ensure that schools are good, that the financial system will handle their savings honestly, that police will safeguard their property, that courts will be honest, and that the government will not tax them too highly or waste their savings through inflation. They need a free press to tell them what the government and courts are doing, and freedom of speech and assembly and elections to organize their opposition if the government lets them down. In short, though it may be simplistic to say that a middle class, by definition, will demand the kinds of institutions that help sustain democracy, such institutions and a socially active and politically engaged middle class will mutually reinforce each other.

The middle class is growing fast in most Arab countries, although it's growing most quickly in the state bureaucracies. But no doubt as a consequence of the subservient role of women, the Arab middle class is not growing nearly quickly enough to cope with the stunningly high birthrates that give the region such a high proportion of young people under the age of 25. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the median age in Egypt and Algeria is now 20; in Lebanon it's 18, and in Iraq it's 17. On average, annual population growth remains about three percent in many Arab countries, compared with two percent globally.

The role of women in the Arab world points to a deeper issue: the degree to which democracy depends on culture. The long stability of Britain and the United States, the first countries to produce a mass middle class, is telling. Some political theorists suggest that the tradition of juries and common law, property rights, elected parliaments, a free press, and largely free trade, along with the low taxes permitted by a happy geography that precluded the need for a vast standing army, endowed the English-speaking world with a special predisposition to democracy. The theory is beguiling, but it turns ominous when used to suggest that some peoples and cultures are inherently antipathetic to democracy—as has been said at various times of Germans, Japanese, Indians, Africans, and Russians, and as is now being said of the Islamic world in general.

**T**he debate on democracy's potential in the Middle East will continue, even as democracy's green shoots are evident in Oman's elections, Qatar's new constitution (which gives women the right to vote), and Jordan's and Morocco's significant steps toward representative government. But these potential democracies remain works in timid progress, proceeding under two baleful shadows. The first is the example of Iran, where a democratically elected parliament and president have been unable to establish their authority over the ayatollahs of the Guardian Council, who control the judicial system, the Pasdaran Revolutionary Guard, and the domestic security agencies, and who are deeply suspicious of democracy. As Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini wrote in 1977, "The real threat to Islam does not come from the Shah, but from the idea of imposing on Muslim lands the Western system of democracy, which is a form of prostitution." The second shadow is the nagging fear that a democratic election in most states of the Arab world is likely to be won by the well-organized Islamists. The army inter-

vened in Algeria to prevent the Islamic Salvation Front from taking office after it won the elections of 1992. That triggered an insurgency in which more than 100,000 people have since died.

Still, it's not entirely clear that the separation of religion and state, a concept Islam finds difficult to embrace, is a prerequisite for democracy. The British have functioned tolerably well with an established Church of England for nearly five centuries; Germany's Christian Democratic and Christian Social Union coalitions have provided impeccably democratic government; and France's proud republican tradition of laicism has not spared the nation political anguish over the right of Muslim women to wear headscarves in school. But there's little left in modern European politics of the religious passions that unleashed war, massacres, and persecution in the 16th and 17th centuries.

**I**slam, at least in the Arab world, has yet to undergo its Reformation, and those Islamic states that have produced a more relaxed religious form have their own difficulties. Indonesia is a tremulous democracy, rent by ethnic as well as religious tensions, with the army constantly poised to intervene again. Malaysia, economically the most dynamic of Islamic countries, has seen Islamist extremist groups win power in two states—one of which they lost in recent elections—after years of well-funded Wahhabi proselytizing. Turkey, where a moderate Islamic party has now come peacefully to power by election, remains the most promising example of the way in which Islam and democracy might prosper together. Since the reforms of Kemal Atatürk, Turkey has had 80 years of secular rule, 50 years of NATO membership, and now the lure of joining the European Union to strengthen its democratic commitment.

Turkey, of course, is a constant reminder that there's little in history or political theory to suggest that Islamic nations cannot become democracies. Indeed, the constitutional monarchy and parliamentary system that ruled independent Iraq from 1932 to 1958 produced the freest press, the most vibrant civil society, and the most impressive levels of health and education in the Arab world during that period. Yet Iraq was a clouded democracy: The elected prime minister, Nuri Said, was an authoritarian figure, susceptible to British influence, who routinely suspended parliaments when they proved hostile. At least the latest efforts at democratization in the Arab world take place under happier circumstances, without the looming presence of the Cold War.

President Bush's new "forward strategy of freedom" will need a great deal of international support, both political and financial, if it is to succeed, and a patient world will have to persuade a highly skeptical Arab public that the United States is resolved to achieve a fair peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians. Ultimately, however, as the president made clear in January, his strategy rests on an act of faith: "It is mistaken, and condescending, to assume that whole cultures and great religions are incompatible with liberty and self-government. I believe that God has planted in every human heart the desire to live in freedom. And even when that desire is crushed by tyranny for decades, it will rise again." □

# An Open Door

by Saad Eddin Ibrahim

It's a little-known fact, but the Arab world had a liberal age that lasted for nearly 100 years, from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th. The legacy of that age may provide the ground on which to build new Arab democracies. *Newsweek's* Fareed Zakaria and others who have argued that liberalism is a prerequisite for sound democracy contend that its various elements—free media, competent legal institutions, the rule of law, and ethnonoreligious tolerance—attune individuals to the spirit and behaviors of citizenship and predispose groups, communities, and other collectivities to the rules of fair play. They become tolerant, for example, of the unpleasant outcomes invariably built into electoral politics: “Losers” don't habitually contest the outcome of elections or resort to violent means, and “winners” don't disregard the legitimate interests of the losers. Such restraint can't be legislated. It needs to be learned and internalized by citizens if they are to enjoy sound democratic governance. So, too, must they learn the skills of organizing, mobilizing, debating, and compromising that are inculcated through the spread of small-scale institutions of civil society.

During the past two centuries, the Arab world has gone through a sequence of overlapping political phases: an early liberal, a colonial, a middle liberal, a populist radical, an Islamic, and a new liberal. Not every Arab country passed through all six phases, but Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Tunisia have done so, and their experience is instructive. In each, external factors triggered the start of political transformation. Beginning in the late 18th century, the encroachment of French, British, Italian, Israeli, and American forces was the impetus for the birth of modernity, even as the presence of the foreign powers also unleashed forces of resistance. As one phase ended and left its legacy and another began, certain social formations—classes, occupations, and ethnic groups—declined, and new ones arose. Each phase was associated with a distinct social formation. The landed bourgeoisie, for example, championed the first liberal age, and the middle class the second. The lower middle class dominated the populist radical phase, and a mix of the lower and lowest urban classes has sustained the current Islamic moment. A coalition of Western-educated professionals and business leaders in the Arab world is pushing currently for the return of liberalism.

The elements of liberalism helped usher in Western-type democracy first in Egypt, at the end of the 19th century, and then in a score of Arab countries from the early 1920s to the mid-1950s. The seeds of liberalism were sown in Egypt as early as the turn of the 18th century. When Napoleon's ships anchored in Alexandria's harbor in July 1798, the West had its first significant encounter with the Arab Middle East since the last Crusade, in the 13th

century. Like the other eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire, Egypt in 1798 was stagnating in medieval Islamic ways that had maintained themselves for centuries—the very centuries during which Europe made its great leaps forward in scientific knowledge, technology, and religious and political reformation. With Napoleon, the French Revolution arrived in full dress on the banks of the Nile.

Among the things the French brought to Egypt were the printing press and a new vocabulary—words for liberty, fraternity, equality, human rights, and



*Khedive Ismail and his son Tewfik: One opened the door to liberal reform in 19th-century Egypt, the other slammed it shut.*

(1805–1849). His ambitious state-building led, albeit unintentionally, to the gradual emergence of Egypt’s modern civil society and to the nation’s first liberal experience.

**M**uhammed Ali dispatched 311 of Egypt’s brightest young men to France, Italy, Austria, and Britain to receive the latest training in all modern fields. He also imported European officers, engineers, and doctors to train Egyptians at home. It’s estimated that more than 2,000 native sons benefited from this training. Between 1818 and 1849,

municipal councils. The Egyptians were intrigued, but soon revolted and pushed the French out with the help of the British and Ottomans. The French took with them their guns but left behind the printing press and the revolutionary slogans. These would have a lasting impact on the emergence of a modern state and society in Egypt.

One of the young Ottoman officers stationed in Egypt at the time, Muhammed Ali, observed the French with great admiration. Shortly after their departure, and with the help of the native ulema (learned men of religion), Muhammed Ali maneuvered his way to becoming Egypt’s ruler. Unlike the brief tenure of Napoleon, Muhammed Ali’s reign lasted 44 years

these modern educated Egyptians became the backbone of a new middle class, and from their ranks emerged proponents of liberal values and practices. By the early 1860s, elements of the new middle class were beginning to establish newspapers, theaters, and other organs of civil society, and to advocate liberal politics. In 1866, Khedive Ismail, a fairly enlightened viceroy of Egypt, responded favorably to these liberal aspirations and decreed a constitution that allowed Egypt's first parliamentary elections.

**T**he first parliamentary council in Egypt was quite timid in its early years. But it eventually gained enough self-confidence to challenge the khedive and to stand at the forefront of a revolt in 1881. The deputies simply refused to rubber-stamp a new tax bill without their own audit of the state budget. One of the more outspoken deputies even invoked a slogan of the American Revolution: "No taxation without representation." To quell this unexpected parliamentary defiance, Khedive Tawfik (Ismail's son) issued a decree dissolving the council. But the deputies, to his surprise, refused to disband, and barricaded themselves in the council building. This act of parliamentary defiance triggered an army rebellion, a popular uprising, and demands for "a proper constitution." Khedive Tawfik resorted to external help to put down what was becoming a full-fledged revolution. In 1882, the unrest provoked the British occupation of Egypt, which ended the 16 years of democratic experiment.

Many of Egypt's sociocultural liberal elements endured under the British. Liberalism in Egypt was enhanced by measures protecting private

MODERN EDUCATED  
EGYPTIANS BECAME  
THE BACKBONE OF A NEW  
MIDDLE CLASS.

property, free trade, and a market economy, all of which further empowered both the landed bourgeoisie and the new middle class. In due course, these groups also became instrumental in resisting British occupation and seeking political

independence and constitutional democracy. Both quests were partly successful, thanks to a popular uprising in 1919. Britain conceded in February 1922 and granted Egypt independence; King Fouad (son of Tawfik and grandson of Ismail) gave his consent to a liberal constitution in 1923. That ushered in a second political cycle of Egyptian liberalism.

Egypt's long liberal saga was paralleled in other Arab countries. Though still nominally part of the Ottoman Empire, Iraq, Lebanon, and Tunisia managed to gain substantial autonomy at different points in the 19th century, and under the leadership of ambitious modernizers they instituted large-scale socioeconomic and educational reforms that created new middle classes within a single generation. These classes in time became politically assertive, first against the Ottomans (from the mid-19th century to World War I), then against Western

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occupying powers (Britain, France, and Italy) in the period from 1918 to 1939.

In Iraq, the liberal march began with Dawood Pasha, in 1830, and continued under his successor, Medhat Pasha, who was in a hurry to emulate his Egyptian counterpart, Khedive Ismail. Dawood sent young Iraqis to study abroad, brought in foreign trainers, and proposed a constitution for Iraq in 1869, just three years after enactment of the Egyptian constitution. The Iraqi constitution failed to materialize because of Medhat's untimely death, but the fact that a constitution was even proposed reflected a clear trend among several rulers of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The Egyptian and Iraqi liberal scenarios were taken as examples by an energetic Tunisian reformer, Khyir Eldin, and by a local ruler in the province of Mount Lebanon, Bachir al-Shihaby. Though they never matured to the same political level as those of Egypt, the socio-cultural elements introduced by these reformers in Iraq, Tunisia, and Syria outlived their originators.

Among the most salient features of the first Arab liberal age was the growth of civil society. By the end of the 19th century, some 65 civil society organizations had been established. By 1925, the number had jumped nearly fivefold, to 300, and, by

1950, to more than 3,000. Most of the early organizations were welfare associations. Later, others were established to perform educational and developmental tasks. Some, such as cooperatives, clubs, and trade unions, were public and registered, but others were politically motivated secret societies. From the mid-19th century to the time of World War I, these societies were devoted to resisting Ottoman rule; from the 1920s to the 1950s, they resisted Western colonial powers. Most significantly, they served as incubators for many of the leaders of the region's independence movements, who then became the new rulers once independence was won.

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**A**s significant as the role of these civil society groups in the flowering of the first and second cycles of Arab liberalism was the role played by the press. It's remarkable that newspapers sprouted so rapidly in an area of the world with so much illiteracy—and which had not been introduced to the printing press until 1798. In Egypt, the number of newspapers grew over the course of the 19th century from one to 23, and in Lebanon from 3 to 46. The media entrepreneurs in Egypt and the rest of the Arab world were disproportionately Lebanese Christians who had suffered discrimination under the Ottomans. The publications they founded preached liberal values and practices, and their polemical content triggered heated debates—on Darwinism, Marxism, secularism, Arab nationalism, Islamic reformation, female emancipation, unveiling—among prominent thinkers, politicians, and lay readers.

In sum, many of the values and practices thought to be prerequisites for demo-

cratic governance existed in the Arab world as early as the second half of the 19th century. To be sure, these liberal beliefs and practices were prevalent in only a limited stratum of society: modern, educated Arabs. That same stratum had staffed newly established institutions during the reigns of early indigenous reformers in the 19th century, and it led the resistance against Western colonial occupation during the first half of the 20th century. From its ranks came the initial rulers and state-builders after independence.

**T**he form of governance chosen by the new native rulers, in cooperation with the colonial or mandatory authorities, was pluralistic, multiparty, constitutional democracy. It is not surprising that Egypt, Iraq, and Jordan modeled their governments along the lines of a British-type constitutional monarchy, or that Syria and Lebanon modeled theirs after the government of France—always with adaptations to the specific circumstances of each country.

The second cycle of the Arab liberal age came to an end in most countries during the 1950s and 1960s, when it was no more than 30 or 40 years old. Several

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factors caused its early demise, the most immediate being the 1948 Arab defeat in Palestine at the hands of the newly established state of Israel. Brigades from seven Arab countries had been hurriedly ordered into Palestine to suppress the would-

be Jewish state, and Arab public opinion was primed by a demagogic press to expect a victorious mission that would be concluded in one or two weeks. It was to be a “picnic.” Instead, a real war lingered on for several months and ended in humiliating defeat. The returning armies blamed the defeat on their liberal governments. Allegations of corruption and treason flew in all directions and paved the way for a series of military coups d’état—in Syria (1949), Egypt (1952), Iraq (1958), Sudan (1958), and Libya (1969).

But there was more to discredit the liberal regimes than the 1948 defeat in Palestine. One cause of widespread discontent was their neglect of the so-called social question. From the 1930s on, Arab critics and foreign observers noted a growing imbalance in the distribution of wealth and power among the various social classes. The imbalance worsened in the 1940s as a result of higher rates of population growth, urbanization, and the stresses of World War II, in which the Arab world was a major theater. With the postwar demobilization, unemployment skyrocketed in Arab urban centers, and fascist, socialist, and Islamic movements had ample opportunity to exploit this state of affairs by fomenting anger among the growing, disenfranchised urban proletariat.

Arab countries with liberal civilian governments were unable to act wholly on their own. Nearly all were tied to their former colonial masters by the strings of foreign aid and foreign military bases on their soil. Four of the countries, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Libya, were constitutional monarchies, and on paper at least, the monarchs were supposed to reign but not rule. But each king meddled exten-



*A victorious Gamal Abdel Nasser electrified the Arab world when he nationalized the Suez Canal in 1956, but his grand vision of pan-Arab unity ended little more than a decade later in defeat and disillusion.*

sively in politics, and the elected governments could not act independently of the throne. In the rare cases when they did, they were dissolved, and a minority or transitional cabinet was appointed until new elections were held. Because of the persistent machinations of throne and foreign power, nonelected minority or transitional governments in Egypt and Iraq ruled longer than the majority elected parties had during the liberal age. This state of affairs crippled elected governments and cast doubt on the viability of the entire project of a multiparty democratic system. So when military regimes took over, dissolved political parties, and did away with democracy altogether, few tears were shed.

Though a military coup d'état in reaction to the Arab defeat in Palestine occurred first in Syria (1949), it was Egypt that provided a full-blown archetype for other military regimes, not only in the Arab world but in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The new Egyptian rulers undertook far-reaching distributive measures that dramatically affected class structure, education, and economic life. These measures were meant to address the social question for the less privileged in society—those neglected by government during the liberal age from the 1920s to the 1950s—and the initial response from the targeted constituencies was sup-

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port and enthusiasm. The new regime also addressed deep-seated national sentiments by declaring, very early on, its anti-colonialist, anti-Zionist, and anti-communist orientations. The nationalization of the Suez Canal and the gallant resistance to the Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of 1956 enhanced Gamal Abdel Nasser's charisma as a pan-Arab leader.

When, in 1958, Syria and Egypt were joined in what was called the United Arab Republic (UAR), the credibility of Nasser's vision was enhanced. He promised to fulfill the popular demands for social justice, free education, full employment, free health care, the liberation of Palestine, and Arab unification, and for much of the 1950s and 1960s the Arab masses were tantalized. There was enough delivery on some of the promises to keep peoples' expectations alive if not soaring. More sober observers at the time

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questioned the price the people had to pay: a suspension of basic political rights, democracy, and public freedom. Only members of the upper and upper-middle classes (no more than 25 percent of the population) were keen on democracy and liberal freedoms.

That was to change dramatically with the swift Arab defeat at the hands of Israel in the Six-Day War in 1967. The shock paralyzed the Arab masses for weeks. Investigating the causes of the defeat and putting the military commanders responsible for it on trial took months, and as the public began to sense a cover-up, massive demonstrations broke out in all the major cities. The protesters demanded democracy. Nasser responded to the public anger by issuing the "February 28 Declaration" (1968), in which he reiterated his regime's responsibility for the defeat and promised a return to a full democratic system as soon as "the traces of aggression are removed." Nasser died two years later, and it was several more years before his successor, Anwar el-Sadat, waged another war (1973) to remove those "traces of aggression" (the Israeli occupation of Egyptian Sinai). Not until 1976 did Sadat begin the process of restoring democracy.

Just as the 1948 defeat in the Arab-Israeli war expedited the demise of the first Arab liberal regimes, so too did the defeat in 1967 mark the beginning of the end of the Arab radical populist regimes. But though it took only a decade (1949–58) for the liberal regimes to disintegrate in Arab countries, it's taking much longer for their radical populist successors to fall or to change substantially from within. This is much longer than it has taken for democratic systems to be re-instituted elsewhere in the world. One plausible explanation for the protracted transition is the emergence of another radicalism: political Islam.

**I**n the aftermath of the 1967 defeat, the liberal democratic forces that emerged to reclaim the mantle of societal leadership were joined by a variety of Islamic movements. Radical political Islam has had staying power, in both the Arab world and neighboring Muslim countries. Islamic

groups challenged the Sadat regime in Egypt as early as April 1974, and one of them ultimately succeeded in assassinating the president in October 1981. What made the Islamic alternative especially credible was the success of the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979. That event gave a great moral boost to advocates of the Islamic vision in several Arab countries, who then posed a serious challenge to the entrenched populist regimes of Egypt, Algeria, Yemen, and Sudan. Only in Sudan did they manage to seize power, through a military coup in 1989. But the blood shed during the Islamists' challenge to regimes in Algeria and Egypt, and the harsh and backward implementation of sharia by the Islamic Salvation Front in Sudan and the Taliban in Afghanistan, in the 1990s, disillusioned many who had been hopeful. Even the revolution in Iran quickly ran out of steam, its version of the Islamic vision discredited by a reign of terror at home and adventurism abroad.

**T**he horrendous attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, have, of course, had consequences well beyond the borders of the United States. One of those consequences may well turn out to be the beginning of the end of politically militant Islam—resulting not so much from the devastating American military reaction as from a painful collective reassessment in the Arab world of the Islamic legacy as it was projected in the last quarter of the 20th century. That legacy will have to be stripped of its cultish millennial aspects if moderation is to be achieved.

In fact, we have begun to see moderation already in Turkey, Morocco, and Bahrain. All three countries held parliamentary elections in late 2002 and early 2003, and in all three, Islamic political parties ran campaigns of tolerance and respect for the rules of democratic governance. One eminent Islamic thinker, Sheikh Gamal al-Banna, who derives some of his credibility from the fact that his brother was the founder of the Muslim Brothers, one of the original Islamist groups, now argues that today's Islamist movements should evolve into Muslim democratic parties akin to the Christian Democratic parties of Western Europe. Should the trend toward moderation continue and extend to other Muslim countries in the Middle East, the prospects for liberal democracy in the region will surely become brighter.

Over the past 30 years, one radical ideology after another in the Arab world has displayed signs of retreat. In some cases, one radical regime gave way to another; in others, more significantly, the existing regime altered its own policies and practices. The first retreat came with the crumbling of Nasser's quasi-socialist pan-Arabism after the military debacle of 1967. In Sudan, Ja'afar

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Numairy (1969–85) shifted rapidly from socialism to capitalism to Islamic radicalism. Libya, the most extreme example, went through several radical phases before it recently capitulated to former Western foes over contested issues of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. And the fall of the Baathist regime of Saddam Hussein at the hands of an American-led coalition was so dramatic that many observers predicted the further weakening,

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if not total demise, of other radical regimes in Syria, Libya, Sudan, and non-Arab Iran. Now the predictions are materializing, as evidenced by the retreat from radicalism on the part of the Sudanese, Libyan, and Iranian regimes. By the end of 2003, all three agreed to do what they had resisted for years: remove

weapons of mass destruction, allow international inspections, or, as in Sudan, sign peace agreements to settle internal conflicts.

With every defeat or retreat of Arab radicalism, the door opens for a return of liberalism. In the economic sphere, for example, Egypt and Tunisia were among the countries that began to liberalize their economies after the October War of 1973, partly to attract deposits, remittances, and investments from oil-rich Arab countries. The Gulf War (1991), which liberated Kuwait from Iraqi occupation, opened a new avenue of freedom of expression in the form of Arab satellite TV networks. The best-known of these is the notorious Al-Jazeera, which broadcasts from the small Gulf state of Qatar. But there were others before, and many have been created since, including Arabiya, LBC, and Al-Huriya. The new media have opened up the Arab public space as never before. Competition for an ever-growing audience has improved the professional quality of broadcasts and expanded the margins of freedom even in countries still controlled by the more repressive authoritarian regimes, such as Libya and Syria.

**A**rab monarchies have been, on the whole, more responsive than their republican counterparts to regional and global developments and domestic demands for change. King Hussein of Jordan and King Hassan of Morocco, for example, made significant political reforms in the 1990s. Both presided over steady democratization, which made possible several parliamentary elections. Their successors, Abdullah II and Mohammad VI, respectively, have continued the practice of relatively fair and honest elections into the 21st century. Opposition groups, including leftists and Islamists, have won seats in those elections, and have occasionally occupied cabinet positions. This has contributed to a marked political stability in both countries, despite the ups and downs of economic conditions.

Mohammad VI, the young king of Morocco, is also leading a social revolution. In November 2003, he urged the Moroccan parliament to approve a radical bill that gives Moroccan women equal rights with men in all matters of mar-



*On the road to democracy? Morocco's King Mohammad VI has led the way toward reform in the Arab world.*

riage, divorce, child custody, and the like. On January 7, 2004, the king went an extra mile toward accommodating victims of human rights violations during the reign of his father, Hassan II, when he announced the establishment of a national commission on fairness and reconciliation similar to that established by Nelson Mandela in South Africa in 1994. These two measures have added significantly to the growing liberalization of Morocco—and to the popularity of Mohammad.

The leaders of Morocco and Jordan have become role models for Arab royalists in Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman. So it's the monarchies that are leading the newest cycle of Arab liberalization, while the republics of Egypt, Syria,

Tunisia, Algeria, and Libya are reluctant and falling behind. The impulse toward liberalization is not merely a function of the kings' good hearts. It's as much a response to growing domestic and external pressures. In Morocco, for example, nongovernmental organizations mushroomed from fewer than 20,000 in 1980 to more than 80,000 in 2003; many of them are human rights and women's advocacy groups that actively network with their European counterparts.

**T**he events of 9/11 and their aftermath focused Western, especially American, attention on the need for broad sociopolitical reform in the Arab Gulf states, and that new interest converged with long-standing domestic demands for reform in those countries. The benign convergence tipped the balance against the old conservative forces, which had long used narrow interpretations of Islam to resist change. The battle is far from over, and occasional reversals are to be expected. But thanks to the steady growth of the new middle classes, the pressure for sustainable reform now has substantial indigenous support. Although Americans watching TV news might assume that Islamists have captured the hearts of the Arab world, the reality is quite different. For example, the latest World Values Survey shows widespread pro-democratic sentiment and opposition to Islamist ideology. More than 70 percent of Jordanians, for example, say that Islamic leaders should not influence politics.

There's a difficulty, however. Because regime change in Iraq was brought about by a hastily assembled coalition of Western powers that, in its continued presence, symbolizes "foreign occupation," a new wave of patriotic-nationalist forces has been unleashed. The danger for the reformists is that they will be viewed by the public as agents not of positive change but of foreign occupation. Thus, the fate of this latest cycle of Arab liberalization is contingent, in part, on how rapidly the visible symbols of foreign occupation can be removed. By the same token, because liberalization and democracy are closely associated with the West, local detractors will continue to resist so long as other outstanding accounts from the colonial legacy remain unsettled—the most potent and complicated of them being the Palestinian question.

It is often said that, for Middle Easterners, history never dies, it merely fades temporarily, only to return again. That certainly seems to be the case with the cycles of liberalism in the Arab world. This time around, though, at least four things are new and different: (1) Countries that did not even exist during earlier cycles are zealously joining the latest wave. (2) Sociopolitical formations that had previously flirted with radical populism or militant Islamism are revising their beliefs and practices to join or draw nearer to liberal forces. (3) The new middle classes, though impoverished in some Arab countries, are growing and steadily reclaiming liberal values and democratic ideas. (4) With the Cold War over, Western powers seem more committed to withdrawing support for dictators and to advancing democratic systems in the Arab world in the hope that more-inclusive regimes will be an antidote to both religious extremism and terrorism. On balance, then, liberal democracies have never had a better chance of taking hold in the Arab world—and surviving. □



# Beyond Liberalization?

by Daniel Brumberg

**A**mid all the swirling rhetoric about the future political shape of the Middle East, it's easy to lose sight of a simple but vital distinction: Democracy and political liberalization are not the same thing. Democracy rests on rules, institutions, and political practices through which voters regularly and constitutionally replace or modify their leadership by the exercise of representative political power. Political liberalization, by contrast, is about promoting a freer debate and competition in the media, civil society, and political parties. It's a necessary but far from sufficient condition for democracy.

The distinction between liberalization and democracy goes to the heart of the debate about the kinds of change the United States can or should promote in the Arab world. President George W. Bush has emphasized his administration's desire to promote more freedom in the Middle East, but there's little consensus within and outside government that the United States has the means or the political will to promote democratization.

The roots of this uncertainty run deep. For nearly a decade, the United States has given modest financial support for what is fundamentally a political liberalization strategy in the Arab world—initiatives that attempt to inject vitality and competition into fragmented and harassed civil societies. These initiatives have also included technical projects to enhance the capacity of political (as distinct from civic) institutions and actors, such as parliaments and political parties. Yet however well meaning, the programs have not been intended to alter the basic institutional lay of the land by threatening the hegemony of the region's ruling parties, royal families, or security apparatuses. With the recent exception of Iraq, Arab *states* have not been the target of our democracy aid programs.

The preference for chipping away at the outer perimeter of Arab autocracy can be attributed in part to expediency. In contrast to America's Cold War programs to aid democracy, which were advanced in the hope that communist regimes would collapse, U.S. Middle East programs have sought to reassure regimes closely aligned with Washington. The fact that Islamist parties were the first to benefit from democratic openings in the late 1980s and early 1990s reinforced the logic of this realpolitik thinking. But in the aftermath of 9/11, Washington's long-standing preference for liberalization over democratization came under unprecedented scrutiny both within and outside the Bush administration. Neoconservatives such as Joshua Muravchik

of the American Enterprise Institute, backed by neoliberals such as *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman, argued that the very phenomenon of Arab autocracy posed a danger to American security. Since the nihilistic, anti-American ideology that created sympathy for the likes of Osama bin Laden was an indirect product of the swamp of anger and despair that Arab autocracies had created and exploited to hide their own failures, political reform was essential to combating the surge of radical Islamist terrorism. The invasion of Iraq and the effort to build a democracy in that ravaged land heralded the new thinking and signaled that Washington was now ready to entertain an unprecedented level of political risk and uncertainty. Bush reinforced this message in his November 6, 2003, speech before the National Endowment for Democracy, in which he took the unusual step of apologizing for decades of support that the United States had given to Arab autocracies.

Yet there has been no basic shift in the nature and goals of American democracy aid programs, which continue to focus on economic reform, free trade, women's rights, civil society, and promoting more "moderate" or liberal Islamist thinking. This is in keeping with a long-standing desire to make non-governmental, civil society organizations the agents of a *demand-driven* model of slow reforms that ultimately shields Arab regimes from any dramatic challenges. In other words, the idea is to build and reinforce groups within Arab societies that will then push rulers to enact democratic reforms. Very little of what the Bush administration proposes actually requires states to *supply* the reforms that are needed if political liberalization is to become a handmaiden of democratization. Absent some kind of encouragement (or pressure) from the United States, political liberalization might very well improve the lives of many Arabs, but by itself it will not produce democracy.

**T**he question, then, is fundamental: Should the United States augment, or even replace, its traditional *liberalizing* strategy with a *democratizing* strategy, whose manifest goal—in words and, more important, in deeds—is to lay the foundation for an actual transition to competitive democracy? And if the answer to that question is yes, how should the shift be accomplished? At which countries of the Arab world should the new strategy be directed?

Consider the basic political requirements of a genuine democratization strategy. To be effective, it would require at its most elemental level a substantive shift—away from a demand-side, civil society–focused approach to a supply-side, state-focused approach. By the latter I do not mean narrowly conceived technical programs that are geared toward showing legislators how to pass bills or would-be candidates for office how to draft an election manifesto. Those are indeed state-focused, supply-side initiatives, but their narrow scope does little to address the core of the problem, which is the excessive and mostly unchecked power of unelected executives, or of executives who are “elected” in state-managed polls that usu-

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*An American dilemma: Even as it urges reform, the U.S. needs political support from Arab autocrats. At a June 2003 summit in Egypt, President George W. Bush posed with King Abdullah II of Jordan (on left), Crown Prince Abdallah Aziz of Saudi Arabia, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, and King Hami Bin Issa of Bahrain.*

ally give them 90 percent or more of the vote.

An adequate state-focused strategy must begin by addressing the rules of the game that inhibit democratic representation. These rules are enshrined in constitutions that, by hook or by crook, give presidents or monarchs ultimate power. Such constitutions may not completely denude legislatures of power or authority, but they severely circumscribe them—through provisions, for example, that explicitly make the monarchy the supreme seat of authority (as in Morocco), or that subordinate the legislature to an all-powerful president (as in Tunisia and Egypt), or that provide for an upper house whose members are chosen directly or indirectly by the office of monarch or president, and can therefore be counted on to exercise their *constitutional* prerogatives to block or modify laws approved by the lower house (as in Morocco, Algeria, and Bahrain). Absent sweeping constitutional reforms—along the lines of those that

have set the stage for parliamentary and presidential elections in Indonesia this spring—even the most successful legislative training programs will make barely a dent in the flexible armor of Arab autocracies. After all, these programs cannot be effective unless parliaments have real authority and power to represent electoral majorities.

A second requirement for genuine democratization is an overhaul of the judiciaries of the Arab world. While the judiciaries of some Arab

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states, such as Egypt, have on occasion exhibited remarkable independence, most are hamstrung by constitutional, legal, and informal mechanisms that allow rulers to subordinate courts and judges to their will. Those informal mechanisms are especially insidious. Financial pressures, coupled with “old boy”

patron-client networks, give regime allies a discreet but effective means of pressuring judges into issuing rulings that serve the political and personal whims of those in power. The result, as George Washington University political scientist Nathan Brown has observed, is that rule *by* law rather than rule *of* law is the norm.

To remedy the situation, at least two kinds of constitutional reforms are needed. First, rulers must get rid of conditional constitutional clauses—of the sort that allow “total freedom of speech and assembly” *providing* that such freedom does not “violate” Islamic, national, or Arab values. Since it is the ruler, acting through the courts, who arbitrarily defines when such values are violated, the conditional loopholes make a mockery of constitutional guarantees. The loopholes must go. Second, clauses that formally subordinate judicial authority must be replaced with new ones that secure real independence for the judiciary. For this purpose, the introduction of high courts, or a reinforcement of the authority of high courts that already exist but are not in fact truly independent, is vital.

**R**ule *by* rather than *of* law is sustained as well by the subordination of legislatures to executives. Where they exist in the Arab world, legislatures are often controlled by the president’s party—as in Egypt, Algeria, and Yemen—or by members of the royal family. In Jordan, Kuwait, and Bahrain, kings and princes use their alliances with traditional tribes or clans to thwart the efforts of pro-democratic groups to mobilize their followers. Thus, the overhaul of the legal system cannot be separated from the constitutional reform needed to breathe real representative authority into legislatures. Each piece in the dense ecology of Arab autocracies is linked to every other. The creation of independent and authoritative parliaments will require sweeping reforms of the electoral systems and of laws that hamper the creation of coherent political parties. Together with parliaments, such

parties—able to organize and represent constituencies with distinct and competing social, cultural, and ideological interests—constitute the very foundations of an effective *political society*. Yet the plain fact is that, with the possible exceptions of Morocco and Lebanon, no Arab state has a constitutionally protected and competitive political party system.

**P**olitical society in the Arab world remains weak and fragmented in part because a long tradition of state control has placed large segments of the population outside the realm of daily politics. Political life has been dominated by a thin layer of elites, whose preoccupation is to negotiate with the ruling regime through state-controlled—and often state-financed—parties, professional syndicates, unions, and traditional tribes. Lacking grassroots support, such organizations are not the building blocks of effective political society. Because Islamist organizations are usually the only groups that have managed to overcome this legacy of enforced depoliticization, rulers have been hesitant to allow the kinds of wholesale reforms that would permit freely constituted parties to mobilize mass support in unfettered electoral competition. Paradoxically, legal restraints, such as laws that give rulers arbitrary powers to legalize new parties or that impose “emergency laws” restricting open competition, often redound to the benefit of Islamists. Their control of urban mosques and charitable institutions gives them a distinct advantage over non-Islamists. Genuine party and electoral reforms are thus bound to be risky, not because Islamists are a majority but because they constitute an *organized* plurality. Yet, without such reforms, the vast majority of political parties and parliaments in the Arab world will continue to be arenas for elite bargaining and debate rather than for limiting executive power or for the free representation of an engaged and voting public.

The weakness of political society in the Arab world cannot be offset by promoting civil society. Over the past decade, the American-led effort to vest in nongovernmental organizations some of the functions and responsibilities of political society has not fared well. When civic organizations with specialized missions take on the particular burdens of political representation that only political parties can assume, the result is not democracy but rather the excessive politicization and ideological fragmentation of the groups themselves. Thus, to take just one example, in Egypt the quest to defend human rights has been hampered by sharp ideological splits within the community of nongovernmental organizations, especially between Islamists and secularists. This dysfunctional dynamic has often abetted the divide-and-rule strategies that Arab autocrats depend on for their survival.

WHERE THEY EXIST IN THE ARAB WORLD, LEGISLATURES ARE OFTEN CONTROLLED BY THE PRESIDENT'S PARTY OR BY MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY.

The dysfunctional burdening of civil society organizations could be considerably reduced if we redirect our energies toward supply-side, state-focused reforms, such as the promotion of effective political party systems. This does not mean the United States should simply drop all civil society reform initiatives. Quite the reverse. Their value will *increase* in concert with a greater focus on state-based reforms. But we must place a much greater emphasis on promoting those organizations whose specific task it is to buttress the authority and effectiveness of political society. Here I have in mind, for example, the creation of independent domestic electoral commissions, along the lines of the one formed in Mexico during the early 1990s. That commission gave Mexico's opposition parties an effective means to deter fraud at the polls, thus setting the stage for parliamentary and presidential elections that ousted the long-ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) from power. Given the widespread cynicism in the Arab world about the very process of elections, independent electoral commissions offer the only real hope for inspiring people to take the act of voting seriously.

To identify the key elements of any genuine democratization strategy is also to recognize the revolutionary nature of such a project. Democratization will require undermining the very foundations of autocracy and tackling, in short order, a number of other linked political practices. After all, democracy, no less than autocracy, rests on an interdependent ecology of rights, powers, and institutions. So gradualism, as Thomas Carothers, of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, has observed, may not be a realistic reform option if we are serious about promoting democracy. But gradualism may be the most reasonable and least costly *political* option, given that the ruling elites of the Arab world believe that the alternative is much too risky. The dilemma over whether to proceed gradually or rapidly is compounded many times over by the fact

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that the United States counts on these very elites to defend its geostrategic interests in general—and to aid in the war on terrorism in particular.

Rather than address the dilemma, the United States has long preferred to back, or at least not undermine, the Arab world's "liberalized autocracies"—states that tolerate and even promote a measure

of political openness and reform sufficient to meet the minimal demands for change of mainstream domestic political groups but insufficient to give such groups the means to pose a mortal danger to the rulers' political survival. Through state-controlled elections, "managed" party competition that favors the state's clients and allies, "opposition presses" that are constrained by official and self-imposed censorship, and the pro-



*A storied institution in the Arab world, the coffee shop remains, in the absence of a vigorous civil society, an essential outlet for informal political debate and the exchange of news and gossip.*

liferation of hundreds of small civil society organizations that have little capacity for cooperation, liberalized autocracies expand their room for maneuver above a divided field of manipulated political competitors.

Still, many Arab opposition activists and parties have concluded that state-managed political liberalization offers them a means of both negotiating with ruling elites and expanding the opposition's grassroots support. And given the still-yawning ideological gap between Islamists and more secular-minded Arab political activists, liberalized autocracies allow for experiments in state-managed power sharing. To varying degrees, those experiments succeed precisely because Arab parliaments do not provide the opposition a substantial means to exercise legitimate authority on behalf of the electorate. Since no one group has the capacity to impose its agenda democratically, a measure of peaceful coexistence can obtain among Islamists, secularists, and ethnic groups (such as Kurds or Berbers)—so long as no one questions or undermines the basic rules and institutions that are at the core of liberalized autocracy. This is the sort of coexistence that has characterized Kuwait, Jordan, Algeria, Morocco, and, more recently, Bahrain.

The downside of the arrangement is that autocrats retain ultimate political power, while legislatures and legislators rarely get the experience or develop the ethos that's vital to building democracies. And because Islamists can use mosques and charitable institutions to organize, their political parties usually benefit most from liberalized autocracy.

The dilemma facing the United States and its democratic allies is that the very attempt to exit the trap of liberalized autocracy in the Middle East might open the door to Islamist electoral victories. If that were to happen, democratization could not only invite a return of the military but dishearten would-be democrats in the secular or ethnic camps. Following the example of like-minded Algerians in 1992, who recoiled when Islamists triumphed at the polls in the nation's first competitive parliamentary elections, they might decide that they prefer a coup or a return to autocracy over the black hole of full democratization. It's precisely this hellish outcome that the political purgatory of liberalized autocracy is meant to avoid.

**I**n view of all these constraints, the United States cannot direct a democratization strategy at the entire Arab world. Rather, its strategy must be aimed much more narrowly, at an Arab state whose political institutions are already sufficiently independent and competitive that, if Islamists do enter a genuinely open election, they must be prepared to negotiate and ultimately share power with non-Islamist parties. Morocco is the most likely candidate for such an experiment. Although the credibility and legitimacy of Morocco's non-Islamist political parties have diminished over the past decade, the two largest secular parties, as well as several smaller parties, enjoy enough public support that, together, they can probably contain the challenge of mainstream Islamist parties. This point was demonstrated in Morocco's 2002 parliamentary elections, in which the Islamist Justice and Development Party finished a close third behind the Socialist Union of Popular Force and the Independence Party.

As a monarchy, Morocco enjoys a structural advantage that the Arab world's presidential systems lack: a leader who is not tied down by a hege-

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monic ruling party, and who can therefore serve as an arbiter brokering compromises over social, cultural, legal, and economic policy. This brokering function is formalized in a constitution that, despite its democratic provisions, gives the king ultimate and supreme power over the legislature and the cabinet

should he choose to use it. The constitution's eclecticism is both an advantage and a liability. For some six years now it has allowed for the creation of governments that have included ministers from different opposition parties. At the same time, it has given the king the authority to appoint ministers of his liking (technocrats with few party affiliations), thereby undercutting the legitimacy of his governments. Nevertheless, with bold leadership from its young king, Mohammad VI, and the readiness of all parties to negotiate the terms of a new democratic pact, Morocco just might



move beyond the confines of such eclectic experiments in state-managed liberalization. That said given the high level of poverty, and the capacity of Morocco's urban poor to mobilize, a democratization strategy would still carry considerable risks. King Mohammad alluded to that very point when he said, more than a little defensively, that "each country has to have its own specific features of democracy"—an implicit if obvious rationale for maintaining Morocco's particular brand of liberalized autocracy.

A common American-European policy on promoting political reform could certainly help Arab leaders imagine alternatives to such thinking.

This is perhaps why, in the run-up to the Group of Eight meeting in Istanbul this June, Arab leaders have warned against any effort to "impose" an American-European agenda on the region. The irony is that there's little desire among leaders on both sides of the Atlantic to promote full-throttled democratization. The president's advisers surely know how difficult a supply-side, state-focused approach will be, not only because it could unleash radical forces, but also because it could threaten the stability of regimes whose cooperation in the war on terrorism the United States needs. Thus, Bush administration officials have repeatedly reassured Arab leaders that political reform is a protracted process that must remain in tune with the region's political, social, and cultural realities. Bush himself made this point in his November 6 speech heralding the administration's democracy policy. Since then, he has reiterated his desire to see *freedom* and *liberty* prevail in the Middle East. By design or default, this position echoes the administration's preference for a gradualist, political liberalization strategy.

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There is, of course, one Arab country where the United States is advancing a very different strategy, and that is Iraq. By taking the right steps from the start—such as adopting an interim constitution that provides for the kinds of political and civil rights absent in Arab constitutions—the administration hopes that the foundation for a pluralist democracy can be laid. Success in this fractious and ravaged land would, it hopes, eventually inspire rulers and oppositions elsewhere to get off the circular track of liberalized autocracy. Yet such a strategy represents a huge gamble. What if Iraq doesn't work out? What if the ethnic, religious, and ideological tensions generated by the very push for democracy produce civil conflict or, worse, civil war? By investing all its hopes in Iraq, the administration is skirting the challenge of promoting genuine democratization in the Arab world. This is why Washington would be far better off hedging its bets through a strategy that makes at least one Arab country a candidate for something more than the old liberalization game. Morocco might be a good place to start. □

# The Woman Question

*by Haleh Esfandiari*

October 10, 2003, was a significant day for women throughout the Middle East. Shirin Ebadi, an Iranian activist, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of her work in Iran for human rights, women's rights, and children's rights. Through her, the prize acknowledged the wider struggle Iranian women in particular, and Middle Eastern women generally, have waged to gain their rightful place in their not-so-hospitable societies. The Nobel committee put Middle Eastern governments on notice that the international community is following with keen interest the efforts of women in the region to achieve equality under the law.

For Iranian women, Ebadi's Nobel Prize had a special poignancy. It rewarded their quarter-century fight against a political regime determined to turn back the clock on women's rights. Ebadi, a practicing lawyer who was born (in 1947) and educated in Iran, was among the first female judges to be appointed to the bench under the shah's regime, in 1975. Although she was an activist in the revolution against that regime, Ebadi was purged by the Islamists after they came to power in 1979, when women were barred from all judgeships. Following her dismissal, Ebadi established a private legal practice, taught law at Tehran University, wrote on legal matters, and worked passionately for women's and children's rights. Like other activists in the Islamic Republic, she was thrown in jail for specious reasons, and she was barred from practicing law for five years. But she was not deterred.

Ebadi's prize created great excitement in Tehran, and great consternation in the Iranian government. President Mohammad Khatami, who owed his presidency in large part to the votes of women and the young, shocked those who regarded him as an enlightened cleric by remarking that the important Nobel Prizes were awarded in the sciences. In a mass rebuke to the government, tens of thousands of Iranians—men and women alike—turned out at the Tehran airport to greet Ebadi on her return from Paris, where she had been when the call came from the Nobel committee.

In fighting for their own rights, women in the Middle East are broadening the democratic space in society as a whole. Ebadi herself dramatically emphasized this point simply by appearing without a scarf at a Paris



*Homeward-bound after receiving news of her Nobel Peace Prize in Paris, Iranian activist Shirin Ebadi, shown with her daughter, dramatized a key practical and symbolic issue by refusing to wear a head covering.*

press conference. By defying a sacred rule of the Islamic Republic, she drew attention to an issue that is of great concern to women throughout the Middle East and is also a key symbol in the larger struggle for democratic rights. What could be a simpler and more fundamental individual right than to dress as one pleases?

**C**ourageous women such as Shirin Ebadi have made women prime movers in the struggle for a more liberal democratic order, and the status of women is now a key barometer of progress. In Jordan, women launched a campaign against so-called “honor killings,” in which men kill female relatives who bring “dishonor” on the family. In Kuwait, women who participated in the resistance to the Iraqi occupation of 1990–91 started a campaign for women’s suffrage after the Iraqis were driven out. In Iran, women successfully campaigned against the stoning and flogging of their sisters. In Saudi Arabia, a brave group publicly challenged the authorities in 1990 by the simple but bold step of driving their own cars. And Iraqi women have successfully pressured the Governing Council to rescind regulations that required family law to be based on religious law. In each of these instances, women have helped expand political space and the concept of democratic rights by example and, often, achievement.

All of these conflicts concern at a fundamental level the role and interpretation of Islam. The Middle East's national constitutions are based on Islamic law and recognize Islam as the official religion, and Islam, through the Koran and the traditions of the Prophet, also sets down rules for everyday human behavior. Yet there's considerable diversity in the Islamic world. The Islam practiced in Indonesia is not the Islam practiced in Saudi Arabia or Bosnia or Nigeria. Women's roles and rights in each country are the product of its particular history, culture, and political character. Growing up in the tolerant environment of pre-revolutionary Iran, for example, I always found the highly conservative, orthodox form of Islam practiced in some Arab countries puzzling. But after the Islamists came to power in Iran in 1979 and began to regulate women's lives—public and private—I learned to understand the difficulties women in those countries face.

**T**oday, in some less conservative states, such as Jordan, Syria, and Egypt, women's rights are open to liberal interpretation. But in Saudi Arabia, where a fundamentalist form of Islam reigns, the status of women is based on a strict interpretation of the Koran and the

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sharia (Islamic law), and is not negotiable. Women are required to wear an abaya, which covers them from head to toe. Wearing the abaya is also expected, though not mandatory, in the Persian Gulf States. (Saudi women are free to set the abaya aside when they are outside the country.) But in Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Tunisia, and a few other countries, the state no longer

regulates what women may wear. In Iran, until recently women were flogged for not observing the Islamic dress code, which requires either a black veil covering the whole body and leaving only the face and the hands (but not the wrists) exposed, or a long, loose robe, also in black, with a hood-style head cover. Yet on the streets of Tehran and other cities over the years, the length of the robe has grown shorter, the hood has been replaced by a scarf, and pastel colors have supplanted black. Increasingly, Iranian women now dare to sport short, tight-fitting robes and skimpy head covers.

Even as a degree of liberalization has occurred in some countries, there's been movement in the opposite direction in others. A recent trend in Egypt, Iraq, and even relatively cosmopolitan Lebanon, especially among Shiites, is for women to cover their hair, even when not required. It's

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unclear what's behind this change. Some observers see the trend as a political statement against the regime in power; others say it reflects a revival of religious feeling; still others believe women wear the scarf as protection from harassment by fundamentalists. It's not uncommon for many women to cover their hair on their way to work but remove their head cover once inside their office.

The key differences in the status of women in the region's countries can't be traced to differences between the Sunni and Shiite forms of Islam. Societal conditions—level of education, size of the middle class, degree of urbanization, national history—seem to matter more. Women are enfranchised in Sunni-dominated countries such as Egypt and Jordan and in Shiite Iran (one of two Shiite-majority countries, along with Iraq), but not in other Arab countries. Women may drive cars in Iran and Egypt, among other places, but not in Saudi Arabia.

THE MIDDLE EAST'S RULERS  
HAVE RARELY TAKEN THE  
INITIATIVE IN ADVANCING  
WOMEN'S RIGHTS.

**T**he main obstacle to the emancipation of women is family law, which is based on the Islamic sharia and regulates marriage, divorce, child custody, and a woman's right to work, to choose her place of domicile, and to leave her house, town, or country. In Saudi Arabia, a woman didn't even have the right to her own identity card until two years ago; she had to be registered on the card of her husband or father. In Iran, a married woman still needs notarized permission from her husband to travel. I know of women who were prevented from leaving the country even though they were members of government delegations going abroad on official business.

The Middle East's rulers have rarely taken the initiative in advancing women's rights. The shah of Iran enfranchised women in 1963 in the face of clerical opposition. Last year, King Mohammad VI of Morocco persuaded parliament to make major changes in Morocco's family law. The new law restricts a man's right to divorce on demand, and to more than one wife; it raises the legal age of marriage for girls to 18 and recognizes the equality of the spouses in a family. The king also suggested a quota of seats for women in parliament and local councils. In Iraq, the Governing Council has partially yielded to women's demands by calling for electoral laws that will give women 25 percent of seats in a future parliament. But in 1999, the parliament of Kuwait rejected a proposal by the emir, Sheik Jaber Al-Ahmed Al-Sabah, to grant women the right to vote and to sit as members of that legislative body.

Women themselves have been the main force for change, and the change they seek is fundamental, not merely incremental. The number of educated women is growing with extraordinary speed, and so is the demand for fuller participation in government and public affairs. When

no women were included in the committee responsible for drafting the interim laws that will serve as a basis for the new Iraqi constitution, Iraqi women publicly protested. And Afghan women presented President Hamid Karzai with a women's bill of rights for inclusion in the constitution. In Iran, protests against overt discrimination in the workplace and in universities have forced the government to alter its policies.

**T**he spread of the Internet and satellite dishes will promote further change, though not with lightning speed. Globalization undermines isolation, giving women an awareness of the progress their counterparts are making elsewhere in the world and linking them in a common effort. In most Middle Eastern countries, women's organizations that have links to the Internet have established their own websites. While the percentage of Arab women with access to the Internet is in the low single digits, female-led nongovernmental organizations are working to change that. A worldwide network of supporters

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awaits women when they do get access. Today, when a woman is sentenced to death by stoning for adultery, whether in Iran or northern Nigeria, groups around the world mobilize to alert international and local organizations and to protest to heads of state. On a number of occasions, national governments

have been forced to overturn the sentences.

The wider world has provided another important goad to action, in the unexpected form of two sobering reports sponsored by respected international organizations. The United Nations–funded *Arab Human Development Report*, written mostly by Arab experts and thinkers and published in July 2002, came as a rude surprise to the people of the Middle East. It exposed the degree to which the region trails the rest of the world, even in comparison with other developing countries, when judged by basic economic, social, and political indicators. Despite its substantial oil revenues and other natural resources, the Middle East lags far behind in making progress on gender issues, human rights, and good governance. And for the first time a group of prominent Arab intellectuals and experts blamed the Arabs themselves, rather than colonialism and other external factors, for the failures of the Arab world.

The report examines the state of economic, social, civil, cultural, and political development in 22 countries with a combined population of some 300 million. (Nearly 40 percent of that population is under the age of 14, creating a demographic time bomb.) The authors identify three major areas of deficit in the Arab world: freedom, women's empowerment, and knowledge. The section on women begins with this sentence: "Arab



*In a Riyadh supermarket, a Saudi woman peers from her abaya, required dress in the kingdom.*

women have made considerable progress over the decades.” But the authors go on to say: “Sadly, the Arab World is largely depriving itself of the creativity and productivity of half its citizens.” On paper, boys and girls in all countries of the region have equal access to education, but the percentage of girls in school varies from country to country. In most countries, primary and secondary education is segregated, while classes in colleges and universities are mixed (except in Saudi Arabia). In Iran, Lebanon, Oman, and Qatar, the number of women entering the universities is actually greater than the number of men. In some countries, the number of women’s universities, with their more comfortable all-female surroundings, has been on the rise.

The second report, *Gender and Development in the Middle East and North Africa: Women in the Public Sphere*, was released last fall by the World

Bank. While noting progress, the report points out many shortcomings. Thus, “women’s average literacy rate rose from 16.6 percent in 1970 to 52.5 percent in 2000,” but that still leaves nearly half of all Arab women without the ability to read and write. Despite a 50 percent increase in women’s

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employment in the region since 1960, the report notes, the rate of female integration into the labor market “remains among the lowest in the world,” in part because of restrictive family law and a culture that sees men as families’ sole breadwinner.

The two reports show that the number of educated women is growing but that women do not play a commensurately greater role in society. Governments have been relatively bold in expanding educational opportunities for women but timid in addressing obstacles embedded in family law.

In the political sphere, women have made significant progress in the last two decades but still remain at a great disadvantage. The national constitutions of the Middle East generally guarantee equality under the law for both men and women, but rarely is this promise realized. Turkey granted women the right to vote in 1934; Iran, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, and a few other countries did so gradually over the ensuing decades, including Bahrain in 2001. Women still do not have the right to vote in four countries: Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (where neither sex is enfranchised), Qatar, and Kuwait.

**T**he right to vote is no guarantee of representation—or of anything else, since elections in most countries can hardly be described as free and fair and many legislative bodies have little power. According to the *Arab Human Development Report*, women claim only 3.5 percent of the seats in Arab parliaments. Lebanese women, for example, were enfranchised in 1952, but the first woman was elected to parliament only in 1992. In Iran, just before the 1979 revolution, 20 women sat in parliament; in the first round of elections this past February, only eight women won seats. Jordanian women were enfranchised in 1974, but no parliamentary elections were held until 1984, and it wasn’t until 1993 that a woman gained a seat. Six women sit in the new parliament elected last year.

More women are serving in cabinet positions, but the numbers remain so low that women in some countries are lobbying for a quota system that will give them a proportional share of parliamentary seats and cabinet positions. Women now hold cabinet positions in Syria, Egypt, Bahrain, Jordan, Oman, and Qatar. But a handful of token appointments will no longer suffice. And



women no longer think their cause is significantly advanced when they are appointed to cabinet posts that have acquired a gender-specific identity, such as health and education. Women leaders argue that cabinet positions, indeed, all leadership and managerial positions, must be filled on the basis of merit rather than gender. The region, they say, needs a large number of female ambassadors, undersecretaries, directors-general, governors, mayors, city and local councilors, judges, lawyers, and diplomats. But if it takes quotas to achieve this goal, activists increasingly argue, then let quotas be put in place. In Iraq, for example, women pressed for a constitutional guarantee reserving them 40 percent of all political appointments and seats in parliament. They had to settle for a *goal* of 25 percent of parliamentary seats.

**N**o matter what is accomplished at the level of higher politics, equal legal status for women is virtually unachievable so long as family law remains based on the sharia, and rules derived from a particular interpretation of Islam prevail in the social sphere. Under this system, women need the permission of a male member of the family to seek education and employment. They have no right to a divorce, and they lose custody of their children when their husbands divorce them. Girls as young as nine can be married at the whim of their fathers and divorced at the whim of their husbands. In many places, women can still be killed for bringing “shame” on the family, stoned for adultery, and flogged for showing a bit of hair. If women are to be empowered, family law must be modified. Yet only a few women sit on high courts in the Middle East—though in some countries, such as Syria, their numbers are increasing in lower courts—and few countries have family courts to adjudicate family disputes.

The specious guarantees of equality before the law for all citizens that mark so many constitutions can no longer be accepted as polite fictions. Middle Eastern governments must be persuaded to adhere to the letter of their constitutions. The full integration of women into society will be impossible so long as women are seen as second-class citizens, under the tutelage of the male members of the family. A growing community of educated women will demand access to employment; and economic independence, be it in cities, towns, or villages, will inevitably create demands for a voice in writing the laws that influence women’s lives. To change the laws women must be present in political offices and law-making bodies, and this must be achieved through wider political participation and, if necessary, quota systems.

In a number of countries, men are learning to respect and work with women. Only through such partnership will women’s empowerment be accelerated. Female Middle Easterners are increasingly active, and increasingly supported by an international network of members of their own sex that can monitor the progress women are making and the stumbling blocks governments place in their path. It’s frustrating for many women that their cause may take one or two steps forward only to take one step back. But the struggle for women’s rights can no longer be stopped. Women in the region know this—and so do their governments. □

# The Other Sixties

The 1960s in America didn't begin as "The Sixties." Before the years of upheaval and angry division, the decade brought Americans an interlude of civility and earnest aspiration. Anything was possible. The youth of the president gave the nation back its youth; its best days were ahead. Those few brief years were the high-water mark of classical liberalism in American life and seem all the more attractive today for being irretrievable.

*by Bruce Bawer*

**T**wo decades, the 1950s (1950–59) and "The Sixties" (ca. 1965–74), continue to be the touchstones by which American liberals and conservatives define themselves. To those on the right, the 1950s were the last good time, an era of sanity and maturity, order and discipline, of adults behaving like adults and children knowing their place. To those on the left, the 1950s were a time of fatuous complacency, mindless materialism, and stultifying conformism — not to mention racism, sexism, and other ugly prejudices. By contrast, "The Sixties," for conservatives, were an explosion of puerile irresponsibility and fashionable rebellion, the wellspring of today's ubiquitous identity politics, debased high culture, sexual permissiveness, and censorious political correctness. For liberals, the period was a desperately needed corrective that drew attention to America's injustices and started us down the road toward greater fairness and equality for all.

Of course, we know all this. But what do we know about the early 1960s, the years between those touchstone decades? Well, we know that they saw perhaps the most dangerous incident in the history of American foreign policy, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and perhaps the most stirring moment in the nation's long domestic racial conflict, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. These events, recounted in numerous books and movies, have become the stuff of American legend, though their social and cultural contexts have too often been given short shrift. Indeed, the period itself has too often been lost in the shuffle, viewed as merely transitional (the lingering twilight of the Eisenhower era, the predawn of the Age of Aquarius), and largely overshadowed by the legend of the man who presided over it, John F. Kennedy. So enthralled, or benumbed, have later generations been by the endlessly repeated anecdotes about Kennedy, his family, his women, and his administration's crises that they have failed to look closely at the era itself.



*The evening of the inaugural balls welcoming President and Mrs. Kennedy in January 1961 seemed the overture to a new era of elegance and aspiration in America.*

Which is not to deny that Kennedy gave the period a focus and a tone. “Let the word go forth from this time and place,” he said in his inaugural address, “that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans, born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage.” Those few words, as it happens, did a good job of reflecting not only the thinking of the president and his men, but also the temper of the time that had just begun, a period at once aware of its newness, restless for change, and respectful of its past, its roots, its traditions. In this sense, it differed markedly from

the periods that bookended it. Preceded by an era that was to a large extent passively conservative, and followed by a divisive epoch in which a radical-left groundswell provoked a strong conservative reaction, the early 1960s were something else entirely—a time dominated, to an extent almost unimaginable today, by reform-minded, bipartisan, consensus liberalism. The years were classical liberalism’s last hurrah.



To read through the bound volumes of the newsmagazines *Time* and *Newsweek*, issue by issue, from the late '50s onward, is to be struck, sometime around the beginning of the 1960s, by the sudden proliferation of the word *new*. Society was newly open, popular culture newly experimental, religious institutions (in the words of one contemporary observer) “newly irenic.” There was even talk among Vatican II-influenced, reform-minded Catholics of a “New Church.” A new national order was under construction: After three centuries, it appeared that America was at last beginning to confront its racial divisions and inequities and move toward greater unity and fairness. And there was a new world order, or at least a “New Europe,” as headlines of the day frequently put it. Where formerly there had been a continent made up of countries that had warred with one another for centuries, there was suddenly a Common Market that seemed headed toward that miracle of miracles, unified sovereignty.

There was a New English Bible, its language condemned as barbarous by none other than T. S. Eliot (who would die in 1965). And there was a new, disorienting way of mapping out the country: In August 1963, an unbylined writer in *The New*

*Yorker's* “Talk of the Town” column confessed that “for the past several weeks, we have been trying to come to terms with the Post Office’s new address-by-number system, called, with somewhat unnerving cajolery, the Zip Code.” (Alas, that

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“unnerving cajolery” was the language of the future.) There was even something called the “new math,” one of many educational innovations rooted largely in a fixation on besting the Russians.

*Newsweek* carried a regular full-page feature called “New Products and Processes,” which heralded a Brave New World of, among much else, small record players (from Toshiba, one of several Japanese companies that were beginning to reverse the 1950s equation of “Made in Japan” with cheapness and shoddiness), removable car seats for children, aluminum (not tin) cans, overhead projectors, a \$12,000 videotape recorder “primarily for use in offices, factories, and

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hospitals,” and the IBM 1440 “Flexible Finder,” a marvelous small-business computer that

stores information in interchangeable plastic packs. Each pack weighs about 10 pounds and holds six magnetic memory disks containing a total of 3 billion characters of information. In a matter of seconds, the disk pack is placed on a drive spindle and the computer unit is ready to operate, speedily searching the memory disk for the data needed to perform its assigned chore. . . . The 1440 will rent at \$1,500 to \$6,000 a month . . . [and] sell for \$90,000 to \$315,000.

*Time*'s Man of the Year for 1960 was, for the first time, not one individual but a group of individuals—“15 brilliant Americans, exemplars of the scientists who are remaking man's world.” A new heaven and a new earth seemed within reach.



On the gender front, things were changing fast, and increasing numbers of women were working in traditionally male jobs. (“Today's career woman,” noted one disapproving commentator, “is becoming the equal of men.”) In 1962, the closest thing America had to a popular feminist tract was Helen Gurley Brown's *Sex and the Single Girl*, which took for granted that every young woman's dearest wish was “a rich, full life of dating.” In 1963, a very different book about sex and single girls was published. “One gets the impression that this is how Ernest Hemingway would have written had he gone to Vassar,” quipped television talk show host Jack Paar about Mary McCarthy's novel *The Group*, which was viewed at the time as a daringly frank depiction of women's intimate lives. Many considered McCarthy's book a harbinger of new ways of thinking and writing about the lives of women. A few months later, Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* appeared, to be followed by other manifestoes from more radical feminists.

A spirit of synthesis and unity reigned on many fronts. If the Common Market promised to erase ancient national divisions in Europe, the leaders of the mainstream Protestant denominations of America spoke ambitiously of uniting their churches within the next few years—a movement heralded in a *Time* cover story, “The Ecumenical Century.” (The movement, like many other hopeful developments, would peter out and die ignominiously amid the divisions of “The Sixties.”) Meanwhile, Catholic Americans, whose church, as reported in an *Atlantic Monthly* supplement, was coming “out of the catacombs,” were heeding the urgings of their pope, John XXIII, to embrace Jews and Protestants as their brothers and sisters. One of the first signs of this new thinking came in December 1960, when the pope and the archbishop of Canterbury met at the Vatican—the first such meeting in the history of their two churches. “With increasing frequency,” noted *Time* in 1962, “Catholic theologians are being asked to speak to Protestant groups, and Protestants to Catholics.” When the Second Vatican Council was convened in 1962, non-Catholic religious leaders were stunned to find themselves not just invited as observers but given access to sensitive documents of the sort the Curia would once have classified top secret.

To many Americans, the country—indeed, the world—seemed, in an astonishing number of respects, on the verge of becoming One. In 1961, James McCord, president of Princeton Theological Seminary, hailed a new “Age of Syncretism” and “the dawn of universal history,” and he wasn’t talking only about religion. Nor was America’s leading Catholic theologian, John Courtney Murray, speaking just of his own church when, on the eve of the Kennedy presidency, he hailed the beginning of a “new era in the United States.” Upon the death of John XXIII, in June 1963, a *New Yorker* eulogist commented that “few successors of St. Peter have labored as hard as he to achieve the injunction of Christ, ‘May they be one.’”

Such was the spirit of the times, which would not long survive Pope John. It was, in fact, a spirit with which most Americans did not actually concur, though

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this fact was, at the time, easy to ignore, at least if you were a member of the Northeastern establishment. The decisive defeat of Barry Goldwater in the 1964 presidential election certainly suggested to many observers that conservatism as a force in Amer-

ican politics was dead. Even liberals who realized how conservative the country actually was tended to take for granted that persuasion and education would change that state of affairs over time. Or else they simply assumed that conservatives would continue to keep their mouths shut.



**I**n the 1940s, America won a colossal war against fascism; in the 1950s, it achieved a colossal prosperity. In terms of material wealth, postwar American life was like nothing else on earth—a thing of wonder, the realization of millennia of human hopes and dreams. As America entered the 1960s, there was a widespread sense that the nation had an opportunity, at last, to do something with that prosperity.

In part, this simply meant that Americans had the freedom to relax and enjoy, to loosen up a bit and ease certain restraints and disciplines. (Young Americans of the 1960s, who had known only security and prosperity, tended to have a view of life and the world very different from that of their parents, who had grown up during the Depression and World War II.) But it also meant that Americans at last had the luxury to do some hard thinking, to face up to social wrongs, and to be a bit more generous, perhaps, with the less fortunate among them. After a decade of fixation on their economic success, Americans began to pay serious attention to the indigence in the world’s richest land. “For a long time now,” wrote Dwight Macdonald in 1963, in a *New Yorker* review of Michael Harrington’s *The Other America* that was itself almost as long as a book, “almost everybody has assumed that . . . mass poverty no longer exists in this country.” Using statistics drawn largely from Harrington’s book, Macdonald demonstrated that “everybody” was wrong.

Facing up to the reality of poverty was one thing; knowing what to do about it was another. “The problem,” wrote Macdonald in his review, “is obvious: the persistence of mass poverty in a prosperous country. The solution is also obvious: to provide, out of taxes, the kind of subsidies . . . that would raise incomes above the poverty level, so that every citizen could feel he is indeed such.” In the Lyndon Johnson years and afterward, of course, it would become increasingly clear that the solution was not at all obvious. If many Americans were essentially in agreement on what their country’s major social challenges were, they were hard-

ly in agreement on what to do about them. And it was disagreement over the best way to address the challenges that would give rise to the ideological rifts of “The Sixties.” In the early 1960s, however, these divisions lay in the future, and the solutions to many of American society’s most formidable problems did indeed seem obvious.



*John Glenn had the right stuff to be the first American to orbit the Earth in February 1962. But not till the moon landing of 1969 could America declare victory in the “space race” with the Soviet Union.*

It was in the early 1960s that many Americans first heard about air and water pollution, about urban blight and suburban sprawl. In the course of a couple of weeks in 1962, *Newsweek* told its readers about the “population explosion” and its dire consequences (“Too Many Babies?” was the question on the cover), and about the grim message of Rachel Carson’s new book, *Silent Spring*: “DDT, parathion, and malathion spray have a somber lining.” Moreover, after a long silence, young Americans were beginning to speak up. “Last year they went boom,” wrote *Time* in 1961 about college students. Teenagers and twentysomethings were at last openly political, picketing Woolworth’s lunch counters to protest segregation, rallying against the House Un-American Activities Committee and ROTC. There was an unusual degree of high school and undergraduate participation even in the fledgling right-wing movement of Barry Goldwater. The memory of the era’s earnest, low-key student politics would fade fast amid the campus riots and sit-ins of “The Sixties.”



**T**oday, the early 1960s seem remote: men wearing ties and neatly pressed suits on all occasions, working women of every age identifying themselves as “career girls,” black people still largely “in their place,” gay people firmly closeted. Yet in these times of ours—when both hard-hitting social and political satire and genuine flag-waving patriotism are simultaneously in style, when Robbie Williams is turning the Frank Sinatra



*The Rat Pack's officer corps unwind backstage in a nicotine haze after entertaining at a Carnegie Hall benefit performance for Martin Luther King, Jr. in January 1961.*

and Sammy Davis, Jr. tunes of the early 1960s into hits all over again, when Hollywood remakes the Rat Pack's *Ocean's Eleven*, when Richard Rodgers' 1962 musical *No Strings* has returned to the New York stage, and when more and more Americans appear worn out by the ideological wars of recent decades and newly eager for a sensible centrist consensus—the early 1960s appear far more accessible and attractive than either the gray decade that Robert Lowell called “the tranquilized Fifties” or “The Sixties” of LSD, hardhats, Janis Joplin, and Archie Bunker.

To be sure, the attractiveness of the early 1960s is bound up to a considerable extent with the period's naiveté, its innocence as to the moral and strategic complexities of the projects it was undertaking so eagerly. In the end, the apparent liberal consensus would prove largely illusory, and therefore temporary. What united America during those years, to the extent that it *was* united, was not an elaborately articulated ideology but a broadly shared set of good intentions. Only later would these intentions be overwhelmed and undermined, as multitudinous prejudices, resentments, and differences in values, beliefs, and priorities came to the fore; only later would the more fractious and extreme elements of society, at both ends of the political spectrum, find their voices and gain a semblance of legitimacy.

Though the naiveté of the early 1960s is not something to which we should wish to return, much about the times remains highly appealing. The period seems



in many ways to represent a congenial balance between highbrow and middlebrow, between seriousness and frivolity, and between ideas and values that we now associate with the political Left and Right. Those years were America's liberal moment, and a pivotal point in American history. They were the gestation period of the postmodern era in which we now live.



One way to get a handle on the period is to look at some of its more representative cultural figures—the men and women who reflected its style, tone, and preoccupations. Among those figures were two talk-show hosts, David Susskind and Jack Paar. American TV in the 1950s had combined vaudeville-style variety (*Texaco Star Theater*), comfortable sitcoms (*Father Knows Best*, *The Donna Reed Show*), and solemn middlebrow drama (*Playhouse 90*). In “The Sixties,” TV would offer a mishmash of retrograde fare that sought to ignore entirely the new currents in American society (*Here's Lucy*) and shows that strove—some more successfully than others—to be “with it” (*Laugh-In*, *All in the Family*). Between came an era in which TV, with surprising frequency, reached impressive levels of sophistication. What distinguished this period was the quality of the talk. The twin peaks were Susskind's *Open End* and Paar's *Tonight Show*. Both struck a knowing balance between seriousness and irreverence that was at once characteristic of the period and unlike anything Americans had seen before.

*Open End*, which first aired in 1958, would last a long time; under the title *The David Susskind Show*, it ran until 1987. But it was as *Open End*, during the early 1960s, that the show had by far its greatest impact. The title referred to the program's indeterminate running time: Susskind and his guests kept on talking, sometimes for hours, until it was felt that what needed to be said had been said.

*Open End* was not about wall-to-wall irony, as David Letterman is today, or about Oprah-style self-realization. It was about ideas and about the art of conversation itself. The guests, unlike Oprah's and Letterman's, weren't there because they had something to promote; they were there because they had something to say. Admittedly, the guest lists included the usual high-profile entertainers, but what *Open End* became known for was substance. Susskind's interlocutors included authors, artists, scientists, and political leaders; he went one-on-one with Harry S. Truman and Nikita Khrushchev. Susskind was not, by nature, a celebrity-ego massager but a restless intellect, probing, challenging, often obnoxious. His show's popularity is testimony to the high level of seriousness that a great deal of the viewing public was willing to tolerate, and even embrace, during the early 1960s. It was a time when American mass taste may well have been more sophisticated than it has ever been.

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Then there was Jack Paar, the closest thing Susskind had to a late-night equivalent. Paar took over the *Tonight Show* in 1957 from one funnyman (Steve Allen) and passed it on in 1962 to another (Johnny Carson). But though Paar, too, was amusing, he was an altogether different sort of host—and humorist—from Allen or Carson. Engaged, passionate, unabashedly neurotic and oversensitive, Paar had a wonderful sense of humor and brilliant comic timing. He did his share of skits and jokes, but he was far better known for his epigrammatic quips about political figures and events. Like Susskind, Paar interviewed politicians and made little secret of his own leanings. He broadcast from the Berlin Wall as it was being constructed; he interviewed John Kennedy and Richard Nixon when they were presidential candidates; he did not hide his disdain for the Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista or his support for Fidel Castro, who was also one of his interview subjects (and who had not yet identified himself as a communist).

Paar represented a distinct, even radical departure from mainstream 1950s entertainment, but he was not a man of “The Sixties.” It was on his

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show (not Ed Sullivan’s, as legend has it) that the Beatles made their American TV debut, on film, singing “She Loves You” in January 1964—though as Paar has always freely admitted, he showed them not because he liked their music

but because he thought they were “a joke,” a silly fad. What he was laughing at, of course, without realizing it, was the era to come, which the Beatles would personify, then and forever, and which would soon relegate the tastes and values of Paar’s heyday to the dustbin of history. It’s remarkable to realize how quickly Paar went from being a pivotal figure of the Zeitgeist to being a relic for whom the post-fame years would always seem somewhat out of joint. (Decades later, Paar described himself as offended and embarrassed by sexual situations on the relatively innocuous TV comedy *Mad about You*.)

Paar embodied a key aspect of American culture of the early 1960s: its awareness that one could be a thoroughly mature, successful, and socially responsible member of what later in the decade would be derided as “the Establishment” and still be irreverent, funny, and even silly. It was as if Americans shared, more than they ever had before (or have since), an unspoken understanding that thought, wit, and culture were not burdens but were, rather, among the pleasures and privileges afforded a free and affluent people.

Nor was the easy sophistication of early-1960s popular culture limited to talk shows. The 1950s had been a decade of sometimes mindless conformism; “The Sixties” would be an era of rebellion and reaction, much of it also mindless. The early 1960s, at their heart, were neither. They were a time of serious questioning, when political ideas, social conventions, and cultural values underwent vigorous, searching, and cogent examination. Suddenly, America was less afraid of dissent, and throughout mainstream culture, intelligent, respectful disagreement was coming to be seen as a good thing. Even the period’s lighter theatrical fare tended to challenge 1950s-style conformity, asserting the value of fun, frivolity, irrev-



*“We will bury you” was Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev’s promise to the West. But he appeared ready in 1960 to make an exception for TV interviewer David Susskind.*

erence. One thinks, for example, of such plays as Jean Kerr’s *Mary, Mary* (1961) (Kerr was *the* emblematic playwright of the era), a frothy comedy about divorce and taxes—and of such musicals as *Little Me* and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962). There was a similar spirit of irreverence in Herb Gardner’s *A Thousand Clowns* (1962), about a fellow who liberates himself from his stultifying career as a TV writer, and Neil Simon’s *Barefoot in the Park* (1963), about an adventuresome young bride who chafes at her husband’s sudden sobriety.

The dramatic situations these and other distinctive entertainments of the period presented, on both stage and screen, and the sexual humor they contained, were thought daring at the time; within a couple of years they would be considered embarrassingly passé. Take, for example, such Doris Day movies as *Lover Come Back* (1961), a sex farce with Rock Hudson, and *That Touch of Mink* (1962), in which Day keeps frustrating Cary Grant’s attempts to bed her. Or take, for that matter, Julie Andrews in *Mary Poppins* (1964), which contains a good deal of suggestive and genuinely funny humor that’s intended to go over the heads of small children. Day and Andrews, the two big female stars of the era, were savvy, sexy, sophisticated actresses who knew their way around a double entendre; yet both saw their stock plummet—and their images become twisted and ridiculed—as the early 1960s gave way to “The Sixties.” Andrews followed *The Sound of Music* (1965), the greatest

## The Other Sixties

box-office hit since *Gone with the Wind*, with more than a decade of flops.

One of the defining public figures of the early 1960s was a pretty young actress who was the ingenue of the age. Her movies included *The Chapman Report* (1962), inspired by the Kinsey report; the saucy western *Cat Ballou*, (1965); and a series of artsy, libidinous, and awful French movies, culminating in the ridiculous *Barbarella* (1968), directed by her then husband, Roger Vadim. But her predominant image in America at the time was that of the Doris Day-like “good girl” or pretty young housewife. To watch her now in such light romantic comedies as *Tall Story* (1960), *Barefoot in the Park* (1967), and, above all, *Sunday in New York* (1963), a defining movie of the period—a then chancy, now innocuous story about a 22-year-old woman tired of her virginity, with an oh-so-hip jazz score by Peter Nero (remember him?)—is to be astonished anew at the difference between the Jane Fonda of those days and the “Hanoi Jane” who climbed on a tank in North Vietnam and won an Oscar for playing a hooker in *Klute* (1971). (Perhaps the breathtaking change of image should come as no surprise when the woman who carried it off also managed subsequently to trade in her aging-radical husband Tom Hayden for plutocrat Ted Turner and transform herself from anticapitalist icon into queen of the workout-video industry.)

Or look at the early-1960s TV shows that were known to *Time* magazine writers as sitchcoms but that came to be called sitcoms. By comparison with the depiction of domesticity in such 1950s staples as *The Donna Reed Show* and *Ozzie and Harriet*, the portrait of family life on *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, the emblematic sitcom of the early 1960s, seemed staggering in its sheer smartness and casual elegance. Mary Tyler Moore, as Laura Petrie, revolutionized the pop-culture depiction of the American housewife simply by wearing capri pants and not spending all her time in the kitchen. (In a striking reversal of ironclad 1950s practice, Rob Petrie was occasionally shown preparing meals or mixing drinks.) The series at least touched glancingly on—though it did not quite topple—many of the social



Tom Wesselmann's *Still Life #25* (1963) made pop art of American abundance.

barriers that 1950s TV hadn't dared approach: Rob's colleague Sally Rogers was a single professional woman; his colleague Buddy Sorrell's bar mitzvah was the centerpiece of one episode, which showed Jewishness not as a phenomenon of the immigrant ghetto (as in the 1950s series *The Goldbergs*) but as a part of mainstream American culture. And the cast of yet another episode included, if only briefly, a middle-class black couple who embodied none of the inane stereotypes to which black people had been bound theretofore in TV and movies (up to and including Eddie "Rochester" Anderson's shuffling servant in the 1950s' *Jack Benny Show*).

Yet still the *show*, not the message, remained the thing. Early-1960s TV comedy never approached the explicitly political content of such standard "Sixties" programs (many of them actually of the early 1970s) as *All in the Family* and *Chico and the Man*. Which helps to explain why *The Dick Van Dyke Show* can seem less dated today than does, say, either *Ozzie and Harriet*, with its period-bound social conventions, or *All in the Family*, with its stream of up-to-the-minute political references.

And then there were the early-1960s comedians. The joke-telling style established during the vaudeville era had continued to define American standup comedy through the 1950s. In the early 1960s, that changed very quickly. Jack Paar, in a late-1990s interview, remembered the period as a lost "golden age" of "sophistication" and "wit," when "there were people like Bob Newhart, and Carol Burnett, and Mike and Elaine."

"Mike and Elaine" were Mike Nichols and Elaine May. As the PBS series *American Masters* later put it, together they "revolutionized the landscape of American comedy," changing "our expectations of comedy, and our sense of humor." They worked with tools that would be the staples of early-1960s comedy: improvisation, low-key wit, and a sharp satirical perspective on Establishment institutions. Their brief and very high-profile joint career peaked when *An Evening with Mike Nichols and Elaine May* opened on Broadway in 1960. Both would go on to film careers, Nichols mainly as a director, May chiefly as a screenwriter.

Nichols and May weren't alone in reshaping American comedy during these years. In addition to Bob Newhart, there were Mort Sahl, Shelley Berman, and Woody Allen. (Allen was described in an August 1962 issue of *Newsweek* as having "the nervous delivery of Mort Sahl and the puny physique of Wally Cox," but "material closer to that of essayists S. J. Perelman and Robert Benchley.") All these comedians, venturing far from the familiar territory of broad gags and pratfalls as practiced by Milton Berle, Lucille Ball, and other stars of the 1950s, served up low-key, sophisticated monologues (or, in the case of Nichols and May, improvisational dialogues) that functioned not only as entertainment but as social criticism, and that were funny in highly original ways.

If American pop culture in "The Sixties" would be shaped largely by the Beatles, American pop culture in the early 1960s owed some of its distinctive flavor to another British foursome: the comedy troupe Beyond the Fringe, who arrived on Broadway in 1962. *Newsweek* hailed Peter Cook, Jonathan Miller, Alan Bennett, and Dudley Moore for their "unrelentingly satirical attitude toward the sacred and the profane. . . . The four Fringemen are as . . . in tune with their times as Mike

Nichols and Elaine May.” In 1950s America, middle-class values often seemed to be sacrosanct, while in “The Sixties” they would be dismissed condescendingly by some Americans and defended fiercely by others. In the early 1960s, Americans still respected these values but responded open-mindedly, even enthusiastically, to irreverent humor at their own expense. That balance seems to me just about right. Admittedly, there was a broad insipid strain to the pop culture of the early 1960s. The highest-rated TV show of the period was, after all, *The Beverly Hillbillies*. There plainly existed (to borrow a term Richard Nixon would popularize a few years later) a “silent majority” with little regard for sophisticated humor. The *Hillbillies* notwithstanding, however, the early 1960s seemed a golden, or at least silver, era of high culture. “Young people,” reported *Time* in July 1960, “are reading more and better books than ever before.” Two months later, the magazine enthused: “The book business is booming, classical records are selling by the stack, and art galleries are thriving.”

More than anyone else, Leonard Bernstein personified this flourishing high culture. Though identified in the public mind largely with his stage hit *West Side*

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TRADED IN MEATLOAF  
FOR COQ AU VIN.

*Story* (1957), Bernstein, who had been appointed musical director of the New York Philharmonic in 1958, became a famous face to middle Americans in the early 1960s when he used his Broadway fame to help promote classical music. His target audi-

ence included not only middle-class adults but their children as well, and his “Young People’s Concerts,” broadcast on TV in the early 1960s to extraordinary acclaim, had an impact one could hardly imagine nowadays, let alone duplicate. Watching those programs today, one remains immensely impressed by Bernstein’s first-rate teaching skills, his refusal to talk down to children, and his obvious dedication to the cause of educating young people about music. (His prominence and his widely recognized busyness were reflected in a 1963 *New Yorker* cartoon in which a woman, watching TV with her husband, asks him: “Do you suppose Leonard Bernstein is trying to cover up some lack?”)

Inspired by an earnest optimism, Bernstein sought to transform the world both culturally and politically, to spread to the multitudes a love of high culture and, along with it, a more liberal sensibility. In this, he was a true man of the early 1960s. Yet as the times changed and the early 1960s shaded into “The Sixties,” Bernstein, like many other earnest liberals, would find himself dazed and confused in the strange new moral territory the country had entered. His reflexive empathy for the downtrodden served him well in the early 1960s, but when he applied it later in the decade to phenomena such as the Black Panthers, he came off as naive and injudicious. That, of course, would be the thrust of Tom Wolfe’s *Radical Chic* (1970), which described in painful detail Bernstein’s eager courting of the Panthers at a 1969 soirée in his Park Avenue penthouse.

Wolfe’s unforgettable portrait of that evening captures High Sixties limousine liberalism at its most absurd. But Wolfe does not stress sufficiently that Bernstein, by 1969, was simply a man out of his time. He had intelligently and honorably

negotiated early 1960s America, but he lost his way in the more complex political landscape of “The Sixties.” The man who in the early 1960s had embodied his nation’s highest cultural and social aspirations failed to respond sensibly to the era’s new challenges. In Wolfe’s book, he comes off as nothing less than a fool. In his eagerness to move with the times, Bernstein neglected to draw responsible distinctions and made himself irrelevant.



**E**ven food changed in the early 1960s. For the most part, the American diet through the 1950s was tame and bland, its most representative dish being meatloaf and mashed potatoes. Then along came Julia Child, who started a culinary revolution with her first book, *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* (1961), and who domesticated and demystified French cuisine with her easygoing, playful manner. Thanks to her, millions of Americans grew more adventurous in their eating habits. Those new habits were part of a broad pattern of changes in the American way of life, not just in diet but in clothing and décor. Prosperity allowed Americans to travel abroad, and Western Europe, which during the 1950s had still been living in the shadow of World War II, grew increasingly forward-looking. Ablaze with culture, it was newly attractive to newly flush Americans, who visited in record numbers.

In a short time, the United States took on a more cosmopolitan cast. This development, as has often been noted, was influenced by Francophile first lady Jacqueline Kennedy. But it was the spirit of the times that made the difference. In the 1950s, many Americans would have regarded such phenomena as French cuisine and designer dresses as unassimilably alien. In “The Sixties,” the mentality of the New Left, whose Establishment-defying casual wear forever changed American dressing habits, would condemn haute couture, haute cuisine, and anything else *haute* as irredeemably classist and counterrevolutionary. But in the early 1960s, there was a thaw; coq au vin and Givenchy got a foothold in American culture and lost something of their strangeness. JFK, too, played a part in setting fashion. In *The New Yorker* for November 30, 1963, the first issue of that magazine to appear after the assassination, the memorial article ended with the observation that “when we think of him, he is without a hat.” Ever since, it has been difficult to picture any of our chief executives *with* a hat.



**T**he period’s defining work of fiction was Harper Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Published in August 1960, and faithfully adapted as a 1962 movie starring Gregory Peck, the novel told the story of two white Alabama children and their father, a lawyer who quietly and bravely stands up against prejudice, ignorance, and backwardness. Though set in the 1930s, it was an emblematic story of the early 1960s—of America’s own awakening from a kind of childhood innocence into the full moral truth about itself and its past.

To be sure, the novel's earnest liberalism, so lavishly admired at the time, would come in for some vicious criticism by the end of the decade, and its racial politics, which had been thought enlightened, would be dismissed by some as offensively paternalistic. Yet the novel has endured in the schoolroom (despite occasional ignorant efforts to ban it on account of its politically incorrect period dialogue), where it continues to serve as a model of skillful storytelling and a useful springboard for the discussion of moral values and social issues. The book's signal quality is its simple decency. Indeed, it does not seem too outrageous an exaggeration to say that simple decency was a hallmark of the early 1960s. Racial questions still seemed relatively simple; the bitter, polarizing ideological divisions that would open up in "The Sixties," and that persist in American politics to this day, lay in the future. On important issues, the leading politicians in both parties, as well as the most respected Establishment figures, were essentially in agreement, sharing a broad vision of social progress allied with a firm anticommunism. There were few serious differences within the mainstream of American thought as to what the country was essentially about. Even Charles E. Coughlin, the Catholic priest who in the 1930s had been a popular radio anti-Semite, told *Newsweek* in 1962 that "bigotry is passé."

**T**his is not to suggest that everything on the civil rights front was going smoothly or predictably. The mood of the time made for the occasional odd turn of events. After *To Kill a Mockingbird*, with its heroic portrait of a lawyer fighting institutional racism, won Harper Lee a Pulitzer Prize, even the state legislature of Governor George Wallace's Alabama—itsself the very embodiment of institutional racism—felt moved to pass a resolution offering "homage and special praise to this outstanding Alabamian who has gained such prominence for herself and so much prestige for her native state." And this in the same month, May 1961, that Freedom Riders were viciously assaulted in several Alabama cities for trying to integrate intercity buses!

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In the summer of 1963, *Time* reported that "week by week, the U.S. civil rights movement burns more deeply in its intensity, shifts into bewildering new directions, expands fiercely in its dimensions." Yet for all the intensity and puzzlement, most Americans of goodwill seemed to have accepted the idea that they were wit-

nessing, if not taking an active role in, a process of social change that was essentially positive and that would in time bring greater social harmony. Clearly, the rhetoric of Dr. King and others was having an effect. (In September 1961, *Time* hailed what it called "integration 1961 style: peaceful compliance with the law of the land.") There was a general understanding and acceptance, as there had not been in the 1950s, that integration was America's future. Few imagined the



difficulties ahead, let alone the urgency and ferocity that would mark political protest later in the decade.

The process of integration that was under way throughout America in the early 1960s was especially conspicuous in show business. “Until a year ago,” reported *Newsweek* in September 1962, “stores in Negro districts, and magazines like *Ebony*, were the only American marketplace for Negro mannequins. Now such girls are winning the attention of white model agencies.” Interracial romance and marriage, so recently taboo, were suddenly in the public eye on a regular basis. Pictures of mixed-race celebrity couples, such as Eartha Kitt and her husband, appeared regularly in the newsmagazines. On Broadway, the Rodgers musical *No Strings* centered on a romance between characters played by Richard Kiley and Diahann Carroll, and the fact that the romance’s interracial nature was just *there*, presented not as a burning political issue but as an inconsequential human detail (which was not mentioned once in the show), had a strong impact on audiences.

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The most famous black person in America to be married to a white person—indeed, perhaps the most famous black person in America other than Martin Luther King, Jr.—was Sammy Davis, Jr., who was the husband of Swedish actress Mai Britt. Along with Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Joey Bishop, and Peter Lawford, Davis was a member of the “Rat Pack,” also known as “The Clan.” During the early 1960s they were the coolest thing on the continent, the very definition of hip. And the matter-of-fact inclusion of Davis among them made a powerful statement about integration. As with the unmentioned interracial affair in *No Strings*, the statement was all the more powerful because neither Davis nor his fellow Rat Packers were inclined to discuss or debate their racial politics. They just *lived* them, sometimes with real courage. The easygoing way Davis and his friends interacted on and off stage, making jokes about race rather than speeches, left many Americans feeling a lot more comfortable about the new America than they might otherwise have been.

Sinatra and his Clan were perfect symbols of the early 1960s. They were too hip for the ’50s, and too unhip—with their tuxedos and cocktails, and their un-PC banter about booze and broads—for the dope-smoking, jeans-wearing “Sixties.” But the sheer fun of the Rat Pack looks far more appealing today than the dour New Left and Religious Right moralisms of later decades. “The Sixties” sent the Rat Pack down in flames. The Beatles landed, and in the blink of an eye Sinatra and friends seemed hokey and irrelevant, if not downright offensive. (Only a couple of years after he’d been at the top of the showbiz heap, Sinatra was pleading with radio stations to give him “equal time in Beatleland.”) As for Davis himself, his notorious, career-damaging embrace of Richard Nixon in 1968 reflected the confusions of an

entertainer who, not unlike Leonard Bernstein, was very much a man of the early 1960s, a man of good intentions who responded unwisely to the “Sixties” cry of “Which side are you on?” and came off looking foolish.



In religion, liberal reform was the order of the day. *Time*, naming John XXIII its Man of the Year for 1962, described the Second Vatican Council as “the beginning of a revolution in Christianity.” The revolution, which stressed reconciliation and forgiveness, seemed to be occurring everywhere. While John XXIII was pointing the Catholic Church in a new direction with his encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, Anglican bishop John A. T. Robinson was turning his own church’s theology upside down with his best-selling book *Honest to God*, an assault on traditional doctrines. Morris West’s novel *The Shoes of the Fisherman* (1963) told of a gutsy, liberal-minded pontiff who sells off the Vatican’s treasures to feed the poor; it hardly seemed a fanciful story in those heady days.

*Elmer Gantry*, Sinclair Lewis’s novel about a shady tent-meeting evangelist, had caused an uproar on its publication in 1927. When Richard Brooks’s movie version was released in 1960, *Time* observed that “hardly anybody is complaining.” Indeed, many critics considered the movie’s topic, the hypocrisies and fire-and-brimstone excesses of Protestant fundamentalism, utterly irrelevant to 1960s America. The future of Christianity lay with the progressive ecumenism of John XXIII. Few in the mainstream press foresaw any such thing as the Religious Right, even though millions of future members of the movement were all around them, worshipping quietly, playing little or no role in national politics, and waiting only for the advance of civil rights and the implementation of Supreme Court decisions against prayer in public schools to rise up and make their power felt.

And yet, and yet. Even as all the good liberal ideas were being spread about in the early 1960s, and progressive reforms being planned and implemented, America was in the midst of a seemingly intractable nuclear standoff with the Soviet Union. To be sure, Joseph Stalin was dead, and the current Soviet premier, Nikita Khrushchev, had openly condemned some of Stalin’s more blood-thirsty acts. It appeared possible that the Soviet Union might actually reform itself to some degree. Nonetheless, the early 1960s proved to be the most dangerous period of the whole Cold War. Russia was testing the “new” America, and America was testing the “new” Russia. The result was the Cuban Missile Crisis. For several days, the two countries hovered on the brink of nuclear annihilation. And then America went back to normal. Or pretended to. (And what, in such circumstances, was “normal,” anyway?)

The civil defense craze was at its height, though at the time most Americans seem not to have regarded it as a craze at all but as a matter of commonsense preparation. In 1961, President Kennedy said that “prudent” families should have their own bomb shelters. In August of that year, *Time* reported that “more and more families made preparations last week to go underground.” Federal agencies issued pamphlets explaining how to build home fallout shelters, and private firms such as the Norton Atomic Shelter Corporation of Highland Park, Illinois,



*The trend-setting nuclear family of the early 1960s owned a prefabricated nuclear fallout shelter, in which to hunker down and wait out the apocalypse playing Scrabble.*

did a brisk business. Wham-O, the makers of the Hula Hoop and (later) the Frisbee, put a \$119 do-it-yourself shelter kit on the market. A famous map in an October 1961 issue of *Time*, whose cover story explained that “civil defense must be part of the normal way of life,” illustrated the potential effect of a single atomic bomb dropped on Manhattan. Concentric circles marked the areas within which various percentages of the population would be killed—instantly by the detonation or slowly by fallout. (When I saw the map recently, I recognized it at once from my baby-boom New York childhood.)

Americans lived with the knowledge that at any moment a nuclear attack might eradicate the country as they knew it and compel them, if they were still alive, to retreat with their families to a basement hideaway. Officially, the nation was at peace and living well; at the same time, it was enduring a daily trauma of colossal proportions. The largely suppressed awareness that a strange and disturbing reality lay concealed beneath society’s genial and placid surface is at the thematic heart of such deeply weird movies of the era as *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962), *Lolita* (1962), and *The Birds* (1963), and of the creepy TV comedies *The Munsters* and *The Addams Family*. That same awareness animates the period’s most distinctive TV series, *The Twilight Zone*.

Lasting for five seasons (1959–64), *The Twilight Zone* tapped into all those unvoiced fears and insecurities that are presumably hard-wired into the human psyche, which explains why, all these decades later, the series’ best episodes, in reruns, continue to disturb and haunt. The program spoke with particular

urgency to the early 1960s Zeitgeist, especially the preoccupation with atomic war. Reading through a list of *Twilight Zone* storylines, one is struck by the number of times the show explicitly addressed worries about the nuclear threat. In one episode, with the nation on the brink of atomic attack, two men plan to steal a spaceship and escape the planet; in another, a group of suburban neighbors,

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fearing an invasion from outer space, fight over access to a bomb shelter. Several *Twilight Zone* episodes took place in the aftermath of nuclear war. In perhaps the most famous of them, a misanthropic bookworm is pleased to be the lone survivor of such a war because he now has all the time in the world to read; but when he sits down on the steps of

the public library with a pile of books, his reading glasses fall off and break.

More often, the series, which was created, produced, introduced, and often written by Rod Serling, approached the period's apprehensions in a more elliptical fashion. A traveler arrives in a town and wonders where the people are. A man awakens to discover that nobody knows him and that all traces of his existence have vanished. A defendant being sentenced to death gives a passionate, urgent courtroom declamation in which he insists that the courtroom and all the people in it are not real. An airline passenger sees a monster walking on the plane's wing. Five strangers find themselves mysteriously confined in a huge cylinder. Aliens land on Earth, and the book they've brought along, *To Serve Man*, turns out to be not a humanitarian manual but a cookbook. The anxieties reflected in these storylines are relatively unambiguous. Perhaps everything is not as we think it is. Perhaps we are not who we think we are. Perhaps we are trapped in something from which there is no escape. Perhaps the fine, orderly society we think we are living in is only an illusion, concealing horrors more immense and threatening than anything we can imagine. Such was the undercurrent of early-1960s life as captured by *The Twilight Zone*.



It's haunting to read chronologically through the confident newspapers and newsmagazines of the early 1960s while knowing the end of the story. The clock was winding down, and the America that people expected to continue along much the same path for years to come would soon be gone forever. Yet no one realized. "One knew in one's bones," observed the anonymous "Talk of the Town" columnist in *The New Yorker's* issue of May 18, 1963, "that 1936 was prewar. . . . In 1963, we are surely . . . in the post-postwar period. It does not, though, have the feel of prewar days that 1936 had."

But war was already under way. Though the conflict in Indochina was by 1963 a present reality, no one foresaw the consuming, destructive, all-transforming struggle it would become. No one foresaw the Berkeley Free Speech Movement, the

Paris Commune, the sit-ins, the riots, the Summer of Love, Woodstock. Those events would take place in, and shape, another world.

Nor did anyone foresee the Kennedy assassination—the event that, for everyone alive at the time, was decisively transitional. In retrospect, to be sure, the transition was presaged by several other developments in 1963: the death of John XXIII on June 2, the murder of Medgar Evers on June 12, the March on Washington for civil rights on August 28. Yet November 22, 1963, was the watershed. By December, *Time* was noting “a mounting tide of conservatism” in politics and religion; in February 1964 the Beatles arrived in New York; 1965 would see seizures of campus buildings by college students and riots in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Watts. “Sixties” music, “Sixties” politics, “Sixties” culture took hold. And as they did so, the American consensus (or the illusion thereof) unwound, and centrist liberalism faded away, its adherents scattering to both left and right, becom-



*Actor Burgess Meredith's discomfit was par for the course on TV's Twilight Zone.*

ing part of the nascent New Left, or of the movement that would come to be called neoconservatism, or, in some cases, just hovering between, uncertain, rudderless, alienated by the rhetoric on both sides. Americans who had marched together at Selma would be at each other's throats, fighting over busing, food stamps, crime, affirmative action, "moral equivalence," political correctness, prayer in the schools, abortion, homosexuality.

Though new issues occupy the front burner, that polarization endures today, and the concept of civic obligation—so central to the early 1960s—has long since been supplanted by a reflexive cynicism and a tendency to judge all public discourse by its entertainment value. Who, in the early 1960s, would have imagined that 40 years later the best-selling books on public affairs would be not earnest tracts on poverty and the environment but crude partisan rants by the likes of Michael Moore, Ann Coulter, Al Franken, and Michael Savage? Likewise, the respectably middlebrow common culture of the early 1960s is only a memory, as is the pipe dream of an America enchanted by serious literature and classical music; instead we have American mass culture, a worldwide economic powerhouse that transforms almost everything it touches. And though that mass culture is, admittedly, large and diverse—and fragmented—enough to include many bright spots, it also has staggering depths of vulgarity, is aimed (largely) at 12-year-olds, and has little regard for intelligence, seriousness, or wit. The early 1960s' naiveté may be gone, but philistinism and ignorance thrive unashamed. In a time when many Americans appear far more eager to be coarsened than to be edified, the early 1960s look very attractive indeed.

**B**ut what's past is past. By its very nature, that decent, earnest, innocent interlude could not last more than a moment. And though it was clear by nightfall on November 22 that an era had ended, the awareness that a new period was genuinely underway dawned, no doubt, on a different day for everyone. For one person, it may have been the day he first saw a teenage boy with shoulder-length hair; for another, the day she first smelled a strange, sickly sweet smoke coming from the back of the school bus. My own memory yields a cluster of images that must date back to the spring of 1967, when I was 10 years old. It was a warm, sunny weekend afternoon, and I was walking with my parents through Tompkins Square Park in the neighborhood of Manhattan that had long been called the Lower East Side but that would soon be known as the East Village. We had driven in from Queens to see my grandmother, a Polish immigrant who lived in the neighborhood. But my parents were curious to get a look at the flower children, whom we had heard about and seen on the news. So instead of returning to our car after our visit we walked over to the park, in which I had never before set foot. And indeed there they were, in real life, all around us, reclining on the grass—young people dressed in T-shirts and bell-bottom jeans, one or two of them playing guitars, their manner strangely casual, loose, relaxed in a way I had never seen before. And, yes, with flowers in their hair.

I didn't know what to make of them. But their image lodged firmly in my mind, and I knew that day that the world had changed. □

# THE PERIODICAL OBSERVER

*Reviews of articles from periodicals and specialized journals here and abroad*

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## *What Makes Cities Grow?*

*A Survey of Recent Articles*

From Providence, Rhode Island, to Bellevue, Washington, urban America has been beguiled by the notion that the key to a city's future economic growth lies in attracting hip young "brain" workers—the "creative class." But Richard Florida, the impresario behind the idea, warns in *The Washington Monthly* (Jan.–Feb. 2004) that the "creative economy" has stalled. He points to the increased allure of foreign cities and to retrograde Bush administration policies. His critics say that only the dot-com boom of the late 1990s made his "creative class" thesis seem temporarily plausible. The fact that Florida's favored "creative" cities are now struggling only reveals the bankruptcy of his prescriptions. Writes Steven Malanga, a contributing editor of *City Journal* (Winter 2004): "The basic economics behind his ideas don't work."

Florida, a professor of economic development at Carnegie Mellon University and author of the bestseller *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002), believes that the U.S. economy is in the midst of a great transformation. Just as the 20th century brought a massive shift from an industrial base to services, the 21st is bringing a shift from service industries to creative work. Florida's "creatives" are the vanguard of this change: scientists and engineers, writers, artists, entertainers, architects, and certain people in fields such as law, medicine, finance, business, and software.

At [www.creative-class.org](http://www.creative-class.org), the website for his consulting group, he says that, since 1980, the "creative class" has grown from 20 percent of the workforce to more than 30 percent—38 million people. "The great creative sector of the economy accounts for nearly half of all salary and wages in this country, \$1.7 trillion, as much as the manufacturing and service sectors combined." San Francisco heads his list of the top "creative" cities, followed by Austin, San Diego, Boston, and Seattle. Their products: "cutting-edge entertainment in southern California, new financial instruments in New York, computer products in northern California and Austin, satellites and telecommunications in Washington, D.C., software and innovative retail in Seattle, biotechnology in Boston."

Florida's prescription for struggling cities is two-fold. Instead of aiming chiefly to attract businesses they should focus on enticing young creatives to take up residence. (Business will follow.) And to do that, cities should invest in the kinds of amenities these folks like. (A cultural climate "known for diversity of thought and open-mindedness" is also part of the formula.) City officials around the country have eagerly set off down the creative path. They've funded arts projects and music festivals, built sports stadiums and bike paths, and tried to nurture downtown arts and entertainment districts. If they had to raise taxes to pay for these things, so be it.

All of this seemed to make sense in the overcaffeinated days of the dot-com boom, say Joel Kotkin, a senior fellow at Pepperdine University's Davenport Institute for Public Policy, and Fred Siegel, a professor at the Cooper Union. "Yet virtually all [of Florida's favored cities] have been hemorrhaging jobs and people since the boom busted," they observe in *Blueprint* (2003: No. 6). San Francisco, for instance, has lost jobs at a Depression-era rate, and roughly four percent of its inhabitants have left for "more affordable, if boring, places, such as Sacramento."

The critics say it was all a mirage. Florida's larger theory is just a creative repackaging of older theories of economic transition. And his studies are badly flawed. "Although Florida's book bristles with charts and statistics showing how he constructed his various indexes and where cities rank on them," writes Malanga, "the professor, incredibly, doesn't provide any data demonstrating that his creative cities actually have vibrant economies that perform well over time." Consider job growth. Taken together, the top 10 creative cities on Florida's list in his book not only did no better on that front than the national economy between 1993 and 2003, they did *worse* than his 10 *least* creative cities. These cities, led by Las Vegas, Oklahoma City, and Memphis, Malanga says, "turn out to be jobs powerhouses, adding more than 19 percent to their job totals since 1993—faster growth even than the national economy."

Or consider the incubation of fast-growing businesses. A 2001 study by the private National Commission on Entrepreneurship (at [www.publicforuminstitute.org/nde/reports/2001-high-growth.pdf](http://www.publicforuminstitute.org/nde/reports/2001-high-growth.pdf)) rated cities on how well they hatched high-growth companies in the mid-1990s. ("High-growth" firms are those that grew by 15 percent a year for five consecutive years.) The study put Detroit—which is not among Florida's top 10—in second place among major cities. And New York, which *was* on Florida's most-creative list, finished at the bottom.

Far from being concentrated in high-tech, the study concluded, fast-growing firms "are widely distributed across all industries."

The creativity-oriented approach to economic growth no longer makes even "passable

sense," Kotkin writes in *The American Enterprise* (July-Aug. 2003). Instead of dance clubs, art museums, and hip shopping districts, today's growth hot-spots—such as Boise, Fresno, Fort Worth, and Provo—are more likely to have single-family homes, churches, and malls. Families, not singles, dominate their local economies. For these people, *affordability* is the number one priority.

High-growth businesses are likewise concerned with keeping costs reasonable. Local governments in these growth hot-spots care less about lifestyle amenities than about the nuts and bolts of creating a favorable business environment. "Places kindest to business costs, whether in terms of office rents, taxes, or regulatory environments, seem to be doing best," writes Kotkin in *Inc.* (Mar. 2004). The worst large metro area (in terms of job growth and balance of industries) is San Jose, "home of Silicon Valley, the megawatt center of late '90s business hype."

Kotkin and Siegel think that the gossamer quality of Florida's ideas is what helped make them so attractive to city leaders and others: "This is a strategy for a frictionless universe" that makes no mention of politics and ignores "the problems produced by outmoded regulations, runaway public spending, or high taxes."

In his recent *Washington Monthly* article, Florida opens a new front in the war with his critics. If the "creative economy" is stalled, he says, blame foreign competition and the Bush administration. Foreign cities "from Sydney to Brussels to Dublin to Vancouver" have begun to lure the creative—and the Bush administration, with "its disregard for consensus scientific views" on matters such as global warming and stem-cell research and its unilateral foreign policy, is making the United States a less attractive place for internationally mobile members of the creative class.

The Bush administration also has shifted attention and resources to extractive industries and other "older sectors of the economy." This is no accident, Florida argues. "Red" (Republican) America is based in "the economically lagging hinterlands." The Democratic "blue" sections contain "the talent-laden, immigrant-rich creative centers." In his view, the November elections will be in part a referendum on the future of the "creative economy."



## *Still a City upon a Hill?*

“The Soul of a Nation” by Wilfred M. McClay, in *The Public Interest* (Spring 2004),  
1112 16th St., N.W., Ste. 140, Washington, D.C. 20036.

When the World Trade Center towers fell to earth, American flags suddenly sprouted everywhere, and millions of Americans flocked to churches for solace and strength. American “civil religion” was back, though for how long it’s difficult to say.

Civil religion blends the religious and the secular in a sometimes uneasy union, explains McClay, a historian at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, bestowing “many of the elements of religious sentiment and faith upon fundamental political and social institutions.” It’s the civil religion that makes the Declaration of Independence a “sacred” text and the religious notion of America as a “city upon a hill” a secular touchstone. And it’s the civil religion that steels Americans to sacrifice for the common good.

Throughout American history, there have been critics who’ve seen the whole idea of civil religion as a dangerous invitation to national self-righteousness or to religion’s subordination to the state. But most Americans have accepted the civil religion, concerning themselves chiefly with the constant renegotiation of the boundary between the political and the religious that it involves.

Since the 1980s, however, there has been growing disenchantment among committed Christians on the Left and Right, who question whether Christianity is compatible with an America that pursues such policies as intervention abroad (says the Left) or legalized abortion (says the Right). The liberal Methodist theologians Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon even argued in 1989 that churches should see themselves as “colonies in the midst of an alien culture.”

That disenchantment has been fueled by the rising strength of those who question the place of *any* civil religion in America. It can be seen in the criticism of President George W. Bush’s post-9/11 “God talk”—which is perfectly in conformity with American tradition, says McClay—and the current controversies over the Pledge of Allegiance, gay marriage, and bioethics. Yes, McClay concludes, there’s always a danger of too close an identification between the religious and the political, but a greater danger today is that committed Christians will choose to confine their faith to their churches and cease to consider themselves “loyal and obedient American citizens.”

## *Talking Back to the Court*

“We the People” by Larry Kramer, in *Boston Review* (Feb.–Mar. 2004), E53–407,  
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

Nearly everyone now takes it for granted that the final word on the Constitution’s meaning belongs to the Supreme Court. Yet “broad acceptance of judicial supremacy is of surprisingly recent vintage”—and ought to be overturned, argues Kramer, a law professor at New York University.

Judicial supremacy didn’t begin with *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), as is commonly supposed, he argues. That decision established the principle of judicial review of acts of Congress, but it didn’t imply that the Supreme Court would have the last

word on all things constitutional. In invalidating a federal statute, Chief Justice John Marshall avoided using Federalist arguments for judicial supremacy (though he favored it) and instead cribbed Democratic-Republican ones for “departmentalism.” This theory, which emerged in the 1790s, grew out of the notion that the different departments of government, by checking and balancing one another, would keep the people informed about controversial proposals. The people themselves would serve as the ultimate arbiter of

the Constitution's meaning, expressing their views through petitions, protests, and public opinion.

For many years, claims of judicial supremacy were revived only occasionally. When "an overconfident Supreme Court" declared in the infamous *Dred Scott* decision in 1857 that Congress had no power to exclude slavery from federal territories, Abraham Lincoln and others reasserted the departmental theory and rebuked the Court for its presumption. After clashing with President Franklin D. Roosevelt over some of his New Deal legislation—and facing the threat of FDR's court-packing plan—the Court essentially backed down: Constitutional questions about the scope of federal power would be left to the political process, while the judges would police individual rights.

But in 1958, when Arkansas and other southern states sought to defy the Supreme Court's school desegregation decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the justices made a sweeping claim of judicial supremacy, asserting that it had been accepted since *Marbury*.

That was nonsense, says Kramer, but the idea "seemed gradually to find public

acceptance." Conservatives, for the most part, had always favored it, and liberals, enamored of the Court's liberal activism under Chief Justice Earl Warren, abandoned their old doubts. Still, the Court largely refrained from trying to define the scope of presidential and congressional authority.

Until, that is, Chief Justice William Rehnquist's conservative Court became much more aggressive, says Kramer, "striking down federal legislation at a pace far greater than [that of] any other court in American history."

Behind the rise of judicial supremacy since the mid-20th century, Kramer believes, lie "profoundly anti-democratic attitudes." In his view, when the Court overreaches, Americans should pressure their representatives to rein in the jurists: "Justices can be impeached, the court's budget can be slashed, the president can ignore its mandates, Congress can strip it of jurisdiction or shrink its size or pack it with new members or give it burdensome new responsibilities or revise its procedures. The means are available, and they have been used [in the past] to great effect when necessary."

## *Not So Bully*

"Public Presidential Appeals and Congressional Floor Votes: Reassessing the Constitutional Threat" by Richard J. Powell and Dean Schloyer, in *Congress & the Presidency* (Autumn 2003), Dept. of Government, American University, 4400 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016.

When a popular president uses the "bully pulpit" of his office, does an aroused public then scare Congress into doing as he wishes? Many scholars have thought so, and some have even fretted that a "plebiscitary" presidency is undermining what passes for deliberative congressional debate. Not to worry, say Powell, a political scientist at the University of Maine, and Schloyer, a graduate student at Northwestern University.

They selected 330 controversial key votes in the House between 1961 and 1992, and 299 in the Senate, and examined how the votes were affected by presidential speeches made during the month before they were taken. Powell and Schloyer found that neither the total number of speeches on an issue nor

the fact that one or more were delivered in the legislator's home state made any difference in the legislator's likely vote. But when the president spoke on national television, "vulnerable" senators, especially those of his own party, were slightly more likely to go along with him. House members, in contrast, were slightly more likely to *oppose* him, which suggests, say the authors, "that presidents go public when congressional support for a bill is waning." The odds of winning House converts, particularly in the opposition party, are against them.

So what's the bully pulpit good for? It improves the chances that legislation favored by the president will at least make it to the floors of the House and Senate for votes.

## *Superpower Seeks Friends*

"America's Crisis of Legitimacy" by Robert Kagan, in *Foreign Affairs* (Mar.–Apr. 2004),  
58 E. 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Americans may be from Mars, and Europeans from Venus, as Kagan asserted in a controversial article and subsequent book, *Of Paradise and Power* (2003), but it turns out that for best results in ventures such as the preventive war in Iraq, the Martians need Venusian backing. "There are indeed sound reasons for the United States to seek European approval," he writes. "But they are unrelated to international law, the authority of the [UN] Security Council, and the as-yet nonexistent fabric of the international order."

Though the Iraq war and the George W. Bush presidency "may have deepened and hardened the transatlantic rift into an enduring feature of the international landscape," Americans and Europeans were al-

ready diverging in their views on international law and "what confers legitimacy on international action," writes Kagan, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Today, for the first time since World War II, most Europeans "doubt the legitimacy of U.S. power and of U.S. global leadership."

Though Europeans demand that the United States win international backing for ventures such as the Iraq War, Kagan thinks that's largely a smoke screen. Europeans didn't look upon the Security Council as "the sole source of international legitimacy" during the Cold War, and they joined the United States in Kosovo in 1999 without the council's sanction and in violation of "the sovereign

EXCERPT

### *Without a Country*

*Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
This is my own, my native land!  
Whose heart hath ne'er within him burn'd  
As home his footsteps he hath turn'd,  
From wandering on a foreign strand!*

*A contemporary answer to [Walter] Scott's question is: Yes, the number of dead souls is small but growing among America's business, professional, intellectual and academic elites. Possessing, in Scott's words, "titles, power and pelf," they also have decreasing ties with the American nation. Coming back to America from a foreign strand, they are not likely to be overwhelmed with deep feelings of commitment to their "native land." Their attitudes and behavior contrast with the overwhelming patriotism and nationalistic identification of the rest of the American public. A major gap is growing in America between the dead or dying souls among its elites and its "Thank God for America" public. This gap was temporarily obscured by the patriotic rallying after September 11. In the absence of repeated comparable attacks, however, the pervasive and fundamental forces of economic globalization make it likely that the denationalizing of elites will continue.*

—Samuel P. Huntington, chairman of the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, in *The National Interest* (Spring 2004)

equality of all nations, the bedrock principle of international law.”

The real issue is European influence over U.S. policy. During the Cold War, European influence was guaranteed by the fact that the protection of Europe itself from the Soviet Union was the paramount U.S. strategic goal. All that has changed.

Yet there’s still an important link. The United States “is and always has been a revolutionary power,” Kagan believes, a force for liberalism and democracy around the world. And that’s the real reason it needs the legitimacy that only Europe can provide: “The world’s sole superpower needs to demonstrate that it wields its great strengths on behalf of its principles and those who share them.” The American people won’t indefinitely

support efforts abroad “in the face of constant charges of illegitimacy by the United States’ closest democratic allies.”

Yet if the United States is to grant Europe influence over its exercise of power, possibly through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, there must be agreement on “the nature of today’s global threats and the means to counter them,” warns Kagan. Such agreement doesn’t currently exist. Most Europeans think that the United States has exaggerated the risks of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction.

Kagan says it’s time for “the wisest heads in Europe” to ask themselves if they really want to bet that “the risks posed by the ‘axis of evil,’ from terrorism to tyrants, will never be as great as the risk posed by the American leviathan unbound.”

## *A Chink in the Armor*

“Missile Defence Myopia: Lessons from the Iraq War” by Dennis M. Gormley, in *Survival* (Winter 2003–04), International Institute for Strategic Studies, Arundel House, 13–15 Arundel St., Temple Pl., London WC2R 3DX, England.

America’s Patriot missile defenses, such a dud in the 1991 Persian Gulf War, worked far better in the Iraq War last year. But amid all the dazzling displays of U.S. firepower, it wasn’t widely recognized that the United States was still operating with “only half a missile defense”—a dangerous condition that now cries out for correction, contends Gormley, a senior fellow in the Monterey Institute’s Center for Non-proliferation Studies.

The Patriot intercepted and destroyed each of the nine Iraqi ballistic missiles that posed serious threats. (Ten others, mis-aimed, were allowed to land harmlessly in the desert or gulf waters.) But low-flying Iraqi cruise missiles and aircraft—hard to distinguish on radar screens from all the friendly choppers and planes flying close to the ground—were another story.

“American and Kuwaiti missile defenses and warning systems apparently failed to detect or intercept four of five” Iraqi cruise missiles that were fired, Gormley reports. One of those missiles “came per-

ilously close to a U.S. Marine encampment,” while another hit just outside a large Kuwaiti shopping mall. In addition, two Iraqi ultralight aircraft, which could easily have been carrying deadly chemical or biological agents, flew over a U.S. Army encampment—and thousands of American troops—before being detected.

This record provides what one missile defense officer called “a glimpse of the future,” in which cruise missiles and piloted or drone aerial vehicles such as ultralights could constitute “a poor man’s air force.” Simple, inexpensive kit airplanes that hobbyists buy could readily be adapted to serve as weapons. The very success of the Patriot in dealing with ballistic missiles, Gormley observes, makes the cheap alternative that much more attractive to potential enemies.

In addition to stronger diplomatic efforts to curtail proliferation of cruise missile technology, he concludes, the United States should seek closer coordination among the relevant army, navy, and air



*America's Patriot missile defenses, like this unit deployed in the Kuwaiti desert in March 2003, performed well against ballistic missiles, but cruise missiles and low-flying aircraft escaped detection.*

force units, possibly under a single Pentagon agency. And deployment of a new "wide-area surveillance and battle man-

agement platform," which is not scheduled to occur until 2011, may need to be speeded up.

## *The Roots of Terrorism*

"Education, Poverty, and Terrorism: Is There a Causal Connection?" by Alan B. Krueger and Jitka Malečková, in *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (Fall 2003), Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, Minn. 55105.

The notion that poverty and ignorance breed terrorism seems to have a seductive appeal that transcends mere facts. Public figures left and right continue to repeat it, even though there's little evidence to support it, write Krueger, an economist at Princeton University, and Malečková, a professor at the Institute for Middle Eastern and African Studies, Charles University, Prague.

As a rule, they note, better-off and better-educated people are *more* likely to support and participate in terrorist or militant acts than their less fortunate peers. In a December 2001 opinion survey of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, for

example, 86 percent of adults who had attended high school supported armed attacks against Israeli targets, compared with 72 percent of their illiterate peers. And outright opposition to such attacks was much higher in the ranks of the illiterate: 26 percent voiced opposition, compared with only 12 percent of better-educated Palestinians.

Many studies of those who actually commit terrorist attacks follow the same general pattern. Of 129 Lebanese Hezbollah militants who became *Shahids* (martyrs) between 1982 and 1994, only 28 percent came from impoverished families (while 33 percent of all Lebanese were living in poverty). Thirty-three

percent of the killers had been to high school, compared with only 23 percent of the general population. A study of 285 Palestinian terrorists who carried out suicide bomb attacks for other groups between 1987 and 2002 found that they were nearly twice as likely to have finished high school and attended college as other Palestinians. Two of the bombers were the sons of millionaires.

On the other side of the conflict, a look at the membership of Israel's deadly Bloc of the Faithful, which killed 23 Palestinians during the early 1980s, turns up teachers, writers, entrepreneurs, a chemical engineer, and other high achievers.

Krueger and Malečková look more to politics than to economics to explain terrorism. People who have "enough education and income to concern themselves with more than minimum economic subsistence" are more likely to become engaged in politics, violent or not. And countries that allow fewer political outlets are more likely to produce terrorists. Comparing the home countries of international terrorists who struck between 1997 and 2002, the authors found that countries with basic civil liberties produced fewer terrorists. When political freedoms were taken into account, the poorest countries were no worse incubators of terrorism than the richest.

## ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

### *Devilish Incentives*

"Religion and Economic Growth Across Countries" by Robert J. Barro and Rachel M. McCleary, in *American Sociological Review* (Oct. 2003), 1307 New York Ave. N.W., Ste. 700, Washington, D.C. 20005-4701.

The "Protestant ethic" may have spurred the rise of capitalism, as sociologist Max Weber argued more than 70 years ago, but what about religion's role in keeping economies growing? Apparently, it's helpful to be a God-fearing country, but not so God-fearing that people attend religious services on a regular basis. Think Scandinavia.

Countries with large numbers of religious believers—no matter what their faith—tend to prosper more than others. But if those believers are regular participants in services, economic growth is retarded, according to Barro, an economist at Harvard University, and McCleary, director of Harvard's Religion, Political Economy, and Society Project. They analyzed data on 41 countries around the world from the 1980s and 1990s.

What's wrong with a country's citizens'

regularly attending religious services? Not only does it take time and attention away from earthly concerns, the authors speculate, but when a lot of people attend, it may be a sign that organized religion in that country strongly influences "laws and regulations that affect economic incentives," such as those governing credit and insurance markets.

But just having a lot of citizens who profess a belief in God while still heading off to work on holy days doesn't light a country's economic fire. It's a belief in an afterlife that matters most. Barro and McCleary think that's what encourages the capitalist virtues, such as honesty, thrift, and a strong work ethic. But not just any afterlife, they note: "There is some indication that the fear of hell is more potent for economic growth than is the prospect of heaven."

### *Piracy's Second Act*

"The New Piracy" by Charles Glass, in *The London Review of Books* (Dec. 18, 2003), 28 Little Russell St., London WC1A 2HN, England.

While everybody talks about digital piracy these days, piracy of the old-fashioned kind, which supposedly disappeared after the

Napoleonic Wars, has been making a big comeback—and some fear that the worst is yet to come. There were 445 attacks on ships

around the world last year, compared with 370 in 2002 and 106 in 1998. Twenty-one seafarers were killed and 71 others listed as missing. The estimated cost to international trade in lost cargo and ships and higher insurance premiums now runs about \$16 billion annually, according to the Asia Foundation.

“Ninety-five percent of the world’s cargo travels by sea,” observes Glass, author of *Tribes with Flags* (1990). “Yet no one, apart from ship owners, their crews, and insurers, appears to notice that pirates are assaulting ships at a rate unprecedented since the glorious days when pirates were ‘privateers’ protected by their national governments.”

Piracy today is most common in waters where it flourished in the past: in the Bay of Bengal, in the Java and the South China seas, off the Horn of Africa, and in the Caribbean. Instead of Spanish galleons and the like, today’s pirates prey on oil tankers and other merchant ships, then sell the captured cargo on the black market. Beyond

national territorial waters, there are no laws and no police. “Many countries lack the will or the resources to police even their own waters,” says Glass.

Owners of small vessels often can’t afford some obvious protective measures, such as satellite-tracking devices, closed-circuit cameras, and onboard security officers. “Owners and trade unions discourage the arming of merchant ships in the belief that firearms will put crews’ lives at greater risk,” Glass adds.

Lax security opens the door to terrorists as well as pirates. Singapore would be one tempting target. Each day, some 200 ships, carrying more than half the world’s oil exports and a quarter of all its cargo, pass through the island state’s port and refinery. Terrorists who seized an oil tanker and steered it at full speed into the port could cause tens of thousands of casualties and cripple the port’s operation for years. And the economic impact would shake the globe.

## *Betting on Jobs*

“Casino Gaming and Local Employment Trends” by Thomas A. Garrett, in *Review* (Jan.–Feb. 2004), Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, Public Affairs Dept., P.O. Box 442, St. Louis, Mo. 63166-0442.

The prospect of *jobs, jobs, jobs* is one of the chief enticements held out by proponents of corporate casino gaming when they seek permission to operate in a community. Yet it’s by no means obvious that local workers are winners when the gambling establishment arrives.

“Most casino jobs require some skill, be it accounting, dealing cards, security, or other expertise,” observes Garrett, a senior economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. In an urban area, enough such skilled labor may well be available locally, but in a rural area, it may have to be imported from outside the community. Further, the introduction of casino gaming might cause some local businesses to close, and the resulting number of lost jobs might offset some or all of the new casino jobs.

The jobs question is not just academic. Corporate casino gaming, which generated more than \$27 billion in revenue in 2001, is now available in 10 states—and is likely to expand to others as state governments feel the pinch of budget deficits that are collectively

approaching \$70 billion this fiscal year.

Garrett explored what happened to employment between 1986 and 2002 in six counties that introduced casino gaming during the early-to-mid-1990s: four rural counties (two in Mississippi, one in Illinois, and one in Iowa) and two urban (St. Clair, Illinois, and St. Louis, Missouri). In three of the rural counties, employment went up. The number of people working in Tunica County, Mississippi, for example, increased by 3,144 between late 1992, when the first casino was introduced, and the end of 2001, even though the population increased by only 1,172. So the increased employment benefited the precasino residents more than the new ones. Casino gaming is now Tunica County’s main industry, and it has apparently lifted other employment, especially in services, which went from 123 jobs in 1992 to 2,441 in 2001.

But the fourth rural area, Lee County, Iowa, had 1,846 fewer jobs at the end of 2001 than it had when a casino opened there in late 1994.

In the same seven-year period, the county showed a population loss of 1,652. Perhaps, Garrett notes, casino gaming slowed the demographic hemorrhage.

The impact of casino gaming on the local residents of the two urban counties was harder to discern because casino employment was such a small part of the overall total.

Nevertheless, the 1,184 casino jobs in St. Clair County were 11 percent of the county's total jobs gain by the end of 2001, and the 2,050 casino jobs in St. Louis County were 12 percent of the gain there.

On balance, Garrett concludes, casino gaming appears a pretty good bet in terms of local employment, especially in rural areas.

SOCIETY

## *Revising Indian History*

"The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Cultures" by Pekka Hämäläinen, in *The Journal of American History* (Dec. 2003), 1215 E. Atwater Ave., Bloomington, Ind. 47401-3703;

"Virgin Soils Revisited" by David S. Jones, in *William and Mary Quarterly* (Oct. 2003), Box 8781, Williamsburg, Va. 23187-8781.

By introducing the horse to the New World, Europeans enabled the Indian tribes of the Great Plains to reinvent themselves as equestrian cultures, radically altering their way of life for the better. On the much heavier debit side, the Europeans (and Africans) brought deadly infectious diseases against which the Indians had almost no immune defenses. These statements

both sum up mainstream historical views, but both seem to need thorough revision.

"Horses did bring new possibilities, prosperity, and power to Plains Indians" after the Spanish brought the animals to the Western Hemisphere in the 16th century, says Hämäläinen, a professor of early American history at Texas A&M University.



*Fierce competition among Plains Indians for scarce horses often led to bloodshed, such as depicted in this encounter, *Duel to the Death*, by Charles M. Russell in 1891.*



With horses, the Jumanos and Apaches—who “traded for, and stole, horses from New Mexico and Texas” and created in the 17th century the first distinct “horse culture” in the Great Plains—could hunt bison with ease and “travel farther to trade, raid, and wage war.”

But horses “also brought destabilization, dispossession, and destruction,” says Hämäläinen. In the southern plains, the Indian tribes’ vast herds of horses competed with bison for the limited riverine resources, helping to trigger a decline in the bison population in the 19th century. In the northern plains, the long, cold winters, which exposed the horses to starvation, kept most tribes chronically horse poor. The few owners of horses became rich. This scarcity, along with the expanding fur trade with Euro-Americans, says Hämäläinen, resulted in “constant warfare” among the northern tribes.

In the late 18th century, the Lakotas in the Mississippi Valley began to obtain horses and to expand westward across the Missouri River into the northern plains. The Lakotas’ aggressive movement and rise during the 19th century, says Hämäläinen, “supposedly encapsulates the full spectrum of Plains Indian experience from the adoption of horses to the exhilarating affluence of the buffalo days and from the fierce resistance against the American empire to the final, dreadful defeat.” In fact, he says,

the Lakotas’ wholly successful experience with horses was the exception, not the rule, among the Plains Indians.

Also in error is the conventional notion that Indians had “no immunity” to the diseases the Europeans brought to North America, maintains Jones, a resident in psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital. “With the exception of persons born with rare genetic immune diseases, all humans can mount a powerful defense against viruses, bacteria, fungi, and parasites.”

There’s no evidence of smallpox, measles, and influenza before Columbus, and Indians might indeed have been genetically vulnerable to them, but throughout history the physical and social environments have also been important in the spread of disease. “Any factor that causes mental or physical stress—displacement, warfare, drought, destruction of crops, soil depletion, overwork, slavery, malnutrition, social and economic chaos—can increase susceptibility to disease,” Jones writes. And incursions by whites exacerbated many of these conditions.

The relative contributions of genetics and other factors to the decimation of the Indians will probably never be known, Jones concludes, but the simplistic “no immunity” thesis lets the Europeans off the hook much too easily.

## *When Crime Goes to School*

“Are Idle Hands the Devil’s Workshop? Incapacitation, Concentration, and Juvenile Crime” by Brian A. Jacob and Lars Lefgren, in *The American Economic Review* (Dec. 2003), 2014 Broadway, Ste. 305, Nashville, Tenn. 37203.

Getting kids “off the street” is a time-honored recipe for reducing juvenile crime and a commonsense rationale for everything from an extended school year to “midnight basketball” programs. But there’s a tradeoff involved, warn Jacob, a professor of public policy at Harvard University’s Kennedy School of Government, and Lefgren, an economist at Brigham Young University.

In analyzing data from 29 cities, ranging in size from Minot, North Dakota (pop. 36,657) to Austin, Texas (pop. 656,562), they found a surprise. The level of vandalism and other property crimes in the community did de-

cline, by about 14 percent, on days when school was in session. But on those same days, assaults and other violent crimes—mostly among the kids themselves—*increased* by about 28 percent. Any parent could tell you why: Putting a bunch of kids together in one place increases the chance that some kind of mayhem will break out.

In a hypothetical city of 120,000, the authors calculate, lengthening the school year by a day would lead to a decrease of only 0.29 property crimes and an increase of only 0.25 violent crimes. Of course, there are other reasons for increasing the amount of

time kids spend in school, but if keeping them out of mischief is the goal, Jacob and Lefgren conclude, it would be better to

place them in summer jobs, small after-school programs, or other venues where their numbers don't reach critical mass.

## Consuming Kids

"The Commodification of Childhood: Tales from the Advertising Front Lines" by Juliet B. Schor, in *The Hedgehog Review* (Summer 2003), Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, P.O. Box 400816, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va. 22904-4816.

You've heard of focus groups, you've filled out surveys, you've been called by someone wondering what TV shows you watch. But chances are you've not heard of the GIA. The Girl's Intelligence Agency and other firms like it are a subtle and powerful new force in advertising aimed at understanding the likes and dislikes of kids—in the GIA's case, girls as young as six years old.

Marketing products to kids is nothing new: In the 1980s, Levi-Strauss even hired a 10-year-old to tell the company what he liked and didn't like about its jeans. What's different is the financial power kids now wield: In 2002, children between the ages of four and 12 spent as much as \$30 billion. So kids have become an increasingly enticing quarry for advertisers, who have responded with methods that strike Schor, a Boston College sociologist and author of *The Overworked American* (1992),

as a threat to both parents and children.

The GIA approach seems innocuous enough. With its trademark "slumber party in a box," the agency asks one of 40,000 "agents," recruited from kids who've registered on its website, to invite some friends over for a "party." There the girls are offered a sample product—anything from a new toy to a TV show—while researchers study their reactions.

That's where the new techniques become insidious, Schor argues. Though a "party" might be used to gather information, it can also be the launching stage for a "viral" marketing campaign: Kids recommend the featured products to their friends, who recommend them to their friends, and so on. Since each "agent" reaches an average of 512 other girls, the "research" has the potential to generate significant sales. Parents, the traditional "gatekeepers" for

### EXCERPT

## *L.A.'s Lonely Police*

*The West Coast is generally more lightly policed than the East Coast, where police jobs were once important parts of political patronage machines. Los Angeles, however, takes the West Coast's penchant for small forces to an extreme. To police a city of 3.8 million people, the LAPD relies on approximately 9,200 officers—half the number per capita that New York City has. Moreover, these officers patrol an area nearly twice the size of New York. All in all, Los Angeles neighborhoods have only about one-quarter of the police presence that New York's neighborhoods do.*

*The small size of the LAPD has had a dramatic effect on the organization's culture. In New York, if an officer gets into trouble and calls for backup, he can expect a dozen cars on the scene in five minutes or less. In L.A., help may take three times as long to arrive. According to John Linder, a consultant who has worked closely with [L.A. Police Chief William] Bratton in both cities, understaffing in L.A. has over time created a police force whose officers worry more about personal survival than about community relations, and who go into every situation hard, fast, and expecting the worst.*

—John Buntin, a staff correspondent at *Governing* (Dec. 2003)

their children, are out of the picture.

Schor believes that these new methods are turning children into marketing instruments and showing them that “friends are a lucrative resource that they can exploit to gain products or money.” She’s not impressed by marketers’

argument that kids are such savvy consumers that they don’t need their parents’ help. Speaking directly to kids, they say, empowers children. Schor thinks it teaches them the worst possible lessons about the “value” of friendship.

## *Feminism Lives!*

“The Myth of Postfeminism” by Elaine J. Hall and Marnie Salupo Rodriguez, in *Gender & Society* (Dec. 2003), Sage Publications, 2455 Teller Rd., Thousand Oaks, Calif. 91320.

Are we living in a “postfeminist” age? That’s certainly the drift of opinion in the popular press and some scholarly journals. But survey data give the lie to this “myth,” argue Hall, a sociologist at Kent State University, and Rodriguez, a graduate student there.

Such hard evidence is exactly what’s missing from nearly all the 90 decline-of-feminism articles in *Time* and other periodicals that the authors examined. Only about one-fourth of the articles provided any survey data, and the vast majority of those provided none over time, which would be the only way to demonstrate the alleged decline over the 1980s and early 1990s.

According to surveys by the Center for Political Studies, adults looked *more* favorably on the women’s movement in 1996 than they did in 1980. Asked to rank the movement on a 100-point scale, they gave it an average of 63 points in 1996, up from 53 points in 1980. Other surveys show little change in opinion be-

tween 1986 and 1998, with more than two-thirds of adults holding very or mostly favorable views.

Contrary to the postfeminist myth, young women are not less likely than older ones to support the women’s movement, Hall and Rodriguez say. In a 1998 National Election Survey, 78 percent of women 18 to 29 years old expressed a favorable opinion of the movement, compared with 64 percent of middle-aged women. And 73 percent of black women gave the movement a thumbs-up, the largest proportion of any racial group.

Surveys conducted during the 1980s and 1990s consistently showed that about half of American women “considered the movement to be relevant,” say the authors. Yet the postfeminist myth has acquired a life of its own in the mass media, and could “create a future reality in which collective struggle is deemed unnecessary.”

### PRESS & MEDIA

## *Holy Unaware*

“Religiously Ignorant Journalists” by Christian Smith, in *Books & Culture: A Christian Review* (Jan.–Feb. 2004), 465 Gundersen Dr., Carol Stream, Ill. 60188.

Is it too much to expect that journalists who write about religion should know at least as much about their subject as their peers who write about politics, sports, economics, science, or art? Of course not, says Smith, a sociologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, who finds the current level of religious journalism, which is to say secular journalism about religion, low indeed. Smith tells of being called by a reporter for a major

Dallas newspaper who wanted to talk to him about “Episcopals,” the subject of a story the reporter was writing. “What an embarrassment. How do I break the news to him that there are no ‘Episcopals’? Actually, they are called Episcopalians.”

How, Smith wonders, is the reporter possibly going to write an informed story, in a matter of days, about so complex a matter as the appointment of the homosexual Episcopalian

bishop Gene Robinson when he starts out ignorant of even the proper name of members of the church? We wouldn't put up with political journalists talking about the "strategies of the 'Democratizer' or 'Republication' parties, or about the most recent 'Supremacist' Court ruling," but a comparable level of ignorance seems no barrier to journalists on the religion beat.

"Why do so few journalists covering religion know religion?" Smith asks. One reason, he suggests, is that "the knowledge class" presumed for most of the 20th century "that religion was simply irrelevant to anything that mattered." That has left them playing catch-up in the post 9/11 era, trying "to figure out religion with little collective accumulated knowledge of it on which to rely." Because

news writers and editors are so often ill-informed, "they incessantly project their own biases into their religion coverage." They associate religion with "fundamentalism, violence, scandals, homophobia, dying churches, repression, exotic rituals, political ambition, cults, trivia." It's no surprise to Smith that "of all the possible important and interesting stories about American religion that reporters could cover, about the only one they could seem to imagine reporting on last year was the Catholic priest abuse scandal."

Smith's remedy for the current situation is entirely sensible: He proposes that editors assign religion stories only to journalists who know something about the subject—and that the editors invest in competent religion reporters if none are now on staff.

## *Ed Murrow's Illusion*

"The Man Who Invented Truth': The Tenure of Edward R. Murrow as Director of the United States Information Agency during the Kennedy Years" by Nicholas J. Cull, in *Cold War History* (Oct. 2003), London School of Economics and Political Science, Houghton St., London WC2A 2AE, England.

When Edward R. Murrow took the job of director of the United States Information Agency (USIA) in 1961, he was the most famous broadcast journalist in the country. He'd made his name reporting for CBS Radio from London during World War II, and then, switching to the new medium of television, he'd taken on Senator Joseph McCarthy during the 1950s (when he also interviewed Marilyn Monroe and other celebrities). But even journalistic icons have illusions. Murrow's was that he thought truth and power could easily be reconciled.

President John F. Kennedy promised Murrow access and influence, and Murrow, in turn, publicly promised to portray the United States "warts and all" to the outside world. Neither promise was fully kept, writes Cull, a professor of American studies at the University of Leicester, England.

Established in 1953, the USIA had the mission of promoting U.S. interests abroad by informing foreign publics about U.S. policies and American life—what we would now call public diplomacy. "Murrow's notion of showing 'the U.S.—warts and all' could be seen in the matter of civil rights," Cull says. But USIA coverage of the protests and confrontations in

the South played down the violence and played up the federal protection of the rights of black citizens.

Despite the presidential promise of access, Murrow was "left 'out of the loop'" on the U.S. decision to sponsor a covert invasion of Cuba in April 1961. And when he did learn of the plan, he didn't tell his staff. As the disaster unfolded, says Cull, journalists at the Voice of America, USIA's radio arm, strove for balanced coverage but were "fed misleading material by the State Department and the USIA policy office"—and they resented it.

That summer, the Soviet resumption of nuclear testing was a boon to USIA propagandists. To take full advantage of the development, Murrow urged that U.S. resumption of testing be delayed as long as possible. That proved "his only decisive contribution to Kennedy's foreign policy-making," says Cull.

Murrow came to feel "increasingly ill at ease with the Kennedy administration," writes Cull. He left the government in early 1964 and died the following year. Thirty-four years later, with the Cold War over, USIA was itself interred—absorbed by the State Department. And the age-old conflict between truth and power was no closer to resolution.

## *Did Ancient Israel Exist?*

"Memory in Ruins" by David Hazony, for the editors, in *Azure* (Winter 2004),  
22A Hatzfira St., Jerusalem, Israel.

Are the glories and tragedies of ancient Israel little more than myth? That's the thrust of a revisionist school of archaeology that has emerged in recent years. In this new archaeology, "the urge to smash myths has overtaken sound judgment," contends Hazony, a senior editor of *Azure*.

Between the 1920s and the mid-1980s, biblical archaeologists working at hundreds of sites in the Middle East lent support to the Hebrew Bible's account of a distinct Israelite people that emerged some 3,500 years ago, was enslaved in Egypt, entered Canaan, and established a unified kingdom under David and Solomon. Some of today's debunkers, such as Keith W. Whitelam, author of *The Invention of Ancient Israel* (1996), "have an overtly political agenda," notes Hazony. Whitelam

argues that the traditional account is a fabrication created to justify the dispossession of the Palestinian Arabs. A more scholarly attack has been launched by a group of academics led by Israel Finkelstein, chairman of Tel Aviv University's archaeology department. Finkelstein and his allies reject any use of biblical sources to corroborate the identification of archaeological discoveries. They argue that the impressive structures unearthed throughout Israel and long believed to have been built during Solomon's reign in the 10th century B.C. were actually built a century later. Far from being the fabulous city described in the Bible, King David's Jerusalem "was no more than a poor village," Finkelstein told *The New York Times*.

The revisionist attack has won enor-



*According to new archaeological scholarship, the existence of buildings such as Solomon's Temple, purportedly built during biblical times in Israel, may be as fanciful as this 16th-century artist's depiction.*

mous worldwide publicity. Meanwhile, complains Hazony, leading archaeologists who uphold more conventional interpretations have handcuffed themselves. Hebrew University's Amnon Ben-Tor and Amihai Mazar have confined their responses to academic journals. And unlike their predecessors, these scholars avoid any attempt to construct a coherent history of the period, contenting themselves with "detailed compendia of archaeological finds." They shy away from

research on the biblical era—not a single major biblical-era dig has been launched in Jerusalem. "For scholars like Ben-Tor," Hazony says, "the question of what archaeology may mean for the larger issue of Jewish history is a danger to the scientific standing of the discipline."

The revisionist case is "fragile," in Hazony's view, but scholars who refuse to seek out fresh evidence or to mold it into a coherent historical account will be poorly equipped to carry out the quest for truth.

## *Christianity Lite*

"Dieting for Jesus" by Alan Wolfe, in *Prospect* (Jan. 2004), 2 Bloomsbury Pl., London WC1A 2QA, England.

With a card-carrying conservative Christian in the White House, can an American theocracy be far off? That's only a slight exaggeration of the view that seems to prevail among Europeans and not a few Americans. But it's based on a pastiche of dated stereotypes about evangelical Christians, argues Wolfe, director of the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life at Boston College.

The kind of religion these critics fear—dogmatic, intolerant, and at war with modernity—doesn't survive the powerful solvent of American culture. "Because U.S. culture is individualistic, populist, entrepreneurial, and experiential, old-time religions that stand for unchanging truths, rigid dogma, and strict conceptions of sin do not have much chance."

Polarizing public figures such as Jerry Falwell don't speak for the evangelical majority, Wolfe contends. For example, opinion surveys by Christian Smith, a sociologist at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, show that while evangelicals still look upon America as a "Christian nation," they also almost unanimously agree that they should not try to force their views on others.

The specter of powerful religious institutions forcing their will on the nation is a far cry from the reality on the ground in Protestant America, where religion focuses on the authentic experience of individual faith rather than conformity to fixed beliefs. Pentecostals—the fastest-growing sect in American Protestantism—"value emotionality and spirit far more than creed and doctrine."

The effects can be seen in evolving conceptions of sin. In the 1920s, Pentecostals inveighed against a long list of sins, from drinking and dancing to working crossword puzzles and primping in front of the mirror. Today, Pentecostal women are flocking to a church-related group called "Women's Aglow," which touts hairdos and manicures as visible signs of a commitment to God. Patricia B. Kreml's *Slim for Him* is just one of a host of conservative Christian books that take the same approach to dieting.

As this example suggests, it's women who are driving the rise of conservative Protestant churches, and they're drawn by a particular kind of empowerment. Wolfe cites a Texas church that bars women even from teaching Sunday school but thinks nothing of women in Bible study groups who casually substitute the word *daughter* where the Bible refers to the son of God. The pastor lectures his male parishioners on the need to give sexual pleasure to their wives—men are like microwaves, he declares, while women are like Crock-Pots. Because they need to attract women, Wolfe notes, the conservative churches are surprisingly "soft" on many feminist issues, such as women working outside the home.

Some conservatives, such as Lutheran theologian Marva J. Dawn, fret that the new Protestantism's emphasis on self rather than God reflects the narcissism of the larger culture. Wolfe, however, seems to take comfort in the fact that the more Christians diet for Jesus, the less weight they will have to throw around.

## *The Revenge of the Typewriter*

“Ten Technologies That Refuse to Die” by Eric Scigliano, in *Technology Review* (Feb. 2004),  
1 Main St., 7th fl., Cambridge, Mass. 02142.

When a fast-moving technological advance brings the next new thing, the older technology left in the dust is usually assumed to be history. Yet surprisingly often, reports Scigliano, a Seattle-based science writer, superseded technologies survive, and even thrive, “because they fill real needs that their more sophisticated successors don’t.”

Take dot-matrix printers. Their heyday was in the 1980s, before ink-jet and laser printers came along. Most personal computer users today probably assume that the clickety dot-matrix machines are heard no more. But in fact they’re alive and well, operating under a new, jazzier name (“impact printing”) and functioning as an industrial tool. “For accounting firms, banks, and pharmacies with reams of data to print out (and for whom speed, reliability, and economy actually count for more than looks), dot-matrix—er, *impact*—printing still works,” writes Scigliano. “Small wonder: Today’s impact rigs can print up to 2,000 lines a minute, over 500,000 pages a month, for less than a fifth of a cent per page—versus 1 cent per page and up for ink-jet and laser printers.”

Pagers, too, live on. “The teens who made these devices essential fashion accessories in the early ’90s graduated to cell phones, and even RadioShack stopped selling them,” says Scigliano. “But pager sales rose in 2002, contrary to industry expectations.” Hospitals, for example, use them heavily because cell phone signals can interfere with diagnostic equipment. Pagers are also cheaper than cell phones, provide more extensive coverage, and don’t jam up as often in emergencies.

Scigliano points to eight other technologies that have outlived the reports of their death—from old-fashioned, sweep-hand watches (sales dramatically up in recent years) to typewriters (434,000 word processors and electronic typewriters sold in 2002, not to mention the classic manual machines still available from Olympia and Olivetti). Even mainframe computers, dismissed as expensive dinosaurs when the PC arrived, are still used by banks and other institutions for large-scale data processing. The behemoths offer speed, security, and reliability, Scigliano notes. So in the new millennium, IBM’s mainframe sales are once again on the rise.

EXCERPT

### *Against Consensus*

*I regard consensus science as an extremely pernicious development that ought to be stopped cold in its tracks. Historically, the claim of consensus has been the first refuge of scoundrels; it is a way to avoid debate by claiming that the matter is already settled. Whenever you hear the consensus of scientists agrees on something or other, reach for your wallet, because you’re being had.*

*Let’s be clear: The work of science has nothing whatever to do with consensus. Consensus is the business of politics. Science, on the contrary, requires only one investigator who happens to be right, which means that he or she has results that are verifiable by reference to the real world. In science consensus is irrelevant. What is relevant is reproducible results. The greatest scientists in history are great precisely because they broke with the consensus.*

*There is no such thing as consensus science. If it’s consensus, it isn’t science. If it’s science, it isn’t consensus. Period.*

—Michael Crichton, author of *The Andromeda Strain* and other novels, in a lecture at the California Institute of Technology, at [www.crichton-official.com/speeches/speeches\\_quote04.html](http://www.crichton-official.com/speeches/speeches_quote04.html)

## Where the Wild Things Are

“Atlantic Salmon, Endangered Species, and the Failure of Environmental Policies” by David Jenkins, in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (Oct. 2003), Univ. of Michigan, 102 Rackham Bldg., Ann Arbor, Mich. 48109-1070.

The wild Atlantic salmon has been on the decline for close to a century and a half, despite state and federal efforts to reverse the trend, and the species’ long-term prospects look poor. But how close to extinction the fish has become depends on the meaning of *wild*, among other things, according to Jenkins, executive director of the Roundhouse Institute for Field Studies, in Auburn, Maine.

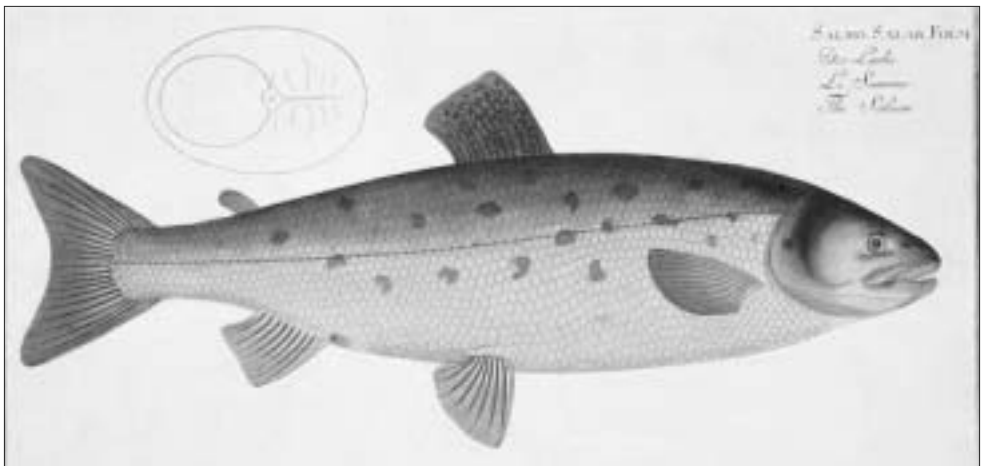
Once native to most major East Coast river systems, wild salmon, by almost any definition, can be found today only in a handful of rivers in northeastern Maine. For some researchers and environmental advocates, Jenkins says, “wild” salmon are those that “live their lives—from natal stream to ocean and back to their natal stream to spawn—outside of human influence,” have characteristics specific to particular rivers, and are genetically linked to similar, wild native ancestors. By this definition, only an estimated 100 wild salmon returned to seven Maine rivers in 2000. But by less restrictive definitions, a “wild” salmon can simply be one whose parents lived a natural life cycle, regardless of their genetic origins. That lets descendants of non-native stocked fish or fish that have escaped from salmon farms qualify as “wild,” potentially in large numbers.

In the 1990s, seeking to avoid having the species listed under the federal Endangered

Species Act, with all the burdens on agriculture, salmon farming, and timber that would involve, Maine governor Angus King forged a five-year plan to improve salmon habitats. Environmental groups and affected industries signed on in 1995, as did federal officials. By 1999, Maine had spent \$1 million to implement the plan, with another \$1 million earmarked for future spending.

But a lawsuit by two environmental groups led to a ruling in 2000 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service that the Maine Atlantic salmon was “endangered” after all. Under the services’ somewhat relaxed definition, a salmon does not need to be a genetically pure descendant of wild ancestors to qualify as *wild*. But the state government, using the most restrictive definition of *wild*, argued in the suit that the Maine wild salmon was *already* extinct. The remaining salmon were not in danger of extinction, so the Endangered Species Act would not apply.

The genetic tangle results in part from largely unsuccessful salmon recovery programs that have been underway in Maine since the late 19th century. It wasn’t until the late 1930s that biologists recognized that salmon returned to their home streams to spawn. By then, notes Jenkins, “many millions of fish had been stocked in rivers foreign to them.”



Atlantic Salmon, by Johan Friedrich August Krueger and Johan Friedrich Henning (1785)



Science alone can't really answer the question, What's a wild salmon? It's a pity, in Jenkins's view, that the debate over the future of Maine's salmon has to be conducted under the terms of the Endangered Species Act, which excludes consideration of anything but

science. As the Maine case shows, other concerns—about economic impact, local autonomy, and environmentalism—have a way of being covertly inserted into “scientific” arguments and further muddying the waters. Better to consider them openly.

## *Reproductive Tourism*

“Reproductive Tourism in Europe: Infertility and Human Rights” by Ruth Deech, in *Global Governance* (Oct. 2003), William S. Hein & Co., 1285 Main St., Buffalo, N.Y. 14209.

To the long list of conundrums caused by the rise of new biological technologies, add another: “reproductive tourism.” People who find their home country's rules on infertility treatments inconvenient, for example, are shopping around elsewhere for what they want. Does your national government bar you from choosing the sex of your baby? Maybe it's time for a little getaway to Rome, where the law won't stand in your way.

More serious problems are posed by the international trade in sperm. To reduce the risk of unknowing incest by offspring, for example, France allows sperm donors to “father” only five children. But Denmark allows 25 offspring from a single donor. If they import Danish sperm, the French must therefore accept the Danish risk level. Britain's sperm donors are anonymous, but women who conceive a child with donated Swedish sperm are told the biological father's identity.

Such problems are especially ticklish in Europe, where national laws and the emerging European Union law are full of potential conflicts, writes Deech, principal of St. Anne's College at Oxford University.

In Britain, for example, a young woman named Diane Blood, planning to conceive a child through artificial insemination, persuaded doctors to extract sperm from her comatose husband before he died. Under British law, the husband's lack of consent rendered her plan illegal. But Belgian law posed no such obstacle, and Mrs. Blood sought to export the sperm there. In the tangle of court cases that followed, British laws were weighed against European statutes limiting restrictions on trade among member nations and protecting the human rights of people such as the late Mr. Blood. In the end, the case was decided against Mrs. Blood on the narrow ground that exporting sperm merely to avoid national law was impermissible.

But the bigger issues won't go away, Deech warns, nor will the pressure driving “national standards toward the regional lowest common denominator.” International treaties setting standards in Europe and other regions could help, but “if regional arrangements are deemed unduly constraining, people can simply go farther afield.”

## *The High Price of Knowledge*

“The Promise and Peril of ‘Open Access’ ” by Lila Guterman, in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Jan. 30, 2004), 1255 23rd St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

Think you spend a lot on magazines? Imagine if subscriptions cost you as much as some scientific journals cost university libraries. *Brain Research*, which is among the most expensive, costs more than \$21,000 per year; at least 19 journals are priced at more than \$10,000 yearly. Rising fees and budget cuts have caused some libraries to drop as

many as one-third of their subscriptions. But many journals are indispensable to scientists—a fact, some librarians complain, that corporate publishers often exploit in setting subscription rates.

Last fall, librarians spotted a potential savior: “open-access” journals that publish original, full-text academic articles at no cost on the

Web. But open access is not as “open” as it appears, and it raises a host of new questions for universities, libraries, and publishers.

The big question, reports Guterman, a *Chronicle* science writer, is, Who will pay the bills? Unlike traditional publications, open-access journals ask their authors to pay a publication fee of as much as \$1,500. But more often than not this money comes from universities—and university libraries—not the author. Eventually, some critics say, this could cost schools—especially big research institutions—more than journal subscriptions ever did.

Open-access journals are already seeking new sources of financial support. One of the first organizations to advocate open access, the Public Library of Science (PLOS), founded by Nobel laureate Harold Varmus, imitates public radio, inviting frequent readers to become “members” by pledging their support. Another journal is experimenting with modified open access, keeping some work private, but allowing

researchers who want their work “open” to pay an author fee (so far, only one in five authors has opted to pay).

For the time being, open access has complicated things for almost everyone. It seems to have allowed some libraries to negotiate with publishers for lower subscription rates, but libraries are now faced with paying author fees *and* maintaining expensive subscriptions. Researchers have shown interest in open-access journals, but many end up submitting elsewhere for fear that the journals may not last or that they lack enough prestige to help in the battle for tenure.

Yet in its first eight hours online last October, the inaugural edition of PLOS’s flagship journal, *PLoS Biology*, received a surprising 500,000 hits—and many supporters would suggest that the “movement” has not yet reached critical mass. Journal subscriptions will probably never be free, but even in its nascent state, open access is shaking up the \$3.5 billion journal publishing industry.

## ARTS & LETTERS

### *The Sweetest Sounds*

“Richard Rodgers: Enigma Variations” by Stefan Kanfer, in *City Journal* (Autumn 2003),  
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017.

Richard Rodgers (1902–79) wrote some of the most melodic and inventive popular music of the 20th century, but nothing in his personality would have made you think him capable of that. The man who gave so much pleasure to others had little in his own life, and that remains the great puzzle about him. A lifelong hypochondriac, he was a dour and unhappy fellow, despite his great success and the riches it brought. He drank too much and was depressed too often. “No one in the [Rodgers] family (or out of it, for that matter) had ever seen the composer sit at the piano and play for sheer enjoyment,” writes Kanfer, a former editor of *Time* and the author of several novels and social histories. The piano was for business, the business was mostly Broadway, and “Broadway was his life.”

Some people are lucky in their friends. Rodgers was lucky in his collaborators. He found Lorenz Hart and Oscar Hammerstein II at key points in his career, and with the two

lyricists he ruled Broadway from the 1920s through the 1950s, fashioning songs that, on the basis of performances and record sales, are even today, Kanfer reports, the world’s most popular. The melodies still enchant, and the words delight (“Manhattan”), enthrall (“Oh, What a Beautiful Morning”), inspire (“You’ll Never Walk Alone”).

So Rodgers was a team player, but always the name *before* the conjunction. There was a Rodgers and Hart phase to his career and a Rodgers and Hammerstein phase (and a lesser phase with several other collaborators after Hammerstein’s death in 1960, including, just once, Stephen Sondheim). The first team gave the world smart, sassy, glittering, and bittersweet stuff, such as—in a single show, the 1937 *Babes in Arms*—“Where or When,” “My Funny Valentine,” “The Lady Is a Tramp,” and “I Wish I Were in Love Again.” For a single show of their own, *South Pacific* in 1949, the second team produced “Some

Enchanted Evening,” “Bali Ha’i,” “Younger Than Springtime,” and “There Is Nothin’ Like a Dame.”

Hart was an even more unhappy figure than Rodgers—“an undisciplined, unprepossessing man,” says Kanfer, “whose furtive homosexual liaisons invariably ended in sorrow.” No wonder that “his natural *métier* was disappointed romance and unfulfilled yearnings.” (“Nobody’s heart belongs to me. Heigh-ho! Who cares?”) Rodgers, on the other hand, “had a muscular work ethic; music flowed out of him like conversation.” Yet the unlikely pair went from success to success on Broadway in the 1920s and 1930s, until Hart simply hit the bottle too hard and began failing to show up for work. He died of pneumonia in 1943, at the age of 48, after being found drunk in the night rain, sitting on a Manhattan curb.

By then Rodgers was working with Hammerstein, who could not have been more different from Hart: “a devoted family man instantly accessible, disciplined by habit, and optimistic by nature.” Hammerstein caused Rodgers to dig deeper and, says Kanfer, “write

more serious and sustained melodies,” such as that for “If I Loved You” (*Carousel*, 1945), as ecstatic a love song as any ever sung on Broadway. Their collaboration began with the revolutionary *Oklahoma* in 1943 and ended with *The Sound of Music* in 1959. Of the latter, the critics disapproved: “Not only too sweet for words, but almost too sweet for music,” said the *New York Herald Tribune* reviewer. But the public adored the show and the subsequent movie, and there’s still no escaping “Do-Re-Mi.” After 1959, Rodgers found no other Hart or Hammerstein, and for one show, *No Strings* (1962), he wrote both words and music. So “The Sweetest Sounds” is entirely his.

When the man whom Kanfer calls a “pantheon figure in American music, indeed, in world music,” died, his body was cremated. “There is no grave, no statue, no marker; the location of his ashes is a secret. As, finally, is the musician himself. What had troubled him from the early days has never definitely become clear. . . . That his mystery endures matters little beside his sweet, ever-enduring melodies.”



Composer Richard Rodgers (at the keyboard) and lyricist Oscar Hammerstein II in 1953.

## Dvorák's Mission

"Dvorák in America: Finding a New Voice" by Scott Ethier, in *Humanities* (Nov.–Dec. 2003), P.O. Box 371954, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15250-7954.

When Jeanette Thurber invited Czech composer Antonin Dvorák to teach at her National Conservatory in New York in 1892, she hoped for nothing less than a transformation of American classical music. Although writers such as Walt Whitman and Herman Melville had given an American voice to literature, America's composers were still writing music that was virtually indistinguishable from that of their European models. Could Dvorák, who had taken inspiration from various Slavic folk traditions to become "one of Europe's most respected composers," teach American composers how to create music from their own traditions?

The early signs seemed promising, writes Ethier, himself a composer and a freelance writer. The New York press lauded Dvorák on his arrival, with one journalist finding in his rags-to-fame life (the composer was the son of a Bohemian butcher) a "story of manifest destiny" that should "keep alive popular belief in the reality of that precious attribute called genius." Dvorák himself found much to admire in America's music, particularly that of African Americans and American Indians.

According to Ethier, Dvorák wove these influences into his best-known symphony, *From the New World* (1893)—the most significant of

the many new works he composed in New York. "The first movement features a closing theme similar to 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot,' and the second movement contains the signature English horn melody reminiscent of the spiritual 'Deep River,'" Ethier says, while Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's poem, "Song of Hiawatha," provides the inspiration for the Indian-tinged melodies of other sections.

The *New World* symphony went on to become a standard of the modern orchestral repertoire, but it failed to transform American classical music. New York critics generally praised the work when it was premiered at Carnegie Hall in December 1893, but Boston critics savaged a later performance. "Such Negro melodies as I have heard I should be sorry to see become the basis of an American school of composition," sniffed composer George Chadwick.

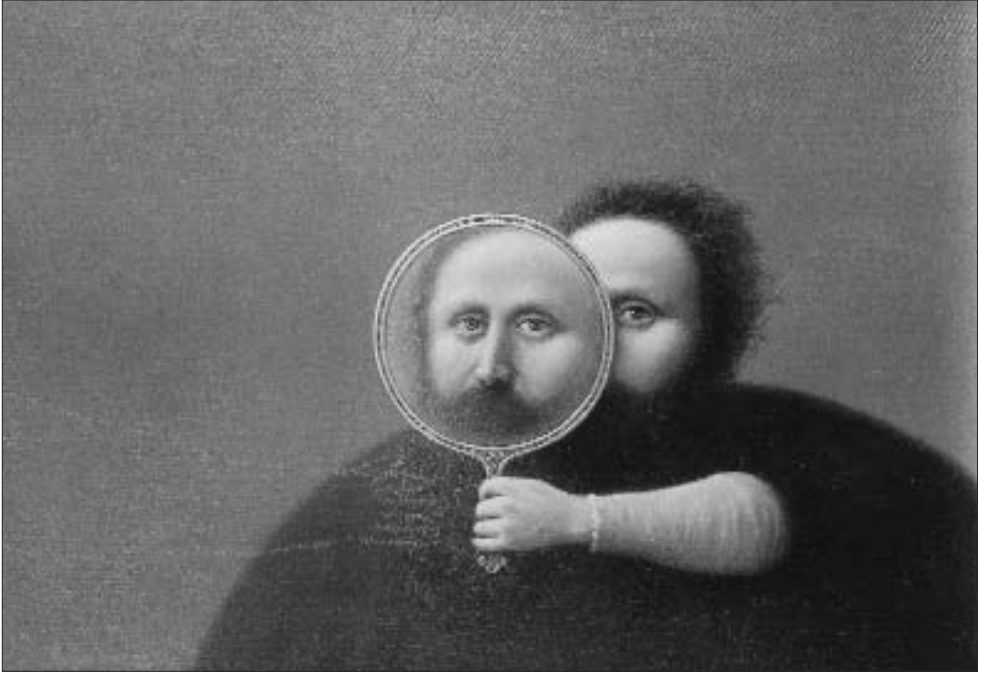
Dvorák returned to Europe in 1894 and continued to write pieces drawn from his American experience. A new music did emerge in America within a few years, but it wasn't inspired by Dvorák. The new sound was ragtime, the creation of Scott Joplin and a host of other contemporary composers. By the 1920s, when Dvorák's students were reaching maturity, America had finally discovered its definitive sound: jazz.

### EXCERPT

## *The New Art Appreciation*

*The enormous popularity of photographs of Ground Zero suggests that many people were able to appreciate the striking visual qualities of the awful devastation, at least when it was framed and edited by the lens of a camera, the viewfinder being the modern-day equivalent of the picturesque. Indeed, the most arresting pictures—one need only think of the hauntingly beautiful images of New York City firemen encased, like sculpture, in white dust—made those of us who admired them heartlessly forget what we were looking at. Apparently, the habit of taking pleasure in visual composition alone is now so deeply ingrained that not only aesthetes but even ordinary people are capable of seeing beauty unproblematically in places where it has no right, morally speaking, to exist.*

—Rochelle Gurstein, author of *The Repeal of Reticence* (1996), in *The New Republic* (Feb. 23, 2004)



Alfredo Castaneda's *When the Mirror Dreams with Another Image* (1988)

## *What's in a Face?*

"Loss of Face" by Charles Baxter, in *The Believer* (Nov. 2003),  
826 Valencia St., San Francisco, Calif. 94110.

Though the face once seemed a window to the soul, it's gotten fogged up. How one appears no longer reveals how one is. But the blank look yields curious results for both the novelist and, possibly, the ethicist as well, writes Baxter, author of the prize-winning novel *The Feast of Love* (2000) and professor of English at the University of Minnesota.

Until around the turn of the 20th century, most people thought physiognomy reflected character. And even when it didn't (as with snub-nosed, beautiful-souled Socrates), they thought that it should. As Montaigne said, appearance should not be "the shoe made of polished leather, but the well-made shoe that reveals the shape of the foot." The Victorian novelists—Dickens, Eliot, Hardy—introduced the men and women of their books with assured and comprehensive facial interpretations.

But America in the 20th century entered what Baxter calls a "post-face" age: The exterior no longer revealed the interior. With the deal-making of the businessman came

the triumph of the poker face, or the sly face, or any face but the real one. "Life has become a theater and there are actors everywhere," says Baxter. The evils of racism and other forms of discrimination caused novelists to lose faith in the ability of the face to say anything meaningful about an individual.

It's true that every child still learns to read faces as a basic social "survival skill." And even when you think that you can't judge a book by its cover, secretly you "may believe that you still can." In the literary world, too, there are some holdouts. Saul Bellow, for example, still assumes "that you can tell who a person is simply by looking at him (or her) carefully enough." Jennifer Egan's *Look at Me* (2001) and Siri Hustvedt's *What I Loved* (2003) are notable for their "considerable concentration on what remains of the face."

Yet those are exceptions. The absence of the face from the modern novel can't be explained as a simple byproduct of literary innovation. Writers may have cast their lot

with Henry James, who thought that you never “get the full sense of the person at first glance.” Or maybe dwelling on the details of the face has “acquired a creepy voyeuristic overtone.” Then, too, we’ve always known that “clothes and body language may be a sign of artifice . . . now [that] the face and the rest of the body may be completely ‘engineered.’”

Baxter sympathizes with the modern skepticism toward appearances. But just as publications should continue to print photographs and painters paint portraits, nov-

elists should keep physiognomic description in their literary repertoire, he argues, especially description of those faces that “we don’t want to see . . . at all.” The face is what most brings the sense of humanity—if no other characteristic—to an audience’s attention. Baxter cites the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, who “argues that the face is the unique physical presence that provokes the [audience’s] obligations” to the person with the face. It’s always ineluctably particular, never abstract or theoretical. Nobody’s just another pretty face.

#### OTHER NATIONS

## *Saudi Arabia’s War Within*

*A Survey of Recent Articles*

**D**id the two suicide bombings in Riyadh last year, in which 52 people were killed, turn Saudi Arabia into a resolute U.S. partner in the war against terrorism? Washington claims so, and the ensuing crackdown on radical Islamic militants in the kingdom seems to support the claim.

But the basic situation hasn’t changed much, maintains Michael Scott Doran, a professor of Near Eastern studies at Princeton University, writing in *Foreign Affairs* (Jan.–Feb. 2004). The powerful Saudi religious establishment continues to have the same enemies list as Al Qaeda (except that Al Qaeda’s list also includes the Saudi royal family). The religious leaders are locked in an intense struggle with Western-oriented elements of the elite. Crown Prince Abdullah, a de facto regent during the long illness of his octogenarian half-brother King Fahd, “tilts toward the liberal reformers and seeks a rapprochement with the United States.” His powerful half-brother, Prince Nayef, the interior minister and master of the secret police, sides with the clerics, says Doran.

So intense is the struggle, Doran believes, that it’s quite possible that “the jihad against the United States is actually a continuation of domestic politics by other means.” Saudi Arabia’s fundamentalist Wahhabi religious establishment “hates the Shiites more than any other group, including Americans or even Jews,” regarding them as dangerous

heretics. Radical Wahhabi leaders believe that the Shiite minorities in Saudi Arabia and other countries are conspiring with the United States and Jews to eradicate their “true” Islam. By inciting hatred against the United States and linking Shiites to a foreign demon, the Wahhabis are able to weaken reformers and other domestic foes who would ease up on the Shiites.

Economic crisis is exacerbating Saudi Arabia’s tensions, according to Doran. “The economy cannot keep pace with population growth, the welfare state is rapidly deteriorating, and regional and sectarian resentments are rising to the fore.” Political reform is needed, but “a profound cultural schizophrenia” prevents agreement on specifics.

In 1981, when oil was selling for nearly \$40 a barrel, the annual per capita income in the kingdom was more than \$28,000; oil is now back near \$40, but income is below \$7,000. The difference is due, in part at least, to a population explosion, says Robert Baer in *The Atlantic Monthly* (May 2003). Saudi Arabia’s birthrate is about 2.5 times the U.S. rate. Half the population of about 19 million (not counting five million foreign workers) is under 18.

“Saudi Arabia operates the world’s most advanced welfare state, [an] anti-Marxist non-workers’ paradise,” writes Baer, a former U.S. Central Intelligence Agency operative. “Saudis get free health care and interest-free

home and business loans. College education is free within the kingdom, and heavily subsidized for those who study abroad. Electricity, domestic air travel, gasoline, and telephone service are available at far below cost. Many of the kingdom's best and brightest have little motivation to do any work at all."

Foreign workers hold 70 percent of the jobs in the kingdom, and 90 percent of the private-sector jobs. "For decades, the Saudi government has been attempting to replace foreigners with native workers," writes journalist Lawrence Wright in *The New Yorker* (Jan. 5, 2004), "but it has run into resistance from employers who don't want to hire their own people. 'Saudis aren't qualified,' Prince Sultan bin Salman bin Abdul Aziz, the secretary-general for tourism, told me. 'Showing up for a job is not a priority for them. Even the culture of working as a team is not there.'"

**T**he Saudi government used to hire nearly all university graduates, until oil prices plunged in the mid-1980s. "Unemployment and idleness became central facts of life for young Saudi men," Wright observes. It's not surprising that all but four of the 19 hijackers in the 9/11 terrorist attacks were Saudis. Al Qaeda's Osama bin Laden "gave young men with no control over their lives an identity, and a wanton chance to make history."

Saudi Arabia's atmosphere of extreme sexual repression may be another incubator of radicalism, Wright speculates. "The most unnerving feature of Saudi life" is "the self-

effacement of an entire sex, and, in consequence, of sexuality itself. The only places I was sure to see women were at the mall and the grocery store, and even there they seemed spookily out of place. Many of them wore black gloves, and their faces were covered entirely. It felt to me as if the women had died, and only their shades remained." According to Wright, it's not hard to see why young men such as the 9/11 hijackers might be "propelled in part by the notion of being rewarded in the afterlife with the company of virgins."

Last year, reports staff writer Faye Bowers in the *Christian Science Monitor* (Jan. 8–13, 2004), the government began stressing the virtues of tolerance and moderation to the clergy, reining in the zealous religious police, and purging textbooks of "objectionable references to Jews, Christians, and Hindus, and the inappropriate use of the word 'jihad.'" The government also arrested three clerics for issuing fatwas promoting terrorist activity; all three went on TV to recant their views.

Even so, it would be as hard for Riyadh to truly divorce radical Wahhabism as it was for the Soviet Union to renounce communism, contends Michael Doran. "Clearly, there are forces in the kingdom who would be willing to support the efforts of a Saudi Gorbachev, but it is not clear when or whether one will appear. Wahhabism is the foundation of an entire political system, and everyone with a stake in the status quo can be expected to rally around it when push comes to shove."

## *The Allende Affair*

"Kissinger and Chile: The Myth That Will Not Die" by Mark Falcoff, in *Commentary* (Nov. 2003), 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

The 1973 military coup d'état that deposed Chile's president Salvador Allende, ushering in a decade and a half of repression during which more than 3,000 Chileans were murdered or mysteriously "disappeared," is often blamed by the Left on Henry Kissinger and the United States. Journalist Christopher Hitchens has made the case for the prosecution in a BBC documentary and other forums. Falcoff, a Latin

America specialist at the American Enterprise Institute, rises to the defense.

In the presidential election of September 4, 1970, three years before the coup (and his death), Allende, a Marxist with "strong Soviet-bloc and Cuban connections," says Falcoff, received 36.3 percent of the vote—1.4 percentage points more than his nearest rival—and the Chilean Congress was expected to confirm him as the winner on October 24.



*Salvador Allende shaking hands with Chileans shortly before his overthrow by Augusto Pinochet in 1973.*

In Washington, President Richard Nixon was “deeply distressed” at this turn of events, Falcoff notes, and ordered the Central Intelligence Agency to prevent an Allende presidency. Covert efforts were made, but without success. Roberto Viaux, a cashiered Chilean general, was eager to take on the challenge but was judged “not a good bet,” according to Falcoff. On October 15, national security adviser Kissinger “ordered the Viaux coup ‘turned off.’”

Hitchens contends that Kissinger merely wanted “deniability.” The October 15 memo of a meeting in which he took part and a cable the next day from the CIA to its station in Santiago directed that Viaux be warned against “precipitate action” but did not “turn off” the general; if anything, they incited him “to redouble his efforts.” Falcoff says there is no evidence that Kissinger saw the CIA cable, and cites the transcript of an October 15 phone conversation in which Kissinger told Nixon, “This looks hopeless. I turned it off. Nothing would be worse than an abortive coup.” Nixon responded, “Just tell him to do nothing.”

In the event, Viaux continued with the scheme, as did the CIA station in Santiago. Just why the plot went forward is “not clear,” according to Falcoff, but Kissinger “seems to

have been unaware” of it. Blocking the plotters’ way was General René Schneider, commander in chief of the Chilean army, who refused to go along with their scheme. The plan was to kidnap him and take him to Argentina for a while. But Viaux’s men bungled the kidnapping and ended up murdering Schneider on October 22. Ironically, by turning Schneider into a martyr for the Chilean army’s “constitutionalist” traditions, Falcoff says, the assassination helped assure the orderly transfer of power to the Allende administration.

Despite the tough talk in the White House in 1970, writes Falcoff, once Allende was in office, “the thrust of U.S. policy shifted to sustaining a democratic opposition and an independent press until Allende could be defeated in the presidential elections scheduled for 1976.” The “real causes” of the 1973 coup, he believes, are to be found not in Washington but in “the devastating collapse of the Chilean economy that took place during the Allende presidency, as well as in Chile’s increasingly polarized political environment.” The Allende administration itself, he concludes, brought about the situation that “drove the military into action” and led to General Augusto Pinochet’s murderous right-wing dictatorship.



# CURRENT BOOKS

Reviews of new and noteworthy nonfiction

## *Hayek's Incomplete Victory*

HAYEK'S CHALLENGE:

*An Intellectual Biography of F. A. Hayek.*

By Bruce Caldwell. Univ. of Chicago Press.

489 pp. \$55

*Reviewed by Francis Fukuyama*

The intellectual distance the Western world has traversed over the past two generations in how we think about markets, the state, and economic policy is nowhere better illustrated than in the changing reputation of the Austrian economist Friedrich A. Hayek (1899–1992). In the decade after publication of Hayek's tract *The Road to Serfdom* (1944), in which he argued that expansion of the European welfare state was of a piece with spreading totalitarianism, he was regarded as little more than a right-wing crank, a provocateur who dressed up his own normative preferences for markets and individual freedom in the language of science. Today, by contrast, Hayek wears a richly deserved mantle of intellectual respectability. Winner of the Nobel Prize in economics in 1974, he is rightly seen as the intellectual godfather of the pro-market revolution that swept the West with Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. He has spawned an enormous following that extends well beyond the social sciences.



*Friedrich Hayek in 1974*

And yet, even those who claim to admire Hayek rarely understand that many of his most important ideas are critical not just of state intervention and planning as practiced by the Left, but of dominant currents in contemporary neoclassical economics as championed by the Right. Bruce Caldwell's impressive new biography pulls together these themes and shows how the second critique logically grows out of the first.

All the threads in Hayek's thought came together in the so-called socialist calculation debate of the late 1930s, in which he and other Austrian school economists challenged the view that centralized planning would yield greater economic growth. In such works as "Economics and Knowledge" and "The Use of Knowledge in Society," Hayek's critique of socialism was, at its core, empirical rather than normative. He argued that human knowledge is inevitably partial: There are limits to rationality, and what any individual knows tends to be local in nature. This is particularly true in a macroeconomy, which depends on

the interactions of thousands, even millions, of individual producers and consumers.

The problem with socialism, Hayek argued, is that it seeks to replace the dispersed knowledge of those myriad actors with that of a single, omniscient planner. Socialist central planning cannot work because it attempts the impossible: using a static equilibrium model to capture unfathomably complex inputs and outputs characterized by dynamic, constantly shifting equilibria. In market economies, by contrast, the price mechanism provides information about preferences and relative scarcities to thousands of agents, whose continual exchanges produce a socially beneficial if unplanned outcome.

At the time of the socialist calculation debate, the Soviet economy was growing rapidly and the capitalist West was reeling from the Great Depression, leading many to consider socialism the superior system. Empirical validation of the Hayek thesis would have to await later decades, when centrally planned economies began to display huge dysfunctions arising from precisely the kinds of informational problems he had outlined. Today, virtually no one believes that the coordinating function of the price mechanism in a free market can be replaced by central planners using even the most powerful supercomputers. And we are much more likely to accept Hayek's broader insight that social order—not simply markets but morality, social norms, the rule of law, and the like—is often the spontaneous and unplanned consequence of the interactions of dispersed individuals with limited knowledge, not the work of a single designer.

But Hayek also offered a far more profound critique of the limits of human reason, which extended to the models that would come to underlie postwar American neoclassical economics and, thus, the economics that we teach university students to this day. Caldwell explains that a constant theme in Hayek's writing—from his early critique of "scientism" in his "Abuse of Reason" project to his last published work, *The Fatal Conceit* (1988)—is a critique not just of real-world planners but of positivist social scientists who aim to turn the study of

human behavior into something as empirical and predictive as the physical sciences.

Like contemporary neoclassical economists, Hayek was a "methodological individualist" who believed that the behavior of groups needs to be explained in terms of the interactions of the individuals who make up the collectivity. But his view of individual choice was far more nuanced and complex than the typical neoclassical model of economic man. He understood that individuals are neither omniscient nor fully rational and are constrained by institutions, norms, and traditions that can be understood only through a study of history.

As Caldwell notes, Hayek initially thought the dividing line between possible and impossible positivism lay in the distinction between natural sciences and social sciences, but by the 1950s he had come to understand that the issue was really one of complexity. A positivist, predictive science is possible only for phenomena, whether human or natural, that are relatively simple—particle physics, for example. One can never fully model and predict complex phenomena such as the spontaneous orders produced by the interactions of simpler agents. These orders include the human brain, whose higher functions cannot possibly be inferred from its physical substratum, as well as ecosystems and, of course, markets, cultures, and other human institutions.

Hayek, in other words, fully anticipated the rise of what we now know as the study of complex adaptive systems, or complexity science. Drawing much of its inspiration from evolutionary biology, this approach is today practiced in such places as the Santa Fe Institute, a multidisciplinary think tank that uses agent-based simulations to model the emergence of complex behaviors on the part of larger collectivities. But Hayek would doubtless disapprove of the research agenda in much of the complexity field, which seeks to use these models to produce deterministic, predictive outcomes.

One of the most interesting parts of Caldwell's book is the epilogue, which quotes Hayek toward the end of his life as saying he regretted his failure to return to his critique of Milton Friedman's *Essays in Positive Eco-*

nomics (1953) as much as his failure to revisit his critique of John Maynard Keynes. Hayek's critique had not to do, of course, with Friedman's preference for markets and limited government, but rather with his belief that economics could be turned into a rigorously empirical and predictive science. Caldwell notes that while econometric methodology has become far more sophisticated, and game-theoretic models ever more complex, economics' promise to cumulate knowledge about universal laws of human behavior has remained largely unfulfilled. Thus, the highly mathematical and ahistorical turn that academic economics has taken in recent years would have been, for Hayek, as much an abuse of reason as the socialist planning of earlier generations.

*Hayek's Challenge* is, as its subtitle implies, a purely intellectual biography that seeks to interpret the body of Hayek's written work. One finds virtually no details of Hayek's personal life—why he divorced his wife, or how he reacted to being awarded the Nobel Prize alongside the leftist Gunnar Myrdal. Instead, the book begins with a lengthy and informative intellectual history of Austrian economics, touching on such issues as the debate between Carl Menger and Gustav Schmoller of the German historical school. This exposition is critical to understanding the intellectual milieu in which Hayek studied, as well as interesting in

itself because it anticipates the controversies that continue to divide contemporary positivist social science from more historical and ethnographic approaches to understanding things human.

Caldwell, an economic historian at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, ends his book by plaintively noting that the un-Hayekian agenda of turning economics into a rigorous science has driven all other approaches, including the study of economic history, out of American economics departments. But the damage done by this positivist approach is, in fact, much greater. Economic methodology has colonized political science too, eliminating individuals with knowledge of real peoples, cultures, and history—for example, experts on the Middle East—from the country's top schools. We are thus presented with a rather depressing picture of human progress. Although the particular brand of intellectual hubris that elevated central planning over markets is gone, other forms persist, and indeed have grown stronger. Hayek's challenge remains an open one.

>FRANCIS FUKUYAMA is Bernard L. Schwartz Professor of International Political Economy at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. His books include *The End of History and the Last Man* (1991), *The Great Disruption: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order* (1999), and *Our Posthuman Future: Consequences of the Biotechnology Revolution* (2002).

## *Cities by Design*

*THE NEW CIVIC ART:  
Elements of Town Planning.*

By Andrés Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Robert Alminana.  
Rizzoli. 384 pp. \$85

*Reviewed by Witold Rybczynski*

A title such as *The New Civic Art* raises the question, What was the *old* civic art? The answer lies in *The American Vitruvius: An Architects' Handbook of Civic Art* (1922), a 298-page practitioners' atlas of urban design. More than a glossary and less than a primer, *Civic Art*, as it was popularly

known, includes some 1,200 plates—town plans, building plans, diagrams, drawings, sketches, photographs—culled from a multitude of sources. The authors, Werner Hegemann, a German city planner, and Elbert Peets, an American landscape architect, made no attempt to provide a continu-

ous text, so reading *Civic Art* is a bit like leafing through a compendious, wonderfully eclectic scrapbook.

According to Hegemann and Peets, the design of cities—the “civic art” of the title—should reflect a “living heritage from classic, medieval and Renaissance times.” They traced this heritage from Trajan’s Forum in Rome and Renaissance piazzas to famous city spaces such as the Place de la Concorde in Paris and the squares of Madrid, Vienna, and Berlin, and then segued into American examples. When it came to town planning, American architects had traditionally sought inspiration in Europe, especially Paris, where many of them had spent their formative years studying at the École des Beaux-Arts. *Civic Art* showed models closer to home: Jefferson’s magisterial University of Virginia, Frederick Law Olmsted’s plan for the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893, Daniel Burnham’s vision for Chicago, and McKim, Mead & White’s great Municipal Building in New York City.

The same year that Hegemann and Peets published their book, an unknown Swiss architect and painter, Le Corbusier, exhibited his visionary plan to replace parts of Paris with huge, freestanding skyscrapers, producing “a contemporary city for three million.” Le Corbusier had sent his proposal to Hegemann, who responded that it struck him as economically unsound and aesthetically monotonous. But Le Corbusier persevered, and his doctrinaire teachings eventually replaced the more catholic approach of Hegemann’s generation. As urbanism became more and more futuristic and disassociated from the past, learning from history appeared hopelessly old-fashioned. Books such as *Civic Art* languished on library shelves, largely unread. A 1972 edition of *Civic Art* ended up remaindered—which, unexpectedly, led to the book’s second spring.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the failures of urban renewal and modernist planning, as well as the advent of postmodernism, encouraged a revival of interest in the work of early-20th-century town planners. For students and young architects, the inexpensive, remaindered *Civic Art* was a treasure trove of useful information. One of those who discovered tra-

ditional town planning was Andrés Duany, who saw his first copy of *Civic Art* in 1978. In the years that followed, Duany and his wife, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, planned the Florida resort village of Seaside, promoted traditional neighborhood development, cofounded the Congress for a New Urbanism, and became the best-known and most accomplished town planners in the United States.

Now, after more than two decades of practice, Duany and Plater-Zyberk, together with Robert Alminana, are tipping their hats to their forebears. *The New Civic Art* could have been titled *Civic Art II*, for it is not an update but a sequel. Six years in the making, this ambitious project has grown well beyond the size of the original, with more than 1,400 images and 384 pages. Duany and his coauthors have consciously copied *Civic Art*’s encyclopedic format, its international scope, its blending of past and present, and its eclecticism, yet *The New Civic Art* is a manual, not a history book. Duany has described the contents as “anything old or new, good or bad, so long as it’s relevant to today.” Some novel juxtapositions result: the Disney Company’s new town of Celebration, Florida, and the Islamic city of Qairouan in Tunisia; Western Plaza in Washington, D.C., and the Plaza del Toros in Barcelona; Raymond Unwin’s Hampstead Garden suburb outside London and Coral Gables, Florida.

Most readers will discover something here. I learned about the interesting new towns built by the Italian Fascist regime in the 1930s. The Piazza della Vittoria, in Brescia, shows how art deco buildings can be successfully integrated into a medieval urban center. And my favorite photograph is an aerial view of the famous Bauhaus building, designed by Walter Gropius during 1925–26. The modernist icon, usually seen as a sculpture in the round, is shown to have been carefully fitted into the German town of Dessau, facing a central square and bridging the main street leading to the railway station. Who’d have thought?

The plates are accompanied by extended captions, most written by Duany, that range from instructive and provocative to arch and sometimes smarmy. New urbanism is often

attacked for being stylistically retrograde and sentimental about the past. In an apparent attempt to defuse this argument, *The New Civic Art* plumbs a variety of non-traditional architectural sources, including not only Gropius but Alvar Aalto and Louis Kahn, as well as more recent practitioners such as Peter Eisenman, Michael Graves, and Rem Koolhaas. The authors even feature a photograph of



*A model of the proposed Daniel Libeskind building to be constructed at the World Trade Center site in New York City.*

Frank Gehry's Bilbao Guggenheim on the jacket, although it is unclear what this expressionist building has to do with civic art, old or new.

Like its predecessor, *The New Civic Art* is about urban design, with the emphasis squarely on design. "Expert design is a necessary element of urbanism," the authors write in the introduction. This sounds obvious, but it bears repeating. Since the 1950s, city planning has become a bureaucratic profession, based on the belief that good plans come from the right policy decisions, tempered by an inclusive public consultation process. The mediocre urban settings that have resulted demonstrate the fallacy of this approach. The correct disposition of buildings to create beautiful urban places, whether streets, civic centers, or public spaces, requires design expertise. Whence comes this expertise? "The methodology of emulating successful models is at the heart of successful design," argue the authors, who contend that good urbanism is derived from historical examples.

But isn't good urban design about originality, innovation, and personal invention? In

the debate about the future of the World Trade Center site, the public has wanted such fireworks. Under planner Daniel Libeskind, the result has been a cacophonous scheme that, even in model form, is confused and confusing. Recently, architectural superstars such as Jean Nouvel and Norman Foster have been tossed in the mix, as if adding individual buildings of striking appear-

ance could save the situation.

*The New Civic Art* is unequivocal in rejecting this viewpoint. "There is a contradiction between unbridled expression and a viable urban environment," writes Duany. He illustrates this maxim with a view of Nexus World, a new residential project in Fukuoka, Japan. This ambitious development brought together some of the most celebrated architects in the world, among them Pritzker Prize winners Koolhaas of the Netherlands and Christian de Portzamparc of France, as well as Steven Holl of the United States and Arata Isozaki of Japan. The result is a grouping of interesting and unusual buildings that doesn't quite cohere—precisely because the parts are so unusual. "Architects who permit themselves to be assessed primarily as artists usually find themselves ignoring the disciplines and concerns of urbanism," observes Duany in *The New Civic Art*. Libeskind and company should read this book.

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## ARTS & LETTERS

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**REPORT FROM A  
PARISIAN PARADISE:**  
*Essays from France, 1925–1939.*

By Joseph Roth. Norton.  
301 pp. \$24.95

When I lived in Paris during the 1950s, I wished I had been there a couple of decades earlier. That was the era when the effulgent city radiated with Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, Josephine Baker, Henry Miller, Jean Renoir, Picasso, Chagall, Dadaists, and surrealists. I ingenuously imagined myself mingling with them on the terraces of their favorite cafés, the Flora and Deux-Magots in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, or the Dome and Select on the Boulevard Montparnasse. Or we might dine at such fancy restaurants as Chez Maxim's or the Grand Vefour. Joseph Roth's essays evoke that exhilarating time, and I devoured them.

A Jew born in 1894 in Galioia, at the frontier of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Roth moved first to Germany, arrived in the *ville lumière* in 1925, and died there in 1939. France enthralled him from the start. He tirelessly roamed its towns and villages, hobnobbing with artists, cabdrivers, merchants, peasants, priests, teachers, and workers, and poking into studios, markets, farms, churches, schools, and factories. His narratives, primarily published in the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, are meticulously and at times tediously detailed. Paid by the word, he was one of the most affluent journalists of the period.

Scanning the Marseilles harbor, he counts the ships, lists their flags, and itemizes the cargo piled on the docks: "crates, beams, wheels, levers, tubs, engines, ladders, tongs, hammers . . . Bengal tigers, hyenas, goats, Angora cats, oxen, and Turkish carpets." He explores the Côte d'Azur and climbs over the Roman ruins in Nîmes, Arles, and Aix-en-Provence. Visiting the seaside resorts Deauville and Trouville, he observes the aristocracy and haute bourgeoisie in their swish villas, playing baccarat at the casino or riding in carriages along the beach, a scene Proust had brilliantly portrayed. Roth can make Walt Whitman seem laconic.

Naturally, Roth was intrigued by the Jews in Paris. Many were immigrants from Eastern

Europe, and, he reported, they rejoiced in freedoms they had been denied in their native lands. They attended Yiddish theater, frequented kosher bistros, and were molested only by a lunatic fringe of boisterous right-wing neoroyalists "without influence." To the extent that anti-Semitism existed, it was far less brutal and widespread than the Jews had experienced elsewhere. In France, Roth rosily maintained, they "are perfectly happy." He was mistaken. In 1940, a year after his death, the Germans marched into Paris and, with the complicity of their French collaborators, deported 75,000 Jews to concentration camps. Hardly any of those responsible were ever brought to justice.

Suffused with enthusiasm for his "paradise," Roth failed to perceive the troubles plaguing France. The flower of its youth had been slaughtered during World War I. As a result of the bloodbath, men were scarce and the birthrate sharply declined, leaving the country dominated by the elderly and infirm. Persistent strikes and bitter industrial disputes crippled the economy. Mismanaged by corrupt politicians and bureaucrats jockeying for power, the government was a shambles. Yet the French adamantly refused to recognize these realities, and instead nursed the illusion of grandeur—a conviction they still hold today.

But it would be churlish to impugn Roth for his myopia. Like other foreigners before and since, he idealized France, and, as an excursion into nostalgia, his pieces are irresistible.

—STANLEY KARNOW

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**LONE STAR LITERATURE:**  
*From the Red River to the Rio Grande.*  
Edited by Don Graham. Norton.  
733 pp. \$29.95

David Crockett called it the "garden spot of the world." Union general Philip Sheridan said that if he owned hell and Texas, he'd "rent out Texas and live in hell." Crockett and Sheridan fairly bracket the reactions of outsiders to Texas; the feelings of Texans themselves are more complicated but no less extreme.

Don Graham, who teaches American literature at the University of Texas at Austin, has sampled the collective mind of Texans and

gathered three-score pieces of writing about the Lone Star State. Most are short stories or parts of novels; several are essays. Though the Texas mystique developed during the 19th century, Graham largely restricts himself to the 20th. This leaves enough of the old Texas—including Andy Adams on a waterless cattle drive, O. Henry on the politics of cowboy art, and Walter Prescott Webb on the Comanches—to satisfy traditionalists, but allows Graham to illustrate how the Texas experience diversified after the discovery of oil at Spindletop in 1901. The voices are as varied as the people of the state.

Graham's Texas is divided into four parts: the West, the South, the Border, and, reflecting the fact that Texas has become one of the most urbanized states, Town and City. Dorothy Scarborough writes of the wind on the West Texas plains, and how it blows away beauty and youth and dreams. Katherine Anne Porter looks east to find the memories that fill the region that was a salient of the Cotton Kingdom. C. C. White's memories of the same district come from the other side of the color line. Ray Gonzalez watches immigrants cross the Rio Grande at El Paso, defying authority as immigrants to Texas have done since the Comanches and Americans pushed into Spanish and Mexican Texas during the early 19th century. Robert Caro—no Texan but a New Yorker on an extended visa—writes about the Hill Country, where Lyndon Johnson grew up without electricity and vowed to ease the burden of women like those who reared him.

Larry L. King ponders the oft-noticed habit of Texans to become more Texan after leaving the state. "Texas remains in my mind's eye that place to which I shall eventually return to rake the dust for my formative tracks," he writes, "that place where one hopes to grow introspective and wise as well as old." Molly Ivins is less lyrical and more put out as she describes the varieties of Texas sexism: "They used to say that Texas was hell on women and horses—I don't know why they stopped."

Short stories and essays anthologize well; bits of novels are trickier. Mary Karr's piece from *The Liars' Club* (1995) is hilariously self-contained, but Billy Lee Brammer's *The Gay Place* (1961), the finest novel of Texas politics, is woven too tightly for clean excerpts. Brammer has to be included, and Graham does his best, but the ragged edges show. In this case, the

plea of all anthologists applies with special force: Go read the original.

Graham is a gentle guide to what he calls the "archeological site" of Texas literature. He suggests themes but otherwise lets visitors ramble. "Readers may make their own discoveries and connections, and they are welcome to whatever insights may arise." It's a rich plot, worth returning to again and again.

—H. W. BRANDS

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**GODARD:**

*A Portrait of the Artist at Seventy.*

By Colin MacCabe. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 432 pp. \$25

As a filmmaker, Jean-Luc Godard, éminence grise of the European avant-garde, presents stumbling blocks. More essayist than storyteller, he has always made films that subordinate narrative to ideas, or else discard narrative altogether. The ideas unfold unpredictably, through images and techniques that are, by turns, evocative, smart-alecky, and silly. To Godard, contradictory impressions represent not incoherence but fidelity to life's tumult. For a time, especially in the 1960s, every new Godard film was an event.

Born in 1930 to a prosperous family, Godard left his home in Nyon, Switzerland, at 16 to attend the Lycée Buffon in Paris. A lackadaisical student, he turned to petty thievery, got arrested, and was disowned by his parents. Godard soaked in Paris's rich cinema culture at Henri Langlois's revered Cinémathèque and the Ciné-Club du Quartier Latin, and got to know Eric Rohmer, Claude Chabrol, and



*Jean-Luc Godard on the set in 1968*

## Current Books

François Truffaut. This movie-mad bunch became critics for the influential journal *Cahiers du cinéma* and then filmmakers of the French New Wave.

Along with retelling that story, Colin MacCabe, a professor of English and film at the University of Pittsburgh, places Godard in another familiar tale: Scion of a cushy background finds Marx and rebels against the bourgeoisie. While films such as *Une femme mariée* (1964) and *Masculin féminin* (1966) probe the topic of consumerism with a relatively detached eye, *Week-end* (1967) depicts France as a decaying nation overrun by greed. As MacCabe notes, *Week-end* is the work of “someone who has reached a point of total disgust and rejection of his own society.” The film closes with the words “End of Cinema.”

Godard’s next films, including *British Sounds* (1969) and *Vent d’est* (1970), sketch a nebulous Maoist ideology that dictates cultural revolution. They are, writes MacCabe, “in some simple sense unwatchable—the premise of each is that the image is unable to provide the knowledge that it claims.” Through a partnership with the filmmaker Anne-Marie Miéville, Godard has subsequently returned to engaging the audience rather than hectoring it, but his politics haven’t changed.

MacCabe illuminates the historical and theoretical contexts, but he doesn’t deeply analyze the films themselves. It’s a conscious choice, and probably a wise one. There’s no substitute for watching such masterworks as *Breathless* (1959) and *Contempt* (1963).

—CHRISTOPHER BYRD

## RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

### *FAITH-BASED INITIATIVES AND THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly.*

By Jo Renee Formicola, Mary C. Segers, and Paul Weber. Rowman & Littlefield. 214 pp. \$68, \$23.95 paper

As a matter of both substance and institutional allocation of power, the Bush administration’s faith-based initiative is sprawling. It raises profound issues of welfare policy and church-state relations. All three branches of the federal government play significant parts in the enterprise, as do the states. And the initiative tackles the politically charged task of distributing funds among faith-based entities, with African American churches and white Protestant evangelical groups in particular standing to gain.

In *Faith-Based Initiatives and the Bush Administration: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly*, Jo Renee Formicola, Mary C. Segers, and Paul Weber, political scientists all, appraise this tangle of substantive and institutional concerns. The “Good” portion of their book neatly summarizes the initiative’s conservative intellectual underpinnings; the “Bad” chapter discusses the potential legal constraints; and the “Ugly” segment recounts the considerable political strife spawned by this effort, both within the executive branch and

between Congress and the White House. The book’s conclusion raises a multitude of questions but offers few answers.

Far more than most presidential policies, the faith-based initiative is shaped by constitutional doctrines. Three decades ago, judges probably would have invalidated major elements of the initiative. First Amendment rulings then barred government from funding “pervasively sectarian” institutions. But by the time George W. Bush took office in 2001, those sweeping restrictions had disappeared (though others remained). The following year, the Supreme Court ruled that government could, through tax-funded vouchers, purchase services with explicitly religious content—a result sharply inconsistent with the jurisprudential trend of the early 1970s.

Formicola, Segers, and Weber are least illuminating with respect to the deep conflict, within both the Supreme Court and the political culture, between neutralist and separationist visions of church-state relations. Neutralist approaches require government to treat religious and secular organizations evenhandedly. Separationist approaches, which hold religion to be constitutionally distinctive, would disable government from aiding an individual’s religious experience. Neutralists and separationists agree that the Bush initiative



poses dangers, including religious coercion on the part of service providers as well as sectarian favoritism on the part of government. At bottom, what divides these camps is whether James Madison was right when he asserted that government's use of religion as an "engine of civil policy" is an "unhallowed perversion of the means of salvation." Neutralist proponents of government-backed, faith-intensive programs—whether designed to encourage sexual abstinence among teens, rehabilitate felons, or solve problems of substance abuse—reject Madison's sentiment.

This book can bring the reader up to speed on the faith-based initiative's intellectual and political history. But with Congress stalemated over one issue—religious discrimination in employment by faith-based groups—the initiative's future will play out on several different fronts: the states, many of which have been reluctant to implement it; the executive branch, which has been extremely active in making new policy over the past year; the lower courts, where the initiative has already experienced significant defeats and victories; and the Supreme Court, whose decision in *Locke v. Davey* this year has recognized the states' power to separate religion and government further than the Constitution requires. Until the election of 2004 determines whether the initiative's cheerleader in chief remains in office, these are the places to measure the effort's vital signs.

—IRA C. LUPU

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### ***THE HAPPINESS PARADOX.***

By Ziyad Marar. Reaktion Books.  
208 pp. \$19.95

Ziyad Marar is after the Grail. For those of us who believe in this world alone, this life alone, there's nothing better than happiness. "It is the only good answer to the question *What would you ask for if you had only one wish,*" he writes in his introduction. "It is the thing we want for our children."

Though published in England, this book seems aimed at Americans, the people who wrote the pursuit of happiness into a founding document. Since 1776, the chase has only hotbed up. Marar notes that "the world database of happiness" identifies 22 scholarly articles published between 1900 and 1930. Since

1960, nearly 3,000 social science studies have pondered happiness, in addition to a glut of pop psychology articles.

Editorial director at Sage Publications in London, Marar opens with a visit to Amman (his father was Jordanian), where he asked an uncle: Are you happy? "He talked for a while about his work, his family, their health, my grandfather, the state of the economy," Marar recounts. "I pressed for more: 'But are you actually *happy*?' After a while he just looked at me blankly. . . . This peculiarly Western question was incoherent when detached from the aspects of life that contribute to a good life, well-lived." Kant exemplifies the uncle's tradition with "the dictum that morality is not properly the doctrine of how we make ourselves happy, but how we make ourselves worthy of happiness."

Marar pulls quotes from a variety of sources, including Erica Jong, Bertrand Russell, Pablo Neruda, and Joni Mitchell. He seems to be having fun writing this book, and we can't help but join in. No pretension is safe. On romance we get La Rochefoucauld's observation that "many people would not have fallen in love had they not heard of it." The sacred image of man as a single and separate moral being is also assaulted. "We are governed by an invisible web of expectations and finely balanced codes and rules," writes Marar. "In occasional contexts, like the pressure not to be the first person to clap after a concert, we come to glimpse the silent, and usually concealed, power of others that permeates our identity."

The book gives a history of happiness, corners it in work and in love, and then devotes the final chapter to the paradox flagged in the title—namely, that we desire the approval of others and, at the same time, freedom from others. "It is not simply that these needs contradict one another," Marar writes. "They are literally paradoxical in that the successful expression of the one requires the assertion of its opposite."

Perhaps it's churlish of me to turn against a book that gave so much pleasure, but I had hoped for more. Marar has a light, welcoming style, and he meets the great questions with deep knowledge and an open heart. It's a tragedy—and I use the word advisedly—that his happiness paradox turns out to be a rather prosaic idea.

—BENJAMIN CHEEVER

## HISTORY

### *THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS IN TIMES OF WAR.*

By Carl M. Cannon. Rowman & Littlefield. 331 pp. \$24.95

A great many volumes have been written about our national birth certificate, particularly the phrase “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Almost as many books have dealt with the threat to civil liberties in times of war. In this sprawling meditation, Carl Cannon, a White House correspondent for *National Journal*, looks at how a large cast of notables have spoken of the pursuit of happiness during wartime. The results are sometimes surprising.

“The American people need to go about their lives,” President George W. Bush said a month after 9/11. “Our government will fight terrorism across the seas, and we’ll fight it here at home. And the American people need to fight terrorism as well by going to work, going to ballgames, getting on airplanes, singing with joy and strength.” This advice was much ridiculed by pundits at the time. Surely life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness means something more—indeed, something quite other—than shopping, taking vacations, or watching the Atlanta Braves blow another postseason playoff. The president’s own career as a baseball executive was usually mentioned, as though a man with such a background could hardly be expected to understand that freedom means improving one’s mind, working for social justice, or, best of all, speaking out against war.

Cannon wouldn’t deny (any more than Bush would) that the freedom terrorists hate includes all those pursuits. His emphasis, however, is not so much on the big freedoms enshrined in the Bill of Rights as on the smaller ones Americans exercise every day. Five weeks after Pearl Harbor, Franklin Roosevelt, who referred to the pursuit of happiness 14 times in presidential speeches, urged the commissioner of baseball to ensure that the 1942 season would take place on schedule. Even longer ago, George Washington liked to watch his troops play an 18th-century version of the national pastime at Valley Forge. Fair balls and fouls are a more powerful emblem of American freedom

than most historians (with the exception of Doris Kearns Goodwin) probably recognize.

Declaring the pursuit of happiness “the best working definition of freedom that has ever been devised,” Cannon finds in Jefferson’s words “a kind of nightingale’s song to the human ear. Anyone who has been denied freedom and who hears that song wants to sing it himself—or herself—forever.” In 1776, Abigail Adams urged her husband to “Remember the Ladies.” Twentieth-century revolutionaries from Ho Chi Minh to Václav Havel devised their own tunes to the familiar words. These figures, along with every living ex-president and the major dead ones, plus heavyweight baritones such as Frederick Douglass, Hubert Humphrey, and John McCain, make up Cannon’s mixed choir.

Readers who consider the war in Iraq consistent with American ideals of extending liberty will find historical support in this book, despite its occasional sentimentality and careless editing. Those who think otherwise will be less happy with it. In the context of that war, which began while he was finishing the manuscript, Cannon writes, “I became convinced in the research and writing of this book that those rights *are* inalienable, that the yearning for them is universal as well, and that, ultimately, there is no real safety or satisfaction to be had until all the people of the world are free.”

—CHRISTOPHER CLAUSEN

### *EUROPE’S LAST SUMMER: Who Started the Great War in 1914?*

By David Fromkin. Knopf. 349 pp. \$26.95

Almost as soon as the guns began to fire in that glorious, sunny August of 1914, the arguments started over who was to blame. After the armistice of 1918, the Commission on the Responsibility of the Authors of the War formally found Germany guilty. This verdict led to Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles, the notorious “war guilt” clause that was used to justify the \$32 billion in reparations that Germany was required (but proved unable) to pay.

The apparent unfairness of pillorying

Germany inspired historians to reconsider the assignment of guilt. Perhaps the most universally satisfactory new judgment was that of the British historian A. J. P. Taylor, reinforced by the American Barbara Tuchman, who shifted some of the blame to the mechanics of mobilization. Germany planned to defeat France in six brisk weeks and then move its victorious troops by train to face the Russians. Once Russia began to mobilize against Austria, Germany had to invade France or else lose valuable time. This explanation neatly blamed the war on impersonal forces rather than individual statesmen or countries.

But the explanation didn't hold up long. In the 1950s, Franz Fischer discovered archives overlooked by previous historians. His seminal book of 1966, *Griff nach der Weltmacht* (Bid for world power), showed that Kaiser Wilhelm's generals wanted war, and quickly, before Russia's headlong industrial growth made it too fearsome to fight. In the view of General Helmuth von Moltke, military chief of staff, this would be a defensive war forced upon Germany to preserve its position in Europe against the Slavic tide. His Austro-Hungarian counterpart, Conrad von Hoetzendorf, wanted war, and quickly, in order to preserve the empire against the siren lure

independent Serbia exercised upon Slavic peoples ruled by Vienna. Fischer's conclusions inspired a new generation of historians, who have modified but not demolished his thesis.

David Fromkin, whose *A Peace to End All Peace* (1989) is a splendid account of the way World War I led to the reshaping of the Middle East, with consequences we all suffer to this day, now claims to have resolved the continuing controversy over the Great War's outbreak. Historians were looking for the origins of one war, he believes, when they should have been looking for the origins of two.

Germany's Moltke wanted a war against Russia, to be waged as soon as the Kaiser's army defeated France. To hold off the Russians while Germany fought the French, Moltke needed Hoetzendorf's Austrian armies heading northeast. But Hoetzendorf wanted a war to crush Serbia, which required his army to move south. Thus, Moltke and Hoetzendorf were allies who pursued wholly different strategic aims via incompatible war plans. To Fromkin, this dysfunctional alliance, in which each chief of staff tried to pull the wool over the other's eyes, explains the speed with which Old Europe plunged into a war that became a collective act of suicide for its empires, its



Kaiser Wilhelm II reviewing his troops in 1915.

armies, and its pretensions to civilization.

Historians will doubtless take issue with elements of Fromkin's case. He may go a little easy on the tsarist court, on British equivocation, and on the French high command. But they should also ponder the second and in some ways more profound argument he deploys in his conclusion. "The decision for war in 1914 was purposeful; and the war itself was not, as generations of historians have taught, meaningless," Fromkin maintains. "On the contrary, it was fought to decide the essential questions in international politics: who would achieve mastery in Europe, and therefore in the world, and under the banners of what faith." That is a far more pungent and arresting matter to ponder than yet another sift through the rumbling bones of blame.

—MARTIN WALKER

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*FROM JIM CROW TO  
CIVIL RIGHTS:*

*The Supreme Court and the  
Struggle for Racial Equality.*

By Michael J. Klarman.

Oxford Univ. Press. 655 pp. \$35

This luminous study explores the relationship between the Supreme Court and the quest for racial justice. Michael J. Klarman, a professor of law and history at the University of Virginia, has produced a sweeping, erudite, and powerfully argued book that, despite its heft, is unfailingly interesting. Klarman maintains that *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and other Supreme Court rulings didn't transform American society as profoundly as "changes in the social and political context" influenced the Court. In his analysis, *Brown* might have come out differently but for a variety of developments during and after World War II.

In the South, the black middle class expanded; black militancy grew more widespread, a result of the war; and many black southerners moved from farm to city, which enabled most to live in somewhat more tolerant settings and allowed civil rights leaders to mobilize the black population more readily. But, according to

Klarman, southern racial oppression was so pervasive that other, external, factors were also essential for abolishing Jim Crow: the northward migration of blacks, which increased their political clout; the ideological shift brought on by World War II, which delegitimized racist thought; and the Cold War, which cast a harsh light on domestic racial oppression as Washington grappled with Moscow in the name of freedom and democracy.

These factors helped reshape American politics, society, and attitudes about race. The new attitudes, in turn, influenced the Supreme Court. Indeed, from *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) through the early 1960s, the Supreme Court never "clearly contravened national public opinion," Klarman writes. Even in the case of *Brown*, at least half the country supported the Court's decision.

The book is most arresting and original when Klarman analyzes *Brown's* indirect impact on the trajectory of the civil rights struggle. The ruling made it possible for extremists such as Alabama's George Wallace and Mississippi's Ross Barnett to assume power. As a result, some of the movement's aims in the early 1960s, such as voting rights and desegregated lunch counters, met with unyielding and often violent resistance. The violence in turn provoked white revulsion in the North. Like many Americans, John F. Kennedy was sickened by the snarling German shepherds and the fire hoses that confronted blacks in Birmingham in 1963, and he moved to secure passage of effective civil rights legislation. The following year, Lyndon Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act into law. *Brown* thus did little to desegregate southern schools in the 1950s, but it helped make possible the Civil Rights Act a decade later, which *did* substantially achieve that goal.

Klarman concludes that the Supreme Court did not stand in the vanguard of the campaign for racial equality. Instead, the Court endorsed changes that were already emerging in American society—changes that had little to do with nine robed men in Washington.

—JONATHAN ROSENBERG

# CONTEMPORARY AFFAIRS

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## *THE SIBERIAN CURSE:*

### *How Communist Planners Left Russia Out in the Cold.*

By Fiona Hill and Clifford G. Gaddy.

Brookings. 303 pp. \$46.95,

\$18.95 paper

Ever since the age of the tsars, Siberia has embodied the Russian paradox—a place of seemingly boundless abundance (oil and gas, timber and coal, gold and other precious metals) lying amid frozen wastelands. Today, Siberia has captured the Russian imagination. The vast lands east of the Urals represent, to the men at Russia's helm, a source of contention—seen alternately as Russia's destiny and its burden, either a sacred cornucopia of the motherland's treasures or an endless stretch of tundra and taiga where only survivalists could live and slave labor grow. Among Russian politicians, the debate over what to do with Siberia—invest in it, abandon it, defend it against Chinese annexation, sell it to the Japanese—dominates discussions about the country's future. Whatever the viewpoint, all sides seem to agree: Siberia remains the key to Russia's fate.

In *The Siberian Curse*, Fiona Hill and Clifford Gaddy, scholars at the Brookings Institution, offer a refreshing, well-documented addition to the literature on post-Soviet Russia. They recommend “downsizing Siberia” as the only way to reverse the colossal mistakes of Soviet economic planning and streamline Russia for a 21st-century game of catch-up. Much of their case rests on the hardships of the Siberian winter—and spring, summer, and fall. They also make the good point, rarely heard in this debate, that a chief obstacle to transforming Siberia, and the Russian economy more broadly, is the absence of employment migration. “We’re not Americans,” the head of Russia's privatization program once told me. “We don’t move for work. If Sergei loses his job in Tomsk, he still stays in Tomsk until he dies.” Siberia gave the Soviets, as the authors wryly note, plenty of “room for error,” and the lack of economic mobility is among the worst errors, one that remains a

hidden tax on Russia's economy.

Hill and Gaddy do have a plan. A force of migrant workers should labor in the regions rich in minerals and petrochemicals. (Gazprom, the natural gas giant, is in fact moving in this direction by rotating workers in remote areas in quarter-year shifts.) Above all, the authors argue, Moscow must lure the population from Siberia westward, to the region geographers call “European Russia,” the lands west of the Urals. But talk of such downsizing would bring bloodshed in the Duma, let alone in Siberia. And the World Bank's \$80 million pilot program to move pensioners and the unemployed from three cities in the Far North, a high-minded plan sketched here in favorable terms, has been a mitigated disaster. Those who live near the Arctic Circle are a tough lot; of the 25,000 residents targeted for resettlement, only a few hundred have taken up the offer. Some have even outsmarted the Western economists and social planners by accepting the financial incentives and staying put.

There are gaps in Hill and Gaddy's analysis—the role of the oligarchs in putting whole swaths of Siberia on life support is all but ignored, while the emphasis on geography slights demography, which is the greatest present danger. (Each year the country's population shrinks by nearly one million.) The authors concede that the odds that Vladimir Putin will elect to “shrink” Siberia are long. But they note that if neither Napoleon nor Hitler, not to mention the Soviet central planners, could conquer Russia's ice fields, then President Putin, if indeed he wishes his country to compete in the global market, has little choice but to downsize.

—ANDREW MEIER

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## *LOVE ONLINE:*

### *Emotions on the Internet.*

By Aaron Ben-Ze'ev.

Cambridge Univ. Press. 289 pp. \$25

Most of the books published on love and the Internet fall into two categories: alarmist pseudoexposés (beware: people have cyber-

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"That's it, Artie? Share a life with you online?"

sex!) and kitschy self-help manuals (listen up: here's how to meet your future husband online!). What makes Aaron Ben-Ze'ev's work unusual is that he approaches the topic from a scholarly mezzanine, seeking to explain the Internet's evolution from a cold fiber-optic knot to a strangely human place where emotions transmute into entirely new forms. Ben-Ze'ev, a professor of philosophy at the University of Haifa, wants to know what this means for the future of romance. Do we need to rewrite the rules?

Ben-Ze'ev has written perhaps the first truly thorough and thoughtful analysis of these topics. Defining cyberspace as "a psychological and social domain," he breaks down the processes of falling in love, cheating, flirting, and having (cyber)sex in this odd ether. He explains the seductiveness of a space where you can be at once connected and anonymous, and the nuanced ways in which this affects relationships, often allowing for purer emotional contact. "Netizens," as he calls them, may lie about their looks, professions, ages, and pasts, but they disclose deeper emotional truths online than when hanging out with friends, family, and spouses. That they may never meet in person, Ben-Ze'ev argues, doesn't necessarily diminish the exchange. Cyberspace, in other words, qualifies as a legitimate reality with its own emotional ebb and flow, a place where "superficial politeness is less common" and "emotional sincerity is more important."

Sadly, Ben-Ze'ev's approach to emotions is so devoid of, well, emotion, that you have to remind yourself that he's talking about the love lives of human beings and not the mat-

ing habits of plankton. The tone is relentlessly clinical, as when he describes falling in love: "The complex experience of romantic love involves two basic evaluative patterns referring to (a) attractiveness (or appealingness)—that is, an attraction to external appearance, and (b) praiseworthiness—that is, positively appraising personal characteristics."

What saves the book from collapsing under such lingual sludge are the tales from the frontlines. "I

have had cybersex once or twice," a gentleman reports, "and it's nice to have that instant feedback from the woman (God, I hope they're women)." A married woman says that having "a cybersexual affair was a real wake-up call in my life," one that "helped my marriage in the long run." These testimonials ground the book, and, more important, remind us of the perpetually unpredictable nature of love and sex.

Ben-Ze'ev concludes by arguing that we need the mental malleability to integrate the Internet into our relationships. Sure, it sounds a bit frightening, but we've always fallen for people who tempt our imaginations in one way or another. Now our princes and princesses are simply pixilated, too.

—DAVID AMSDEN

**ONE NATION UNDER GOODS:**  
*Malls and the Seductions of American Shopping.*

By James J. Farrell. Smithsonian.  
329 pp. \$24.95

People shop a lot but don't think about it much. They might discuss when they'll have time or money to buy something, but they rarely reflect on what they're buying and why. Perhaps we should all think a little more about these larger issues as we blow our disposable income on novelties and luxuries. James J. Farrell, a professor of history at St. Olaf College in Minnesota, convincingly argues that our incessant pursuit of more stuff, masterfully encouraged by malls, is eating away at the good life.

It all started innocently enough. After cars were invented and cities got congested, the

suburbs were born, and developers had to give suburban residents a place to buy what they needed. Thus was born the shopping center. But the suburban separation of work, shopping, and home—elements that were mostly integrated in the city—permanently changed American culture. Once we all shopped together in big, highly organized, well-marketed settings, we could see what others were buying and what it was possible to have. Aided by the growing influence of the media, our culture of consumerism was born.

But at what cost? Certainly not just the money we shell out for things. Our kids are bombarded by media messages telling them what they should buy, and they learn to value new purchases more than the simple pleasures of childhood. Our teenagers go to the mall to hang out and socialize, which can be a welcome distraction for kids with so many questions about life. “But sometimes,” writes Farrell, “shopping centers seem to suggest that distraction *is* the purpose of life, and that questions of consumption . . . *are* life’s big questions.”

Farrell spends plenty of time analyzing the contemporary mall: the history, the architecture, the retail design, the merchandising, even the escalators and the greenery. Most interesting are the developments that bespeak

our cultural values. We value fun, so malls now have movie theaters, places to eat, even amusement parks. We value luxury, so malls use more glass and marble to surround their tantalizing mix of aspirational and affordable retail. We value escape, so now we have Rainforest Cafe and other themed venues.

But the malling of America has also alienated us. On the nation’s retail floors, millions of sales clerks, underpaid and uninvolved, need only scan a UPC code to complete a sale. The human interaction once involved in a purchase is virtually gone. Through the magic of plastic, meanwhile, the question has changed from “Can I afford it?” to “Do I want it?”

Farrell also confronts readers with the harm American consumerism wreaks around the world. Overseas sweatshops employ children to churn out cheap goods; sprawling shopping centers damage the environment. With the media starting to pay more attention to these effects, Farrell believes that “the era of oblivious shopping is coming to an end.”

I’m not so sure. Retailers are geniuses at sanitizing what they sell, and Americans enjoy their obliviousness. The injustices deserve our attention, but what’s equally wrenching is the notion that we’re looking for that next purchase, the one that’s certain to make us happy.

—MARGARET WEBB PRESSLER

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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### *THE RETREAT OF THE ELEPHANTS:* *An Environmental History of China.*

By Mark Elvin. Yale Univ. Press.  
564 pp. \$39.95

Some 4,000 years ago, wild elephants roamed woodlands across much of China. Tame ones worked as war elephants in Chinese armies until 1662. Today, China’s elephants exist only in zoos and in tiny protected areas in the southwest. Mark Elvin, one of the foremost historians of China, uses this vanishing act as a symbol of environmental transformations over the course of Chinese history. Elvin made his mark more than 30 years ago with an insightful if controversial interpretation of the economic history of premodern China, *Patterns of the Chi-*

*nese Past* (1973). *Retreat of the Elephants* is a worthy successor, one that will long serve as the standard work on the subject.

The centerpiece of the story is the relentless deforestation of China, which has resulted from the extension of farming mainly to keep up with population growth. But Elvin takes pains to show that Chinese environmental history is not a simple Malthusian process; politics and the state played crucial roles. Regions that manipulated nature for short-term advantage, he contends, enjoyed a competitive edge over those that did not—more a matter of Darwinian politics than Malthusian pressures. This idea seems plausible for the periods when various regions struggled against one another in China, but less so for eras of centralized control.

## Current Books

The book opens with masterly and engaging accounts of deforestation, species loss, agricultural expansion, and the establishment of irrigation. Next come tightly focused tales of three localities: Jiaxing, just south of the Yangzi delta; Guizhou Province in the south, originally home to the Miao people; and Zunhua in the northeast. These chapters place the themes of the book in specific contexts. The story of Guizhou, in which the Miao were gradually dispossessed and replaced by Han Chinese, is especially illuminating. Like the history of Amerindians and Euro-Americans in North America, this clash of cultures involved environmental transformation as a means of political control: To defeat the Miao, the Chinese replaced Guizhou's forests with cultivation. The final part of the book deals with Chinese perceptions of nature. Here Elvin concludes, as others have before him, that the reverence for aspects of nature expressed in countless Chinese texts did next to nothing to restrain the actual behavior of Chinese toward nature.

Chinese history is a broad canvas, and Elvin doesn't cover it all. He leaves aside the borderlands and the regions inhabited chiefly by non-Chinese. He also avoids the 20th century, in which environmental changes were overwhelming, as well as the invisible but important world of microbes. Still, his book is essential for those who want to understand the long sweep of Chinese history, and it will enhance the perspective of those who think they already understand it. A scholarly tour de force, it's not for beginners; Elvin doesn't always wear his immense learning lightly. But readers can skip the occasional algebraic formula or table of raw data on rice yields. Few books repay patience as generously as this one.

—J. R. MCNEILL

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### ***THE PURSUIT OF PERFECTION: The Promise and Perils of Medical Enhancement.***

By Sheila M. Rothman and  
David J. Rothman.  
Pantheon. 292 pp. \$25

When did we become a nation dedicated to the proposition that all men created

equal shouldn't have to stay that way? Columbia University professors Sheila and David Rothman show that Western medicine has been walking the slippery slope of medical enhancement for nearly a century. As far back as the 1920s, drug companies were aggressively marketing new treatments to the medical community, endowing research chairs, funding university laboratories, and exploiting individual doctors to advance their claims. These days, Genentech, the largest manufacturer of human growth hormone, routinely doles out research grants to the doctors who prescribe it. *Plus ça change*, the Rothmans would say.

Ludicrous medical practices have always gotten a warm reception in this country. In the 1930s, wealthy Americans raced to Europe for "sexual rejuvenation" by the Viennese doctor Eugen Steinach, who used x-rays to stimulate the ovaries and claimed to increase testosterone production via vasectomy. Researchers in St. Louis figured out how to create synthetic estrogen from the urine of sows and pregnant women, and soon gynecologists seeking to prevent miscarriages were freely dispensing DES, an estrogen compound later discovered to cause vaginal cancer in the daughters of its recipients. For the past half-century, despite reports of associated cancers, menopausal women have taken estrogen supplements to forestall normal aging.

Plastic surgery, which began as reconstructive work on World War I soldiers, came of age at midcentury, when such traits as a "Jewish" nose or small breasts were deemed especially undesirable. In the 1970s, a French doctor developed a method of removing fatty deposits from the body using gynecological instruments, and soon men and women were rushing for liposuction to correct genetically ordained fat distributions. Nowadays, plastic surgery is just another middle-class blood sport, albeit one fueled by self-loathing. At the opening of each episode of *Nip/Tuck*, the FX series about plastic surgeons in Miami, one of the doctors asks a new client: "Tell us what you don't like about yourself." Where to begin?

Though quackery abounds, the Roth-



mans argue that the field of medical enhancement represents serious science, promising to make us not just better looking but better behaved and longer lived. “We do not believe that enhancement will necessarily violate nature, subvert our humanity and dignity, or undermine social order,” they write. But “what the technolo-

gies do represent is a test of the outer limits of allowing science to set its own agenda, of allowing happiness to drive clinical care, of allowing profit motives almost unbounded license, and allowing individuals to exercise autonomy and choice.” Botoxer, beware.

—A. J. HEWAT

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## PORTRAIT: Henry David Thoreau



“It is as solitary where I live as on the prairies,” Henry David Thoreau wrote in *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*, first published 150 years ago. Today, solitude is in short supply at Thoreau’s pond. On a summer day, as many as 15,000 people—joggers, hikers, swimmers, tourists—may crowd the site. And Thoreau’s words and life have caused Waldens to proliferate elsewhere, as W. Barksdale Maynard reports in *Walden Pond: A History* (2004). These include not just the predictable lakes and ponds but towns, condos, and housing tracts. The Forest at Walden Pond, for instance, a housing development near St. Louis, features a “Thoreau” model (four bedrooms, two and a half baths) costing more than \$200,000. Yet Thoreau would very likely have found solitude at any of these many new Waldens: “What sort of space is that which separates a man from his fellows and makes him solitary?” he asked in *Walden*. “I have found that no exertion of the legs can bring two minds much nearer to one another.”

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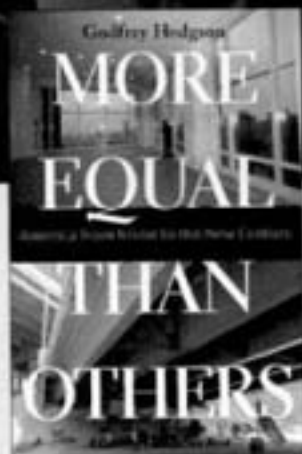
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