



# W

The WILSON QUARTERLY  
SURVEYING THE WORLD OF IDEAS



# Q



## Globalization 3.0

BY MARTIN WALKER

## My Jefferson

BY MAX BYRD

## In Praise of the Values Voter

BY JON A. SHIELDS

# Overdrive!

*Competition  
in  
American Life*

DANIEL AKST  
TYLER COWEN  
MILES HOFFMAN  
BENJAMIN R. BARBER

AUTUMN 2007  
\$6.95 (\$9.95 CAN)

 Woodrow Wilson  
International  
Center  
for Scholars

## The Making of a Tropical Disease

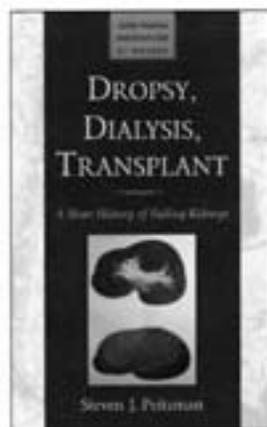
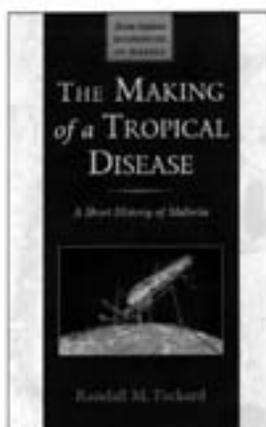
*A Short History of Malaria*

Randall M. Packard

Malaria has not always been concentrated in tropical areas. From Russia to Bengal to Palm Beach, Packard's far-ranging narrative traces the natural and social forces that help malaria spread and make it deadly. Authoritative, fascinating, and eye-opening, this short history of malaria concludes with policy recommendations for improving control strategies and saving lives.

\$24.95 hardcover

Johns Hopkins  
Biographies of Disease  
*Charles E. Rosenberg, Series Editor*



## Dropsy, Dialysis, Transplant

*A Short History of Failing Kidneys*

Steven J. Peitzman

Peitzman traces the medical history of kidney disease alongside the personal experience of illness. Joining the clinician's perspective with the historian's analysis, this fascinating chronicle offers insight into how diseases are defined, categorized, and understood and explains current concepts of how kidney disease behaves and how modern therapy works.

\$24.95 hardcover



THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS

1-800-537-5487 • [www.press.jhu.edu](http://www.press.jhu.edu)



## The Liberals' Moment

**The McGovern Insurgency and the Identity Crisis of the Democratic Party**

Bruce Miroff

"Bruce Miroff brings to life the excitement and furor of a time when Americans were divided over Vietnam as they are over Iraq today. His vivid portraits of McGovern and scores of other activists are grounded in a scholarly, in-depth portrait of this unforgettable era."—James MacGregor Burns, author of *Leadership and Running Alone*  
336 pages, 21 photographs, Cloth \$29.95



## Electing FDR

**The New Deal Campaign of 1932**

Donald A. Ritchie

"The best account of the most important presidential campaign of the twentieth century. Holds some surprising lessons for today's presidential candidates."  
—Patrick J. Maney, author of *The Roosevelt Presence: The Life and Legacy of FDR*  
*American Presidential Elections*  
280 pages, 14 photographs, Cloth \$29.95



University Press of Kansas

Phone 785-864-4155 • Fax 785-864-4586 • [www.kansaspress.ku.edu](http://www.kansaspress.ku.edu)

# AUTUMN 2007

VOLUME XXXI, NUMBER 4

## FEATURES

- 16 Globalization 3.0** | *By Martin Walker*  
The West led the way in the second great wave of globalization after 1945, but it's no longer in command. A look at the emerging global order.
- 25 The Brief History of a Historical Novel** | *By Max Byrd*  
As he unravels the mysteries of Thomas Jefferson's character, one writer ponders the challenges and delights of historical fiction.
- 32 In Praise of the Values Voter** | *By Jon A. Shields*  
Pundits blame agitation over hot-button moral issues for alienating voters and short-circuiting reasoned debate. They are wrong on every count.
- 39 Twelve Ways to Know the Past** | *By Athanasios Moulakis*  
Now that the culture wars have abated, it's time for a serious look at the many everyday ways we grapple with our heritage.

- 45 OVERDRIVE: COMPETITION IN AMERICAN LIFE**  
More than ever, American life is a competitive sport. We jockey intensely for jobs, dates, admission to the college of our dreams, and even little resumé builders for our five-year-olds. Our authors examine the rewards and the costs of always playing to win.

**Strive We Must** | *By Daniel Akst*

**Beautiful Victory** | *By Miles Hoffman*

**The Lost Art of Cooperation** | *By Benjamin R. Barber*

**The New Invisible Competitors** | *By Tyler Cowen*

**ON THE COVER:** Detail from *Starting Line* (1991), painting by Bart Forbes.

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



THE WILSON QUARTERLY  
Published by the Woodrow Wilson  
International Center for Scholars  
[www.wilsonquarterly.com](http://www.wilsonquarterly.com)

## DEPARTMENTS

- 2 EDITOR'S COMMENT**
- 4 LETTERS**
- 12 FINDINGS**  
Grift.gov  
Baghdad Baedeker  
Rue Deal  
Moondogfight
- 67 In ESSENCE**  
Ph.D.'s in Uniform  
George Bush and the Rain God  
The End of Music?  
India's Creamy Layer
- 89 CURRENT BOOKS**  
David J. Garrow on the intelligence community  
Sarah L. Courteau on the Bible's harlot queen  
Jan Swafford on 20th-century music  
**Brief Reviews:** Ken Chen, David Beers, Martin Walker, Hara Estroff Marano, Jeremy Lott, Hannah Holmes, Brendan Boyle, John Brady Kiesling, and others
- 112 PORTRAIT**  
Humble Origins

# EDITOR'S COMMENT

## Head to Head

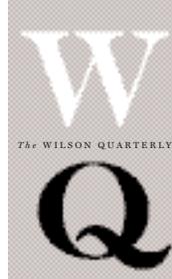
"What has competition ever done for us?" French president Nicolas Sarkozy asked recently. It was a rhetorical question designed to make a narrowly economic point, since Sarkozy knows all about the competitive rigors of French society, but it's still worth taking seriously. In the United States, competition has gone from being a characteristic trait of our national life a few decades ago to one of its defining features today, and perhaps the country's most widely celebrated virtue. Americans as never before are throwing themselves into the fray and showering rewards and adulation on its winners. More competition is our prescription for everything that ails us, from bumps in our career paths to bad schools. I am reminded of the magnitude of this change every time I encounter a friend of mine who, sometime during that hazy period around the end of the 1960s and the early '70s, lived the mellow life in a tepee in the woods. Now he is a hard-driving information technology guy who delights in the progress his children are making onward and upward in what we used to call the rat race.

Of course, many of us need only look in the mirror to see evidence of a similar transformation. We have learned that competition really does spur us to excel, that work can be fulfilling, and that most organizations get sloppy and arrogant when shielded from competition. Yet any value so widely acclaimed requires examination. Is something lost when people give their all to the race? What are the consequences when a society exalts competition and downplays cooperation and collective action? In this issue's cover "cluster" of articles, our authors answer these questions with—you guessed it—competing views.

---

Congratulations to Kate Braestrup, daughter of founding editor Peter Braestrup, on the publication of her new book, *Here If You Need Me: A True Story*.

—STEVEN LAGERFELD



**EDITOR** Steven Lagerfeld

**MANAGING EDITOR** James H. Carman

**SENIOR EDITOR** Judith M. Havemann

**LITERARY EDITOR** Sarah L. Courteau

**ASSISTANT EDITOR** Rebecca J. Rosen

**EDITORS AT LARGE** Ann Hulbert, James Morris, Jay Tolson

**COPY EDITOR** Vincent Ercolano

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS** Daniel Akst, Stephen Bates, Martha Bayles, Linda Colley, Denis Donoghue, Max Holland, Stephen Miller, Walter Reich, Alan Ryan, Amy E. Schwartz, Edward Tenner, Charles Townshend, Alan Wolfe, Bertram Wyatt-Brown

**BOARD OF EDITORIAL ADVISERS**

K. Anthony Appiah, Cynthia Arnon, Amy Chua, Robert Darnton, Nathan Glazer, Harry Harding, Robert Hathaway, Elizabeth Johns, Jackson Lears, Robert Litwak, Wilfred M. McClay, Blair Ruble, Peter Skerry, Martin Sletzinger, S. Frederick Starr, Philippa Strum, Martin Walker

**FOUNDING EDITOR** Peter Braestrup (1929–1997)

**BUSINESS DIRECTOR** Suzanne Napper

**CIRCULATION** Cary Zel, ProCirc, Miami, Fla.

THE WILSON QUARTERLY (ISSN-0363-3276) is published in January (Winter), April (Spring), July (Summer), and October (Autumn) by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars at One Woodrow Wilson Plaza, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C.

20004–3027. Complete article index available online at [www.wilsonquarterly.com](http://www.wilsonquarterly.com). Subscriptions: one year, \$24; two years, \$43. Air mail outside U.S.: one year, \$39; two years, \$73. Single copies mailed upon request: \$8; outside U.S. and possessions, \$10; selected back issues: \$8, including postage and handling; outside U.S., \$10. Periodical postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices. All unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

**MEMBERS:** Send changes of address and all subscription correspondence with THE WILSON QUARTERLY mailing label to Subscriber Service, THE WILSON QUARTERLY, P.O. Box 420406, Palm Coast, FL 32142–0406.

**SUBSCRIBER HOT LINE: 1-800-829-5108**

**POSTMASTER:** Send all address changes to THE WILSON QUARTERLY, P.O. Box 420406, Palm Coast, FL 32142–0406.

Microfilm copies are available from Bell & Howell Information and Learning, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. U.S. newsstand distribution through Disticor Magazine Distribution Services. For more information call (631) 587-1160 or fax (631) 587-1195 or e-mail: [mraucci@disticor.com](mailto:mraucci@disticor.com).

**ADVERTISING:** Brett Goldfine, Leonard Media Group. Tel.: (215) 675-9133, Ext. 226 Fax: (215) 675-9376 E-mail: [brett@leonardmedia.com](mailto:brett@leonardmedia.com).

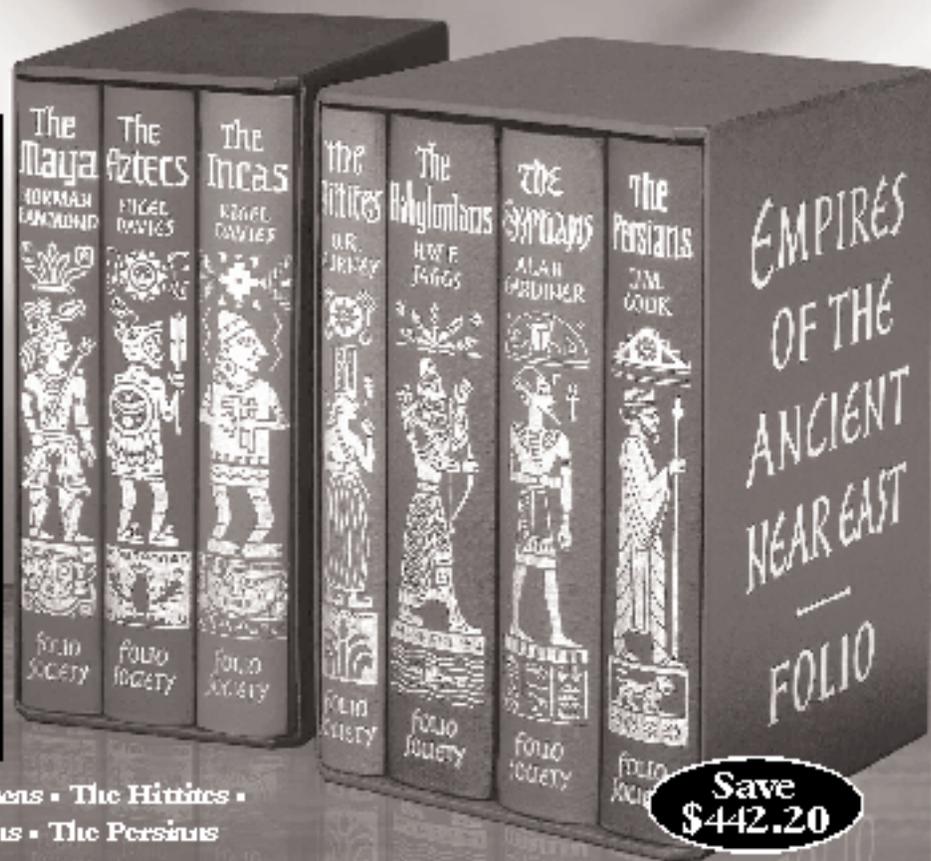
# EMPIRES of the ANCIENT WORLD

The definitive  
7-volume collection

Yours for only

# \$19.95

(shipping is FREE)



Save  
**\$42.20**

The Maya • The Aztecs • The Incas • The Hittites •  
The Babylonians • The Egyptians • The Persians

As your introduction to The Folio Society, we are offering you this unique beautifully bound set - worth \$874.00 - for just \$19.95. Plus, reply within 14 days and you will receive *The Great Egypets*, a two-volume slipcase set worth \$87.00 - yours FREE to keep whatever you decide.

*Empires of the Ancient Near East* is a lavishly illustrated chronicle of the four major civilizations - the Hittites, the Babylonians, the Egyptians and the Persians - to emerge between the end of the Stone Age and the advent of Hellenistic Greece. It encompasses the invention of the wheel to the rise of Persia as the first great superpower. *Empires of the Ancient Near East* contains maps, charts, the three empires which dominated Central and South America between the third and the sixteenth

centuries A.D. As their art and architecture indicates, the Maya, the Aztecs and the Incas were bold and brilliant people, and these books show how significant they are to an understanding of how civilization developed outside the Christian world.

The Folio Society does NOT send you unsolicited books or 'choices of the month.' In return for this special offer all you need to do is order four books from the catalogue, nothing more.

### The choice for discerning readers

Our current publications include history and eye-witness accounts, classic and modern fiction, short stories, notable biographies, poetry, memoirs, children's books, humour, legend and authoritative books on the classical world. Prices start as

low as \$29.95 and many of our books are less than \$40. Our books are not available in bookstores.

The Folio Society, established in England in 1947, publishes books for dedicated readers who wish to rediscover the pleasure of the fine edition at an affordable price.

Why not start your collection today? Simply fill out and return the coupon today or call Toll Free (24 hours) 1-800-838-0700.

### The Folio Society Promise

100% full money-back guarantee on all orders.

## THE FOLIO SOCIETY

P.O. Box 698, Holmes, PA 15068  
www.folio.society.com

### Reply Today and Save \$42.20

To: The Membership Secretary, The Folio Society,  
P.O. Box 698, Holmes, PA 15068, Fax: 1-610-682-9001

ORDER TOLLFREE 1-800-838-0700

Please accept my application for FREE membership of The Folio Society and send me *Empires of the Ancient World*, together with the Folio catalogue and my FREE set of *The Great Egypets*. I agree to purchase at least 4 books from your catalogue. I will be billed only \$19.95 for *Empires of the Ancient World* (including shipping and handling). If I am not satisfied - for any reason - I will return the entire book set within 14 days. My membership will be cancelled and I will owe nothing. I understand that as a member of The Folio Society I have the right to return any book if I am not completely satisfied. *The Great Egypets* will be yours to keep whatever I decide.

Name  Title  Date

Address

City  State  Zip

Please allow 21 days for delivery. Applications subject to approval. See the back cover for more details. Form FDS005

### Plus your FREE gift

YES, I am replying within 14 days and claim my free Folio edition of *The Great Egypets* which is mine to keep, whatever I decide.

*The Great Egypets* is a fantastic detail of passion, adventure, suspense and tragedy. Robert Owen tells them with great command. *Five Jews*, *Attila* and the *Minstrel* to the *reminding* of *Perseus*, *Jason* and the *Golden Fleece* to the *birth* of *Aphrodite*. 'I already own it!' **PERSEUS** **ROBERT OWEN**



Worth  
**\$87.50**

# LETTERS

## ONWARD AND UPWARD

I CHEERED OUT LOUD WHEN I received the “Women in Charge” issue of the *WQ*. So many memories came rushing back. Though many of the changes I fought for in the U.S. Congress are now “in the bank,” Judith M. Havemann’s discussion of work and family [“Great Expectations,” Summer ’07] made me feel I was watching a movie I had seen over and over again. It’s high time this movie was given a better ending.

America is still far behind the rest of the world on family issues, despite the flood of rhetoric that pours out of our capital. No major pieces of work and family legislation have been passed since the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. We celebrated when President Bill Clinton signed that act into law, but Americans continued to receive fewer benefits than their counterparts in the rest of the developed world.

Havemann attempts to flesh out the differences between men and women leaders, but the truth is that it’s still too early to tell. Real change happens when an institution attains a critical mass of women. So far, what we have is simply more women representatives in a male-dominated culture. Only once we have reached the tipping point will we be able to hon-

estly assess the character and style of female leadership.

**Pat Schroeder**

*Former Congresswoman from Colorado  
President & CEO, Association of  
American Publishers  
Washington, D.C.*

IT’S TO BE EXPECTED THAT, IN A culture wild with materialism and absurdly focused on educational credentials, these three responsible articles about women would focus on production, not reproduction. The most salient theme is the quality and equality of participation in the public sphere. There is a corresponding inattention to the nature and value of intimate experience. Family life and, especially, mothering are appreciated, yes, but also characterized as compromised experiences in comparison with corner offices, military combat, and participation in civic life—dysfunctional as it may be.

And as can be expected in a culture transfixed by seemingly endless exemplars of the “American dream,” the focus of much public discussion is on elite accomplishment—who runs Hewlett-Packard—and not on less dramatic but arguably more consequential realities. For instance, women are the most numerous and most successful small business owners in America, in part because many find it easier to create a business that fits with their family life

than to join a business that requires them to adapt their intimate life to it.

Just as society must do whatever it can to assure men and women fair and dignified opportunities for productive accomplishment, it should attend to reproductive ones as well.

**Lionel Tiger**

*Professor of Anthropology  
Rutgers University  
Author, *The Decline of Males* (2000)  
New Brunswick, N.J.*

JUDITH M. HAVEMANN TACKLES the situation that we at Catalyst Inc. have been striving to correct: the relative dearth of women in senior leadership positions.

On the whole, I found the piece insightful and well researched, but I am troubled by one argument in particular. After citing multiple studies that confirm quite persuasively that women and men differ very little in leadership and management effectiveness, Havemann opines, “Increasingly the question of whether women get to the top of the heap hinges on their own choices and actions.”

Would that it were the case.

Are we to believe that only 13 women wanted to be Fortune 500 CEOs, and the rest just chose otherwise?

Havemann concedes that women face a variety of barriers that their male counterparts rarely do. But instead of delving into such challenges and exploring ways to combat them, Havemann swiftly succumbs to

[Continued on Page 7]

LETTERS may be mailed to *The Wilson Quarterly*, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004-3027, or sent via facsimile, to (202) 691-4036, or e-mail, to [wq@wilsoncenter.org](mailto:wq@wilsoncenter.org). The writer’s telephone number and postal address should be included. For reasons of space, letters are usually edited for publication. Some letters are received in response to the editors’ requests for comment.

# Explore 3 millennia of genius

with a thought-provoking, recorded course, *The Great Ideas of Philosophy*, taught by Professor Daniel N. Robinson of Oxford University

Perhaps more so than in any other discipline, philosophy is best understood as a "great conversation" held across hundreds of years. All philosophers—and even all philosophers of their followers—have the same eternal questions.

What is the nature of the world? What can we know about it? How should we behave? How should we govern ourselves and each other? Socrates and Plato descended to answer these questions. Aristotle and Hippo wanted answers to these questions. Scientists and artists want answers to these questions. These lectures return to asking these questions by each message and thinker. They are more than a collection of the thoughts of various geniuses; they link their concerns across centuries, making their debate a part of our own.

Professor Daniel N. Robinson focuses on the Long Debate about the nature of self and self-interest, the nature of experience and the nature of science, the right form of life, just in case you have the right theory of human nature. On what philosophical concepts does the rule of law depend? What are the philosophical justifications for respect of the individual? What legal and moral implications arise from the claim of our "autonomy"? On what basis, philosophically, did we ever come to regard ourselves as outside the order of nature? In the nature of things, there are no final answers, but some are better than others.

A lifelong student of these issues, Professor Robinson is a Philosophy Faculty Member at Oxford University and a Distinguished Research Professor, Emeritus, at Georgetown University. He has published well over a dozen books on a remarkable range of subjects, including the connection between his specialties, philosophy and psychology, and medicine, politics, and human nature.

Professor Robinson's course takes you into the exciting world of ideas. Customers agree: "Professor Robinson explains multiple disciplines like no one since Aristotle. His scope is awesome. A professor's professor."

## About The Teaching Company

We recruit the best of top-level professors from America's best colleges and universities and you. From this extraordinary group we choose only those rated highest by panels of our customers. Fewer than 10% of these world-class scholars become selected to make The Great Courses. We've been doing this since 1990, producing more than 2,000 hours of material in modern and ancient

## About Our Sale Price Policy

Why is the sale price for this course so much lower than its standard price? Every course we make goes on sale at least once a year. Producing large quantities of only the sale course keeps costs down and allows us to pass the savings on to you. This approach also enables us to fill your order immediately. 99% of all orders placed by 2:00 p.m. eastern time ship that same day. Order before January 11, 2008, to receive these savings.



Plato and Aristotle, 15th-century engraving of Giovanni Battista Piranesi

As a result

history, philosophy, literature, fine arts, the sciences, and mathematics for intelligent, engaged, adult lifelong learners. If a course is even less than completely satisfying, you may exchange it for another or we will refund your money promptly.

## Course Title

1. From the Pyramids to Homer
2. Philosophy—Did the Greeks Invent It?
3. Religion and the Divinity of Numbers
4. What Is True?
5. The Greek Tragedies on Man's Fate
6. Hellenism and the Leap of History
7. Science on the Emergent Life
8. Plato's Search for Truth
9. Our Names Be Tangled
10. Plato's Republic—How Wide Is the Gap?
11. Hippocrates and the Science of Life
12. Aristotle on the Knowable
13. Aristotle on Friendship
14. Aristotle on the Perfect Life
15. From the Stoics, and the Rule of Law
16. The Stoic Bridge—Christianity
17. From Law—Holding a City of the One-Wife World
18. The Light Within—Argument on Human Nature
19. Man
20. Search Knowledge—The Man of University
21. The Repercussions of Experimental Science
22. Scholasticism and the Theory of Moral Law

23. The Renaissance—Was There One?
24. Let Us Burn the Witches to Save Them
25. Francis Bacon and the Authority of Experience
26. Descartes and the Authority of Reason
27. Newton—The Spirit of Science
28. Hobbes and the Social Machine
29. Locke's Newtonian Science of the Mind
30. Rousseau? The Challenge of Emancipation
31. Hume and the Birth of Happiness
32. Thomas Reid and the Scottish School
33. Rousseau and the Philosopher
34. The Romantic Spirit and the Great Experiment
35. What Is Enlightenment and Kant on Freedom
36. Moral Science and the Human World
37. Phenomenology—A Science of the Mind
38. The Idea of Freedom
39. The Hegelian and Heidegger
40. The Aristotelian Movement—Growth
41. Nietzsche and Twilight
42. The Liberal Tradition—J. S. Mill
43. Darwin and Hume's "Propose"
44. Nietzsche—Dead But Not Forgotten
45. The Frankfurt World
46. The Revival of William James
47. William James's Pragmatism
48. Wittgenstein and the Dissolution of Truth
49. Alan Turing in the Face of Wisdom
50. Foucault: Theorist of a Good Life
51. Ontology—What Does "Really" Is
52. Philosophy of Science—The Last Word?
53. Philosophy of Psychology and Rational Constitution
54. Philosophy of Mind, E. D. Hume's One
55. What makes a Problem "Moral"?
56. Medicine and the Value of Life
57. On the Nature of Law
58. Freud and the War
59. Aristotle—Beauty Without Obsession
60. God—Really?



THE TEACHING COMPANY  
1735 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036  
GREAT COURSES, INC. 2000 N. ZEEB RD.  
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72114

SAVE UP TO \$475!  
OFFER GOOD UNTIL JANUARY 11, 2008

1-800-TEACH12 (1-800-832-2412)  
Fax 703-378-3819

Special offer is available online at  
[www.TEACH12.com/7Vq](http://www.TEACH12.com/7Vq)



The Great Courses  
"The Teaching Company"  
401 Lafayette Square, Suite 110  
Charlottesville, VA 22902-1122

Priority Code 24958

Here and for The Great Ideas of Philosophy, 2nd Edition, with a number of 60 half-hour lectures (30 hours in all) with complete Course 984-4600.

DVD \$160.00 (ret. price \$160.00) \$92.00 (75%)

As the digital recording, and includes complete presentation.

Audio CD \$160.00 (ret. price \$160.00) \$92.00 (75%)

As the digital recording, and includes complete presentation.

Audio tape \$70.00 (ret. price \$70.00) \$41.25 (59%)

As the digital recording, and includes complete presentation.

Complete Library Order Enclosed

\*The U.S. Order Address only, does not apply.

Prices include all applicable taxes, postage, and handling charges.

\*\*Shipping and handling charges apply.

## Quantity credit card

VISA  MC  DISC  AMEX

Card no. (number)

Exp. date

Name

Home phone number

Business phone

Card number

For applicable prices, shipping and handling charges, see our website.

FREE GIFT! Once I have read, receive free copy of your course reading (see purchase agreement).

Special offer ends 11:59 p.m. on 1/11/08. TEACH12.com/7Vq  
Offer ends 1/11/08.

# FROM THE CENTER

## FIGHTING CYNICISM

I'M SOMETIMES ASKED WHY I CHOSE TO COME to the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars following my 34 years in the U.S. Congress. There are, after all, plenty of things a “washed-up” politician can do to pass the time. For me, though, the answer has become clearer with each passing year.

Everywhere I go, I encounter people who are disappointed by the state of our public discourse. They know that we have huge challenges to tackle—on issues ranging from war, to the environment, to immigration. But they don't believe that our existing means are capable of forging solutions. Cynics decry a media that often values spin and sound bites over substantive dialogue; a politics that is crippled by partisanship and awash in money; even an academy where disagreements at times lead to accusations of suspect motives. And the cynics have a point. It's not hard to find evidence that our public discourse has gotten off track.

It is precisely this kind of cynicism, though, that the Wilson Center seeks to counter. The idea is simple—in many ways, far simpler than the contortions we go through to maintain our cycles of spin and division. Here at the Wilson Center, all views are heard. Nobody's motivation is called into question. Scholars are encouraged to perform fact-based research, not to conform their views to a particular partisan or ideological agenda. The ideas presented—through books, reports, conferences, and lectures—are meant to lead to pragmatic solutions, not to spin an issue in one direction or another.

The core of our mission is to build bridges of understanding where, too often, there is division. First, we bridge divides between sectors. Policymakers, scholars, scientists, journalists, and businesspeople all benefit when they can meet and learn from one another. Second, we bridge divides between cultures. In the 21st century, you're not going to understand challenges shaped by globalization unless you bring people together across cultures and national borders, which is one reason why we welcome a

diverse group of scholars and fellows from around the world.

And third, we bridge divides between viewpoints. I reject the notion that the solutions to our problems can be found by digging ourselves deeper into ideological trenches. This is, after all, a nation founded on compromise. And compromise is about more than finding common ground. The complexity of the challenges we confront demands that people of different beliefs, backgrounds, and perspectives think and talk together about what to do. Neither you, nor I, nor any one person has all the answers. Here at the Wilson Center we seek truth by reaching out to all, not by limiting the debate to the few.

Woodrow Wilson himself said it best: “I use all the brains that I have, and all that I can borrow.” All of us could stand to do a bit more borrowing. And that is the feeling I get every day when I stop by a conference, pick up the latest publication, or even engage in a spirited discussion around the lunch table here at the Wilson Center. Amid the conflict and clamor of our public debate, the Center is a place where facts can be established, issues can be discussed with civility, and all options for confronting an issue can be considered.

I do not claim we have fully realized such a place at the Wilson Center, just as President Wilson did not always live up to all of these standards in his own life. But Wilson at his best did embody these core tenets—bridging scholarship and policy, building international understanding, and bringing together different points of view. That's what we try, every day, to achieve at the Center. That's why so many people who pass through our doors or page through our publications discover a different kind of discourse from the dominant one of the day. And that's why, when I'm asked about why I work at the Center, I can't help but think to myself: What more could you want?

LEE H. HAMILTON  
*Director*



Woodrow Wilson  
International  
Center  
for Scholars

Lee H. Hamilton, *Director*

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Joseph B. Gildenhorn, *Chair*  
David A. Metzner, *Vice Chair*

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS:** James H. Billington, *Librarian of Congress*, Bruce Cole, *Chair, National Endowment for the Humanities*, Michael O. Leavitt, *Secretary of Health and Human Services*, Condoleezza Rice, *Secretary of State*, Cristián Samper, *Acting Secretary, Smithsonian Institution*, Margaret Spellings, *Secretary of Education*, Allen Weinstein, *Archivist of the United States*. *Designated Appointee of the President from Within the Federal Government:* Tami Longaberger

**PRIVATE CITIZEN MEMBERS:** Robin B. Cook, Donald E. Garcia, Bruce S. Gelb, Sander R. Gerber, Charles L. Glazer, Susan Hutchison, Ignacio E. Sanchez

**THE WILSON COUNCIL**

Sam Donaldson, *President*

Elias F. Aburdene, Weston Adams, Martin K. Alloy, Russell L. Anmuth, Cyrus A. Ansary, David Apatoff, David H. Bass, Lawrence E. Bathgate, Theresa E. Behrendt, John B. Beinecke, Joseph C. Bell, Stuart A. Bernstein, James D. Bindenagel, Rudy Boschwitz, A. Oakley Brooks, Donald E. Brown, Melva Bucksbaum, Todd Buillione, Amelia Caiola Ross, Joseph A. Cari, Carol A. Cartwright, Mark Chandler, Peter B. Clark, William T. Coleman, Dale Coudert, Mac Donley, Elizabeth Dubin, F. Samuel Eberts, I. Steven Edelson, Mark Epstein, Melvyn J. Estrin, Susan R. Farber, A. Huda Farouki, Michael Fleming, Joseph H. Flom, Barbara Hackman Franklin, Norman Freidkin, John H. French, Morton FUNGER, Alma Gildenhorn, Michael Glosserman, Roy M. Goodman, Raymond A. Guenter, Kathryn Walt Hall, Edward L. Hardin, Marilyn A. Harris, Patricia Hassett, Gail Hilson, Laurence Hirsch, John L. Howard, Osagie Imasogie, Darrell E. Issa, Benjamin Jacobs, Miguel Jauregui Rojas, James Kaufman, Edward W. Kelley, Christopher J. Kennan, Joan Kirkpatrick, Willem Kooyker, Steven Kotler, Markos Kounalakis, Richard L. Kramer, William H. Kremer, Daniel L. Lamaute, James C. Langdon, Raymond Leary, Francine Gordon Levinson, Harold O. Levy, Frederic V. Malek, David S. Mandel, Anastasia K. Mann, Jeffrey A. Marcus, Thierry Marnay, Daniel Martin, John J. Mason, Anne McCarthy, Stephen G. McConahey, Thomas F. McLarty, Donald F. McLellan, Alan Meltzer, John Kenneth Menges, Tobia G. Mercurio, Kathryn Mosbacher, Jeremiah L. Murphy, Stuart H. Newberger, John E. Osborn, Jeanne L. Phillips, Rob Quartel, Thomas R. Reedy, Renate Rennie, Edwin Robbins, Nina Rosenwald, Juan Sabater, Anthony Scaramucci, Steven E. Schmidt, Patricia Schramm, Timothy R. Scully, Hyun-Kyu Shin, Thomas H. Shuler, George P. Shultz, Raja W. Sidawi, John Sitalides, Mark Skolnik, William A. Slaughter, James H. Small, Shawn Smeallie, Jennifer Smith, Thomas F. Stephenson, Robert A. Stewart, Peggy Styer, Peter Terpeluk, Norma Kline Tiefel, Timothy Towell, Mark C. Treanor, Anthony G. Viscogliosi, Marc R. Viscogliosi, Christine Warnke, Peter S. Watson, Pete Wilson, Deborah Wince-Smith, Herbert S. Winokur, Diane R. Wolf, Paul M. Wolff, Joseph Zappala, Richard S. Ziman, Nancy M. Zirkin

THE WILSON CENTER is the nation's living memorial to Woodrow Wilson, president of the United States from 1913 to 1921. It is located at One Woodrow Wilson Plaza, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004-3027. Created by law in 1968, the Center is Washington's only independent, wide-ranging institute for advanced study where vital cultural issues and their deep historical background are explored through research and dialogue. Visit the Center at <http://www.wilsoncenter.org>.

[Continued from page 4] the myth that is arguably the worst barrier of all: Women don't reach more-senior positions because they don't want to.

Women and men may differ in leadership styles, but not in substance. Study after study—several of which Havemann discusses—demonstrates quite conclusively that women and men do not differ in leadership effectiveness and managerial acumen. Gender is a predictor of height, but not ambition or leadership.

Havemann points out that the majority of young people graduating from college and professional schools are women. Let's not tell them what they want before they've started working.

When we use stereotypes to conjure up a world run by women in which bathrooms are clean and fresh salads plentiful, they're amusing. When such stereotypes keep women from the corner office, they're not.

**Ilene H. Lang**

*President, Catalyst Inc.  
New York, N.Y.*

THE AUTHORS OF THE "WOMEN in Charge" articles should be applauded for avoiding the usual women-as-victim narrative while exploring the changing roles of women in our society. They acknowledge that it isn't just societal expectations and norms but real differences between the sexes that shape the roles of men and women.

However, it would have been worthwhile for someone to challenge the premise behind our culture's regular evaluation of women's "progress." Most discussions of women's place in society focus on the number of women in elected office and serving as CEOs in major corporations, and women's wages compared to men's. The under-

lying assumption is that we should strive to ensure that women match men in terms of earnings, power, and public prestige. Yet if women prefer to spend their time and talents differently than men do, we should never expect—nor want—women to be equally represented in political and professional life.

A recent poll of mothers by the Pew Research Center found that many women working full time wish they could work less. Children and family remain a top priority for most women, and many are willing to sacrifice earnings and gains in the workplace for more time with their families. Success for these women can't be measured by earnings data.

Women's lives are improving as our society grows wealthier and healthier, and as more creative options for combining work and family life emerge. That's worth celebrating. Yet evaluations of women's "progress" can't lose sight of women's aspirations, which, because they differ from men's, complicate any comparative assessment of progress.

**Carrie Lukas**

*Author, The Politically Incorrect Guide to Women, Sex, and Feminism (2006)  
Vice President for Policy and Economics  
Independent Women's Forum  
Washington, D.C.*

THE ARTICLES IN "WOMEN IN Charge" illustrate that, against considerable odds, women have moved into leadership positions. We must remember that this struggle for opportunity and recognition reaches far back in our country's history.

In the late 18th century, Massachusetts political activist Mercy Otis Warren won recognition for her work on behalf of a federal bill of rights.

Nineteenth-century businesswoman Lydia Pinkham developed a wildly successful homeopathic remedies company, in part because she was a genius at marketing. Attorney Belva Lockwood opened the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court to women in 1879, and five years later became the first woman to run a full campaign for the U.S. presidency, as the candidate of the Equal Rights Party. And nearly 100 years before Katharine Graham took over at *The Washington Post*, Miriam Leslie proved herself a savvy editor and publisher, bringing her husband Frank Leslie's ailing publishing empire back to financial and creative health after he died in 1880.

Talented, ambitious women exist in all societies. Judith M. Havemann, Holly Yeager, and Sara Sklaroff paint a heartening picture of change in the United States. The challenge, of course, is to keep the revolution going, to bring more women into top management positions in areas other than nonprofits and health care, and, critically, to expand programs that help working mothers, who continue to shoulder a disproportionate share of the responsibility for nurturing children and aging relatives. Without more flextime, daycare, and all-day public school programs, these women will not have an equal opportunity to prove themselves, and to become tomorrow's leaders.

**Jill Norgren**

*Author, Belva Lockwood: The Woman Who Would Be President (2007)  
Hershey, Pa.*

MOST READERS AND, INDEED, many social scientists incorrectly believe that culture and socialization are the primary causes of male dominance of leadership positions. This

myth is happily absent from the *WQ*'s three illuminating "Women in Charge" essays.

There may or may not be differences between equivalent males and females (say, two CEOs), but on a larger, societal level, it is impossible to explain the gap between men and women without taking biological advantage into account.

Socialization and culture alone would be perfectly plausible explanations if we had only one society as evidence; in fact, we have the evidence of thousands of societies. Culture everywhere conforms to the basic pattern of male dominance. When countless societies demonstrate the same pattern, the suspicion arises that something deeper than socialization is at play.

Even if we had no direct evidence of the biological roots of this motif, the astonishing universality in a world of incredible variation would force us to posit a genetic cause. In fact, there is an enormous amount of scientific evidence that supports a physiological basis for male dominance.

**Steven Goldberg**

*Professor Emeritus  
The City College of The City  
University of New York  
Author, The Inevitability of Patriarchy (1973)  
and Why Men Rule (1993)  
New York, N.Y.*

THE HEADLINE ON THE SUMMER '07 issue may be "Women in Charge," but it's telling that the figure on the cover only vaguely resembles a woman. She looks more like a woman posing as a man.

Each symbol of authority and power—her sword, shield, banner, and suit—can be traced back to traditionally masculine spheres. Only the symbol of

Venus on the shield has an exclusively feminine origin. Among the other symbols, it seems grossly misplaced.

The cover is part of a larger paradigm: The only way women can claim authority and importance in our culture is by impersonating and usurping male attributes and positions. The idea that women can gain cultural equality through traditional feminine spheres is conspicuously absent from popular thought. In an increasingly commercial and money-driven world, the feminine is devalued and marginalized.

The concept of power in our culture needs to expand beyond the notion that male spheres are the only ones that matter.

**Peter Town**

*Sacramento, Calif.*

HOLLY YEAGER'S ARTICLE, "Soldiering Ahead," provides an excellent survey of servicewomen's current situation. She correctly concludes that the most important aspect after 9/11 of women's ongoing integration and inclusion in ground combat is all the disasters that haven't happened. No combat catastrophes or mass discipline breakdowns, no epidemic of sexual assault or pregnancies—just soldiers doing their jobs, increasingly accepted as equals by their male comrades.

However, Yeager perpetuates one hoary myth, that women cannot develop adequate upper body strength. Until very recently, the military required women to do the work of soldiers while maintaining the height-weight standards of borderline anorexics. (The Army was the last to modify its weight standards, in October 2006. Its new body-fat standards underestimate women's ability to build muscle mass even more than the old ones did.) Size

matters. Women should be permitted to weigh the same as men their height and age when required to engage in serious weight training. Given what we've learned from Title IX and professional athletics about female conditioning, the notion of the congenitally weak female is one we can now let fade.

What is to be done next? It's time to drop all remaining ground combat exclusions and—without instituting quotas—begin the orderly integration of women into combat battalions and other units. They've earned it.

**Erin Solaro**

*Author, Women in the Line of Fire (2006)  
Shelton, Wash.*

SINCE MORE THAN 90 PERCENT OF the jobs in the military are open to women, and more females serve in combat and thus qualify for promotions, the number of women in leadership roles in the military will inevitably increase. The reasons for this trend were laid out in Holly Yeager's insightful article.

Yeager mentions that many senior women in uniform had few female role models and mentors. Junior women in uniform describe the same challenge, but the ascendance of women into leadership positions is changing that. They are showing college-age women and the generations who will come after them that they can be generals, fly F-18s in combat, lead convoys, and protect their troops during an ambush. If those roles don't involve leadership skills, I don't know a job that does.

Many female servicemembers feel they still have to prove themselves on the battlefield by performing as well as or better than their male counterparts. Having to prove one's worth doesn't

necessarily make an individual a better leader, but deciding to prove your merit over and over could be an indication of someone's determination and resilience—signs of a good leader.

Finally, I'd just like to point out that women in senior positions continue to be tough on women they supervise. It is my hope that the high standards women have for one another will help them be stronger leaders on and off the battlefield.

**Kirsten Holmstedt**

*Author, Band of Sisters: American Women at War in Iraq (2007)  
Jacksonville, N.C.*

HOLLY YEAGER IS RIGHT ON THE mark regarding the challenges and opportunities for women in today's armed forces. During interviews with a number of these women that appeared in a book I coauthored with Scott Baron, we found that they were just as dedicated and motivated as their male counterparts. They have performed with courage and determination.

It may be true that once this war has ended the debate regarding women in combat will continue, but it will be irrelevant. I see an expanding future role for women in our military forces. As women veterans move up in the ranks, their impact on military culture will be widespread. This doesn't mean that many will wear stars in the immediate future. But in the years to come, the extraordinary women we met will reach the top.

**James E. Wise Jr.**

*Coauthor, Women at War: Iraq, Afghanistan, and Other Conflicts (2006)  
Captain, U.S. Navy (Ret.)  
Alexandria, Va.*

## THE HEDGEHOG REVIEW

CRITICAL REFLECTIONS ON  
CONTEMPORARY CULTURE



An interdisciplinary journal that addresses one important topic per issue with articles, interviews, book reviews, and bibliographic reviews written by leading scholars and cultural critics.

### FAST CONTRIBUTORS INCLUDE:

Akbar Ahmed, Talal Asad, Zygmunt Bauman, Peter Berger, José Casanova, Terry Engleton, Carlos Eire, Saul Gabblik, Todd Gitlin, René Girard, Nilufer Göle, Samuel Huntington, Wendy Kaminer, Robert Kaplan, John McGowan, John Michael, Adam Michnik, Martha Nussbaum, Richard Poiry, Michael Sorkin, Elaine Scarry, Richard Schickel, Adam Seligman, Charles Taylor, Dubravka Ugrešić, Cornel West, James E. Young, Adam Zagajewski



Celebrating  
our 10th  
year  
of  
publication

\$2.5 / 1 YR  
\$4.5 / 2 YRS

WWW.HEDGEHOGREVIEW.COM  
Order online.  
Call toll-free (434) 243-8935.

## BRAZIL'S BURGEONING METROPOLIS

IN A CITY AS DYNAMIC AS SÃO Paulo, it is hard to explain the poor quality of education, the prevalence of crime, and the disorganization and corruption in the political system. Rapid growth can only provide a partial explanation at best. These are problems that plague the entire country, not just São Paulo.

Persistent economic and social inequality and 21 years of military rule may be better explanations. In his recent *WQ* essay ["Brazil's Impossible City," Summer '07], Norman Gall describes the gated communities one encounters in every urban area in Brazil, where the system's winners try to hide and protect themselves from the losers. For those losers—the majority of the population—the prospects of ever earning a decent salary are dim, the benefits of long-term planning are too abstract, and the costs of joining gangs and electing corrupt politicians are low or nonexistent.

What São Paulo—and the rest of the country—needs now are sound social and economic policies that flip this equation around, turning vast segments of an excluded population into stakeholders in the political process and the economic life of the country. Education is certainly the most effective means of accomplishing this goal.

**Marcia Leite Arieira**

*Washington, D.C.*

NORMAN GALL SUGGESTS THAT the prison uprising and urban mayhem campaign in May 2006 obscure São Paulo's progress in reducing violent crime, but in fact these phenomena are not contradictory. As the Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC) and its allies have consolidated control over peripheral neighborhoods and sectors

of the economy, violence has declined temporarily—but crime has not.

Van transportation on the periphery of the city provides a case in point. Until 2003, the vans were unlicensed, and the cartels that ran them were locked in bloody turf battles. In that year, several van cooperatives were legalized and given contracts to provide exclusive service in designated regions. The PCC seized this opportunity to exert its influence over the industry, strong-arming cooperatives into accepting PCC-affiliated drivers. Last year, the president of the largest cooperative testified that the city government's former secretary of transport had persuaded cooperatives to hire drivers linked to the PCC. But no significant action has been taken to clean up the cooperatives, primarily because they have demonstrated their ability to bring the metropolis to a standstill when provoked. Declining violence in this sector likely results from greater PCC control, not from successful crime-fighting initiatives.

As Gall notes, São Paulo is way ahead of its peers in the developing world in providing the infrastructure, services, and economic opportunities that allow the megacity to function. But its prosperous economy only makes the impressive leverage of its criminal networks more threatening.

**Bryan McCann**

*Director, Brazilian Studies Program*

*Georgetown University*

*Washington, D.C.*

## NOIR'S LONG SHADOW

IN "RERUNNING FILM NOIR" [*WQ*, Summer '07], Richard Schickel argues that the usual take on classic film noir—that the genre reflected the dark, pessimistic mood of the country—is

incorrect. The country was prosperous, and Americans were optimistic about the future, Schickel says.

There are several problems with his argument. Schickel misdates the period of classic film noir as running from 1945 to 1955. Most scholars identify *The Maltese Falcon* as the first classic noir, released in 1941, right at the beginning of our involvement in World War II. Several classic noirs were released before the postwar boom. There's no clear distinction between those made during the war, when the country was beset with fears about Nazism, and those made later. Prosperity didn't free the nation from anxiety and fear.

Schickel maintains that Americans' only concerns at that time were "modest and local." But he correctly (and somewhat contradictorily) notes that "tainting the nation's overall mood were the Bomb, McCarthyism, and . . . our first muscular confrontation with communism." He forgets the moral and psychological damage that resulted from witnessing the systematic murder of millions. He merely notes that such events didn't appear much in film noir.

He is missing the point. These events don't have to be referenced in the films. They're dark, not in contrast to the country's mood, but in lockstep with it.

**Mark T. Conard**

*Assistant Professor of Philosophy*

*Marymount Manhattan College*

*Editor, The Philosophy of Film Noir (2005)*

*New York, N.Y.*

## PRAGMATISM TURNS 100

WHAT A PLEASURE IT WAS TO read Theo Anderson's superb essay "One Hundred Years of *Pragmatism*" [*WQ*, Summer '07]. Anderson is

# A Alfa Fellowship Program

AlfaBank and CDS International are pleased to announce a call for applications for the Alfa Fellowship Program's 2008-09 Fellows. Now entering its sixth round, the Alfa Fellowship Program is a professional-level exchange designed to foster a new generation of American leaders and decision-makers with meaningful professional experience in Russia.

The Alfa Fellowship begins with language training in the U.S. followed by an intensive language course in Moscow. In October, Alfa Fellows will attend a two-week seminar program with key Russian government, public, and private sector officials to discuss current issues facing Russia. Fellows then undertake individualized professional assignments at leading Russian organizations including private companies, media outlets, think tanks, NGOs, and government institutions.

Eligible candidates must have a graduate degree and professional experience in business, economics, journalism, law, government, or public policy. Russian language proficiency is preferred. The Fellowship includes monthly stipends, related travel costs, housing, and insurance.

## Promoting Understanding of Russia

Applications must be received by CDS International no later than **December 15, 2007**.

Program information and application forms can be downloaded from the CDS website at [www.cdsintl.org/rfomusa/alfa.htm](http://www.cdsintl.org/rfomusa/alfa.htm)

For more information contact:

CDS International, Inc.  
Alfa Fellowship Program  
871 United Nations Plaza, 15th Floor  
New York, NY 10017-1814  
Tel: (212) 497-3510  
Fax: (212) 497-3535  
E-mail: [alfa@cdsintl.org](mailto:alfa@cdsintl.org)  
<http://www.cdsintl.org>

exactly right when he insists that both the book and the argument that bear the name had an overriding religious significance for William James. Pragmatism is first and foremost not philosophical opportunism or unflinching solipsism, but a religious or spiritual proposition that human beings are suited for belief, that believing leads to a better life, and that if you can't believe in God or Allah in an orthodox fashion, you can still believe in believing.

When we enter the postorthodox era of religious experience, James will be required reading. Three cheers for Anderson and his clear-eyed understanding of the real center of William James's work.

**Robert D. Richardson**

*Author, William James: In the Maelstrom of American Modernism (2006)  
Hillsborough, N.C.*

## THE TRIAL OF GENERAL HOMMA

Thank you for your review of Hampton Sides's article "The Trial of General Homma" ["In Essence: Winner's Justice," *WQ*, Summer '07].

I served as the chief clerk of the Apprehension Division of the War Crimes Trials in Manila, and I remember these trials and the atrocities that led to them as though they were yesterday. General Homma knew all about the Bataan Death March. He was seen on the march. Terrible crimes were committed against the American and Filipino troops. Stragglers were bayoneted.

General Homma got what he deserved.

Other death sentences were carried out by hanging. When General Homma received his sentence, his wife

appealed to General MacArthur for his sentence to be carried out by firing squad, as more befitting a general. General MacArthur agreed to this. When we GIs found out, we were outraged.

**Justin D. Vanderlaan**

*Los Gatos, Calif.*

## CORRECTIONS

A picture caption in "Soldiering Ahead" [*WQ*, Summer '07] described Lieutenant General Ann E. Dunwoody as the Army's deputy chief of staff. She is one of five deputy chiefs, in charge of logistics.

In "Findings" [*WQ*, Summer '07], the name of a University of the Pacific communication professor was misspelled. He is Qingwen Dong, not Quingwen Dong.

We regret the errors.

# FINDINGS

BRIEF NOTES OF INTEREST ON ALL TOPICS

## Grift.gov

*Net gains—guaranteed!*

The website [www.wemarket4u.net](http://www.wemarket4u.net) links to a bazaar of marvels. Start with ArthritiCure, the all-natural way to “cure arthritis FOREVER!” One wondrous side effect is that it “actually suspends the aging process, and in some cases, even reverses it!” *The Picture of Dorian Gray*—off the wall and into a capsule.

“For centuries,” touts another site, “Maronesian healers have used precious extracts of the tropical muskmelon to regulate blood sugar.” To get your tropical muskmelon fix, you needn’t fly to Maronesia, a land that, curiously, doesn’t appear in atlases. Just buy Glucobate: It not only reverses diabetes, but also promotes “easier weight loss!”

Of course, diabetics aren’t alone in wanting to shed a few pounds. Now there’s a diet aid—all-natural, naturally—that *really works*. From “the practitioners of Scandinavia” comes NordiCaLite, which, when taken 30 minutes before eating, “can burn up to 600% MORE FAT!” Endorsed by swimsuit model Varnishke, NordiCaLite is a product of Umlaut Industries Ltd., Göttenborg, Svenska.

And, as they say, that’s not all. There’s a tea to cure erectile dys-

function; online tips for stock trading that boast annual returns of 250 percent; a service that cleanses your credit record of any untoward information; a guide to the secrets of the “pure trust,” which enables you to “stop paying federal taxes legally”; and the ultra-lucrative Sundae Station, a vending machine that makes sundaes right before your goggling eyes. (Gushes one franchise holder, “In one year, we’ve gone from \$10 in the bank to \$100,000.”)

But don’t reach for your credit card. Click to order NordiCaLite, for instance, and you’ll be reprimanded by giant red letters: “YOU COULD GET SCAMMED!!! . . . Claims for diet products and programs that promise effortless weight loss are false. To lose weight, you have to lower your intake of calories and increase your physical activity.” What?!

The sites promoting NordiCaLite and the other products are the handiwork of sharpies at the Federal Trade Commission’s Bureau of Consumer Protection. “The University of Texas Law School gave me scholarship money,” says FTC attorney Lesley Fair. “The University of Texas advertising school, where I really wanted to go, did not.” Now she’s helping develop ad campaigns; they just happen to be plugging

products that don’t exist. Some of the sites have gotten more than 100,000 hits. “In a development that’s either disturbing or flattering—I’m not sure which—enterprising entrepreneurs have bought some URLs incorporating our product names,” Fair says.

“Like any other advertiser,” she adds, “we have the tough task of trying to get our message across in a crowded marketplace.” So, to fulfill its statutory mandate, a federal agency is lying—shamelessly, even exultantly. Fighting flimflam with flimflam works. Better, even, than NordiCaLite.

## Scoop to Conquer

*Make-up work*

Evelyn Waugh based much of his novel *Scoop* (1938) on his tenure as a foreign correspondent in Ethiopia, then called Abyssinia. Now his non-fiction account, *Waugh in Abyssinia* (1936), is back in print (Louisiana State University Press).

Not surprisingly, Waugh reports that the scoop is every reporter’s ne plus ultra. A news tip must “be jealously guarded from rivals.” It can’t even be confirmed or investigated, “for fear of attracting their attention.” Truth, schmuth. “As long as someone, no matter how irresponsible or

discredited, has made a statement, it is legitimate news, but there must always be some source.”

At least, that’s the rule for British reporters, Waugh says. Americans, though, “will not hesitate, in moments of emergency, to resort to pure invention.” The difference in methods “is not so much due to [Brits’] lack of imagination, I think, as lack of courage.”

## Baghdad Baedeker

*How to win friends*

Newly arrived troops in Iraq shouldn’t get discouraged. “Most Americans and Europeans who have gone to Iraq didn’t like it at first. Might as well be frank about it. They thought it a harsh, hot, parched, dusty, and inhospitable land. But nearly all of these same people changed their minds after a few days or weeks, and largely on account of the . . . people they began to meet. So will you.”

Well, that was the Army’s promise—in 1943. *Instructions for American Servicemen in Iraq During World War II* (University of Chicago Press), a mere 44 pages, is chock-a-block with fun facts and helpful advice: The nation is about the size of Montana. Don’t urinate in the presence of locals, or offer them pork chops, or snigger at their religion. And “if you should see grown men walking hand in hand, ignore it. They are not ‘queer.’”

Counsel worth heeding. After all, “American success or failure in Iraq may well depend on whether the Iraqis (as the people are called) like American soldiers.”

## War and Scant Peace

*Loutish Leo*

“Happy families are all alike,” Leo Tolstoy famously observed. Sheer guesswork, suggests Leah Bendavid-Val in *Song Without Words: The Photographs and Diaries of Countess Sophia Tolstoy* (National Geographic). Bendavid-Val deems the marriage between Leo and Sophia Tolstoy “one of the worst in history.”

“I feel that she is depressed,” Tolstoy writes in his diary in early 1863, less than a year into his marriage, “but I’m more depressed still, and I can’t say anything to her—there’s

nothing to say. I’m just cold, and I clutch at any work with ardor.” The entry augured the rest of their 48 years (!) together.

In her diaries, Sophia laments her husband’s temper, remoteness, and ingratitude. “For a *genius*, one has to create a peaceful, cheerful, comfortable home,” she complains in 1902; “a *genius* must be fed, washed, and dressed, must have his works copied out innumerable times, must be loved and spared all cause for jealousy, so that he can be calm; then one must feed and educate the innumerable children fathered by this genius, whom he cannot be bothered to care for him-



Leo Tolstoy and his long-suffering wife, photographed in 1910, on their last wedding anniversary.

self, as he has to commune with all the Epictetuses, Socrateses, and Buddhas, and aspire to be like them himself.”

In October 1910, at age 82, Tolstoy left Sophia. “I advise you to reconcile yourself with the new position in which my departure places you and not to have an unkindly feeling toward me,” he instructed. He died 10 days later.

Sophia once remarked that contemplating her own death didn’t frighten her, “for I welcome that.” One suspects that her husband’s death brought a bit of relief too.

## Sit Back

*First class may cost more than you think*

In the unlikely event of a plane crash, “one seat’s as safe as another, especially if you stayed buckled up,” according to Boeing’s website. Not exactly, reports *Popular Mechanics* (July 18, 2007). National Transportation Safety Board data going back 36 years indicate that the survival rate for the first four rows is 49 percent; for the rest of the front of the plane, 56 percent; and for rows behind the wings, 69 percent. Folks in the back may be the last to deplane, but at least they know that they probably *will* deplane.

## Rue Deal

*Fallin’ for Stalin*

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt all but invited the Soviet takeover of Eastern Europe, argues University of



If Joseph Stalin snookered FDR at the Yalta Conference, it wasn’t the first time, according to a new book.

Notre Dame historian Wilson Miscamble in *From Roosevelt to Truman* (Cambridge University Press). Many scholars have faulted decisions made by Roosevelt at the Yalta Conference of 1945, where he, Joseph Stalin, and Winston Churchill divvied up the postwar world. The president was seriously ill at the time and died two months later. The Yalta misjudgments, in the conventional view, were out of character. Miscamble, however, maintains that illness was no excuse: Yalta was “but another way station on the course that FDR had long charted.”

“The Russians are perfectly friendly,” Roosevelt assured an audience in the spring of 1944. “They aren’t trying to gobble up all the rest of Europe or the world.” FDR repeatedly talked of giving Stalin the blueprints for the atom bomb; Churchill managed to dissuade him. But when Stalin ousted the Romanian government and replaced it with

Communists two weeks after Yalta, Churchill couldn’t get FDR even to sign a letter of protest.

Roosevelt allowed hope to triumph over facts, Miscamble believes. He acknowledges some doubt, not about the accuracy of his contentions but about the prudence of voicing them: “To criticize Franklin Roosevelt in this way is not easy. . . . There still exists a shield of sorts that seemingly protects the dominant president of the 20th century and that encourages even the most capable of historians to assess Roosevelt’s diplomacy toward the Soviets in favorable and forgiving ways.”

When FDR died, U.S. ambassador Averell Harriman went to the Kremlin to convey the news. Holding Harriman’s hand, Stalin offered a condolence that, if we credit Miscamble’s theory, takes on a new connotation: “President Roosevelt has died, but his cause must live on.”

## Moondogfight

*Name that tunemeister*

Plenty of bizarre scenes have unfolded in the courtrooms of New York City, but few quite like the case of *Hardin v. Freed* (1954).

Plaintiff Louis Thomas Hardin Jr., blind since his teens, had a long beard, wore a Viking helmet or other eccentric headgear, carried a six-foot stick, and drank from a hollowed-out antler. He also composed, played, and recorded eclectic music, often in such unorthodox time signatures as 5/4. “The human race,” he maintained, “is going to die in 4/4 time.”

Across the courtroom sat defendant Alan Freed, coiner of “rock ‘n’ roll” and a fast-rising radio star with a knack for picking hits. Earlier in 1954 he had left WJW in Cleveland for the big time, WINS in New York.

Scruffy plaintiff and squeaky-clean defendant had little in common except one thing: the moniker “Moondog.”

Street musician Louis Thomas Hardin Jr., aka “Moondog”



Hardin started calling himself Moondog in 1947, according to *Moondog: The Viking of Sixth Avenue* (Process Media), by Robert Scotto. (The book features an introduction by composer Philip Glass and a CD with 28 of Hardin’s compositions.) Hardin said that a lame dog from his peripatetic boyhood had howled at the moon, inspiring the name. For his part, Freed insisted that he got the nickname from the term for a lunar halo. WJW trademarked “Moondog” in 1952, and Freed took the name to New York, where he hosted *The Moondog Show*.

When Hardin sued for Moondog misappropriation, Freed filed counterclaims, arguing that *he* was the one true Moondog. But the evidence favored Hardin. Before the lawsuit, a magazine reported that Freed had lifted the name from one of Hardin’s Moondog records. Further, Hardin had recorded as Moondog in 1951, some 10 months before the WJW trademark. Even so, the class angle was inescapable: Prosperous Freed was a DJ with fans and clout, whereas Hardin was, well, a wacko who made his living selling his records and poetry on a

Sixth Avenue traffic island. But the wacko’s admirers included Arturo Toscanini and Benny Goodman, who came forward and testified that Hardin was a major contemporary composer.

The awestruck judge began calling Hardin “Mr. Moondog.” Deference presaged outcome: Freed was in the doghouse. Hardin ended up with some \$3,500 and, more important, his Moondog license.

## Red Tape

*Rebirth certificate*

Upon the death of a “living Buddha”—a Tibetan Buddhist monk believed to be a living reincarnation of a Buddha from the past—the Dalai Lama or a lower-level lama confers the mantle on someone else, and the cycle of reincarnation goes on. But in July, the Chinese government issued “Reincarnation Regulations for Tibetan Living Buddhas.”

According to *Chinascopes* magazine, reincarnation now requires an application, which must be approved by the county government, the provincial government, the State Administration for Religious Affairs, and the State Council. “Article 11,” reports *Chinascopes*, “provides that those who violate the Reincarnation Regulations and engage in the unauthorized reincarnation of Tibetan living Buddhas may face criminal charges.”

So it’s finally come to this: Even death requires a visa.

—Stephen Bates

# Globalization 3.0

*On or about December 11, 2001, a new era of globalization dawned. Now the West must cede command to others.*

**BY MARTIN WALKER**

AT SOME POINT IN THE LAST FEW YEARS, THAT overworked phrase “the post–Cold War world” fell out of fashion, and has yet to be replaced. It was neither a satisfactory nor a popular way of describing the strange and somewhat anomalous time after the Gorbachev reforms and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union rearranged the geopolitical furniture. Some preferred to describe the 14 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall as America’s unipolar moment, the period when it was the sole and unquestioned hyperpower, uniquely and unprecedentedly dominant in the military, economic, technological, and even cultural realms.

That brief era was ended by the wretched mismanagement of what seemed at the time to be the unipolar power’s finest hour, its whirlwind defeat of the Iraqi army in 2003. But neither the military nor the civilian administrators were capable of managing the aftermath of the war. Now, with its alliances weakened, its finances in grievous disrepair, its cultural and political appeal tarnished by Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo, America’s magnificent military machine has been checked and humbled by a ragtag assortment of insurgents, terrorists, and roadside bombers, and the political will of the American people to sustain the mission has been subverted.

So what should we call the troubling era we now all inhabit? Historians may look back and question whether

9/11 was a decisive moment, at least in global terms, despite its dramatic impact on Americans’ psychology, including their sense of invulnerability. They may even give the end of the Cold War second place in importance to the rise of China and India.

In the grand sweep of history, the triumph of globalization has been one of the greatest achievements of the human race. The new world economy has quickly hauled hundreds of millions of people out of abject poverty. They have jobs and savings, and can think about investing in the future of their own children, even about a more comfortable old age for themselves. They can afford to have dreams as well as possessions and to think about the years to come with some confidence rather than dread.

Heady projections of current trends suggest that within 20 years the Chinese economy will surpass that of the United States, and in another 10 or 15 years after that India’s economy will have outdone them both. Maybe—many pitfalls lie ahead for both countries and their teeming, ambitious peoples. But it seems close to certain that, having accounted for well over half of global economic output in the last 50 years, the areas that constituted the developed world in the 20th century (North America, Europe, and Japan) will soon be contributing a third or less. Already, more than half of global economic growth is occurring in emerging markets.

In its speed and impact, the surging growth of the

MARTIN WALKER, a senior scholar at the Wilson Center, is senior director of A.T. Kearney’s Global Business Policy Council.



**Shopping around:** On a visit with his wife last year, China's President Hu Jintao spoke of forging a new partnership with India.

world's two most populous countries is so powerful that it will be a rather odd historian who does not describe the period of the last two decades as the Age of Globalization. Chinese manufacturing and Indian software, footloose money and soaring stock markets, the separate revolutions of the Internet and the mobile phone, have combined to transform not simply the way we live and make our various livings, but also the pecking order of global wealth. It is now a commonplace to marvel at the \$1.33 trillion foreign-exchange reserves China has amassed, which are growing at a rate of \$50 billion a month. That is almost small change compared to the \$4.1 trillion that the Arab oil exporters have accumulated in their own sovereign investment funds and financial holdings overseas, according to an estimate released by Hedge Fund Research this past May.

Sums such as these, along with the economic forces propelling China and India out of mass poverty and toward the hope of prosperity, suggest, however, that

simply to call the last few years the Age of Globalization is not entirely satisfactory. We are also witnessing the transfer of economic power.

When we consider the history of the globalization process, it appears that it has gone through at least two phases since its origins more than a century ago. Some historians argue that the true first phase occurred in the 19th and early 20th centuries, ending with World War I. Such historians point to the massive waves of migration, with Europeans moving by the tens of millions to the Americas and Australia, and to the fact that, by 1914, Britain was routinely exporting capital equivalent to nine percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) and amassing overseas holdings worth 140 percent of its own annual economic output. Above all, these historians point to the growth in world trade, as cheap food from the Americas and the Ukraine came to a Western Europe that was busily exporting manufactured goods, and suggest that trade amounted to as much as 10 percent of



**Here come the cars: Chinese automaker Chery is partnering with Daimler Chrysler to build the first Chinese cars for U.S. markets.**

global GDP. That period might well be called Globalization 1.0. It came to a crashing halt after the 1914–18 war, when financially hobbled Britain, the country that had invented and largely financed Globalization 1.0, proved incapable of bearing the burden of managing the system, and no other nation could or would fill the gap.

The long hiatus in globalization lasted until 1944, when the victorious British and American allies, represented by John Maynard Keynes and Harry Dexter White, respectively, planned a new postwar world economy. During three weeks in the New Hampshire mountains at Bretton Woods that July, Keynes and White dreamed up Globalization 2.0, the institutions that would revive, manage, and foster world trade. They devised and planned mechanisms to fund the crucial institutions that created the structures through which globalization revived and flourished, beginning with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). Others, such as the International Organization for Standardization and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, would emerge later. Most important of all was the GATT, the

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which was the forerunner of today's World Trade Organization (WTO) and which steadily dismantled the tariffs and other obstacles to world trade that had made the Great Depression of the 1930s so much worse than it might have been.

With the leadership and investment of the United States, this postwar period saw the recovery of Western Europe through the Marshall Plan. A similar magic was worked in Japan through the funding that made that country the industrial base for the Korean War during the early 1950s. It is not widely known, but through the Pentagon's Special Procurements budget American taxpayers of the immediate postwar period financed the roads, ports, railroads, shipbuilding yards, and even the Toyota assembly lines that fueled Japan's reconstruction.

Globalization 2.0 might have spread more widely but for the Soviet Union's failure to ratify the IMF's Articles of Agreement. And when the Soviet Union and its client states in Eastern Europe were invited to join and share in the benefits of the Marshall Plan in return for an embrace of an "open door" for trade, the Czechs initially

expressed interest, until reined in by Moscow. Soviet foreign minister Vyacheslav Molotov spoke for many later critics of globalization when he justified the rejection of the offer:

We would probably live to see the day when in your own country, on switching on the radio, you would be hearing not so much your own language as one American gramophone record after another. . . . On going to the cinema, you would be seeing American films sold for foreign consumption. . . . Is it not clear that such unrestricted applications of the principles of 'equal opportunity' would in practice mean the veritable economic enslavement of the small states and their subjugation to the rule and arbitrary will of strong and enriched foreign firms, banks, and industrial corporations? Was this what we fought for when we battled the fascist invaders?

Molotov's rejection of the Marshall Plan may have been the single decision that doomed the Soviet Union to defeat in the Cold War. While the West boomed on the revival of world trade, it was able to afford both guns and butter while the Soviet Union could not. The growth of world trade has been the handmaiden of world economic growth. In 1950, the world's total GDP had a value of just over \$1 trillion, and world trade amounted to \$130 billion, or about 13 percent of output. By 1970, global GDP had surpassed the \$3 trillion level and world trade was at \$650 billion, around 20 percent of output. By 1990, the value of world output was more than \$20 trillion, and that of world trade \$7 trillion, or 35 percent of output. Last year, with global output near \$48 trillion, world trade reached \$24 trillion, or 50 percent of output.

In building the West as an economic and trading bloc (and a military alliance) during the Cold War, the United States and its partners dominated the finances, the technology, the trade, and the media of this burgeoning global prosperity, with its mass education, its mass middle class, its mass consumption. And thanks

to the baby boom and modern medicine, the West was falling only slightly behind in demographic terms.

**B**ut now all that has changed. The West no longer leads the world in capital accumulation and as a result no longer dominates global investment and finance. With its space program, its proven ability to shoot down satellites, and its new JIN-class nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, China is already a serious technological contender. The ability of Indian corporations such as Tata Steel and Mittal Steel to absorb Europe's two great steel combines, Corus and Arcelor, along with the striking successes of Indian firms in software, demonstrates that country's commercial and technological prowess.

There are other telling signs of the tectonic shifts now taking place in the global balance of economic power. The West is not only losing its traditional dominance of its own internal markets; it is within sight of the day when China and India will possess the two largest consumer markets in the world. Having accounted for nearly a quarter of the world's population in 1950, the West now accounts for barely 15 percent, and declining birthrates

**THE WEST NO LONGER leads the world  
in capital accumulation and as a result no  
longer dominates global finance.**

suggest that this share will shrink further. Fewer people of working age mean fewer producers and fewer consumers. Thanks to al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya and China's English-language news channel CCTV, and to the rapid spread of the Internet in India and China, plus the growth of India's Bollywood, Nigeria's Nollywood, and the soap opera powerhouses of Mexico and Brazil, the West no longer dominates the world's media.

This is the new era, and we might as well call it Globalization 3.0. It is the time when the West can no longer set the rules for world trade, since each of the 151 member states has an equal vote in the WTO. Indeed, if

we can identify a single moment when the Western-dominated Globalization 2.0 gave way to Globalization 3.0, it may have been when China acceded to WTO membership on December 11, 2001. A number of disparate events that year hinted at the scale of change that was gathering momentum. A symbolic role was played by the terrorist attacks of September 11, which overnight transformed the United States from a status quo power fundamentally content with the world into a nation whose government was determined to change the world, from invading Afghanistan and Iraq to promot-

increasingly difficult to impose its political will on those countries on whom it now depends for savings and investments. The U.S. Commerce Department reported that the current-account deficit for 2006 was a record \$812 billion, a sum nearly equal to the GDP of Mexico, the 14th largest economy in the world. This money must be borrowed. Harvard economist Kenneth S. Rogoff, who is also a former IMF chief economist, notes that “U.S. borrowing now soaks up more than two-thirds of the combined excess savings of all the surplus countries in the world, including China, Japan, Germany, and the OPEC states.”



**The hobnobbing may have been a bit stiff when the prime ministers of India, Malaysia, Singapore, and Australia got together at this past January's East Asia Summit, but theirs is one of several new international institutions that are emerging as significant counterweights to Western-dominated organizations.**

ing democracy throughout the Middle East. But the traditional solidarity of the West under U.S. leadership had begun to erode long before 9/11, over policy disputes on issues as varied as the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and the International Criminal Court. With the European Union enlarging to 27 members and its new euro currency challenging the dollar's traditional dominance, European leaders felt less dependent on U.S. support than they had when the Soviet Union's Red Army was poised at their borders.

Whatever the triggers for the shift from globalization's second to its third stage, one critical development has been the new status of the United States as the world's leading debtor nation. The United States finds it

Traditional Western-dominated international financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF find it increasingly difficult to persuade countries, even those in deep crisis, to accept the hard medicine of these institutions' orthodox economic policies. Such countries now have other remedies. The financial markets have proved remarkably forgiving of defaults on sovereign debt, such as Argentina's decision in 2005 to repay only a third of its defaulted debt, in a controversial restructuring.

This has encouraged some remarkable followers of the Argentine lesson. Ricardo Patino, who was briefly Ecuador's finance minister earlier this year, called in Argentine consultants for advice on debt default strategies, then declared that they had told him to postpone any such move, at least until he had borrowed a great deal more money. But such new attitudes did not stop the financial markets from pumping more than \$1 trillion in private capital into emerging markets during the past two years, according to the Institute of International Finance.

This weakening of the authority of the Western-backed international financial institutions has been accompanied by two parallel developments. The first is the emergence of alternative sources of financing, includ-

ing non-Western institutions. The second is the birth of what may be the first serious ideological rivalry since the end of the Cold War.

Emerging countries are no longer financially dependent on the World Bank and the IMF. For instance, China, which has become one of sub-Saharan Africa's biggest customers, had invested \$12 billion in the continent even before this year's annual meeting of the African Development Bank was held in Shanghai. China's Export-Import Bank then promised another \$20 billion over the next three years in loans, on top of China's new \$5 billion development fund for Africa.

In November 2004, China's president, Hu Jintao, pledged investments of \$100 billion in Latin America over the next 10 years in the course of a long tour of the region. China's two major oil firms, the China National Petroleum Corporation and the China Petroleum & Chemical Corporation (Sinopec), had hitherto led the country's investment in Latin America, with purchases of oil interests in Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, and Bolivia, and partnerships with Brazil's national oil corporation. (Both Chinese oil firms are majority owned by the state.) These developments should be kept in perspective: Venezuela accounts for only about five percent of China's oil imports, far less than China's main suppliers, Angola, Saudi Arabia, and Iran.

Beyond providing its own money, the non-Western world is now developing its own international institutions. Some, such as ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), Latin America's Mercosur, and the Economic Cooperation Organization, founded by Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey in 1985, have been in business for decades. Others, such as the African Union, the East Asia Summit, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), are relatively new. But these institutions are becoming important.

The SCO, for example, brings together China, Russia, and several of the former Soviet republics of Central Asia. Iran, India, Pakistan, and Mongolia have observer status. One of the organization's first objectives (not wholly met),

to remove foreign bases from member states' territory, was clearly aimed at the U.S. military bases established in Central Asia since the Afghan war began in 2001. The member states have agreed to build road and rail links across the region, including energy pipelines, a north-south road, and an energy grid linking Russia and South Asia via Iran. Top ministers and officials of the SCO countries meet regularly, and the organization maintains a secretariat in Beijing. Trade among the members is on track to quadruple between 2002 and 2010, reaching \$80 billion.

But not all is clear sailing. Even though the SCO members have a common interest in discouraging those Western nongovernmental organizations whose pro-democracy activities helped foment the Rose Revolution in Georgia and

**IF WE CAN IDENTIFY a single moment when the Western-dominated Globalization 2.0 gave way to Globalization 3.0, it may have been when China acceded to WTO membership.**

the Orange Revolution in Ukraine, there are tensions between China, with its primarily economic vision for the SCO, and Russia, whose security interests lead it to view the organization as a means to maintain its regional influence.

The East Asia Summit, an annual pan-Asia forum launched in Kuala Lumpur in December 2005, also illustrates how the new regional institutions can generate fresh geopolitical tensions. First proposed by then-prime minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia in the early 1990s, the project was blocked by the United States as exclusionary. When it finally got under way, the summit emerged from ASEAN. It included ASEAN's 10 members and, because of East Asia's growing economic links with them, China, Japan, and South Korea. It became known as ASEAN Plus Three, with the purpose of addressing regional issues ranging from trade to avian flu. Japan and some ASEAN members lobbied hard for India, Australia, and New Zealand to be included in the summit process, but as the inaugural

meeting opened, China strove to formally relegate the three newcomers to a peripheral status. Japan and India, both hoping for a counterbalance to China's influence, held out for full inclusion. The final compromise turned the summit into an adjunct of ASEAN, with meetings held immediately before the annual ASEAN gathering. Whether the United States will be able to join the summit process, as Japan has proposed, and whether the summit will accept the U.S. proposal for an Asia-Pacific Free Trade Area, is for the moment unclear. Beijing seems to prefer to keep the East Asia Summit an essentially Asian institution, as part of its long-term strategy of reducing the United States' traditional role as the predominant Asian power.

**B**eyond its obvious economic and geopolitical dimensions, there is a more profound dynamic at work in the coming of Globalization 3.0 that seems to contain the prospect of new rivalry between ideologies. The erosion of Western power has been accompanied by the erosion of the authority of the grand institutions of Globalization 2.0 which sustained that power by enforcing the implicit rules of Western economic orthodoxy. In the years after the Cold War, those rules were made explicit in the form of the "Washington Consensus," a term coined in 1989 by John Williamson of the Peterson Institute for International Economics in Washington, D.C. As originally formulated, it stated the almost obvious: that the IMF, the World Bank, and the U.S. Treasury broadly agreed on the policies required to help Latin America out of the debt crisis of the 1980s. These policies included fiscal discipline and cuts in budget deficits; tax reform; market-determined interest rates; competitive exchange rates; liberalization of trade and inward investment; privatization of state-owned enterprises; deregulation; secure property rights; and the redirection of public spending away from subsidies and into more useful areas such as education, primary health care, and infrastructure.

The Washington Consensus became the wider policy consensus of much of the West, and with the end of the Cold War it was popularized as the secret of growth through liberal capitalism. Moreover, in that heady period when Francis Fukuyama was claiming that the triumph of liberal democracy heralded "the end of history," the economic prescriptions were conflated with a political spin, so that capitalism and democracy were

said to go hand in hand. This was not an outlandish proposition. Globalization 2.0 had seen West Germany and Japan, two martial nations accustomed to authoritarian rule, transformed into sleekly prosperous and stable democracies. South Korea and Taiwan, which had been authoritarian states in the early years of Globalization 2.0, had become recognizable free-market democracies by the 1990s. It seemed, in America's unipolar moment, that the philosopher's stone had been found. Prosperity and democracy for all seemed to be just a Washington Consensus away, and the essence of the new formula was freedom: free markets and free trade, free press and free institutions.

Despite setbacks to this grand design in Russia, Africa, and Latin America, and despite the Asian currency crisis of 1997, which cast doubt on the wisdom of unfettered and often speculative capital movements, the Washington Consensus became something close to a political creed. Its influence can be clearly and tragically discerned in the policies inflicted on Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003. By then, for many in the emerging markets and the developing world, and among many Western liberal critics, the Washington Consensus had become notorious as a way for Western multinationals to buy and bully their way into poor countries, to impose Western rules and values, and to conduct a form of soft imperialism, disguised as the distilled and disinterested wisdom of the West. In his address to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2006, Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez put the case most pungently when he denounced President George W. Bush as "the devil" who had come to the UN to "share his nostrums, to try to preserve the current pattern of domination, exploitation, and pillage of the peoples of the world."

There is now, in the new era of Globalization 3.0, an alternative to the Washington Consensus of free markets and free institutions. It has been described as the Beijing model of state ownership, state-led industrial strategy, currency controls, and authoritarian politics. It is a model that includes political prisoners, press and Internet controls, and restrictions on religious freedom, yet China has managed to avoid much of the kind of opprobrium that damaged the image of the Soviet Union. The Beijing model's attraction lies in its crude message that countries can prosper and grow without any both-



Even Hollywood's global power is under challenge. One rising competitor is "Nollywood," which churns out Nigerian-made movies that take up distinctively African themes and issues. Filmed with cheap video cameras and sold for a few dollars as DVDs, Nollywood movies are gaining popularity throughout Africa.

ersome democratic baggage such as a free press or free elections, and it includes breathtaking levels of corruption and a docile judicial system. China invests in Sudan while turning a blind eye to the genocide in Darfur—and develops economic relationships with many other unsavory regimes—under the argument that it has no right to interfere in another sovereign country's internal affairs. The model's seductive appeal to a certain kind of political elite in the developing world needs little elaboration, and China's dramatic record of economic growth is its own best advertisement.

Influenced by the Washington Consensus, successive U.S. presidents since George Bush the elder have maintained that economic growth in China will lead eventually to political freedom, and that a new middle class will start to demand a say in national affairs. Its members will want to protect their savings against rapacious governments, dishonest legal systems, corrupt banks, and manipulated markets, and they will demand a free press to inform them of official misdeeds. During his 1998 visit to China, President Bill Clinton expressed the conviction

that economic and social change would lead to democracy in China. "Political freedom, respect for human rights, and support for representative government are both morally right and ultimately the best guarantor of the stability in the world of the 21st century," he said. "Nations will only enjoy true and lasting prosperity when governments are open, honest, and fair in their practices, and when they regulate and supervise financial markets rather than direct them."

**I**t remains to be seen whether that presidential confidence, articulated at the high tide of Globalization 2.0, will hold good as momentum builds toward the new balance of power represented by Globalization 3.0. It is important to remember that China is not alone in propelling that surge. India, the world's largest democracy, with a free press and an independent if laboriously slow judiciary, offers a different model again. Nor should any sober commentator underestimate the capacity of the U.S. economy to reinvent itself and change everything.

In 1961, brimming with pride and confidence as the Soviet Union put the first man into space, Nikita Khrushchev pledged to the Twenty-Second Communist Party Congress that within 20 years the Soviet Union would outproduce America in coal, steel, cement, and fertilizer, the sinews of a modern industrial economy. He turned out to be right. In 1981, the Soviet Union produced more of each of these items than the Americans, but by then the United States was living in a different kind of economy altogether, in which plastics, silicon, and services had fundamentally changed the rules of economic growth. In the 1990s, with a productivity surge riding on the back of the personal computer revolution, the United States did it again. In the coming revolutions of biotechnology, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence, and mechanisms to tackle climate change, America and the old West have an opportunity to redefine the terms of future trade and development.

Yet the United States and the West as a whole appear to be losing that self-confidence and belief in growth and never-ending progress that sustained them in the golden years. It was perhaps inevitable that in the shift from a Western-dominated Globalization 2.0 to the more anarchic version 3.0, many in the West would question whether globalization was still working to their benefit. One sign of this is the lack of agreement in the Doha round of WTO negotiations on the rules of world trade. Another is the growth of protectionist sentiment in Europe and the United States, combined with political and public opposition to immigration and to the acquisition of European and American companies by buyers from developing countries. The U.S. Congress blocked the \$18.5 billion purchase of Unocal by the China National Offshore Oil Corporation, which is 70 percent state owned, and it pushed Dubai Ports World to give up ownership of six U.S. ports it had obtained when it bought Britain's P&O (the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company).

Former U.S. Treasury secretary Lawrence Summers has warned in the *Financial Times* that anti-globalization sentiment is increasing because of "a growing recognition that the vast global middle is not sharing the benefits of the current period of economic growth—and that its share of the pie may even be shrinking." Harvard professor of government Jeffrey Frieden has pointed out that America's public and its political elites were prepared after 1945 to endorse a free-trade system that would benefit other countries (and

breed competitors) as part of the grand strategy of the Cold War. But the national security argument is no longer self-evident, and in the case of China, which may be a strategic as well as economic rival, the logic of national security may even argue against further globalization. Concern about climate change and the worry that economic growth has harmful environmental consequences is another weight in the balance against continued Western support for free trade. Unless it can swiftly become carbon light where Globalization 2.0 was carbon heavy, Globalization 3.0 may thus be sowing the seeds of its own collapse.

But even if 3.0 collapses, some of its characteristics are likely to endure. National markets are being transcended, as corporations start to focus on markets that are regional or global, transnational and cultural, such as Islamic consumers or the Chinese and Indian diasporas, or the global rich, with their credit cards and business- and first-class tickets and their taste for globally marketed luxury goods. The real question is whether the changes in the nature of globalization will continue to allow the global poor to clamber out of their despair and into opportunity.

The way in which Globalization 3.0 develops will engage much of the attention of a new generation of leaders who are coming onto the world stage, from France's Nicolas Sarkozy and Britain's Gordon Brown to the eventual successors of presidents George W. Bush and Vladimir Putin. Yet their impact, like that of China's Hu Jintao and India's Manmohan Singh, will be limited because deeper forces of public opinion and sentiment are at work. Psychologically, while India and China have cultivated a mindset for growth, many in the West now prefer to think in terms of sustainability, and they panic at the thought of the stresses that Chinese and Indian economic expansion will exert on the biosphere. Western societies can no longer raise their children secure in the knowledge that they will have a better future than their parents. That dream is now the prerogative and the defining feature of those rising peoples who have been empowered and enriched by the globalization that the West built, but which is now coming under new management. Compared to all that, the Cold War and America's subsequent unipolar moment were but a sideshow. ■

# The Brief History of a Historical Novel

*Thomas Jefferson was an enigma to everyone he met. A century and a half after his death, one writer strives to understand, if not the man himself, then at least the world as it knew him.*

**BY MAX BYRD**

LET ME BEGIN WITH A CONFESSION.

For many years, as I liked to tell my friends, I led a life of crime, though part-time only. By day, I taught 18th-century English literature at the University of California, Davis. By night, I wrote somewhat lurid paperback detective novels for Bantam Books. I did my scholarly research in my office or the quiet stacks of the library. The research for my detective novels I carried out in low bars and off-duty cop haunts in the mean streets of the San Francisco Tenderloin. Once I even enrolled in a special course in the California Highway Patrol Bomb Squad School.

But one morning in 1988 my publisher at Bantam, a man named Steve Rubin, whom I had never actually met, called me. After a few minutes of cheerful small talk, he cleared his throat and said rather ominously that he didn't much like detective novels, even mine. That produced a long, painful

MAX BYRD, a professor emeritus of English at the University of California, Davis, is the author of the historical novels *Shooting the Sun* (2004), *Grant* (2000), *Jackson* (1997), and *Jefferson* (1993). A version of this essay was delivered as the Bliss Carnochan lecture at Stanford University this spring.



*Portrait of Thomas Jefferson (1975), by Jamie Wyeth*

silence at my end of the line, as I waited to hear the whistle of the ax falling. Instead, Steve went on to say that, since I was a specialist in the 18th century, he wanted me to give up crime and try my hand at a historical novel set in that period. Specifically, he wanted me to write a novel about Thomas Jefferson.

The dumbest idea I had ever heard, I told him. In my opinion, Jefferson was a character completely unsuited for fiction. He was not a dramatic man of action, but a man of the pen and the book—his life had been crowded with incident and accomplishment, but there was no obvious *pattern* to it, such as a novelist seeks. (I mentioned, by contrast, Lincoln, the subject of innumerable novels, who was a kind of American Hamlet—witty, melancholy, framed forever against the titanic backdrop of the Civil War,

asked why I had chosen those years. Because, I said, that was when Jefferson served as the American minister to France, and my research would have to be done in Paris. This time, the long, painful silence was at his end.

**T**here are essentially two kinds of historical novels. One you might call simply a “costume drama”—the kind of story with swords and muskets and powdered wigs, but no real pretense to telling the reader anything significant, or even true, about authentic historical figures or events. The best examples of this kind of historical novel are those by the great Rafael Sabatini, author of such stirring adventure yarns as *Scaramouche* (1921) and—my nomination for

one of the two or three best titles in fiction—*Captain Blood* (1922). A more recent and far more elegant example is Patrick O’Brian’s series of seafaring novels set during the Napoleonic Wars, astonishing in their realistic detail but centered on two

**TELLING SERIOUS, DRAMATIC stories  
about great historical events is a literary  
exercise at least as old as Homer.**

entirely fictional heroes, Captain Jack Aubrey and ship’s surgeon Stephen Maturin.) Jefferson had lived a long, untheatrical life, seemingly little tormented by inner conflicts, and died in bed at the age of 83. Moreover, he was famously enigmatic. Almost everyone who had ever known him used the same words to describe him: elusive, reserved, aloof. (The word that turned up most often to characterize him, as I later learned, was “feline.”)

But Steve kept telephoning, and eventually, after another detective novel or two, I came around. I told him I would write a novel about Thomas Jefferson on two conditions: that he would cover the costs of my research, and that he would allow me to focus on Jefferson’s life in the years from 1784 to 1789. Yes, yes, he said, somewhat impatiently, of course he would pay my research expenses. He imagined (I know because he has since told me so) that these would be chiefly some books, some photocopying, perhaps a short trip to Monticello. Then, as an afterthought, he

entirely fictional heroes, Captain Jack Aubrey and ship’s surgeon Stephen Maturin.

Alas, I had agreed to write, not a new version of *Captain Blood*, but the other kind of historical novel: a sober, factually accurate story about an actual historical figure. Steve Rubin had set out few guidelines, but he made it clear that, because the general outlines of Jefferson’s life and character are so familiar and established, it would be imprudent to take many liberties. Whatever I wrote would have to be, in a very strict sense, faithful to the facts.

This raised a fundamental question. I knew Sabatini, I knew Alexander Dumas, I knew *Treasure Island*—but what, in fact, *is* a serious historical novel? In a literal sense, what does it look like? Trained as an academic, I naturally decided to seek out the authorities and establish a working definition.

There is surprisingly little scholarship concerned with historical fiction, but all colleagues and bibliographies agreed that the place for me to start was a



Jefferson's Francophilia encompassed more than wine. The Hôtel de Salm, above, was going up in Paris during the years when he sat in the Tuileries gardens across the Seine. Upon his return to Virginia, he redesigned Monticello midway through its construction to include its distinctive white dome.

book called *The Historical Novel* (1962) by the Marxist critic Georg Lukács. This turned out to be a thick, impenetrable work of literary theory, propounding the idea that historical fiction began with Sir Walter Scott and, at its best, always concerns the conflict between the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. As a theory of class consciousness, I suppose it was impressive. As a guide to a practicing novelist . . . well, here is a sentence from the preface: "No serious Marxist genre theory is possible unless an attempt is made to apply the theory of reflection of materialistic dialectics to the problem of the differentiations of genres." I put down Lukács, reminding myself that Dr. Johnson had called theory "speculation by those unversed in practice."

I turned, then, to the one authority who, for a writer, comes before any other. Telling serious, dramatic stories about great historical events, about vanished ways of life and departed heroes, is a literary exercise at least as old as Homer. Indeed, as I sat in Paris with my suitcase full of books about Jefferson open before me,

I realized that there were three basic principles I could take from the ancient poet and apply, almost as rules, to my modern historical novel.

First, no matter how much an author concentrates on the foreground of character and action (the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles in the *Iliad*, for example), a serious vision of the past requires a larger thematic background, which we might call the "history of the tribe" (in Homer, why Troy would fall; in Virgil, how Rome began). In the historical novels I knew, this was plain. Kenneth Roberts's wonderful novel *Arundel* (1933) focuses on a single long march and battle in 1775, but opens a window on the whole American Revolution. William Styron's *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (1967), though about one dramatic episode in 1831, seems to set in motion the coming Civil War.

Second, serious historical fiction rarely chronicles a life or story from beginning to end, as an academic historian might. It likes to choose instead one or two

crucial moments and begin in medias res. Long as it is, the *Iliad* covers only the climactic last year of the Trojan War, just as Gore Vidal's splendid novel *Lincoln* (1984) deals not with the president's life from cradle to grave, but with his four heroic years in office.

And third, the scale of a serious historical novel is generally wide and crowded, not narrow and focused like that of a detective story. It ranges from the top of Mount Olympus to the gloomy, dismal gates of the Underworld, and its cast of characters is similarly large and varied, from Zeus the Thunderer down to the wretched, beggarly Thersites. The form, like the effect, is epic.

I saw at once the difficulty I would have in devising a clear plot in such a sprawling literary form. Jefferson



Jefferson called William Short, his secretary in France, "my adoptive son," but they disagreed about slavery and the French Revolution. Jefferson, Short wrote, had "too favorable an opinion of the animal called Man."

arrived in Paris in August 1784, as John Adams and Benjamin Franklin were preparing to leave. (Famously, Jefferson declared that he had come to succeed Franklin, since no one could possibly replace him.) For the next five years, as American minister plenipotentiary, he would be concerned with everything from

promoting the sale of American tobacco in France, to squelching the Barbary pirates in North Africa, to advising Lafayette on the incipient French Revolution. Amid the complex and unending political episodes that dominated his public life, Jefferson also found time for a romantic interlude with young Maria Cosway, the wife of the fashionable and repellent English portrait artist Richard Cosway (whose sideline, I was fascinated to learn, was making pornographic snuffbox lids for the nobility). And in 1787, 14-year-old Sally Hemings arrived in Paris as the slave companion to Jefferson's daughter Polly.

As I crawled through volume after volume of Jefferson's letters and the huge biography by Dumas Malone, one question was with me constantly: How was I to find a *shape* for such an overwhelming abundance of material?

For some years, I've been convinced that the late novelist John Gardner was right when he said that there are only two basic plots in fiction: someone goes on a journey, or a stranger comes to town. In fact, that's only one plot, seen from two different points of view. Gradually, I came to recognize that my plot was really the story of Jefferson's journey from the forests and villages of America to the world city of Paris, with all the sophistication and glamour that magic name evokes. Jefferson, after all, had grown up on the virtual edge of the Virginia wilderness, outside the little settlement of Charlottesville, among Indians and grizzled old sulfur-mouthed trappers and mountain guides. His father had been a frontier surveyor and planter. Before Paris, the largest city he had ever seen was Philadelphia, which, with about 18,000 inhabitants, was really only a small town. Suddenly, at the age of 41, Jefferson, a widower, alone except for his daughters, was transported to the very heart of civilized Europe.

From the point of view of the Parisians who met him, including Maria Cosway, there was the drama of encountering a highly intelligent stranger from an exotic background who rapidly became one of them. As Franklin was fond of saying, Paris changes everybody. For the first time in his life, Jefferson was exposed to complex architecture, to concerts, to galleries of paintings, to kings and queens. He learned to move according to the graceful,

stylized rituals of a polished aristocratic world, and at the same time the author of the Declaration of Independence confronted squalid peasant huts and the almost feudal oppression of the poor, practically outside his door on the Champs-Élysées. (The quintessentially American house at Monticello is an especially visible result of his education. He used to sit in the Tuileries gardens and watch the construction on the Left Bank of the Hôtel de Salm, now the Palais de la Légion d'Honneur. When he came home to Virginia, he swept aside the existing plans for his house and redesigned it to include the beautiful white dome of the hotel.)

My plot, I decided, would be this journey and transformation, and the tribal history behind it would be the clash between America and Europe, perhaps the oldest and richest theme in our national literature.

**T**he earliest occurrence of the term “historical novel” known to me dates from 1804, when an obscure English sailor named John Davis published an imaginative account of the 17th-century romance between Pocahontas and Captain John Smith and called it *The First Settlers of Virginia, An Historical Novel*. Not long afterward, in 1814, the true modern version of the genre was inaugurated by Sir Walter Scott with *Waverley*. To the general principles found in Homer, Scott added two: He gave us the idea that a novel is “historical” only if its action takes place at least half a century before its publication. And he insisted on a complete and uncompromising realism, a nearly archaeological fidelity to historical research and antiquarian detail.

In Paris, I came to see that to employ these principles, a historical novelist would require two very different aids, so to speak—a bridge and a telescope. The bridge is needed to provide, for the contemporary reader, a way over and into the past, and it usually takes the form of a character, real or invented, who has something of a modern sensibility, someone who, in his attitudes and voice, is more like us. For my purposes, after some trial and error with Jefferson's two daughters, I settled on his real-life personal secretary and fellow Virginian, William Short, who adored Jefferson but, inoculated with the ideals and energy of the French Revolution, broke almost bitterly with him on the issue of slavery.

Meantime, the telescope was ready to hand. While living in Paris and reading everything I could about Jefferson's life there, I also went to see the old convent on the rue de



**Maria Cosway, the dishy young wife of painter Richard Cosway, beguiled Thomas Jefferson while he was in France. Though theirs was strictly a Paris affair, Jefferson hung this engraving of her in a Monticello family sitting room.**

Grenelle where his daughters had gone to school. I sought out the buildings (still there) in the Latin Quarter where he had bought his books. I found the house where John Adams had lived, and studied the view Franklin had enjoyed from his residence in Neuilly. I pored over old maps, newspapers, paintings, snuffbox lids. “Research rapture,” as the novelist Oakley Hall calls it, is an occupational hazard of the historical novelist, the overwhelming temptation to include everything you’ve learned and recorded on your three-by-five index cards, just because the learning was so much fun.

I discovered, for example, in a letter home from Abigail Adams to her sister, how French servants sometimes scrubbed the floors. This I put into the opening chapter of the novel, as observed by the youthful William Short while he crosses a room in Jefferson's house: “The truth was, Short couldn't be irritated long at anything French, not even the weather. From wig to calf the footman was beautifully dressed in Jefferson's red livery, with gold buttons, gold epaulets, and even an inch of too-expensive, dandified white lace at the collar and cuffs, but in place of shoes this sophisticated Gallic being had strapped on his feet . . . a pair of huge white soapy scrub brushes. He looked exactly as if he were

standing in all his glory barefoot on two melting cakes of snow. Lace and epaulets aside, however, he was merely Jefferson's official *frotteur*; the servant assigned to polish and wax the wooden floors, which, with inimitable French gaiety he did by putting on his brushes and gliding up and down the hallways, hands behind his back, like a skater on a pond."

But there is another sense in which the writer of historical fiction wants to be realistic. Perhaps the single most interesting and suggestive fact I know about nov-

telling observation. The historical novelist tries to do this too, but, without familiar things at hand, reaches for some curious but concrete fact about the daily past, such as the *frotteurs* in Jefferson's Paris house, which is sometimes sufficient all by itself to surprise a lost time back to life.

But this phrase suggests something more profound and universal than a simple trick of craft or research in an almanac. It is worth thinking for a moment about why you want to bring the past back to life at all. Perhaps for

**WE HAVE A MORAL DUTY to keep  
history warm and alive in our minds, to  
brood over it.**

the reason offered by Edmund Burke, that we have a moral duty to keep history warm and alive in our minds, to brood over it, because the past is an organic thing growing into us, or, to change the image, because it is the soil we are rooted in.

els is this: When he was writing *Tom Jones*, Henry Fielding set a scene on November 28, 1745, not long after sunset, as, according to the novel, the full moon rose. Historical records show that there was indeed a full moon on November 28, 1745, and that it rose at just the time Fielding had it rise. In his biography of the novelist, Wilbur Cross confirms that "Fielding, in his aim to give an air of perfect reality to *Tom Jones*, actually consulted an almanac for his sun and moon." This is an amazing thing to ponder—why would Fielding go to so much trouble? What difference could it possibly make to a reader? Who but the most obsessive and meticulous scholar would ever know?

One answer may be that the ultimate goal of the novelist, any novelist, is not "creation" or "creativity," as those words are so carelessly used. The goal is *mimesis*—imitation so complete and faithful to experience, so widely connected to the larger order of things, even of sun, moon, and stars, that imitation at its furthest point of accuracy passes over and becomes truth.

Another way to put this is to recall the expression often used in talking about historical novels: "They bring the past to life." We don't say that a writer such as John Updike "brings the present to life." The contemporary novelist sees ordinary things, familiar to us all, and animates them with a figure of speech, a driving plot, a

There are other reasons, of course. Henry James spoke of the mysterious, irresistible charm of what he called "the *visible past*," which he regarded as the past of not more than a generation or two ago. Characteristically, voyeuristically, he likens this charm to peering over a wall into someone else's garden. And he added that, for him, the Byronic era of *The Aspern Papers* offered the perfect inviting balance of strangeness and intensity. Mark Twain, on the other hand, wrote historical novels such as *The Prince and the Pauper* (1881) and *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) because he was so disgusted with the present that he could imagine nothing more delightful than to escape it.

If you incline, as I do, to the Burkean view, there is a beautiful poem by Richard Wilbur that perfectly exemplifies it. In "This Pleasing, Anxious Being," he describes his family around the dinner table when he was a boy:

In no time you are back where safety was,  
Spying upon the lambent table where  
Good family faces drink the candlelight  
As in a manger scene by de la Tour.  
Father has finished carving at the sideboard,  
And Mother's hand has touched a little bell,  
So that, beside her chair, Roberta looms  
With serving bowls of yams and succotash.

And then he asks the poignant question “When will they speak or stir?” He answers it himself: “They wait for you to recollect that, / While it lived, the past was a rushed present, fretful and unsure.”

The emotion here is *love*—love for what has been, what has gone, elegiac love for what cannot truly be brought back. And love requires, in the end, not plot, not research, not craft, but art.

Later in the poem Wilbur describes a painter, perched before his easel at the seashore, watching the waves come in and crash, one after the other, and imagines that the painter

... seeing  
The marbled surges come to various ruin,  
Seeks out of all those waves to build a wave  
That shall in blue summation break forever.

The impulse is not so much to recreate time as to halt it in its tracks, to suspend mortality, on a canvas or a page. At its core the impulse to write realistic, truthful historical novels, to bring the past to life, is the same impulse that drove Keats to sit down before his unchanging Grecian urn, or Shakespeare to pray “That in black ink my love may still shine bright.”

With my research in Paris at an end, I had to face the actual process of writing, long delayed, much dreaded. (I agree entirely with Red Smith’s observation that writing is a very easy thing to do—“You just sit in front of a sheet of paper while drops of blood form on your forehead.”) Yet before I could begin I had to deal with the single most important decision a novelist makes. It is a grammatical decision: In which person should I write?

The beginning novelist is always told to narrate in the first person, and it is undeniable that the first person has its attractions—among them immediacy, ease, an automatic involvement of the reader. Most of my crime stories had been in the first person, the logical point of view when the detective is a kind of surrogate novelist, figuring out (in both senses) the plot. As a bonus, there is virtually no risk of writer’s block. I have yet to meet the writer who tires of saying “I.”

But the limitations of the first person are obvious in

a long novel. You cannot range about, you cannot easily develop subplots, you open the door to monotony or tedium. Most historical novels are, in fact, written in the third person—one might say the third-person “epic”—and from many points of view: a minimum, perhaps, of three, as in Gore Vidal’s *Empire* (1987), or as many as a dozen, in Thomas Flanagan’s *Year of the French* (1967). And this is because of that important first Homeric principle. If a novel tells the story of the tribe and the tribe is to be completely represented, you have to include the obscure and the downtrodden as well as the heroic. You need to have the old swineherd Eumaios there to greet Odysseus when he returns to Ithaca. You need Sally Hemings alongside the Master of Monticello.

For me, there was an additional reason to avoid the first person. I had agreed to write about Thomas Jefferson, a man whose life and ideas are known in such detail by millions of people—and who is a personal hero to so many of them—that it would be arrogant, not to say foolhardy, to try to write in his voice. How could I dare?

In the end, I couldn’t. I adopted what I called a carousel of voices or points of view revolving around him—those of his secretary, William Short; his lover, Maria Cosway; his slave and cook, James Hemings; his rival, the great one-legged roué Gouverneur Morris. Whatever else they did in Paris, as the historical records showed, all of them were concerned with the same problem that had bothered me from the first: How are we to understand Jefferson’s elusive, enigmatic, contradictory personality? How do we get close to him and know him?

I telephoned Steve Rubin in New York to explain my plan. And I added that this method, with all its untidiness, had at least the virtue of being realistic, a historical novel faithful to the established facts. We would hear Jefferson’s voice in his own words, culled from his own letters and papers. We would observe his manners and features, from a distance see him move and act on the great transforming stage of Paris. We would come to know him, in other words, from the outside only, not the inside, just as his contemporaries knew him, just as we know anyone. At which point, I hoped, he would begin to speak and stir. In the elusive mysteries of Jefferson’s character I had found the form for my novel.

Then I picked up my pen and sat down to paint. ■

# In Praise of the Values Voter

*Political scientists and liberal reformers once clamored for more ideological fervor in American politics. Now they want to push highly charged moral issues to the sidelines. But what is the purpose of politics if not to address fundamental moral questions?*

BY JON A. SHIELDS

THEODORE LOWI, ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS political scientists of his generation, wrote darkly in his 1969 classic, *The End of Liberalism*, of a politics devoid of conflict over moral principles.

He saw midcentury America as a demoralized democracy in which legislators drafted vague laws and left it to bureaucratic agencies to work out much of the substance offstage with contending interest groups. A bewildered public, in Lowi's grim final sentence, had been left paralyzed by a "nightmare of administrative boredom."

Lowi spoke for the many Democratic Party activists and intellectuals in the consensus-oriented period after World War II who longed for a more ideological politics. Above all, these reformers wished for a more issues-based Democratic Party, one less bent on merely retaining power and acquiring patronage jobs at the expense of larger principles.

JON A. SHIELDS is an assistant professor of political science at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. His book on the democratic virtues of the Christian Right will be published by Princeton University Press next year.

They vehemently rejected the "end of ideology" celebrated by postwar thinkers, who favorably contrasted the pragmatism of American politics with the ideological politics of Europe and the horrors of totalitarianism. In cities such as New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles, middle-class reformers struggled to wrest control of the local Democratic Party machinery from working-class ethnics, most of whom were Catholics. On the national stage, the reformers sought to weaken the power of party bosses over presidential nominations. Political scientist James Q. Wilson described the "essence of this reform ethic" in *The Amateur Democrat* (1962) as "a desire to moralize public life."

Beyond the political trenches, academics and intellectuals nurtured similar ambitions for a sharpening of partisan differences. A special committee on party reform convened by the American Political Science Association concluded in 1950 that the "ailment" of American parties was their absence of ideological cohesion, a condition that had dangerously



The news media zero in on dramatic conflicts such as this 2006 face-off between pro-life and abortion rights demonstrators in Washington, D.C., but far from the media spotlight activists who want to succeed are busily engaged in the work of grassroots rational persuasion.

slowed “the heartbeat of American democracy.” When the New Left emerged in the early 1960s, Tom Hayden and other leaders expressed their hope, in an open letter to the student community, that American democracy would be “vivified by controversy” over fundamental moral questions. Only moral warfare could combat the looming specter of civic apathy.

These liberal efforts culminated in a dramatic remaking of American political institutions. After the 1968 presidential election, Democratic Party reformers succeeded in creating a commission, first chaired by Senator George McGovern (D-S.D.), that effectively transferred control over the selection of presidential candidates from pragmatic party bosses to party activists by radically increasing the number of state primaries, from 16 in 1968 to 28 in 1972. The commission also imposed racial and gender quotas for convention delegates, a development that dra-

matically increased the influence of feminist organizations in the party. More generally, the open selection process strengthened the hand of upper-middle-class, issues-oriented reformers at the expense of working-class voters, who tended to participate in primaries at lower rates. The Republican Party, meanwhile, became more plebiscitary as well, since state laws governing primaries tended to apply to both parties. Years later, evangelical activists used the primary process to push the Republican Party to the right.

Changes outside the Democratic Party were just as important. With reformers such as Ralph Nader leading the charge, new advocacy groups, including Greenpeace and the National Organization for Women, challenged the traditional power of labor unions and organized business. As political scientist Jeffrey Berry has found, approximately half of all the advocacy groups in existence today were created

between the mid-1960s and the early '70s. These public-interest groups also enjoyed more power thanks in part to new laws, such as those allowing citizens a role in the federal regulatory process. Cumulatively, these changes in the parties and government were so dramatic that some political scientists began to speak of a "new American political system."

One might suppose that present-day conservatives would have declared war on this new system. However, it is liberals who are leading the charge, mounting a counterattack against their own revolution. They decry the moral conflict their predecessors longed for. They see single-issue advocates as a kind of democratic cancer. Above all, they are committed to pushing moral issues and passions to the margins of American political life.

Some liberal observers profess to be puzzled by people who vote their convictions rather than their pocketbooks. They want to put economic self-interest back at the center of national politics. "Unassuageable cultural grievances are elevated inexplicably over solid material ones, and basic economic self-interest is eclipsed by juicy myths of national authenticity and righteousness wronged," complains journalist Thomas Frank in his inquiry into the political soul of his home state, *What's the Matter With Kansas?* (2004).

Others hope to remove controversial moral issues such as embryonic stem-cell research from politics by placing them in the hands of scientific "experts." In his best-selling book *The Republican War on Science* (2005), for example, journalist Chris Mooney criticizes what he regards as the politicization of science by liberals and, especially, conservatives. Echoing the early 20th-century Progressives who hoped for government by supposedly apolitical elites, Mooney contends that "scientific expertise and consensus" should direct our political choices rather than our moral or ideological commitments.

Most critics, however, hope to enlist centrist voters against divisive moralists. In a strange political turn, they have embraced what President Richard M. Nixon called "the silent majority" as the source of their salvation from 1960s liberalism. They have

become the new conservatives. *Washington Post* columnist and Brookings Institution fellow E. J. Dionne argues that "ideological battles" have left a "restive majority" with the sense that politics does not address their real concerns, such as child care, school reform, and health care. Ideological battles, he says, have destroyed a once consensual and deliberative republic in which "people resolved disputes, found remedies, and moved forward." Political scientists Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman, and Henry Brady likewise embrace centrist citizens when they lament, in their study of political participation, *Voice and Equality* (1995), that American religious institutions have tended to "distort citizen activity" by mobilizing followers around social issues—particularly abortion—rather than "an economic agenda focused on the less advantaged." More recently, political scientists Jacob Hacker and Paul Pierson have argued that American politics has moved "off center" as "most voters sit on the sidelines watching a political blood sport that plays out with little concern for what the moderate center of opinion thinks." And Stanford political scientist Morris Fiorina and his coauthors dedicated their widely read and scathing criticism of activists in *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America* (2004) to "tens of millions of mainstream Americans."

Yet there is remarkably little evidence that average citizens have become disaffected from politics as a result of ideological warfare. It is true, as critics charge, that political elites are more polarized than ordinary Americans. But they always have been. As political scientist Gary Jacobson of the University of California, San Diego, demonstrates in *Polarized Politics* (2000), since the 1970s ordinary Americans have grown more ideological at the same pace as their party leaders.

At the same time, the divide between the parties has indeed widened: For many years, pollsters have regularly asked American voters to locate themselves on a seven-point liberal-conservative scale, and since the 1970s those who identify with one of the two major political parties have moved about 1.2 points farther apart. But the parties are not out of step with public sentiment. When the same people are asked to locate the parties on the ideological scale, the vast

majority indicate that their party's position and their own are about the same. About 30 percent of the voters place themselves somewhere between the two parties ideologically, but that number has not changed since the 1970s.

Another argument marshaled by critics of ideological politics is that it has alienated American voters and reduced political participation. Yet reports of declining voter turnout since the 1970s are exaggerated. True, when turnout is reckoned as a percentage of the voting-age population, there appears to be a decline. But the political scientists who report these figures fail to account for the growing number of people who are ineligible to vote, notably felons and illegal immigrants. When turnout is calculated as a share of the *eligible* population, the story is quite different. An average of just over 56 percent of eligible voters cast ballots in presidential elections between 1972 and 2004. Contrary to what critics would predict, the contentious presidential elections of 1992 and 2004 produced higher turnouts—more than 60 percent. That is unusually high by 20th-century standards, and unmatched in any election since Hubert Humphrey, Richard Nixon, and George Wallace squared off in 1968, an election year not known for its political consensus and moderation.

**P**olitical polarization has improved civic life in two other respects, just as political scientists of the 1960s hoped. Lowi and his contemporaries saw the widespread willingness of individual voters to split their tickets—to cast ballots for presidential and congressional candidates from different parties in the same election—as a major symptom of the sickness of America's political system. Voters, Lowi complained, were not being offered a real choice. "The similarities between the Republican and Democratic administrations greatly outnumbered and outweighed the differences." Today's voters are

significantly less likely to split their tickets than they were in 1972, a fact that further suggests citizens are not growing disenchanted with partisan politics.

In the miasma of mid-20th-century politics, moreover, opinion surveys revealed that many American voters did not identify with the party that best represented their values, instead choosing on the basis of the past performance of candidates or their own economic self-interest. That, too, is changing. According to Jacobson, the increasing coherence of the parties' ideologies has made "it easier for voters

## WHY IS IT SO puzzling that people vote their convictions rather than their pocketbooks?

to recognize their appropriate ideological home." It has provided citizens with "a much clearer idea of how their collective choices will translate into congressional action."

Overall, American voters are more involved and more attuned to how well leaders reflect their political beliefs than they were just a few decades ago. Yet many political analysts are just as unhappy as Lowi and his contemporaries were. If civic disaffection cannot explain their repudiation of ideological politics, what does?

The chief answer is that they lost their enthusiasm for "values voters" because those voters turned out to have the wrong values. One of the great political ironies of the past few decades is that the Christian Right has been much more successful than its political rivals at fulfilling liberal thinkers' hopes for American democracy. Liberals built an array of well-funded public-interest groups such as Common Cause, Environmental Defense, NARAL Pro-Choice America, and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. But most of these organizations asked little more of their supporters than checkbook activism, and some were entirely supported by foundations. The Right, on the other hand, built gen-

uinely grassroots organizations, including Operation Rescue, the Christian Coalition, and Concerned Women for America, whose members mobilized millions of disaffected evangelical citizens through church-based networks. In his famously despairing account of Americans' civic involvement, *Bowling Alone* (2000), Harvard political scientist Robert Putnam conceded the point, without appearing to find much solace in it: "It is, in short, among Evangelical Christians, rather than among the ideological heirs of the sixties, that we find the strongest evidence for an upwelling of civic engagement."

This was not the way things were supposed to turn out. The New Left had imagined that an America roused to greater ideological awareness would be dominated by debates between liberals and socialists. Political scientists, as Hacker and Pierson note, also based their enthusiasm for more ideologically coherent parties on the assumption that "liberal Democrats would

benefit from the hardening of party differences."

These were not unreasonable expectations. The ideological activists of the 1960s were overwhelmingly liberal. Even the pro-life movement's early campaigns of civil disobedience in the aftermath of *Roe v. Wade* (1973) were led by leftist Catholics who had cut their teeth on the antiwar movement. Conservatism was thought to exist more as a kind of pathological disorder of the nation's passive mainstream masses, an affliction of Nixon's silent majority. Now, however, many liberal thinkers see silent, ordinary Americans as a bulwark against an ideological politics that tilts to the political right.

Yet if the critics of ideological politics have mixed motives, there still might be a good case for trying to push moral issues and passions to the edges of American politics. But that is not easily done. Even those who vehemently call for the marginalization of moral issues hold hard positions on those issues that they



At a 1963 rally against racial discrimination in Detroit, civil rights demonstrators laid claim to their share of the American dream. Like many leaders of contemporary social movements in the United States, civil rights advocates learned that to persuade moderates they must win minds as well as hearts.

either conceal or fail to recognize. Nowhere is this clearer than in the debate over abortion.

Recall Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman, and Henry Brady's claim that religious groups "distort" American politics by focusing on abortion rather than "the least advantaged." While this may strike some as a perfectly reasonable argument, it assumes that the human embryo has no moral status. If this assumption is wrong, if the fetus does have a claim to protection, it is precisely "the least advantaged" that the right-to-life movement is defending.

Although critics fault pro-life advocates for focusing too much national attention on abortion, they do not criticize the Supreme Court for creating a national abortion policy that is badly "off center." Some of the new champions of middle-of-the-road Americans try to answer this criticism by insisting that *Roe v. Wade* represents mainstream opinion. In *Culture War?* Fiorina and his coauthors commend the Court for instituting a "broadly acceptable compromise" on abortion. A majority of Americans are "pro-choice but" (i.e., in favor of abortion rights but with qualifications), they say, and therefore "oppose the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*."

But that majority is not nearly as solid as Fiorina suggests. It rests on Americans' great ignorance of what *Roe* does and does not allow. As sociologist James Davison Hunter of the University of Virginia has shown, the vast majority of Americans imagine that *Roe* is far more restrictive than it actually is. For example, some 80 percent of Americans do not believe that abortion is available through all nine months of pregnancy. Such "mass legal illiteracy," according to Hunter, explains why "Americans want to keep *Roe* intact, but . . . also favor proposals that would restrict (some severely) what it currently allows, if not undermine it altogether." They wrongly assume that the United States is simply in step with European practice, even though most European democracies, including Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, limit abortion access to the first trimester.

Ironically, abortion only became a volatile political

issue when the Supreme Court attempted to take it out of politics with the *Roe* decision. Before the Court intervened, the states were steadily revisiting their abortion laws through the normal political process, and the door to subsequent argument and revision remained open. After *Roe*, pro-life activists were left with few political outlets. Their campaign of civil disobedience began when their political options were

## THE FACT THAT WE cannot escape moral conflicts in politics does not doom American democracy to endless political warfare.

suddenly reduced to amending the Constitution or radically changing the makeup of the Court. If liberal thinkers are alarmed by activist radicalism and truly believe in the centrist majority, the obvious course would be to support a reversal of *Roe*, allowing ordinary political conflict to sort the issue out through the democratic process in state legislatures. But that proposition has not found many takers.

**T**he fact that we cannot escape moral conflicts in politics does not doom American democracy to endless political warfare. Even the most passionate religiously inspired social movements learn to moderate their appeals in order to win over middle-of-the-road citizens. As historian Eric Foner concluded in his study of 19th-century politics, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men* (1970), abolitionists enjoyed more success once they began to emphasize constitutional arguments and the pragmatic concerns of ordinary citizens, such as their fear of a racial bloodbath in the aftermath of slavery. As Foner put it, such arguments were "far more effective politically than mere moralizing about slavery." The Women's Christian Temperance Union and its successor organizations ultimately succeeded in their campaign for prohibition by taking a similarly moderate course. The WCTU's remarkable president, Frances Willard, directed her activists to "be of a teachable spirit

and tolerant of those opinions which differ from ours, while we still strive to show the reasonableness of ours.”

In the early 20th century, the Catholic Church’s crusade against eugenic sterilization rested squarely on public reason. As the historian Sharon Leon found, Catholic activists labored to appeal to non-Catholics by “emphasizing scientific objections to the procedure, legal arguments about appeal and due process, and, finally, social justice issues raised by the racial and economic status of the targeted population.” More recently, the civil rights campaign in the South was a model of a

**AMERICA’S CULTURE WARS are one of the best antidotes to the individualistic consumer culture liberals tend to loathe.**

disciplined social movement. And despite the media’s attentive vigil over the culture war’s most outrageous and marginal characters, most conservative Christian activists today quietly labor to engage those who disagree with them in a civil and reasonable way. Stand to Reason, an organization that trains some 40,000 Christian activists annually, teaches citizens to avoid religious language and engage others in reasoned debate on substantive issues, such as the moral status of the fetus versus the newborn.

It is precisely this moderation within social movements that breeds uncompromising and even violent militants at the fringes. There were violent abolitionists, ax-wielding temperance crusaders, disciples of Black Power in the civil rights movement, Weathermen in the New Left, eco-terrorists in the environmental movement, and abortion clinic bombers in the Christian Right. But radicals also tend to inspire further moderation within social movements. This has been especially true in the Christian Right, where leaders are trying to escape the long shadow of fundamentalists such as Jerry Falwell and Randall Terry (of Operation Rescue fame). Most advocates who

want to win over mainstream Americans are not interested in losing strategies.

Yet leaders in all social movements know that they must also fire up their followers and potential recruits even as they instruct them to engage the public with reason and civility. They must simultaneously excite and educate democratic passions, a tradeoff that brings us directly to the fundamental tension between the competing democratic values of participation and deliberation.

The Founders appreciated this tension far better than most of today’s observers. In their view, deliberation was only possible in institutions that were insulated

from public passions. For that reason, for example, the Constitution provided that members of the Senate would be chosen indirectly, by state legislatures. In addition, the Founders drew congressional districts sufficiently large that the bonds connecting the

districts’ citizens would be weak. Their strategy was to sacrifice participation for the promise of deliberation and freedom from majority tyranny. As the late Wilson Carey McWilliams summarized their philosophy, “Liberty requires that we be kept weak.”

Yet experience has shown that the tradeoff between participation and deliberation is not nearly as stark as the Founders imagined. The genius of American social movements is that they have both engaged citizens *and* educated their moral passions. But they do still more. Social movements draw us out of our own self-interest by attaching us to other citizens and causes greater than ourselves. They demand our sacrifice, solidarity, and attention to politics. In this way, social movements help solve one of the central problems of democracy, which is the tendency of citizens to tirelessly pursue their own happiness without regard to the public weal. Such movements are a bulwark against the emergence of a consumer republic in which citizens, in Alexis de Tocqueville’s ominous words, simply indulge “their petty and banal pleasures.” America’s culture wars, in other words, are one of the best antidotes to the individualistic consumer culture liberals tend to loathe. ■

# Twelve Ways to Know the Past

*The past is always with us—in more ways than we think.*

BY ATHANASIOS MOULAKIS

THE UNIVERSITIES' CULTURE WARS HAVE ABATED. Most people have grown tired of the debates between the worth of "dead white males" on the one hand, and the sins of politically correct ideologues on the other. Neither side can be said to have won. An uneasy truce reigns, broken by an occasional rear-guard action. But the underlying issues have not gone away. How we interpret the past affects the norms by which we live.

For all the ink spilled in these wars, surprisingly little clarity has been achieved. Even the notion that "history is more or less bunk," as Henry Ford put it, survives. Yet just as we read reality now in this manner and now in that, guided by different interests, motives, and sensibilities, so we have different everyday ways of using—and abusing—history. It is a practice we cannot put behind us.

A culture is a unique kind of inheritance. It represents a hoard that can be preserved, nurtured, imaginatively enhanced, and sometimes even invented. It can be wasted, neglected, or allowed to fall to ruin, but it cannot be spent. One cannot trade, say, some *hispanidad* for a bit of English stiff upper lip.

But a cultural legacy is never simply given. As Goethe observed, one must acquire it in order to possess it. To come alive, a cultural heritage needs to be read, deciphered, interpreted, and felt. It is like a landscape: What aesthetic,

ATHANASIOS MOULAKIS was a Southeast Europe Project policy scholar at the Wilson Center during 2006–07. He has taught at universities in Europe and the United States and was most recently director of the Institute for Mediterranean Studies at the University of Lugano, in Switzerland.

cultural, and social messages it conveys depend on how you look at it. The same valley looks different in the eyes of a painter, a rancher, or a military planner. Depending on who I am, I can see that valley as picturesque, as good for grazing cattle, or as suitable for deploying light cavalry. And landscapes are sometimes deliberately arranged to suit the expectations or taste of the viewer. The gondolier sings Neapolitan songs, to the delight of foreign honeymooners and the horror of true Venetians. The Houses of Parliament rebuilt after the Blitz are "Gothic," faithfully reproducing the Victorian fake. Revivals and renaissances are other ways of rearranging the past. As Ernest Renan wrote in his 1882 essay "What Is a Nation?" a nation coheres as much around what it forgets as what it remembers.

There are many ways of apprehending (and eliding) the past, but 12 stand out as most common:

**Postmodernism.** Our past is not revealed to us like a hitherto undiscovered continent. But neither is it a mere figment we can pull out of thin air, as some postmodernist thinkers contend. If Stanley Fish is right to argue that the meaning of a text cannot be reduced to the intention of its author, it does not follow that one reading is as valid or insightful as another. The careful historian and philologist, although aware, as the postmodernists warn, that he does not stand outside history and cannot avoid reading his own understandings into the past, can nevertheless collate and compare evidence,

identify anachronisms and contaminations, establish authoritative texts, and reconstruct contexts.

**Fundamentalism.** Fundamentalists, who want to live according to the literal meaning of authoritative texts, reject the inescapably metaphorical and hence potentially ambiguous qualities of language. They lift the composition of texts out of history, into a mythically privileged moment. That is why there is such resistance to “revisionist” interpretations of the Founding Fathers and why the “higher criticism” of the Bible, which has yielded precious insights into the devel-

**THE CONNOISSEUR is not simply a creature of surfaces. Certain values are inscribed in a style.**

opment of our civilization, is intolerable to fundamentalists. Paradoxically, fundamentalists share the radical relativists’ conviction that if a truth cannot be discovered or revealed as existing independently of the mental grasp and experience of the seeker, it is no truth at all. This is, in a sense, the very denial of faith.

**Historiography.** It may be a blessing to place cool reason over the passions, but it can also be a curse. A truthful image of the historical Thomas Jefferson, warts and all, may not offer an inspiring vision of democratic greatness, as the Jefferson of legend does. Perfect historiography is the death of living history. Those who bemoan that our children are no longer taught history are not generally worried about the students’ capacity to sift historical evidence. They want the young to be elevated by exposure to edifying and cautionary tales woven into their national identity. Second-guessing a formative cultural legacy is considered subversive. It is not surprising that critical, disinterested history is rare, arduous, and subject to censorship and persecution in democracies as in other regimes.

**Aestheticism.** An aesthetic reading of a cultural heritage introduces an element of play, and in some cases it amounts to nothing more than an amusing distraction.

The casual visitor to Pompeii escapes his humdrum existence by entertaining stereotypical visions of opulence, decadence, and the vanity of things human before the force of nature. What matters is not exactitude, the understanding of these lives and that death, but the ability temporarily to escape reality.

This is why earnest moralists such as St. Augustine fulminate against trivial curiosity. Augustine objects to it precisely because it detracts from the pursuit of the true and everlasting good. But he is too severe. Curiosity, for all the vanity and banality of many of its manifestations, is an expression of what Aristotle thought is most human: the desire to know. The vagabond quality of curiosity that bothered Augustine corresponds to the fragmented reality with which humanity is confronted. It is a first tug of the desire to encompass the world. Moving from a

lesser to a somewhat higher degree of coherence seems to be the way to make sense of the world, even though many people, perhaps most, will be happy just to daydream about the last days of Pompeii.

A more sophisticated aesthetic approach takes the form of a gallant amorism that savors the beautiful and the sublime and looks down upon moralizing literalism. It is possible, for example, to transcend the propagandistic intentions of Leni Riefenstahl’s Nazi-era films and photographs and appreciate the craft and beauty of her work. But the aesthete can go a step beyond that. The great art critic Bernard Berenson, following Nietzsche, preferred to judge works of art (as well as people and actions) as life enhancing or not, rather than as good or bad. Shielded from prosaic bourgeois morality, the aesthetic élan aspires to reach deeper into the drama of the human psyche and hence closer to the moral core of human existence than hackneyed conventions allow.

**Connoisseurship.** In a democratic age suspicious of qualities that set people apart for reasons that cannot be spelled out, the ideal of a gentleman is not easy to defend, whereas that of a connoisseur receives grudging recognition (and even admiration when the object of delectation fits an approved category such as wine, whose appreciation the upwardly mobile now value almost as

much as a low golf handicap). The gentleman aims to cultivate a lightly borne assurance, the connoisseur to develop a taste, a palate, a heightened sensibility, but not a body of knowledge. To the connoisseur, the masterpieces of the past are exemplary, but mostly because of the manner of their execution, not the worthiness of their content. Yet the gentleman and the connoisseur are not simply creatures of surfaces. Certain values and modes of conduct are implicit, inscribed in a style.



*The Collector* (1993), by P.J. Crook

**Antiquarianism.** The antiquarian's approach is very different. Surrounding himself with memorabilia of the Civil War, the schedules and menus of transatlantic steamers, or whatever it is, he seeks to enhance his familiarity with cherished things because they are familiar, because they are his. Strolling about in his physical or metaphorical home terrain, he revisits what he already knows in order to know it better. But the antiquarian also escapes the lonely happenstance of his own existence by attaching himself to history.

The local historian who makes a point of knowing every detail and every story behind the features of his town or neighborhood is a good example of this. In this way, he inscribes himself in a greater whole that is still intimately his.

**Grand History.** The antiquarian's punctilious attachment to small things is very different from the sweeping tones of the grand historian, as exemplified by Winston Churchill in his *History of the English-Speaking Peoples* (1956–58).

Often, the evocation of ancient grandeur, real and imaginary, is intended to dispel the drabness of the present and vouchsafe future glories. Besides telling a tale, histories of this kind function like anthems or memorials. Monuments of past greatness, valor, or sacrifice—the Iwo Jima memorial, the eternal flame of the Arc de Triomphe, the statue of Geoffroy de Bouillon in Brussels—are erected and preserved because, in commemorating exemplary individuals or acts, they exalt the idea of the community. They generally glorify courage and loyalty, but they seldom celebrate wisdom, justice, or goodness. They are also frequently conceived and interpreted with poetic license. This may involve deplorable falsifications of events, but it can also create realities of a higher order.

**Textbooks and Encyclopedias.**

The most common tool for imparting the lessons of a cultural inheritance, at the opposite pole from individual sensibility, is the textbook or manual. Textbooks teach subjects, not students. Materials are organized to serve classification, memorization, and repetition. The manual is not interested in the process of discovery, the active intelligence of the authors. It is interested in their results and in their methods divorced from their personalities. Even when individual figures, such as Galileo, are glorified, the worth of their achievements is seen not in the lived experience of their feats of talent, inge-

nity, sensibility, learning, or culture, but teleologically, in their “contribution” to our present capital of knowledge. Even where it is true that, as dwarves on the shoulders of giants, we see further than they did, our own stature remains that of dwarves.

The encyclopedic mode aims to create a broad frame of reference for the learner, a web of structured cultural memory. It is one of the purposes of college general-education

## MEDIOCRITY IS ENCOURAGED by dumbing up as well as dumbing down.

requirements. This approach can receive an additional didactic twist when coupled with the idea that the cultural heritage consists of works, events, and stories from which to draw a moral. This is quite different from trying to understand the searching drama of past achievements. The fundamental idea is that the purpose of the author—Shakespeare or Thucydides, Michelangelo or Beethoven—is to *instruct*. The cultural inheritance then becomes an encyclopedia of stories with a moral. Elegance of expression and narrative power have no significance of their own. Insofar as the stories make learning more pleasant and therefore easier, they are useful, perhaps, but in any case subordinate to the central edifying mission of the encyclopedia.

**Celebrating Identity.** It is rare that cultural legacies are the objects of dispassionate study. It is much more common to “celebrate” a cultural inheritance as a claim to recognition, and the content of the culture is often subordinated to the claim. Pride takes the place of understanding.

Cultures are not inert objects that can be adequately understood from the outside, but neither is it possible for cultures to “speak for themselves.” Yet that is precisely the goal celebrants of cultural identity often embrace. The three-year-old National Museum of the American Indian on the Mall in Washington, D.C., is a good example. In designing their exhibits, the curators have abandoned all traditional classifications by tribe, language, or geographical distribution, and any attempt at chronological arrangement. Because they are extraneous to the cultures presented, such categories are thought to do them violence. Instead, visitors

are invited to “celebrate” the Native American cultures, not so much overcoming ethnocentric presumption as projecting the rhetoric of self-congratulation on cultural worlds not their own. The pose of respect is unaccompanied by any inducement to intellectual assimilation.

Since some kind of ordering of the materials is unavoidable, the truly magnificent collections of the museum are presented under “themes” such as “cosmology” or “landscape.” It is not evident, however, that these categories derive from the mental universe of the cultures presented. An interpretation that avoided all borrowed concepts, following the museum’s stated philosophy,

would require that all things Huron, for example, be presented in the Huron language—not very useful if the purpose is to explain a culture to those who do not belong to it.

The museum’s showcases group together objects found anywhere between Newfoundland and Tierra del Fuego, and made anytime between today and thousands of years ago, under headings such as “animals,” or “containers.” The effect of such classificatory chastity is total vacuity: All things are of equal value, that is, they are all equally worthless. This kind of critical abstinence goes hand in hand with the desire to entertain. At this and other museums, populism and a misplaced business mentality risk transmogrifying the institutional custodians of our cultural heritage into theme parks. The value of a cultural inheritance is abused when it is reduced to a badge of ethnicity.

**Idol Worship.** Mediocrity is encouraged by dumbing up as well as dumbing down. The notoriety of masterpieces eclipses what surrounds them. The immense crowds that line up around the block to see the *Mona Lisa* or Michelangelo’s *David* flow past other marvels of art with nary a look. It is an open question to what extent the very fame of a work prevents visitors from seeing it for themselves.

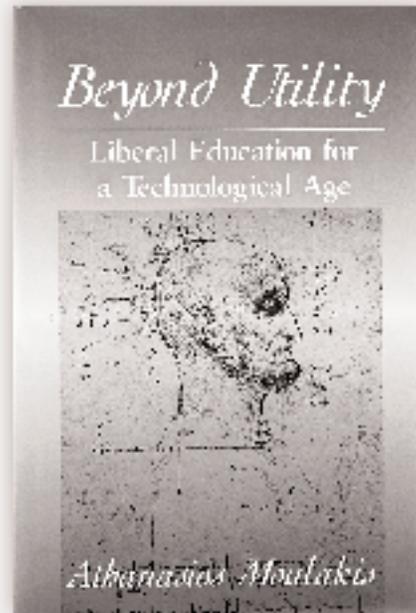
The deserved consecration of certain works as great, instead of stimulating a heightened aesthetic receptivity, encourages mental laziness and can become an excuse for philistinism: “You call that art? An ape can do better. Look at the Old Masters!” The legacy is available, but it needs to be read for its invitation to originality if it is to emerge from under the weight of

**Book lovers agree—the world's largest selection of titles covering political theory and the social sciences is found at AbeBooks.com.**

**Find Moulakis's *Beyond Utility: Liberal Education for a Technological Age* and other award winning titles listed by independent booksellers around the corner and around the world.**



**100 million new, used, rare, and out-of-print books.**



conventional admiration. In one of his books, Le Corbusier includes two pictures showing a mass of redundant ornamentation on early skyscrapers juxtaposed against the perfectly proportioned, grand, and utterly simple staircase in the garden of Versailles. The gee-gaws, he remarks, are what come “from having seen Versailles without understanding.”

**Creative Misunderstanding.** Western art was influenced by contact with the East—from the chinoiseries of the 18th century to Egyptian motifs introduced after Bonaparte’s expedition to the Nile. The influence of Oriental art on the Impressionists and the effect of so-called primitive art, mainly African and Oceanic, on artists such as Pablo Picasso were even more decisive. Picasso was not, of course, attempting to recover the original intention of the makers of these artifacts—for whom they were neither “art” in the Western sense nor primitive. He sought instead to appropriate their forms for his own creative purposes. The profound renewal of Western art that resulted from its prolonged exposure to non-Western forms was the happy result of creative misunderstanding.

Forms inspired by exotic borrowings can, however, acquire a life of their own and create stereotypes projected back on their original. Often the stereotypes are negative, but people on the receiving end can also exploit stereotypes for their own ends. The average “Latin lover” doesn’t rush to disabuse the Nordic vacationer eager for adventure. Flamencos, hula dances, and other folkloric displays reflect the same truth. Entire peoples can play this game. The Dogon of Mali display the costumes, rituals, and professed beliefs in omnipresent spirits that affluent visitors have been programmed to find ever since the anthropologist Marcel Griaule made the Dogon and their intriguing practices known to the Western world in the 1930s. This has led to good practicing Muslims, which is what most Dogon are, passing themselves off as animists, the Dogon disguising themselves as “Dogon.”

The visitors do not just bring money. People feel confirmed in their identity when others seek them out as embodiments of something more meaningfully rooted than what their own bland modern lives yield. The thirst for tradition not only helps sustain “old ways” but is capable of inventing them. The traditional country fare on most Greek

islands, for example, used to be rather poor and limited in variety. Now, an increasingly affluent and sophisticated public demands both interesting food and local color. Restaurants respond with dishes supposedly based on “age-old local recipes.” By dint of repeating the story, the chef himself comes to believe in the culinary genius of his blessed peasant grandmother.

**Meditation.** A meditative approach to a landscape, a text, a work of art, though by no means necessarily religious, has an inward quality of which silence is the most telling outward sign. It does not proceed by analysis but by steady attention. Medieval monks recognized a mode of reading, a *sacra lectio*, that reinforces the community in faith. Each member is moved by an experience similar to that of his peers. The rule of St. Benedict prescribes absolute silence during the reading and prohibits any comments except for edifying remarks considered necessary by the prior. This may strike us as odd and authoritarian, but the discipline is directed not at the silencing of dissent but at the power of heeding what is being said. If it strikes us as impeding self-expression, we should also wonder how a self worth expressing is formed.

Meditative readings are iconolatric; the meaning they find does not emerge from analysis. Great works of all kinds are susceptible to both approaches. A reader of the *Iliad* does not need to know about the formal patterns of epic composition to be transported by the poem. One can be drawn into a Mark Rothko painting without knowing anything about its art-historical antecedents. Images and icons convey meaning beyond what they explicitly depict.

All of these modes of understanding the past come with difficulties and, sometimes, perils. The right kind of attention is not guaranteed. The collective mind is especially apt to be inattentive, attached to the literal. Where images—texts, constitutions, crowns—are venerated in common and thus form bonds of community, we find the beginnings of idolatry. The icon is no longer a vehicle or a window to the ineffable, but an opaque painted board that occludes rather than reveals the inspiring experience that gave rise to its form. This rigidity is the root of fundamentalism. Iconoclastic reactions can be cathartic, but, like reformations and revolutions that aim to recapture and restore the idea behind shopworn and corrupt forms,

they risk throwing out the baby with the bath water. The Italian Futurists of the early 20th century, repelled by the stale sentimentality of the received artistic ideas of their time, vowed to “kill the moonlight.” But their campaign was soon absorbed by a movement that killed people instead.

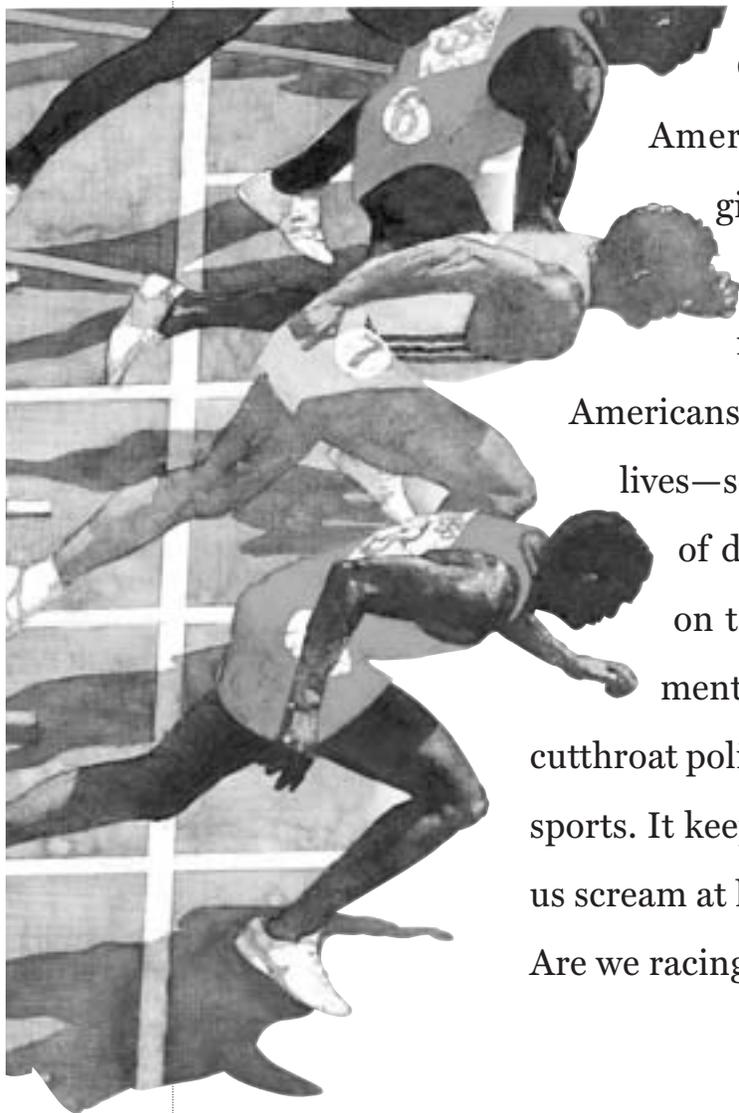
The consecrated character of a text, be it explicitly religious or ostensibly secular, sets limits to its interpretation. The authority of documents such as the Qu’ran or the U.S. Constitution seems essential to holding together a certain kind of community. Yet circumstances change and a literal interpretation of the authoritative text becomes incompatible with the new reality. The Sermon on the Mount, for instance, was pronounced in the expectation that the end was near. It is impossible for a community meant to last to live by its rules. The interpretative genius of the Church Fathers created effective institutional structures, informed by the spirit of the Sermon but adapted to a viable earthly community.

Who guards the guardians? Where meanings are not explicit, who are the legitimate interpreters who decide what conduct is required in response to apparently ambiguous readings? Averroës, the 12th-century Muslim philosopher who revived European awareness of Aristotle, nominates wise scholars. Machiavelli calls on “those who understand.” But once cut loose from the literal meaning of texts, how can we protect against false prophets, demagogues, and charlatans? In the American political system, the Supreme Court, fulfilling the role of Averroës’ scholars, is entrusted with deciding what constitutional provisions mean. “Activist” judges are nonetheless often accused of making rather than interpreting the law, but because they are embedded in the institutional status quo, they are not as radically suspect in their own land as are, say, Sufi mystics who claim an “inner voice” that trumps the authoritative Islamic texts and practices in many Muslim countries.

There are other modes of reading our patrimony in addition to those I have identified here, and none of these modes exist in pure form. They exist in a jumble. They do not represent different destinations in our quest for cultural memory but rather different ways of navigating the sea of culture. We can trim our sails or ply the oars as circumstances and our course demand, and our seamanship can be efficient, elegant, clumsy, or even disastrous. But, like it or not, we are launched upon the waters. ■

# Overdrive!

## COMPETITION IN AMERICAN LIFE



COMPETITIVENESS IS THE NEW American mantra. It's the slogan of giant corporations squaring off in the global economy and the animating principle of everyday Americans conducting the business of their lives—sometimes when they're hardly out of diapers. The struggle to come out on top propels us to greater achievement but also to dismal behavior, from cutthroat politics to corruption in business and sports. It keeps us late in the office and makes us scream at kids who don't play games to win. Are we racing too hard?

DANIEL AKST on the virtues of striving..... p. 46

MILES HOFFMAN on competition in classical music..... p. 50

BENJAMIN R. BARBER on the lost art of cooperation ..... p. 56

TYLER COWEN on our new invisible competitors ..... p. 62

# Strive We Must

*Competition pervades modern life, and it's here to stay. Before we wring our hands, just look where it got us.*

BY DANIEL AKST

WHEN THE PHILOSOPHER SACHEL PAIGE warned us not to look back (because something might be gaining on us), he couldn't have imagined how prescient he was, even though his own career in baseball pointed the way to the world we would all someday inhabit. Restricted to the Negro Leagues for more than two decades, Paige finally broke into Major League Baseball in 1948. Within a couple of decades black ballplayers had become dominant figures in the majors, the Negro Leagues had collapsed—and baseball had become a much more competitive place.

That will happen when barriers fall. Technology has some of the same effects: Newspapers find themselves competing with bloggers, traditional stores with Amazon, and singles bars with Cupid.com. Americans find that, thanks in part to technologies they invented or pioneered, they're competing with workers in India, China, and other far-off lands who are willing to do the same work for a lot less money. Even individuals in need of a Little League logo or a personal webpage are finding people who can do the job for less in Bucharest or Bangladesh.

Competition—the reality but also the metaphor—has somehow come to pervade modern life, much as we try to wish it away or pretend, as in five-year-olds' soccer games, that it isn't really going on. In some cities, the pre-school admissions process is as fraught as the mass ver-

sion of musical chairs with which top universities fill their classes. Stepped-up competition is apparent in the workplace as well. Companies are less willing or able to carry unproductive employees, but in today's competitive business environment even productive workers can receive a pink slip when circumstances persuade executives that cutbacks make sense. Companies these days are less constrained by sentiment or tradition when considering whether to outsource, move, or shut a plant. A study earlier this year by economists Thomas Lemieux, W. Bentley MacLeod, and Daniel Parent found that “the overall incidence of performance-pay jobs has increased from a little more than 30 percent in the late 1970s to more than 40 percent in the 1990s.” Bonus, commission, piecework—whatever you want to call it, pay for production makes work seem a lot more competitive. When *Fortune* magazine reported on white-collar workers “fired at fifty” who couldn't find comparable positions, the best advice from the experts was to embrace “involuntary entrepreneurship,” which of course means competing on your own without a company-provided pension, health insurance, sick days, or vacation.

Globalization has spurred many changes. Firms that once shuffled along in cozy domestic oligopolies now find themselves battling overseas competitors. Deregulation of airlines and utilities, the dismantling of trade barriers, growing Third World productive capacity, rapidly evolving technologies, the weakening of restrictions that kept banks pent up within states and out of the securi-

DANIEL AKST, a recent public policy scholar at the Wilson Center, is a novelist and essayist living in New York's Hudson Valley.



**Faster! While Americans complain of job stress, only a fraction of the population is working harder. Most Americans have more leisure time than ever.**

ties business—these developments and so many others have helped foster a vastly more competitive commercial environment than existed a generation ago, an era well within living memory for many American workers, who recall a time when U.S. industrial might was unchallenged.

Even the home, ostensible refuge from worry and trial, has become a competitive arena. The overturning of traditional roles has meant that spouses may find themselves vying not just to see who can get out of doing the laundry, but for power, status, and renown as well. Consider the case of Ségolène Royal and her partner, François Holland, both ambitious French politicians and rivals for the same party's presidential nomination. Surely, electoral jockeying made for some frosty breakfasts around their house (and in fact the couple recently parted ways). As for the rest of us, competition for filial

affection has radically increased in many families thanks to the increased prevalence of divorce, in which parents sharing custody may find themselves in an authority-eroding contest for the favor of offspring who all too easily play one off against the other.

**H**ow did we get here? As is so often the case in American life, we're victims of our own success. Despite a remarkable amount of hand-wringing, given the circumstances, life in this country for most of us is better than it has ever been—longer, fairer, freer, and richer. And that's what makes for so much competition. More of us than ever before consider that we have a reasonable shot at an Ivy League education, a beachfront property, or a partnership in a law firm. The same is true for less glittering prizes. Discrimination

persists, of course, but there's less of it. Newspaper help-wanted ads no longer specify gender or faith, and real estate ads (to say nothing of deeds) have dropped their restrictions as well. In the political arena everyone's got a lobby, it sometimes seems, except the country at large, and the old, nowadays more numerous and healthier than in the past, compete all too effectively for resources against the young.

Another factor in the seeming competitiveness of modern life is the astonishing efficiency of modern markets, as well as the acceptance of markets as the prevailing metaphor for so much human activity. In the public realm such one-time monopolies as the Postal Service, the local public school, and the regional electric utility, now have to compete against (respectively) UPS and

FedEx, charter and magnet schools, and alternative providers of electricity, with whom consumers can contract. Market participants—that's us—have better information than in the past as a result of the ratings, rankings, and reviews that are cropping up everywhere. Users report their experience with products on websites such as Amazon and Epinions; professors and schoolteachers are bluntly rated on sites such as RateMyProfessors.com (which covers sexual appeal as well as pedagogy); and publications including *Consumer Reports*, *U.S. News & World Report*, and various city magazines rate and rank for a living, so that sooner or later someone is likely to be anointed best dermatologist—or, for that matter, plumber—in Cleveland.

The irony is that it was competition, in the first place,

that helped bring about the richer, fairer, freer—and intensely more competitive—society we have become. All the key forces at work—social change, technology, and globalization—are as plain as day on the baseball diamond. Time was, a young white fellow with a live arm, honed perhaps in sandlot games or by throwing against the barn wall, was competing only against others like himself. Today he's competing against the best the world has to offer. Not only is the sport open to blacks and other minorities from this country, but a significant proportion of today's players are foreign born. Besides the Latin Americans now so common in the big leagues, Korean and Japanese ballplayers are starting to turn up. (Professional basketball and hockey also draw on an increasingly global talent pool.) Foreign squads have been beating American teams in the Olympics and other international competitions for a while now, not just in baseball but in basketball as well. Free agency, meanwhile, has forced baseball team owners to compete



Winning really isn't everything. What's inspiring about sports heroes like Babe Ruth is that the character and talents they hone through competition show us the possibilities of human excellence.

for players, bidding up salaries so that now even a journeyman reliever earns a small fortune. Nor is milking cows any longer the primary builder of wrist strength. Just as travel and telecommunications technologies have made it possible to recruit more widely, advances in training, dietary science, and medicine have enabled players to hit the ball farther and throw it faster.

College admissions is another arena where competition has blossomed riotously. When I applied to college, back in the raccoon coat days of 1974, you had to complete a separate time-consuming application for each institution; Yale's was so daunting that I didn't even bother. I applied to five or six schools and visited none.

Despite only decent grades and a mediocre math showing on the SATs, I got into some excellent institutions, and attended one without hysteria, consultants, or prep courses. My graying friends and I agree that we wouldn't stand a chance of admission into

our own alma maters today. Students are much more focused and accomplished, and the marginal cost of an additional application has plummeted; the rise of the "Common Application" (often filed electronically) has made it easier to apply to many more schools than I did, and high school students are doing just that.

About those spectacular students: You can expect to see more manufactured greatness in the years ahead, and even tougher competition in many arenas, now that genius looks more likely to be made than born, at least in the eyes of those who study such things. Chess prodigies are proliferating, for example, thanks to computer-based training methods, but in fact prodigies are proliferating in many different fields as a result of better training, determined parents, affluence, and, yes, tougher competition. "The standards denoting expertise grow ever more challenging," Philip E. Ross wrote last year in *Scientific American*, where he was a contributing editor. "High school runners manage the four-minute mile; conservatory students play pieces once attempted only by virtuosi." Ross reports on studies comparing tournament chess from 1911 to 1993 which found that modern players made far fewer errors, and that today's top chess

players generally are much better than the grandmasters of yore.

Circumstances and ideology these days are supporting all this competition. The collapse of communism almost everywhere (in China it lives on in name only, supported by something like a capitalist frenzy) has left one brand or another of the market economy as pretty much the only game in town. Pro-competition ideologues (and such intellectual forebears as Adam Smith and Milton Friedman) are in the ascendance, and economists generally have expanded their turf across almost the whole of human activity (including such highly competitive arenas as sex), sharpening our understanding of

**MY GRAYING FRIENDS AND I agree  
that we wouldn't stand a chance of  
admission into our own alma maters today.**

competition's role in our lives. Evolutionary biology, perhaps the other preeminently influential academic discipline of our times, also has competition at its core. Our view of courtship nowadays is as likely to be influenced by Charles Darwin as Jane Austen, and thanks to online dating (the sexual equivalent of eBay?), the Internet gods are playing nearly as big a role as Cupid.

Competition has also been rescued to some extent from the class-based doghouse in which it dwelt for so long. In the bad old days, after all, trying too hard was considered poor form; success was supposed to come easily, like one's wealth and position, and not require any of the sweaty striving associated with the lower orders. Those days are blessedly past—we are all sweaty strivers now—yet we remain ambivalent about this state of affairs. We feel nostalgia for the ethos of good form, and for the freedom from class anxiety we might have felt in a more static society. Who among us has not referred, at some point, to competitive modern life as a rat race? Which of us has not vowed, sooner or later, to fore swear it, presumably in favor of a return to our

# Beautiful Victory

BY MILES HOFFMAN

ROMANTICS STILL DREAM THAT musicians and other artists toil nobly in a golden realm, oblivious to the worldly fray. Human nature, though, has a way of asserting itself: Like everybody else, musicians discern and discriminate, compare and compete. Musical competitiveness—and competition—starts the moment a young player is able to tell the difference between the kinds of sounds he or she is making and the sounds someone else is making. Soon enough, players find themselves grouped by ability: The better players sit closer to the front in the school orchestra or band, and the best players are assigned the solos.

Sifting and sorting continues inevitably in one form or another at every age and every level of accomplishment, from grade school to graduate school to professional life. Is it a good thing? Should the best players always get to play the solos? Sure. The solos sound better that way. The music is more beautiful, which is to everyone's advantage. The stronger players set standards, show what's possible,

and inspire the weaker ones to work harder and to improve—or to shift their focus to areas in which they'll be more successful. And the stronger players have an incentive to stay on their toes.

In music, as indeed in all fields, and among composers and instrument makers as well as performers, competition has been a crucial factor



**Survivor: Classical musicians such as Grammy Award-winner Joshua Bell reach the pinnacle of their art only after years of grueling practice and many competitions.**

in most great accomplishments and all great progress. Each generation of artists, like each generation of scientists or athletes, attempts to match and if possible surpass the preceding generation. Such striving is a hard-wired human phenomenon, and how delightful for all of us when the attempts succeed.

But of course it's no fun to try and

fail, or even to feel that you may not be keeping up. Here we come to the less rosy, occasionally destructive byproducts of competition: disillusion and discouragement. I don't think there's a music student (or professional musician) in the world who hasn't at some point sunk into the misery of these afflictions, either partway or profoundly. There's always at least one

person who can do at least one thing better than you, and somewhere along the way most of us find ourselves confronting more daunting numbers in both respects. Yes, ability blossoms into accomplishment at different rates for different individuals, and in our most lucid moments, we remember that—or have the good fortune to be reminded of it.

With courage, luck, hard work, and moral support from whoever is able to offer it, we frail mortal musicians may find a path that suits and satisfies us. But there are no guarantees.

The fact remains that some people are simply more gifted than others, endowed with talents that are readily apparent. And the words "readily apparent" point

directly to one of the reasons competition in music may *seem* more intense and more jarring than competition in other fields: Music is made out loud. It's a performance art, a public art; differences are obvious, and there's no way to avoid comparisons. Many scientific disciplines, for example, are as intensely competitive as music, but for the most part the work is done in private, and the answer to the question "Who's better?" may not be obvious for years. Music affords no such luxury and—with today's remarkably high performance standards—no respite.

Then again, competition in many fields is even more overt, with much more dramatic consequences than in music. Think of athletics, or politics. Yet in these areas competition seems normal to us, not at all questionable or philosophically disturbing. Why?

The answer lies in an apparent paradox. Psychologically, competition inevitably involves some form of aggression, even sadism, and certainly the will to dominate, to *beat* the opposition. But the way you "beat" the other guy in music is not just by playing (or singing) faster or more powerfully. It's also by playing more movingly, more beautifully, more sweetly. And the idea that sweetness and loveliness can somehow be instruments of aggression and domination can seem strange, dissonant, almost immoral.

The paradox appears most glaring—and arouses the strongest "moral" objections—not in compe-

tion per se, but in competitions, those events great and small in which young musicians play *against* one another for money and prizes. Some people are convinced that competitions by their very nature reward qualities extraneous to beautiful music-making—physical endurance, for example, or nerves of steel, or ambitiousness. And many frankly feel that Art is high and competition low, or that at the very least the two are somehow antithetical. Béla Bartók, for one, once said, "Competitions are for horses, not artists."

I've only attended one competition that was strictly for horses, I admit, but I've judged or observed many music competitions, and participated in my fair share (with happy results in some, less happy results in others). At the risk of puncturing preconceptions, I have to say that far more often than not, the musicians who win competitions are those who play the most beautifully. It's really true. It's also true, however, that there are invariably people who play beautifully who *don't* win, which is very disturbing. Can it ever be right to call someone who plays music beautifully a "loser"? Isn't the very idea of winning and losing a kind of pollutant, best kept well away from a pristine and precious art?

Perhaps. Beauty, after all, is a market that can't be cornered. And the psyches of competitors can indeed get bruised, sometimes badly. Still, if you've entered a competition you've accepted the frame-

work, and voluntarily forfeited your right not to lose. You can always enter other competitions, in which you may have better luck or where the judges may have different tastes, and fortunately there are ways to make a career *without* winning competitions. The best news is that, win or lose, the many hours of pre-competition practice will have brought you to a new level of accomplishment, improving your chances of success on whatever musical path you choose to follow. Right and wrong, good and bad? Take your pick, because in musical competitions, as in competition in general, they're all there, mixed together.

**A** brief coda: The desire to play music beautifully is by no means rooted solely, or even primarily, in competitiveness. We seek the satisfactions of music for their own sake, and if we try to play or sing more movingly, it's usually because we want to be more moved. Given our nature, however, we're entirely capable of wondering what the audience thinks, or what the nasty critic will write, or whether Competitor #32 can possibly match *that*, at the very same moment our souls are absorbed in beauty and delight. This is not a paradox or a contradiction. It's just how human beings work.

MILES HOFFMAN, the dean of the Petrie School of Music at Converse College, in Spartanburg, South Carolina, is the violist of the American Chamber Players and music commentator for NPR's *Morning Edition*.

natural state of romping in the meadows with the butterflies? We want our kids to do well, yet competition is something we want to shelter them from. That's why, in northern California, some high schools with large numbers of Asian-American students are experiencing white flight among families who find the academic environment a mite too . . . hectic.

For all their rhetoric, business executives don't

**CORPORATE EXECUTIVES have often complained of “cutthroat,” “murderous,” or “ruinous” competition.**

seem to like competition much either, and in this at least they frequently have unions on their side. Remember *The Man in the White Suit* (1951)? Alec Guinness plays a man who anticipates glory and riches for inventing an indestructible fabric, only to discover that labor and management are united in their fervor for his scalp. Executives and commentators have often complained of “cutthroat,” “murderous,” or “ruinous” competition. Many corporate mergers—such as the recent acquisition of Wild Oats Markets by Whole Foods Market—are initiated by executives who hope in part to make markets less competitive by joining one-time rivals. Even our own government is dubious; while antitrust laws exist to suppress anticompetitive practices, a host of other government initiatives—such as costly federal farm policies—work to suppress competition.

**M**ore than one liberal intellectual is ready to call a halt. In his book *No Contest: The Case Against Competition* (1986), Alfie Kohn urged us to embrace cooperation and get our kids to play non-competitive games. Some schools have taken this idea to heart by embracing a euphemistic grading system to avoid the nakedly hierarchical A through F that most of us old-timers remember (rest assured, the kids know very well that

NI—“needs improvement”—is about the same as a C). David Callahan, in *The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead* (2004), answers his own implied question by blaming an excessively competitive society. In the realm of baseball, for instance, Callahan cites the case of an over-age pitcher in the 2001 Little League World Series, who mowed down the younger kids until he was

unmasked. Yet the evidence for competitively inspired corruption is anecdotal at best; back in the halcyon days of 1919, after all, the *real* World Series was tainted in the so-called Black Sox scandal, and in 1951 the New York Giants won the

National League pennant thanks not just to Bobby Thomson's game-ending Shot Heard 'Round the World but to the team's premeditated theft of signs from opposing catchers.

Callahan is on firmer ground when he brings up the steroid allegations that have dogged slugger Barry Bonds. It's still unclear how widespread doping has been in baseball, but if you watch a game or two from a mere 25 years ago on *ESPN Classics*, the change is striking: The earlier players seem downright Lilliputian by modern standards. Sadly, steroids are just another example of technology boosting performance in a competitive environment, and these phenomena are not limited to the majors. Nowadays the parents of some school-age players are pressing doctors for rehabilitative surgery on perfectly healthy young elbows, in hopes that the procedure will deliver a couple extra miles per hour on a high schooler's fast-ball (fortunately, it can't).

We may be doomed to earn our bread by the sweat of our brows, but before we plunge into despair over a dog-eat-dog society that grows more competitive by the day, it's worth keeping a few things in mind about competition.

**It used to be worse.** Think of the Roman gladiators! Or in our own country, consider Oklahoma: After it was snatched from the Indians, the future state was apportioned by means of a land rush, with settlers trampling one another to get at prime spots.



Is competition today more cutthroat than before? Ask the gladiators.

Nineteenth-century business practices were truly red in tooth and claw, while total output per person was so much lower in those days that merely staying alive was a competitive scramble for most people. Larger family sizes, meanwhile, meant more competition for parental attention, food, and inheritable resources.

**Life is not as competitive as the media might have us believe.** It's important to remember that our cultural elites live with so much competitive anxiety that their lives simply aren't representative. Most Americans have more leisure than they did a generation ago, even as the highest-paid earners work like maniacs. And competition of all kinds is worst in places such as New York and Los Angeles, where real-estate hysteria and preschool panic afflict even the rich and powerful. The media come to us from these places, and are produced by people who live in a culture of frenzied attention grabbing that sooner or later disappoints everybody. Reports from these precincts should be discounted by at least 50 percent.

**It's our nature.** This is probably not a great argument for anything, but it's worth noting that competition is at least as natural to us as cooperation. Hierarchies crop up almost everywhere, in every setting. Remember *Animal Farm*? Everyone was equal, sure, but some were more equal than others. It's the same in real life, where, in the words of psychologist David M. Buss, "conflict, competition, and manipulation also pervade human mating." The desire to mate—and the imbalance between the most desirable partners and the many more people who covet them—"catapults people headlong into the arena of competition with members of their own sex," even if they don't always recognize that what they're doing—angling for a promotion, applying eyeliner, cracking jokes—is competitive behavior.

**Competition is—dare we admit it?—good for us.** The desire to win was surely one of the things that motivated Branch Rickey to break baseball's color barrier by bringing an African-American ballplayer to the Dodgers. In college admissions, competition is the

handmaid of meritocracy, to say nothing of diversity. In the old days, places at Ivy League universities were bestowed like a birthright on graduates of the right prep schools, but nowadays spots are won as the result of a wide-open national and even international competition. Students are still constrained by circumstances, of course, and the affluent always have an edge, even when admissions are need-blind, just by virtue of their upbringing. Yet by any reasonable standard, the competition today is fairer as well as keener. At the same time, universities compete with one another for students and prestige, with the result being

because of competition for money, status, or mates? Surely, culture has gained right along with the gene pool as a result.

The question, of course, is not whether to stamp out competition but how much to constrain it. It would be relatively easy to sand off the roughest edges of competitive modern society without altogether dulling its edge. Universal medical coverage and better K-12 education—preferably accomplished in both cases by exploiting rather than eliminating competition—would help not just the losers in competitive life, but the less victorious as well. Doping in baseball surely could be contained if owners and

players shared the desire to do so; all it takes is for the fans to care more about cleaning up the sport than watching home runs. And the college admissions frenzy might be considerably eased if applications were rationed. High school students might be given 10 points, with each application costing at least one.

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES compete for students and prestige, creating a system that is the envy of the world, and a stark contrast with our uncompetitive public schools.**

a remarkably varied and dynamic system of higher education that is the envy of the world—and a stark contrast with a relatively uncompetitive K-12 system that performs poorly by international standards.

In business, meanwhile, global competition has raised American living standards, helped lift giant swaths of Asia out of poverty, and knit the world much closer together. Competition even fosters cooperation. The whole basis of the company is that those within will work together to best those without, taking advantage of informational edges and other advantages to compete more effectively. And management specialists now emphasize the need for companies to forge more collaborative relationships with suppliers, customers, and even sometime rivals. The cooperative spirit reaches far beyond business. The world's biggest champions of competitive individualism are also its biggest philanthropists. Charitable giving by Americans totals 2.2 percent of the gross domestic product, more than twice the share of wealth contributed by any other nation. Competition spurs accomplishment. How many fortunes have been amassed, home runs hit, novels penned, all

Colleges could weigh an application's seriousness by how many points were spent on it, just as early-decision applicants today often get an edge.

One problem is that constraining competition usually means giving up something. Keeping out Wal-Mart means paying higher prices. Erecting barriers to imports means a return to the poorly made clunkers Detroit turned out before Toyota scared the dickens out of everybody. De-emphasizing grades creates the risk of encouraging mediocrity.

Yet it seems inevitable that as income inequality grows, so too will pressure to further tax (in the broadest sense) the winners for the benefit, at the very least, of the somewhat less victorious. Meanwhile, it's probably wise to keep the competitive cast of our culture in perspective. Like traffic, it's often unpleasant, but it's a sign of success in a community rather than failure. It's the price of dynamism, of openness, meritocracy, and flexibility and even freedom. It was competition that gave us the modern world. For better or worse, the modern world appears determined to repay us in kind. ■

## Regime Change

*U.S. Strategy through the  
Prism of 9/11*

Robert S. Litwak

"A smart book on  
this theme."  
—Tom Friedman,  
*New York Times*

"This impressive  
study is the best yet of those that  
outline the dilemmas and choices that  
face the United States as it confronts  
hostile states."

—*Foreign Affairs*  
\$25.00 paperback



## Cold War, Deadly Fevers

*Malaria Eradication in Mexico, 1955–1975*

Mircoos Cueto

"The first scholarly and book-length study of malaria eradication  
in Latin America that shows how campaigns actually played out on  
the ground and how they were framed by Cold War ideologies and  
imperatives."—Alexandra Stern, University of Michigan

\$35.00 ~~hardcover~~

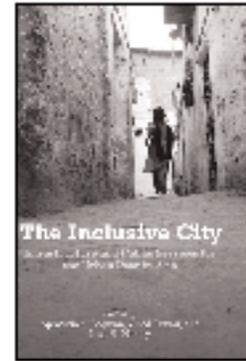
## The Inclusive City

*Infrastructure and Public Services  
for the Urban Poor in Asia*

edited by Apurindia A. Luquitan,  
Vinod Tewari, and Lisa M. Hanley

"Highlights collaborative evidence for urban re-  
newal and urban exemplars worthy of replication."

—Sudha Mohan, University of Mumbai  
\$50.00 ~~hardcover~~



**The Woodrow Wilson Center Press and The Johns Hopkins University Press**

1-800-557-5467 • [www.press.jhu.edu](http://www.press.jhu.edu) • 20% discount to Wilson Center members

# We Can't Live on Ideas Alone

Since the *WQ* got its start more than three decades ago, we have been powered by ideas. Not the intellectual fashions of the moment, or the fare peddled by pundits and publicity departments and ax grinders, but good-faith efforts by leading writers and thinkers to grapple with issues of our times in a thoughtful, critical, and nuanced way.

We take pride in the fact that we have been "accused" over the years of being both a liberal and a conservative magazine. We regard such judgments as testament to the fact that we're fulfilling our mission to examine the ways of looking at the world in all of their variety.

But a magazine cannot run on ideas alone. Beholden to no niche audience, advertiser, or political constituency, neither can we turn to any of these groups when we need to pay the bills. Revenues from subscriptions and other sources simply don't cover all our expenses. The cost of paper goes up. So do authors' fees. And, yes, gas prices. So we turn to our readers, in full faith that you value what we do enough to help us continue doing it, without compromise, by contributing whatever you can.

Questions? Contact the Editor, Steven Lagerfeld, at (202) 691-4019, or [WQ@wilsoncenter.org](mailto:WQ@wilsoncenter.org).

Send your tax-deductible contribution to:  
The Editor, The Wilson Quarterly  
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20004-3027

Checks and credit cards accepted. Make checks payable to *The Wilson Quarterly*. If using a credit card (Visa, MasterCard, or American Express), please indicate name on card, account number, and expiration date. Fax: (202) 691-4036.

# The Lost Art of Cooperation

*In exalting competition, Americans often forget that cooperation and collective effort are the foundation of freedom.*

BY BENJAMIN R. BARBER

*Government and co-operation are in all things the laws of life; anarchy and competition the laws of death.*

—John Ruskin, *Unto This Last* (1862)

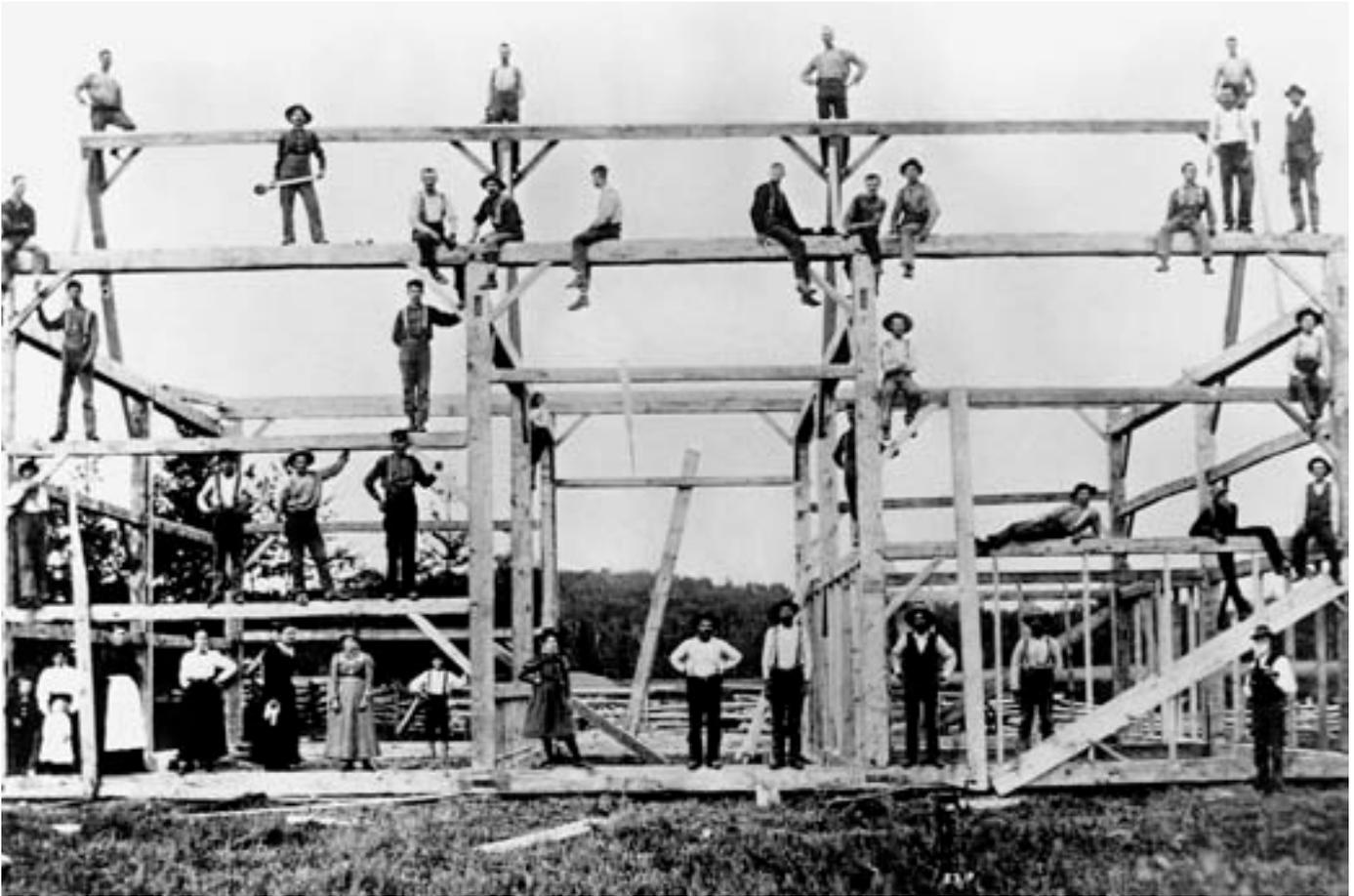
COMPETITION IS AS AMERICAN AS APPLE PIE. IT announces American individualism and marks the American market economy with its characteristic rivalries. Not just for neoliberals such as Milton Friedman and quasi-anarchists such as philosopher Robert Nozick, but for Americans of all political stripes, it reflects a distrust of the “government and co-operation” dear to cultural critic John Ruskin. We are a nation of winners (and, yes, losers) where, in the wonderfully perverse turn of phrase often attributed to one of America’s “winningest” coaches, “Winning isn’t everything, it’s the only thing.”

Yet we need not be readers of Ruskin to know that competition also has a pejorative sense, even in

BENJAMIN R. BARBER is the Gershon and Carol Kekst Professor of Civil Society and Distinguished University Professor at the University of Maryland and president and director of CivWorld, an organization that promotes awareness of international interdependence. His latest book, *Consumed: How Markets Corrupt Children, Infantilize Adults, and Swallow Citizens Whole*, was published earlier this year.

American usage. It may be nature’s way, as Charles Darwin proposed, but only when we conceive of nature as a jungle. Whatever we make of it, today competition dominates our ideology, shapes our cultural attitudes, and sanctifies our market economy as never before. We are living in an age that prizes competition and demeans cooperation, an era more narcissistic than the Gilded Age, more hubristic than the age of Jackson. Competition rules.

We need only look at America’s favorite activities—sports, entertainment, and politics—to notice the distorting effect of the obsession with competition. Sports would seem to define competition, as competition defines sports. But beginning with the ancient Olympics, sports have also been about performance, about excelling (hence, excellence), and about the cultivation of athletic virtue. It is not victory but a “personal best” that counts. In the United States, however, athletics is about beating others. About how one performs *in comparison* with others. Ancient and modern philosophers alike associate comparison with pride and vanity (*amour-propre*), and have shown how vanity corrupts virtue and excellence. When Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar protests, “Such



Minnesotans raise a barn for a neighbor circa 1900. Competition may be as American as apple pie, but so is cooperation.

men as he be never at heart's ease/While they behold a greater than themselves," he captures what has become the chief hazard of a hyper-competitive culture. No wonder ours is often an outer-directed culture, unreflective, grasping, aggressive, and cutthroat.

It is, ironically, a culture that tries to pin on the animal world responsibility for human viciousness. Michael Vick, one of our great gladiatorial football competitors, recently admitted to sponsoring brutal dogfights. The real dogfights, of course, are the football games he played in, where injury and even death are not unavoidable costs but covertly attractive features of the sport. Where steroid use is forgivable, or at least understandable, on the way to a winning record. And where dogfighting itself

(like bullfighting and cockfighting) is justified by an appeal to the "laws of nature," though it is men who articulate those laws to rationalize their own warlike disposition.

It is much the same with entertainment. Our most successful shows, themselves in a competition for survival with one another (sweeps week!), pit on-camera competitors against one another in contests only one can win. The eponymous show *Survivor* is the Darwinian prototype, but the principle rules on all the "reality" shows. On *American Idol*, singing is the excuse but winning the real aim. In the winners' world of television, nothing is what it seems. *Top Chef* is not about excellence or variety in cooking, but about winning and losing. *Project Runway*

turns a pluralistic fashion industry that caters to many tastes into a race (with clocks and time limits) in which there is but one winner. The competitive culture hypes winners but is equally (more?) fascinated with losers. “It is not enough that I win,” pro-

ica has always been deeply individualistic, and individualism has presumed the insularity and autonomy of persons and, thus, a natural rivalry among them. Capitalism also embraces competition as its animus, and America is nothing if not capitalistic. Even the American understanding of democracy, which emphasizes representation and the collision of interests, puts the focus on division and partisanship. There are, of course, democratic alternatives. Systems of proportional representation, for example, aim to ensure fair representa-

**IT'S NO WONDER THAT American winners lose perspective and put themselves above sexual norms, above ordinary standards, above the law.**

claims the hubris-driven American competitor, “others must lose.” And Americans have shown themselves ready to become big losers in order to be eligible to become big winners—however remote the odds. We are a nation of gamblers willing to tolerate radical income inequality and a large class of losers (into which we willingly risk being shunted) for the chance to win.

American politics too is founded on competition. Contrast electoral politics in our representative democracy with citizen politics in a participatory democracy, where the aim is not to win but to achieve common ground and secure public goods—a model of politics in which no one wins unless everyone wins, and a loss for some is seen as a loss for all. The very meanings of the terms “commonweal” and “the public interest” (the “res publica” from which our term “republic” is derived) suggest a system without losers. How different from this the American system has become. As each election rolls around, we complain that ideas and policy are shoved to the background and personality and the horse race it engenders are placed front and center.

**W**hat's gone wrong here? Why, as a nation, are we so obsessed with competition, so indifferent to cooperation? For starters, competition really *is* as American as apple pie. Amer-

tion of all parties and views no matter how numerous. But our system, with its single-member districts and “first past the post” elections, is winner take all and damn the hindmost, a setup in which winners govern while losers look balefully on, preparing themselves for the next battle.

This has never been more so than in this era when politics has, in Jonathan Chait's recent portrait in *The New Republic*, become “an atavistic clash of partisan willpower,” with Christian Right pitted against the Net-roots Left in a polarized media environment defined by hyperbolic talk radio and the foolish excesses of the blogosphere. Moderation, cooperation, compromise, and bipartisanship are lame reflections of a pusillanimous past and of a “pathetic and exhausted leadership” incapable of winning elections. Even more than the Founders, the new political crusaders of Left and Right prefer King Lear's version of politics—“who loses and who wins; who's in, who's out”—to the aspirations of communitarians and republicans who seek to establish a common good. Polarization is more an ideal than a pathology, and incivility is politics properly understood.

In recent decades, sustained by neoliberal economists such as Milton Friedman and the political successes of President Ronald Reagan and British prime minister Margaret Thatcher, this natural inclination toward individualism and competition has been reinforced not only by left/right Manichaeism, but by an ideology of privatization and anti-

government animus that characterizes cooperation as only an excuse for paternalistic bureaucracy and public corruption, while market competition, which strips government of its powers, putatively guarantees transparency and freedom. The most partisan politicians, upon winning, must govern in the name of all, using the powers of overweening government they have secured, so to hell with all politicians. The entrepreneur—whether a blogger or a hedge fund trader—can remain the eternal competitor and hero, active and free in the name of self-interest.

The extreme rhetoric aside, everywhere in America, liberty is deemed competition's ultimate rationale. More than anything else, our modern neoliberal ideology contends that competition and a culture of winners and losers assures us all our freedom. Like the corporate winners in the global marketplace and the political winners of the American electoral sweepstakes, even the ordinary winners on *Survivor* and its ilk are liberated from mundane constraints. No wonder American winners lose perspective and put themselves above sexual norms, above ordinary standards, above the law. By the same token, losing is a ticket to subservience, reminding us of the importance of winning and thrusting us back into the race, no matter how often we lose (think about the gambler's mentality).

Ruskin is turned on his head: Public government, community standards, and cooperation are seen as entailing the laws of inertia. They exonerate people from personal responsibility, and imprison them in circumstances and the victim mentality ("It's not my fault I lost"), the result being a kind of civic death. Private activity and competition, conversely, assure vitality, productivity, and responsibility—"I

made my own circumstances! I made myself a winner!" They are the very essence of life and liberty.

So what's wrong with this? Plenty. Competition skews the balance, and threatens real democracy. More fundamentally, it fails to comprehend freedom's true character. In the human balance, given that we are creatures of nature and artifice, of both rivalry and love, we normally live in parallel, mutually intersecting worlds of competition and cooperation, if not quite as grimly or definitively as Ruskin imagined. Competition may not be the law of death, but as the law of the marketplace and the radically individualistic people who populate it, it distorts and unhinges our common lives and slights the necessary role of cooperation and community in securing liberty. In construing ourselves exclusively as economic beings—what the old philosophers used to call *homo economicus*—we account for ourselves as producers and consumers but not as neighbors and citizens. We shortchange real liberty.



"Greed, for lack of a better word, is good," the fictional villain Gordon Gekko famously declared in *Wall Street* (1987). It's said that the film's depiction of brutal competition drew even more recruits to the real Wall Street.

Clearly we are more than economic beings, if only because we are more than merely material beings. Cooperation, although it is hardly the only law of life, has long been a complementary principle of community and civic living. That is to say, there are two models, not just one, for the human project: We can conceive of ourselves as economic particles in constant collision in a material marketplace, and hence can equate flourishing with robust competition, or we can conceive of ourselves as civic beings embedded in communities, who thrive on cooperation. We can be uncivil antagonists playing king of the mountain or common stakeholders in mutual goods. There are social conditions that permit both of these sides of our nature to prosper, if usually in some productive tension with one another.

That tension is hard to maintain, however. The two modes of being inevitably become the source of rival theories of politics and society and, as a consequence, two distinctive approaches to human identity. When we contemplate nature as a kind of parody of human warfare and anarchy, as Thomas Hobbes did, our social existence becomes a “war of all against all.” According to this model, we live in a “zero-sum” world where one man’s victory must be another man’s defeat. We either have to sacrifice our liberty to secure tranquility or live well through rivalry and conquest. The price of attenuating competition is always high, even when it is deemed necessary for survival (as posited by social contract theory). In our very impetus to move, this view argues, we cannot help but collide with others. In collision, we cannot help but experience others as limits on our own freedom. The preservation of freedom demands competition, while any restraint at all on competition, even mere civility, becomes an unfortunate limit on liberty.

This celebration of radical competition has, of course, been contested by theorists such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Thomas Jefferson, and John Dewey, who have treated competition more as a problem or pathology to be overcome than an ideal to be realized. In the cooperative paradigm, the world is understood to be a non-zero-sum game in which we can win by helping others win. We are psychic as well as material beings and can coexist in common space with similar beings, even become

stronger by doing so. Mutual aid and common ground are extensions of our common being and make possible healthy and sustainable lives. Freedom becomes a feature of our cooperative interaction with others rather than a symbol of our rivalry with or independence of them. We are free not when unconstrained but under constraints and norms we choose for ourselves. And we are free together, not alone.

While Darwin famously saw evolution as an exercise in species-enhancing competition, the Russian thinker Peter Kropotkin insisted that it was an exercise in cooperation. In *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1902), he argued that survival was fostered by cooperation within and among species rather than by murderous rivalries. Similar arguments can be found among evolutionary biologists and social scientists today, as Robert Wright shows in *Nonzero: The Logic of Human Destiny* (2000). The communitarian paradigm offers a portrait of humans as naturally embedded in communities. Here, the political project is one of individuation: creating artificially the conditions for personal freedom from a cooperative democratic process. In this view, democracy is not a product of freedom, freedom is a product of democracy. Democratic societies do not secure cooperation by sacrificing freedom, they create conditions *for* freedom by associating us in cooperative communities.

**L**et us apply this short lesson in political theory to the American experience. In the American ideal of “liberal democracy,” the two tendencies embodied in this term are supposed to stand in a healthy tension. The “liberal” part of our culture is individualistic and competitive, focused on private freedom and property; the “democratic” part is communitarian and cooperative, focused on public freedom (civic freedom), justice, and the common ground that makes private property possible. Today, the liberal element dominates the democratic communitarian element, upsetting the delicate balance.

The American people have always had a healthy distrust of power, especially in its European hyper-collectivist incarnation (the Nazis and the Commu-

nists), in which an ideal quest for community and equality becomes an excuse for rampant despotism. But in allowing this understandable caution to morph into a distrust of democratic centralized government and community power *tout court*, Americans turned a seemingly innocent concern with social justice (welfare government, the safety net society, and a politics of cooperation, for example) into totalitarian vices.

From the start, democracy itself has bred a certain anxiety in America, an anxiety for which Alexis de Tocqueville wrote the defining text. He predicted the formation of a rights-crushing majoritarian tyranny. Yet the specter of majorities run amok that has helped rationalize market neoliberalism and privatization, and has justified advancing the interests of capitalism before establishing civic democracy in places such as Iraq and Russia, has exacted a high cost. For collectivism has never been an American issue. The United States has always been a rights-encased, decentralized, federalist “weak-state” system, relatively impervious to the kinds of dogmatic statism that wrecked Europe in the last century. As my favorite Harvard teacher, Louis Hartz, liked to point out in calling for a more democratic culture, “The American majority has forever been a puppy dog tethered to a lion’s leash.” The new obsession with competition and market liberty constructs an illusory enemy—the supposedly overweening democratic state. The quest for equality and justice is caricatured as a striving for mediocrity and bureaucratic irresponsibility.

At the same time, the actual character of the competitive marketplace is badly misjudged. For the irony is that the rhetoric of market competition often masks private monopolies: less choice, not more. Democratic realists and impartial sociologists recognize that behind the façade of boastful competition lies a world of inequality and domination. While praising the competitive market, those who actually work the marketplace specialize in mergers and

acquisitions, takeovers and cartels, liquidations and selloffs. Wealth is not produced, but reshuffled and expropriated. Real competition is avoided, and the risk in whose name profit is supposedly earned is socialized (the taxpayers bail out the corporate failures), while profits, though no longer earned by tak-

**“THE AMERICAN MAJORITY has forever been a puppy dog tethered to a lion’s leash,” said Louis Hartz.**

ing real risks, are kept private, reserved for shareholders and overpaid corporate managers. Deregulation is said to enhance competition, but in the airline and communication industries it has entrenched price fixing and facilitated cartels and the kinds of monopoly that “bundling” makes possible, as when Bill Gates forced computer companies to include the whole Microsoft software platform in the machines they sold.

This is not to say that competition is just a ruse. While it may fail to actually define the corporate hierarchies that masquerade as a market economy, it dominates American cultural life and pervades our psyches. It manages to twist our social interactions and pervert our sense of commonality. Most damagingly, perhaps, its relentless rhetoric—now integral to the vast marketing industry—persuades us that our most precious value, freedom, is tied up with privacy and dependent on freedom *from* democratic governance, whereas it is democratic governance that actually enforces the variety and pluralism the market putatively reflects and reinforces. Government marks the rule of law, and it is law that secures the conditions for freedom.

John Ruskin had the thing right: As an enemy rather than an ally of true freedom, competition is not our friend. To live and to flourish, it is the lost art of cooperation that we need to cultivate. ■

# The New Invisible Competitors

*In our globalized economy, competitors can suddenly appear out of nowhere—if we can see them at all. The new environment spells trouble for some people, opportunity for others.*

BY TYLER COWEN

REMEMBER THE *ARCHIE* COMICS? ARCHIE AND his conceited rival Reggie battle for the affections of Betty and Veronica, and the two girls, though they are best friends, jockey for the attention of Archie, the affable all-American boy. They have been at it for more than 60 years, and in the early days the basic situation wasn't far removed from the experience of many Americans, especially in small towns. Indeed, cartoonist Bob Montana based the Archie characters on people he knew from his high school days during the 1930s in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Most romantic competition occurred within small groups of people who knew one another. The girl or guy would choose, perhaps the couple would marry and settle down, and often the loser ended up living down the street or across town. Romance was full of heartbreak and anxiety, but at least you knew who your rivals were and who was beating you.

Archie and his crowd continue their antics in the world of colored ink, but in the real world, romantic competition has radically changed. *Millions of Women Are Waiting to Meet You* is the apt title of Sean Thomas's 2006 book about Internet dating, and there really are, just as millions of men

are now potential matches for each woman. But the sad truth for members of both sexes is that millions of rivals are also waiting, waiting to undercut their chances and crush their hopes before they even get close to a first date. All they will "see" is that their charming e-mail to "prettyblonde47" or "bronc0451" was never answered. The competition now is invisible, the rivals faceless.

What's true in the romantic sphere is also increasingly the case in the wider world. Most of the pressure on the wages and job security of American software programmers now comes from eager workers in India and Bangladesh. Hardly anyone saw this challenge coming. When those Bangladeshis were learning programming skills and clever ways to sell their services over the Internet, they never issued a challenge or threw down a gauntlet. And it is not just programmers, factory workers, and call center employees who face new challengers. Invisible competition now touches even those who make their living with paintbrushes and shovels. At Guru.com and other websites, it's easy for anybody anywhere in the world to hire specialists overseas for a wide variety of services, from designing integrated circuits to composing advertising jingles. You can hire somebody to paint your portrait or to draw up a landscape design for your house. The upshot is this: Competition is fiercer

TYLER COWEN, the author of the new book *Discover Your Inner Economist: Use Incentives to Fall in Love, Survive Your Next Meeting, and Motivate Your Dentist*, is a professor of economics at George Mason University.



*Decalcomanie* (1966), by René Magritte

than ever before, yet it is also harder to perceive as real. No rival with snarling teeth knocks on your door.

**A**ny good horror-movie director knows that invisibility increases anxiety. We all want to turn on the light, identify the assailant, or understand the problem we are facing. If we cannot, we clutch at straws. We look for order, even when order cannot be found; this is a theme of Nassim Nicholas Taleb, author of the best-selling books *The Black Swan* (2007) and *Foiled by Randomness* (2005). As the concrete manifestations of the more important contests of love and business vanish, we recreate up-close rivalry to make our lives feel more real. I suspect that this helps explain the growing appetite for televised sports and organized athletics for children as well as the vogue for

reality TV series such as *Survivor* and *American Idol*, eating contests, and even spelling bees. Because children are a cheap labor supply and willing to engage in all sorts of behavior for a chance at a prize or parental approval, they often serve as the vehicle for parents who seek to live out their desire for head-to-head competition vicariously. Spelling does not interest many people (who sits around practicing?), but bees exemplify the competitive spirit in action. The challenge to spell *autochthonous*, *panmyelopathy*, or *warison* will bring one kid to tears and another to triumph.

More significantly, anxiety about invisible competition also feeds the backlash against international trade. Economists are right to stress that the benefits of trade outweigh the costs, most of all to Bangladeshis but also to American consumers, yet an increasingly disquieted public demands

more proof. A measure of reassurance can be found by sorting through the winners and losers created by the new invisible competition brought by globalization.

Let's look at individuals. Human beings evolved in small groups and hunter-gatherer societies, in which virtually all competition was face to face. That is the environment most of us are biologically and emotionally geared to succeed in, and it explains why our adrenalin surges when a rival wins

**PEOPLE WHO ARE DRIVEN to action  
mostly by adrenalin will not fare well in the  
world of invisible competition.**

the boss's favor or flirts with our special someone. But in the new arena, with its faceless and anonymous competitors, those who are driven to action mostly by adrenalin will not fare well. If that's what they need to get things done, they will become too passive and others will overtake them.

The greatest gains in this new world are likely to go to people who are methodical planners or who love the game for its own sake. Some people plot their competitive strategies far in advance. These planners—be they crazy or just highly productive—don't need anyone breathing down their necks, and indeed they often work best alone or in small groups. Bill Gates is a classic example. Planners' behavior may manifest itself in competitive forms, but their underlying psychology is often not very rivalrous at all. They are ordering their own realities, usually for their individual psychological reasons, rather than acting out of a desire to trounce the competition.

Early risers will also be favored. These people simply enjoy being first in line, or first to use a new idea. They build competitive advantages before anyone else has much chance to react. These are the people who fuel America's laboratories and high-technology industries, among other sectors. Basketball coaches are scouting younger and younger talent, parents start preparing their kids for the Ivy League in kindergarten, and businesses are starting to worry about global warming that may be decades away. Planning horizons have never been longer. Especially when early risers are farsighted innovators, they often obsess over their own

internal creative activities more than they do their rivals. Their delight in winning is more abstract than visceral.

Nervous personality types, and those who are prone to choking in public, may also catch a break. The nervous choker typically reacts negatively to an in-your-face situation, such as an expectant crowd, a strutting rival, or a public confrontation. One-time Democratic presidential candidate Howard Dean was a star on the Internet, but in front of the cameras he lost his temper, and his shot at the White House. As more and more people find themselves able to minimize personal contact by working via the Internet, the smart but anxious set will move to a more level playing field. We are thus getting a great hith-

erto-underutilized resource. On the Internet, to paraphrase a famous *New Yorker* cartoon, nobody knows you're a geek.

Most of all, invisible competition favors people with imagination. It favors the new marketing idea, or the new design (think of Apple), rather than those who focus on squeezing out business costs in order to undercut rivals. Invisible competition favors people who can see a new future and want to get there first. Before Google, who knew that Web searching would be such a big deal—and so profitable?

George Shackle, the neglected Scottish economist, wrote in his 1973 book *Epistemics and Economics* that the entrepreneur imagines a future no one else sees. For Shackle, the entrepreneur is not just a trader, a manager, or an initiator of enterprise. The fundamental entrepreneurial activity is creative, and it occurs in the mind rather than the physical world. The creators of YouTube and Facebook did not require a new raw material or even a radically new programming technique; most of all they were blessed with the ability to imagine a new way to present material and connect people to one another. Their competitors, if that phrase can even be used, were the young potential entrepreneurs who might have hit upon similar ideas first, but didn't. These phantom rivals were not out in the public arena, promoting their corporations or thumping their chests and proclaiming grand plans. Rather they were quietly doodling away on their computers in scattered suburbs and cities, perhaps after finishing their homework for the evening.

Invisible competition also gives an edge to people who can manage and interpret their own feedback. In the past, if you lost a job to a person who was smarter than you or had a better line of patter, you could size up the winner and gauge where you fell short. Now you can't always see who crossed the finish line ahead of you. The future will favor people like Madonna, the pop star and media icon who has successfully reinvented herself so many times because she has an uncanny sense of where popular culture is bound and how to get there first.

The world of blogs is a good example of how invisible competition works. A reader can choose from among millions of blogs, and in that sense all bloggers are competing against one another all the time. New blogs appear out of the blue, and, if they carve out the right niche, find the right voice, or fill a previously unperceived need, they steal audiences away from old blogs or render them irrelevant.

Because I am a blogger myself (at [www.marginalrevolution.com](http://www.marginalrevolution.com)), I know or have met a good number of top bloggers. Many of them are shy, and most of them do not come across as particularly competitive. They probably would not be very fierce if they were thrown into a wrestling ring or a tennis court, or even if they were asked to play a round of *Jeopardy*. The top bloggers don't think too hard about how to pander to audiences; they focus on self-realization and developing their own voices. Competition in the blogosphere favors the quirky loner who happens to have a knack for writing quickly and has something interesting to say.

**T**he rise of invisible competition has implications for nations as well as individuals and corporations. For the United States, those implications are overwhelmingly positive. Although Americans fret endlessly about the invisible threat of outsourcing, the rest of the world often sees the United States as the deadliest source of invisible competition. From information technology to cutting-edge medical research to higher education, Americans have achieved exceptional results relatively quickly, before the rest of the world had much chance to respond.



Can you spell *pressure*? Spelling bees, *Survivor*, and other television contests are popular in part because they give form to anxieties fueled by invisible competition.

While American culture glorifies the competitive spirit, Americans are good competitors in part because they don't always need that last-minute adrenalin rush. They tend to value change and innovation for their own sake, and they imagine themselves to be pioneers. The idea of striking out into unknown territory to build a better world is deeply embedded in the national psyche. The Protestant ethic also lives on, expressed in a commitment not only to hard work but to the idea that we fulfill ourselves through our labors. This helps explain why, to the vexation and puzzlement of Europeans, millions of Americans prefer to stay at their jobs rather than take all of their allotted vacation time.

The nations most disadvantaged by invisible competition may be those that exist in proximity to a key rival. They risk focusing too narrowly on one challenge and getting used to the idea that competition takes a highly visible

form. Transfixed by its rivalry with India, Pakistan may be oblivious to other concerns. A similar preoccupation makes it harder for many people in the Middle East to take a global perspective.

Invisible competition hurts some Americans, and its manifestations are not in every way flattering to American society, but nonetheless, it is more to be embraced than feared. We have already made the choice. For all the angst

## WE TEND TO FORGET that competition often breeds cooperation.

and disappointment that Match.com produces, it's hard to imagine that many people would prefer to return to a world in which they had few other choices but to marry the boy or girl next door and had to live without such things as Japanese cars and French wines. And who would pull the plug on the Internet? Invisible competition has arrived with such force because *we brought it here*.

Limiting competition in one sphere of life, moreover, often serves only to push it into another and often less salutary area. Men in prison inhabit perhaps the most controlled environment imaginable, with little opportunity to strive for the normal rewards of life. Yet it is hard to think of a place where competition takes more destructive forms.

We tend to forget that competition often breeds cooperation. What is the contest between Archie and Reggie for the attention of Veronica but a bid for an alliance, a cooperative relationship? Very often, cooperation is needed even before one can compete. In order to succeed in the global marketplace, corporations strive mightily to instill the cooperative spirit in their employees, training them, investing in a shared corporate identity, and working to keep up workplace morale. And as both businesses and individuals become more successful, they are brought into more numerous relationships with other firms and people that require coordination and collaboration. Managing these proliferating relationships has become a major preoccupation of American business.

The same technologies that foster invisible competition also promote new kinds of social ties and cooper-

ation. Through my blog I come into contact with strangers around the world, and some I eventually meet for interesting meals and conversations. Even before she started her freshman year of college this fall, my stepdaughter was trading instant messages with her future classmates, starting new friendships with people she had never seen. Of course, she might use Facebook to get a competitive edge in flirting with some guy; that just shows again how closely competition and cooperation are intertwined.

Still, it is important to anticipate who will be hurt and how they might be helped in the world that lies before us. Awareness alone

will not solve the basic problem. Maybe it would help if teenagers were told that their exams would be graded on a curve—a curve determined mostly by test takers on another continent. Or if they were shown videos of Puerto Rico and Lithuania beating Team USA at basketball in the 2004 Summer Olympics. Realistically, however, such efforts can only go so far.

**W**hat we really need is better competition, in which no one party carries off all the spoils. But to get better competition, we usually end up looking to *more* competition. If one rival reaps all or most of the gains, that winner probably wasn't facing enough of a challenge from others. Coca-Cola can charge higher prices and earn bigger profits if Pepsi is not in the market. If we wish to make sure a winner doesn't dominate a field, we need to bring in more competing parties. When Snapple and others join the fray, just about everyone gets a better deal, except, of course, Coca-Cola.

In other words, we need even more invisible competition, despite all the fears and social peculiarities that entails. We need to learn to live with our fears, because they're not going to go away anytime soon. If you're feeling down about that prospect, the flip side is that we will get more and better cooperation. Match.com claims that more than 200,000 people each year meet the person they were looking for by using its service. Might this number be inflated? Maybe. Should you invest in getting a really spiffy photo on your profile? For sure. ■

# In ESSENCE

REVIEWS OF ARTICLES FROM PERIODICALS AND SPECIALIZED JOURNALS HERE AND ABROAD

Foreign Policy & Defense **67** // Politics & Government **70** // Economics, Labor & Business **72** // Society **73** // Press & Media **75** // History **77** // Religion & Philosophy **80** // Science & Technology **81** // Arts & Letters **83** // Other Nations **86**

## FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

### Ph.D.'s in Uniform

**THE SOURCE:** "Beyond the Cloister" by David H. Petraeus, and "Learning to Lose" by Ralph Peters, in *The American Interest*, July–Aug. 2007.

FOR THE LAST HALF-CENTURY, the military has been sending some of its star officers to the nation's elite civilian graduate schools to earn Ph.D.'s. The practice has produced a generation of military leaders such as General David H. Petraeus, the commanding general of the multinational force in Iraq, and much of his immediate staff. The trend riles author Ralph Peters, who says it leads to dithering and theorizing, requiring "unlearning" before a "too-cerebral officer" can become "the visceral killer any battlefield demands."

General Petraeus counters that his Princeton Ph.D. in international relations and economics has helped him broadly and practically in Iraq. It taught him, for example, that "injecting more money into an economy without increasing the amount of goods in the marketplace does nothing more than produce

inflation." Therefore, when Iraqi government employees began to get paid after the fall of Saddam Hussein, Petraeus worked to reopen the Iraq-Syria border to trade so that the inflow of money from public salaries would not simply push up prices for the few items for sale. Graduate education helped members of his command understand counterinsurgency operations—because they had written papers about lessons from Vietnam and Central America. It gave other staff tools to help a new provincial council set up small-business programs and put together investment deals.

Graduate training, Petraeus writes, blasts military officers out of their cloistered environment and comfort zone. It usually injects at least a modicum of intellectual humility—not a small thing for officers entrusted with soldiers' lives. Such "experiences are critical to the development of the flexible, adaptable, creative thinkers who are so important to operations in places like Iraq and Afghanistan," he says.

Peters, a retired Army lieutenant colonel, asserts that the Ph.D. experience destroys critical thinking and retards common sense. "Can it be coincidental, after all, that across the half-century during which the cult of higher civilian education for officers prospered, we have gone from winning wars to losing them?"

Advanced courses are necessary, but they should be in language skills, Peters argues. What the military needs is officers who can communicate directly with the other side, and think like them. "Such training goes overwhelmingly to enlisted personnel on the unspoken assumption that officers don't have time for that sort of triviality," Peters writes.

"Officers don't need to study elaborate theories of conflict resolution (none of which work, anyway). They need to know how to fight and win wars." What the military requires most is backbone and integrity, "a hallmark of good military units, but certainly not of the contemporary American campus," according to Peters.

Petraeus parries that the academic world is full of people who see the world "very differently than we do." The college campus provides excellent preparation for people who will live and work in other cultures, in uniform or not.

## FOREIGN POLICY &amp; DEFENSE

## Promises, Promises

**THE SOURCE:** "Pie Crust Promises and the Sources of Foreign Policy: The Limited Impact of Accession and the Priority of Domestic Constituencies" by Stephen M. Saideman and R. William Ayres, in *Foreign Policy Analysis*, July 2007.

THROUGHOUT THE 1990s, THE allure of joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union captivated the nations of Eastern Europe. But membership was not automatic. The original members of NATO and the EU made it clear that only the well-behaved needed apply, and that the official costs of acceptance would be steep.

Among a multitude of other requirements, NATO and the EU required the countries knocking on their doors to be democracies with market economies, to make either military or economic contributions to the community, and to protect minorities. Border disputes between countries that had been mortal enemies for centuries were expected to be resolved.

But "international institutions are overrated," write Stephen M. Saideman and R. William Ayres, of McGill University and Pennsylvania's Elizabethtown College, respectively. "Membership processes as instruments of influence on foreign and domestic policy are inherently limited." Membership is political, and if it helps the incumbent members to

admit a country, they do so—regardless of the formal merits of the applicant. Moreover, there are so many conditions of membership that the significance of each one pales in comparison to the others. Treaties can be signed and not implemented. Laws can be passed and not enforced. And once a country is admitted, it is quite free to backslide into business as usual. Kicking out backsliding members would be incredibly hard or impossible.

Membership in NATO and the EU is coveted because the former significantly increases a nation's security and the latter carries grand implications of "joining Europe" and is considered necessary for economic success. Even so, when average voters in Eastern Europe marked their ballots for a new government, it didn't much matter whether the candidates were for or against joining. The transition

from communism to capitalism was so brutal that in most elections, the electorate just chose to throw the bums out, Saideman and Ayres write.

Admission, the authors say, became less a question of "what you do" than "who you know." Cyprus was admitted even though it failed to reunify its Greek- and Turkish-dominated sections. Greece, an incumbent member of the EU, was Cyprus's patron, and admitting the island was Greece's price for supporting EU expansion. France pushed for the inclusion of Romania—which wasn't up to EU snuff on crime fighting and judicial reform—in part to offset the admission of pro-American Poland.

The Baltic states posed a difficult problem. They had sketchy records on minority issues (especially the treatment of Russians), but denying them admission would have seemed a

victory for the Russian heirs of the Soviet Union, under whose hated yoke Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania had chafed for more than half a century. They were admitted.

Hungary—whose wary neighbors have historically been sensitive to its irredentist tendencies—signed border pacts with Romania and Slovakia before joining NATO and the EU. Several writers have cited these treaties as success stories of the "conditionality" membership process. Saideman and Ayres, however, contend that Hungary agreed to

### EXCERPT

## Reconnoitering Ramadi

*The homes were all behind tall, sand-colored walls that made it impossible for us to see what was happening inside. It was this type of structure that worried me during our senseless night patrols in downtown ar Ramadi, since anyone could just drop a grenade, or throw it from behind one of the walls, and then fire at us from the rooftops. There was nowhere to run, no cover, no ditch, no trench, just long roads with high walls that despised us.*

—CAMILO MEJÍA, Army serviceman who served almost nine months in prison for refusing to return to Iraq, author of *The Road From Ar Ramadi: The Private Rebellion of Staff Sergeant Camilo Mejía*, in *Colortines* (July–Aug. 2007)

the border treaties because in return it received something more valuable for domestic political purposes: better protection for the 1.5 million Hungarians living in Romania and the 500,000 in Slovakia. So instead of being pushed by the NATO and EU application processes to abandon any territorial ambitions, Hungary has used them to advance its own foreign-policy objectives. It has since gone a very independent way, going so far as to purchase arms from a non-NATO country.

An accession promise, the authors say, is similar to Mary Poppins's description of pie crust: Easily made, easily broken.

## FOREIGN POLICY &amp; DEFENSE

## Terror in the Fields

**THE SOURCE:** "Responding to Systemic Crisis: The Case of Agroterrorism" by Lesley Seebeck, in *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Sept. 2007.

"FOR THE LIFE OF ME," SAID SECRETARY of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson when he stepped down in 2004, "I cannot understand why the terrorists have not attacked our food supply, because it is so easy to do."

Anthrax and citrus canker are examples of contagions that could devastate agriculture. But no potential weapon would be cheaper or simpler to introduce than foot-and-mouth disease in livestock. The most contagious of all mammal diseases, it is common in the developing world, where it can be easily captured and transported without danger to humans. It debilitates animals, reducing



All nearby animals, even pets, were killed and burned to halt a foot-and-mouth outbreak in Britain.

their milk and killing their young. A small outbreak can devastate a nation's livestock industry.

"An agroterrorist attack lacks the shock value of immediate and bloody human carnage," writes Lesley Seebeck, an analyst in strategic policy for Australia's Department of Defense. But as antiterrorism efforts make mass murder harder to achieve, terrorist groups could change tactics.

Seebeck's inquiry into foot-and-mouth disease outbreaks in Britain during 1967–68 and again six years ago produced sobering results: The lessons learned in the 1960s offered little help later on. Modern agriculture, with its feedlots and factory farms, antibiotic-resistant germs, rapid movement of goods, and reduced inspections, has created many new vulnerabilities.

In 2001, the first cases of foot-and-mouth were discovered on February 19, among pigs that had eaten infected swill, possibly from a local Chinese restaurant that may have imported meat illegally from Asia. By the time British authorities were alerted, the virus had spread to 57

locations in 16 counties. Sheep and cattle were also affected.

Researchers scrambled to build computer models based on the 1960s crisis to help anticipate events. The models were simplistic, according to Seebeck, and lab work was slow. "Peace-time testing systems" were unable to cope with the demands of a nationwide outbreak.

London soon issued a draconian order: Slaughter all animals within 24 hours of infection, and all animals within a radius of nearly a mile within 48 hours. Researchers estimated afterward that well over 80 percent of the slaughtered animals had been healthy.

Eight months after the infection, technicians identified the last case. The outbreak had cost Britain as much as \$10 billion.

For this kind of threat, Seebeck writes, there is no single strategy. It can't be stopped at the border. An adequate defense must extend from beyond the horizon—tracking threats around the world—to local farmers and officials able to serve as first responders if trouble starts.

## POLITICS &amp; GOVERNMENT

# George Bush and the Rain God

**THE SOURCE:** "The Republicans Should Pray for Rain: Weather, Turnout, and Voting in U.S. Presidential Elections" by Brad T. Gomez, Thomas G. Hansford, and George A. Krause, in *The Journal of Politics*, Aug. 2007.

SOME POLITICAL BROMIDES ARE actually true. Rain really does help Republicans. Snow does too. A survey of the weather in 3,000 counties on every presidential election day from 1948 to 2000 showed a strong correlation between unusual precipitation and the performance of the Republican presidential candidate. For each inch of rain above the norm, the GOP's nominee got an extra 2.5 percentage points of the vote; for each corresponding inch of snow, 0.6.

The Republicans, explain Brad T. Gomez, Thomas G. Hansford, and George A. Krause, political scientists at the University of Georgia, University of California, Merced, and the University of Pittsburgh, respectively, have more "core" voters, who tend to turn out like postmen, despite rain, snow, sleet, and hail. According to conventional theories, Democrats draw greater numbers of "peripheral" voters, who are more likely to stay home when it snows or pours.

The weather may have altered Electoral College totals, the authors write, but in most contests

between 1948 and 2000, the outcome was so lopsided that it wouldn't have made any difference. In 1960 and 2000, however, sunshine and raindrops may have dictated the outcome. The 1960 election, in which John F. Kennedy defeated Richard M. Nixon by a narrow margin, might have gone the other way if the weather hadn't cooperated. Had parts of the country had rain and snow that November 8, Kennedy could well have been the loser in close contests in Delaware, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Pennsylvania, and lost the election. Instead, it was clear in New England, the South, and the West Coast, with only light rain and snowflakes in between.

In 2000, unseasonable rain sprinkled some Florida counties on election day, even as the Al Gore campaign struggled with a butterfly ballot and other snafus that cut into their totals. With only 537 votes determining the

A little rain or snow on Election Day in 1960 probably would have cost John F. Kennedy the presidency.

winner, even the small amounts of rain that fell on crucial precincts may have dampened the political fervor of enough peripheral voters to turn the tide.

## POLITICS &amp; GOVERNMENT

# Janus of Jurisprudence

**THE SOURCE:** "The Myth of the Balanced Court" by Cass R. Sunstein, in *The American Prospect*, Sept. 2007.

THE OLDEST AND LONGEST-SERVING justice on the U.S. Supreme Court, John Paul Stevens, is considered its most liberal member. In 1980, he was the institution's middle-of-the-roader, squarely in the ideological center of the nine justices. In the intervening decades, "Stevens hasn't much changed," writes Cass R. Sunstein, a law professor at the University of Chicago. What has changed is the left wing of the court. It has vanished.

Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas are the visionaries of today, Sunstein says. Justices William Brennan and Thurgood Marshall once looked ahead and believed that the Constitution banned the death penalty in all circumstances and created a right to education, as well as abortion. Today, Scalia and Thomas envision a nation where affirmative action laws have been wiped off the books, campaign finance restrictions have been lifted, and abortions are rare.

Justice Anthony Kennedy, nominated to the Court by President Ronald Reagan, now casts

the “swing” vote in decisions that split left from right. Considering Kennedy to be the moderate, rather than Stevens, has important consequences both for constitutional law and public debate. “People’s sense of constitutional possibilities, and of what counts as sensible or, instead, extreme and unthinkable, shifts dramatically,” according to Sunstein.

Marshall’s and Brennan’s

“clear, bold” writings against restricting the ability of citizens to bring suit in federal courts, or in favor of restrictions on campaign contributions, “pressed the Court toward moderation on those subjects.” These liberals, in their “bold” writings on controversial legal issues, were not necessarily correct, Sunstein writes. The Supreme Court is at its best when it proceeds cautiously and incrementally, with respect for the

elected branches of government. “Marshall and Brennan, no less than Scalia and Thomas, tried to use the Constitution to impose a contestable political vision on the nation.”

The preferable route is to work within established categories and to move only with great reluctance to strike down acts of elected officials, above all congressional legislation. From 1984 to 2000, the Court overruled a surprisingly

EXCERPT

## Wild Detroit

*This continent has not seen a transformation like Detroit’s since the last days of the Maya. The city, once the fourth largest in the country, is now so*

*depopulated that some stretches resemble the outlying farmland and others are altogether wild. . . . Just about a third of Detroit, some 40 square miles, has evolved past decrepitude into vacancy and prairie—an urban void nearly the size of San Francisco.*

—**REBECCA SOLNIT**, author of *Storming the Gates of Paradise* and other books, in *Harper’s Magazine* (July 2007)



large number of precedents, more than 40, rejecting the law as it was understood in 1980.

What may be most remarkable about the judicial revolution, in addition to how “stunningly suc-

cessful” it has been, Sunstein says, is “that most people have not even noticed it.”

## ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

# The End of Music?

**THE SOURCE:** “Rockonomics: The Economics of Popular Music” by Marie Connolly and Alan B. Krueger, in *The Milken Institute Review*, Third Quarter 2007.

RECORDING INDUSTRY OFFICIALS have tried legal, legislative, and technical methods to stop teenagers from downloading free music. Nothing has worked. Now performers are responding with their own economic strategies: They are taking their music on the road and boosting ticket prices. The results suggest that the music industry may be facing a deeper crisis than many imagined.

The top 35 pop artists worldwide now earn most of their money from concerts, not recordings. Paul Mc-

Cartney grossed \$64.9 million from concerts in 2002, and \$2.2 million from recordings. For Céline Dion, the figures were \$22.4 million and \$3.1 million; for Britney Spears, \$5.5 million and \$1.8 million.

“Income from touring exceeded income from record sales by a ratio of 7.5 to 1 in 2002,” write Marie Connolly, a Ph.D. candidate, and Alan B. Krueger, an economist, both of Princeton. “The top 10 percent of artists make [some] money selling records,” manager Scott Welch told the economists. “The rest go on tour.”

Since 1996, the authors write, concert ticket prices have risen 8.9 percent a year, nearly four times the over-

all inflation rate. Prices for prime seats have gone up at a notably faster rate than those for less desirable seats. But as prices have escalated, the number of concerts has dwindled. Pop stars sold some 30 million concert tickets in 2000, but only 22 million in 2003, when a quarter of all seats went unsold.

Connolly and Krueger see in the trend a deeper explanation of declining sales of recorded music: a “shift in leisure activities” away from music listening, whether the music is live or recorded. The portion of teenagers who said they had attended a rock concert in the previous year fell from 40 percent in 1976 to 31 percent in 2000. By contrast, the portion of teens who said they attended a professional sports event rose from 43 to 63 percent during the same period.

It’s not just sports that lure the young away. The Internet offers an ever-growing cornucopia of alternatives to musical entertainment. Like print media, the music industry may be feeling the effects of a change more profound than it had reckoned.



The Rolling Stones' concert performances produced 91 percent of their \$44 million gross in 2002.

## ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

# Meet and Spend

**THE SOURCE:** “Meetings: The Biggest Money Pit of Them All” by John Buchanan, in *The Conference Board Review*, Sept.-Oct. 2007.

THE 2002 SARBANES-OXLEY accounting reform act isn’t winning any popularity contests in America’s executive suites, but it might prompt

a hallelujah from the cubicles if it sheds light on one of the darkest corners of modern business: the meeting.

The legislation, passed in the aftermath of the Enron scandal and other corporate iniquities to require greater financial disclosure, is forcing company boards to demand justification for “long-unexamined expenditures—very much including meetings,” writes John Buchanan, a Georgia journalist and author.

Off-site meetings for sales staff and other groups are a vast and largely untracked area of business expense. For instance, pharmaceutical giant Pfizer was surprised to learn that it was spending as much as \$1 billion annually on meetings, not including airfare—twice its estimate.

Meetings in hotels, conference centers, restaurants, and other venues for fewer than 50 people cost corporate America more than \$8 billion every year, according to a recent estimate. Large as that sum may seem, one business travel researcher

thinks that it represents only about 10 percent of the cost of all off-site corporate gatherings.

Traditionally, industry’s meeting planners have been administrative assistants and others who book rooms and flights, decide between surf and turf and chicken for the banquet, and call up the speaker’s bureau for the keynote address. Their expenditures could be buried in a host of budgets—marketing, sales, advertising, promotion, or human relations. Meeting planning has been an entrenched, secretive world, Buchanan says. And it is highly resistant to change. The vast majority of CEOs, according to a study, are still clueless about what their companies spend on business powwows.

While there is a trend toward holding virtual gatherings as a way to cut down on the number of people who have to be flown to meetings, housed, and fed, fewer than a third of all meeting planners told researchers they would position themselves as the go-to person for videoconferencing or

webcasting. Despite a host of new technologies available to help them, the old hands had scant interest in trying out new ways of matching attendees with relevant courses, vendors, and peers, or facilitating networking or sharing conference content.

Now, cost-conscious companies have reined in the planners, establishing “strategic meeting management programs,” which expose meeting staff to an unprecedented level of scrutiny. It’s “a brutal form of accelerated evolution,” Buchanan says, that may well lead to the extinction of the traditional logistical planner. No longer judged on the quality of the rooms and the wittiness of the speaker, meeting organizers are now evaluated on how good they are at “addressing the underlying business objectives of meetings, then assessing their effectiveness.” That’s the overarching issue, Buchanan concludes: Are most meetings really necessary? Down in the cubicles, the minions think they already know the answer.

## SOCIETY

# Mindless Donors

**THE SOURCE:** “Why Give to a College That Already Has Enough?” by Steve O. Michael, in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, July 6, 2007.

LAST FEBRUARY, WHEN JERRY Yang, CEO and cofounder of Yahoo, donated \$75 million to Stanford University, where he is a trustee, it did little to satisfy Stanford’s hunger for money. The university is in the midst

of a \$4.3 billion fundraising campaign, launched last year *after* it was ranked the top dollar-getter for the academic year 2005–06, having amassed a whopping \$911 million. Harvard took in \$595 million that year, and Yale \$433 million. The total endowments of the three institutions at the top are truly eye-popping: Harvard’s stood at \$29 billion as of June

2006, Yale’s at \$18 billion, and hard-driving Stanford’s at \$14 billion. Yet the dollars just keep coming. Why do philanthropists continue to donate so generously to the institutions that need the money least?

There is a natural tendency to give to one’s alma mater, allows Steve O. Michael, vice provost of Kent State University. But “when your alma mater is already fabulously wealthy, it is advisable, indeed wise . . . to adopt other institutions that can yield better returns,” just as investors redirect their cash to better-performing stocks. Michael

## SOCIETY

## Hamburger Snobbery

**THE SOURCE:** "Democracy Versus Distinction: A Study of Omnivorousness in Gourmet Food Writing" by Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann, in *American Journal of Sociology*, July 2007.

insists that "donations to mega-rich universities do not directly improve the academic experience of their professors and students, or result in any qualitative improvement in student learning." Philanthropic dollars could go a long way toward offsetting the burden higher education places on middle- and lower-class families, especially "when states' appropriations to higher education are declining relative to the cost of tuition." The money would help sustain the diversity, represented by more than 4,000 colleges and universities, that is one of American higher education's great strengths.

Yet according to the Council for Aid to Education, \$1.2 billion of last year's \$2.4 billion increase in private donations went to the top 10 fundraisers. The process is self-reinforcing, as donations allow the richest institutions to beef up fundraising staffs and encourage them to judge university presidents "less by the academic success of their institutions and more by the size of donations generated under their watch."

In Michael's opinion, donors "should think of where their dollars will make the most difference," places where even small donations would mean that "classrooms can be upgraded, libraries renovated and expanded, and the burden of cost on students alleviated." At such places, unlike at Ivy League schools or other top fundraising universities, donor dollars have the "potential to transform the institution," and fundraising campaigns are "for genuine academic excellence, not merely the growth of the endowment or the ego of the president."

WHEN *FOOD AND WINE* MAGAZINE emblazoned a hamburger on its cover in 2004, casual readers might have concluded that food snobbery was dead. Snooty foodies, however, are alive and influential, and eating habits remain an important indicator of social status, write Josée Johnston and Shyon Baumann, sociologists at the University of Toronto. The difference is that 50 years ago familiarity with a single culinary tradition—French—identified diners as belonging to the elite. Today, knowledge of ethnic and regional cuisines is as important as the ability to pronounce *au jus* correctly was two generations ago.

The expansion of the high-status food repertoire exemplifies a cultural trend called omnivorousness—eating, or trying, everything—in sociology-speak. The

same thing has happened in music. Where it once might have been enough to recognize classical composers, today the status-savvy need an ability to banter about bluegrass pickers and Cuban singers.

As Americans publicly disdain snobbery and embrace meritocracy, the "democratic ideology" of omnivorousness fuels the notion that arbitrary standards of culinary distinction based on a "single, elite French notion of culture are unacceptable." The cuisine of other cultures and classes now gets its due, according to Johnston and Baumann. But anything still does not go. Although a taste for pecorino, a hard cheese made from sheep's milk, marks the palate of a sophisticate, Velveeta, the easy-melting "cheese product," remains verboten. What is the standard?

Based on their study of 102 articles in four leading gourmet magazines in 2004, the authors conclude that food writers judge cuisines by citing authenticity. They legitimize dishes by locating them in Lucknow, India, or Siglufjörður, Iceland, and by stressing their simplicity, their



"I'll start with the arugula-and-goat-cheese salad, and then I'll have the blackened wolf."

nonindustrial production, and their organic origin. They also connect high-status food to personalities, famous chefs, or well-known families in the food business—although the writers quite consistently leave unnamed the cooks they discover in quaint huts or roadside stands in the developing world. Historical tradition is also important, such as noting that the ancestors of the roasted whole goats in Monterrey, Mexico, have grazed nearby since the 1700s. Exoticism is conveyed by unusualness and rarity. A cheese called Flixer, for example, is eulogized as a “nutty number made only from the milk of 12 very talented Swiss ewes.”

The omnivorousness trend makes lowbrow food worthy of highbrow interest, but only certain lowbrow fare. Many of the authentic foods that are exalted under the new “democratic” standard of food writers are extremely expensive and difficult to acquire in the mainstream commercial supermarkets and restaurants most Americans patronize, Johnston and Baumann note. Democracy ends at the checkout line.

## SOCIETY

## The Myth of the Master's Degree

**THE SOURCE:** “Teacher Credentials Don't Matter for Student Achievement” by Charles Clotfelter, Helen Ladd, and Jacob Vigdor, as summarized in *The NBER Digest*, Aug. 2007.

IN MANY SCHOOL DISTRICTS, slogging through extra college courses to get a master's degree boosts a teacher's annual salary by \$2,000 or more. But an extra diploma doesn't significantly improve student achievement. In some cases, elementary school pupils taught by teachers with advanced degrees actually do worse, write Duke University economists Charles Clotfelter, Helen Ladd, and Jacob Vigdor.

Most Americans agree that the quality of their child's teacher is crucial to learning, but teacher quality is notoriously hard to measure. The Duke economists studied the test scores of about 75 percent of all North Carolina third, fourth, and fifth graders between 1994 and 2003. They

found that a teacher's increasing experience and acquisition of a “regular” teaching license rather than an “other” license (given to those who do not meet all official requirements) made a positive difference on students' test scores, particularly in math. Teachers with 21 to 27 years of experience were most effective, they found.

But teachers who earned a master's degree before they began their career or during their first five years of teaching were no better at raising student achievement than teachers with only an undergraduate degree. Those who got an advanced degree more than five years after they started teaching appeared to be “somewhat less effective” on average than those who did not get one at all, the researchers found.

The authors question whether the higher salaries given to teachers with master's degrees—not to mention the graduate education subsidies offered by some districts—are well spent. In ascertaining why master's degrees don't matter, the answer could well be a variation on Bill Clinton's old campaign slogan: “It's the teacher, stupid.”

## PRESS &amp; MEDIA

## Forget the Error

**THE SOURCE:** “How Complete Are Newspaper Corrections?: An Analysis of the 2005 ‘Regret the Error’ Compilation” by Michael Bugeja and Jane Peterson, in *Media Ethics*, Spring 2007, and “Reign of Error,” by Jack Shafer, in *Slate*, Aug. 15, 2007.

NEWSPAPERS CONSTANTLY call for more vigilance and transparency in government and other

institutions, but in the one realm over which they have total control—their pages—they have failed their own test, according to a study of 600 corrections from 70 newspapers conducted by Michael Bugeja and Jane Peterson of Iowa State University. In fact, if editors con-

fessed to everything that was wrong in their news columns, they would have to devote 50 times more space each day to corrections, says Jack Shafer, editor at large of *Slate*.

Moreover, published corrections, as highlighted on the website Regret the Error, maintained by Canadian freelance writer Craig Silverman, were themselves often full of blunders. Only 30 percent specified when the error happened, very few described how it occurred, and virtually none

suggested what the paper was going to do to prevent future occurrences, according to Bugeja and Peterson, director and associate director, respectively, of the journalism school at Iowa State. A 1986 study found many of the same problems.

Shafer writes that Scott R. Maier, who teaches journalism at the University of Oregon, sent accuracy questionnaires to major sources noted in 3,600 articles in newspapers including *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Mercury News* of San Jose, and *The Tallahassee Democrat*. Roughly 70 percent of the recipients completed the survey. They spotted 2,615 fac-

If newspapers confessed to every error they made, they would have to devote 50 times more space each day to corrections.

tual errors in the stories for which they served as sources. No paper corrected more than 4.2 percent of its flawed articles. Maier reports that when 130 of the sources he queried asked for corrections, only four were published.

Even if some of the errors were relatively minor, such as a wrong age or title, or were out of the newspaper's control (such as faulty information from sources other than those evaluating the facts), the results are shocking to even the "most jaded" of newspaper readers, Shafer writes. And worse than the papers' sloppiness is the cover-up they perpetrate on a daily basis.

## PRESS &amp; MEDIA

## Penny Wise, Culturally Foolish

**THE SOURCE:** "Goodbye to All That" by Steve Wasserman, in *Columbia Journalism Review*, Sept.–Oct. 2007.

LIKE MEMBERS OF A NEARLY extinct species, newspaper book review sections and features are dying at an accelerating rate, and the survivors are increasingly feeble. *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, *The Dallas Morning News*, the North Carolina Research Triangle *News and Observer*, *The Orlando Sentinel*, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* and *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, among others, have cut staff or coverage or pages. Several newspapers have grafted the stump of book coverage onto sections that list upcoming events for readers with interests as divergent as auto racing and celebrity cooking.

The sorry plight of book reviews is only a chapter in the larger story of cultural and technological change affecting the printed word. Newspapers are in crisis, trying to adapt to the new digital technologies sucking away advertising revenue and readers. The bookselling industry is roiling from consolidation and digitization. Most troubling, however, writes Steve Wasserman, the former editor of *The Los Angeles Times Book Review*, is the "sea change in the culture of literacy itself." A speeding and visually dazzling world makes serious reading increasingly irrelevant. The habits of attention indispen-

sable for absorbing long-form narrative and sustained argument have been eroded.

Newspapers have tried to adjust to the new taste for the short, "bright" item, and many book reviews consequently have become mere pabulum, almost deserving of their fate, Wasserman writes. When Stendhal's *The Charterhouse of Parma* was newly and brilliantly translated several years ago, Wasserman commissioned a long review from Princeton's Edmund White and splashed it prominently in the Sunday book section. His editor motioned him into his office the next morning. "Steve," he said wearily, "Stendhal? Another dead, white, European male?"

Serious reading has always been a minority enterprise, but in 2004, for the first time, a majority of Americans said that they had not read a novel, play, or poem in the past year. That nevertheless leaves a lot of people. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that in 2002 nearly 100 million people read literature of some type.

Even so, newspaper book review sections generally, perhaps universally, lose money. So if they don't bring in profits, and are generally "shockingly mediocre," according to Wasserman, why not consign them to a merciful death? He concludes that readers know in their bones something newspapers forget at their peril: "Without books, indeed, without the news of such books—without literacy—the good society vanishes and barbarism triumphs."

## HISTORY

# Civilizing Siberia

**THE SOURCE:** “Unruly Felons and Civilizing Wives: Cultivating Marriage in the Siberian Exile System, 1822–1860” by Abby M. Schrader, in *Slavic Review*, Summer 2007.

THE YEAR 1753 MARKED THE enactment of a great reform in Russia under Empress Elizabeth: the replacement of death sentences with banishment to Siberia. It wasn't long, however, before the accelerating flow of criminal deportees into Siberia began to raise alarms. The authorities in Moscow, increasingly aware of the mineral wealth beneath the tundra, became concerned about the lawlessness of the new residents. Their solution was simple: Marry them off.

Russian officials confidently expected wives to solve the Siberian problem. But not just any wife would do, only “an idealized type of Russian woman who could transform unruly men into proper peasants,” writes Abby M. Schrader, a historian at Franklin and Marshall College, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The effort to achieve this miracle of domestication would consume the Russian overseers of Siberia for decades.

The drive to develop Siberian mining and to increase Russia's Asian sphere of influence virtually obliged the authorities to promote agriculture in the territory because transportation of food and other essentials east of the Urals was irregular at best and impossible for

much of the year. The number of felons transported to Siberia, while minuscule in the context of the vast territory, rose dramatically in the 19th century, from about 2,000 a year in 1816 to 11,000 in 1826. Nearly half were sent for the crime of vagrancy. Many soon became “parasites,” burdening the few settled farmers in the region who were trying to coax crops to grow in the challenging climate.

Unfortunately for Russian officials, their civilization strategy confronted a demographic roadblock: a lack of women. Females were outnumbered by between five and 10 to one in most places, and in Irkutsk, where some of the most impenitent criminals were sentenced to hard labor, the ratio of men to women was greater than 25 to one.

In 1832, the authorities decreed that wives of serfs banished to Siberia must follow their husbands, but many refused to go or were unable to stand the rigors of transportation. Administrators tried to marry exiles to women from “old-timer” Siberian families, but this too failed. Even bribery—the Irkutsk civil governor would pay 150 rubles to each father who wedded his daughter to a deportee—didn't work. And when some of the exiles, with the cooperation of the authorities, bought brides from the indigenous tribes, the resulting unions

weren't recognized by the Russian Orthodox Church.

Siberian officials tried to boost the number of women sent into exile, expecting that “their pure hearts, the domestic orientation of their attentions, and their submissiveness to patriarchal structures would enable them to bring out the best in the exiled men whom they married and hence reproduce Russian society in Siberia,” Schrader writes.

But the exiled women were imperfect material with which to meet the civilizing challenge, and there still weren't enough of them to go around. More than 40 percent were vagrants, 20 percent thieves, 11 percent murderers, and three percent arsonists, with most of the rest guilty of “bad behavior.” The presence of even a few women created a new source of criminality. “An exile frequently persuades another exile's wife to fornicate with him or he colludes with her to kill her husband,” reported the journal *Ministerstva nutrennikh del* in 1833.

Venereal disease spread. And even if the exiles managed to avoid contracting syphilis, “excessive and illegal sexual activity wore out a woman's reproductive organs and limited her contribution to Siberian colonization,” according to one document preserved in the Russian archives.

In the end, the use of proper Orthodox women to produce tractable peasants failed to turn Siberia into a reliable breadbasket. Even today, Siberia remains a frontier that the modern Russian state struggles to reconcile with the motherland in the west.

## HISTORY

## The Sex Deficit

**THE SOURCE:** "Sex, Breastfeeding, and Marital Fertility in Pretransition China" by William Lavelly, in *Population and Development Review*, June 2007.

LONG BEFORE THE ADVENT OF compulsory birth control and sterilization measures, the typical Chinese married woman bore 35 percent fewer children than did her European counterpart. For more than 30 years, scholars have argued over why. William Lavelly, a professor of international studies and sociology at the University of Washington, minimizes the usual scholarly speculation about faulty data, widespread malnutrition, or the practice of voluntary "sexual restraint." Traditional Chinese cultural and child-rearing practices explain the differences, he says.

Before modern birth control measures were developed, Chinese wives gave birth to between five and six children during their lifetime; their European counterparts, between eight and nine. Many scholars believe that, historically, Chinese couples simply had sex less often than couples in the West—a pattern that continues to the present day. The "average coital frequency of married women of reproductive age is between four and five times per month for China as compared to around seven or more times per month for European societies," Lavelly writes, citing government surveys. Moreover, before the 20th century, a married couple would have their first child later in the East than in the West. The custom of arranged marriage in China bound together couples who were strangers on their wedding night and installed

the bride in the unfamiliar home of her mother-in-law. Traditional arranged marriages began with an "awkward, uncomfortable period and low levels of intercourse," according to sociologists Ronald R. Rindfuss and S. Philip Morgan.

Cultural practice and belief also served to lessen the number of children born during pre-modern times to Chinese women, nearly all of whom married, many at age 17 or 18. (By contrast, up to 25 percent of European women never married at all, and many of those who did waited until their early to mid-twenties, Lavelly says.) Chinese Taoist cultural leaders historically considered sex potentially debilitating, particularly for men. The idea that "giving rein to passion will lead to illness and can impair longevity" is a centuries-old belief that is repeated in a Shanghai sex education manual in circulation today.

Despite their early start, and their near-universal participation in marriage, Chinese women's fertility rate was much lower than that of European women in part because of their child-rearing practices. Chinese mothers typically nursed their babies on demand for about two years, and such frequent breastfeeding tends to extend the periods of amenorrhea following childbirth. Solid food usually wasn't introduced for a year, while European babies might be fed gruel as soon as two months after they were born, a practice that led to earlier weaning and more frequent pregnancies.

Lavelly says that the historic Chinese fertility rate was "probably fairly typical" of premodern agrarian societies, and that Europeans are likely the libido outliers.

## HISTORY

## A Royalist Revolution

**THE SOURCE:** "A World of Kings" by Brendan McConville, in *Historically Speaking*, May–June 2007.

"MOST HISTORIANS STILL treat the years between 1688 and 1776 as somehow a long prologue to the revolutionary crisis," writes Brendan McConville, a historian at Boston University. In their examination of pre-Revolutionary War society, they look for and find the roots of capitalism and the democratic society that was to come—"in short, future Americans." They all but ignore evidence, from printed pamphlets to the knickknacks decorating colonial homes, showing that "an ever-growing number of provincials identified themselves as Britons" after 1688 and "proclaimed their love of Britain's Protestant monarchs and loathing for the kings' enemies, particularly papists of all stripes."

This royalist bent, McConville says, "has been gradually wiped from our national memory," partly because a land filled with "proto-republicans" makes the eventual revolution easier to explain. But in his view, it was the colonists' allegiance to the Crown that led to the explosions at Lexington and Concord in 1775.

In England, the Glorious Revolution in 1688 permanently established the primacy of the Parliament over the crown, but the Crown's dynastic struggles were far from over. The later Stuart kings became enmeshed in a series of wars and intrigues on the Continent, eventually leading to the ascension of the German-born

Hanoverian kings in 1714. The English felt “tepid at best” toward these new foreign-born royals, but their allegiance to their government was bolstered by the elaborate system of political patronage in England, the religious and social authority of the Protestant Church of England, and the “fixed and controlled land-tenure system.”

The distant Americans saw these events very differently. Parliament did not loom large in the colonists’ understanding; nor did any of these ties of allegiance hold sway. Far more important to them was the resolution of the long-simmering conflict between Protestants and Catholics that had existed since Henry VIII severed ties with Rome and established the Church of England in 1534. “They saw the national settlement,” McConville says, “as establishing the Protestant succession and a Protestant

British colonists in America doted on royal political spectacles and championed their British king with emotional intensity.

political culture built around a cult of benevolent monarchy.”

Colonial society was “married to royal political spectacles and a slavishly loyal print culture,” McConville writes, and “British North Americans championed their British king with emotional intensity.” For example, on Pope’s Day, observed in November, Bostonians annually reenacted the suppression of a Catholic uprising against the king in 1605. “The result was a polity sown together by passions rather than patronage,”

McConville observes.

In the decades immediately preceding the Revolution, as the colonial population exploded and settlers began pushing out into the frontier, everyone from yeoman farmers to Native Americans resisting the encroaching settlers invoked Britain’s kings in support of their cause. But beginning in the 1760s, Parliament attempted to exert its authority over the colonies and subsequently levied a series of unpopular taxes. The spell was broken, and the underlying incoherence of the colonists’ bonds with the mother country was revealed. By the time the statue of King George III in New York’s Bowling Green was pulled down on July 9, 1776, any remaining bonds with the king had been permanently severed, and, as McConville writes, “the long struggle to make a workable republican society began.”



The toppling of the statue of King George III on July 9, 1776, in New York’s Bowling Green confirmed the severing of colonists’ bonds to England.

## RELIGION &amp; PHILOSOPHY

# Where Islamism Fizzled

**THE SOURCE:** "The 'Islamic Revival' in Daghestan Twenty Years Later" by Vladimir Bobrovnikov, in *Central Asia and the Caucasus*, No. 2, 2007.

WHEN THE SOVIET UNION collapsed in 1991, the Russian constituent republic of Daghestan experienced a dramatic religious awakening. Islamic schools and mosques opened, new periodicals and political parties sprang up, and ubiquitous portraits of Lenin were ripped down and replaced with images of Imam Shamil, a 19th-century Muslim war hero. With the establishment of more than 1,600 mosques, even the appearance of Daghestani villages was transformed, writes Vladimir Bobrovnikov, a senior researcher at the RAS Institute of Oriental Studies in Moscow. It took the Soviets 40 years to open only about 200 public high schools in the republic. Within a decade, private Muslim donors had started nearly 700 Qur'anic classes in mosques, in addition to 38 Islamic colleges and other institutions of higher education.

Then the Islamic awakening began to fizzle. The post-Soviet Islamic parties that had arisen in the early 1990s disappeared. Some mosques and schools were

shuttered. Religious donations continued, but some of the donors were tarnished by profits from the manufacture of alcoholic beverages, the drug trade, and banking. A handful of new Islamic institutions opened, but this did not "lead to perceptible results," according to Bobrovnikov.

What stunted the Muslim spiritual revival in the seemingly fertile soil of Russia's southernmost republic? Part of the explanation may well lie in the

history of the poor and mountainous region's 30-odd ethnic groups. They speak 30 different languages and have been so independent that even Imam Shamil struggled to keep them together. While the republic is at least 90 percent Muslim, its leading sheikhs don't get along.

Daghestan has long been a bastion of the Islamic mystical tradition of Sufism, deemed sacrilegious by the ultraorthodox Wahhabi sect. In turn, Wahhabism, with its roots in Saudi Arabia, is denigrated as "dollar Islam." Bobrovnikov says that Wahhabi imams have been (falsely) accused of accepting money from Arab missionaries for every newly converted

person. After the outbreak of the war in Chechnya—Daghestan's immediate western neighbor—Russian authorities blamed the Wahhabis for inciting the violence. And when Chechen rebels raided some Daghestani villages in 1999, government authorities shut down Wahhabi mosques and schools, killing their leaders and forcing others to leave the country. The Wahhabis have been driven underground, where they threaten to create new splits among the faithful, Bobrovnikov writes.

The real cause of the failure of Islam in Daghestan lies in seven decades of Soviet rule, according to Bobrovnikov. The Muslim spiritual elite of the past century died in Stalin's

## EXCERPT

## Heretics Unmourned

*It is extraordinary that the bombings in Iraq, including in mosques, that kill so many Shia noncombatants draw almost no condemnation in other predominately Muslim countries. To many Sunnis, the Shia are heretical Muslims; the late archterrorist Abu Musab al Zarqawi, who was responsible for the Jordanian hotel bombings [that killed 60 wedding celebrants and others, said,] . . . "Any government made up of rejector or godless Kurds or people who call themselves Sunnis is only a 'collaborators' government." . . . Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda . . . will not be discredited by non-Muslims. They will only be discredited by moderates within the Muslim world who take them on and describe them for what they are—the true enemies of Islam.*

—DENNIS ROSS, envoy to the Middle East under Presidents George H. W. Bush and Bill Clinton, in *World Policy Journal* (Spring 2007)

prison camps, and no new scholars were allowed to arise. At the start of the Soviet era, roughly 10 percent of Dagestanis were sufficiently well versed in the Qur'an to be among the spiritual elite. The figure is now less than 0.1 percent.

The new Muslim institutions of higher education have cobbled together curricula that are neither

strongly religious nor rigorously secular. Students at the North Caucasian Islamic University, for example, take 432 hours of Qur'anic exegesis, 360 hours of physical education, and 72 hours each of information technology, homeland history, international relations, and astrophysics. "Many of them are forced to obtain a second secular education

when looking for a job."

The Dagestan "Islamic spiritual revival" has been stillborn, Bobrovnikov says. Even Muslim students who have gone abroad to study at religious centers in Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Tunisia have "long ago given up their studies and gone into the Russian-language tourist business."

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

# He Said, She Said

**THE SOURCE:** "Are Women Really More Talkative Than Men?" by Matthias R. Mehl, Simine Vazire, Nairán Ramírez-Esparza, Richard B. Slatcher, and James W. Pennebaker, in *Science*, July 6, 2007.

NOT TO MINCE WORDS, BUT women have a reputation for being much chattier than men. In 2006, neurobiologist Louann Brizendine, in *The Female Brain*, attached some numbers to the stereotype, estimating that "a woman uses about 20,000 words per day while a man uses about 7,000." Those numbers poured into the media, cited in *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, and *The Washington Post*, and were also reported on CBS, CNN, and National Public Radio, taking on the stature of scientific fact.

But according to Matthias R. Mehl, a psy-

chology professor at the University of Arizona, Simine Vazire, at Washington University in St. Louis, and their colleagues at the University of Texas, Austin, up to now "no study has systematically recorded the natural conversations of large groups of people for

extended periods of time." Mark Liberman, a University of Pennsylvania linguistics professor, attempted last year to fill the void, analyzing tape-recorded conversations of 153 participants he discovered in a British archive. He found that the women spoke 8,805 words per day versus the men's 6,073, but noted that his findings were not conclusive, since his subjects were free to turn the recorders on and off.

Mehl and his colleagues tested 396 university student volunteers using an electronically activated recorder that "operates by periodically recording snippets of ambient sounds, including conversations, while participants go about their daily lives." Data from the study reveal that women spoke on average 16,215 words per day and men 15,669, a statistically insignificant difference. But the most talkative 17 percent were equally split between men and women. And the three biggest chatterboxes, gushing

## EXCERPT

### A Trillion Stars

*Earth is a clump of iron and magnesium and nickel, smeared with a thin layer of organic matter and sleeved in vapor. It whirls along in a nearly circular orbit around a minor star we call the sun. . . . There are enough stars in the universe that if everybody on Earth were charged with naming his or her share, we'd each get to name a trillion and a half of them.*

—ANTHONY DOERR, author of *Four Seasons in Rome* and other books, in *Orion* (July–Aug. 2007)

more than 40,000 words in the course of a day? All men.

While Mehl and his associates admit that their study sample—all students—wasn't typical of the whole population, they believe that sex differences among the general public would be about the same. Their conclusion: "The widespread and highly publicized stereotype about female talkativeness is unfounded."

## SCIENCE &amp; TECHNOLOGY

## A Solid B+ for Prediction

**THE SOURCE:** "Anticipations: The Remarkable Forecasts of H.G. Wells" by Paul Crabtree, in *The Futurist*, Sept.-Oct. 2007.

IF H. G. WELLS WERE IN A *JEO-**pardy* category, it would almost certainly be science fiction. But at the turn of the last century, Wells (1866–1946) was regarded as one of the leading intellectuals of the West, with an influence that was felt in science, biology, history, and education. In widely popular books, he predicted an astonishing number of the seminal events of the 20th century, from the splitting of the atom to the creation of limited-access freeways, from guerilla warfare to the rise of the Boston-Washington megalopolis.

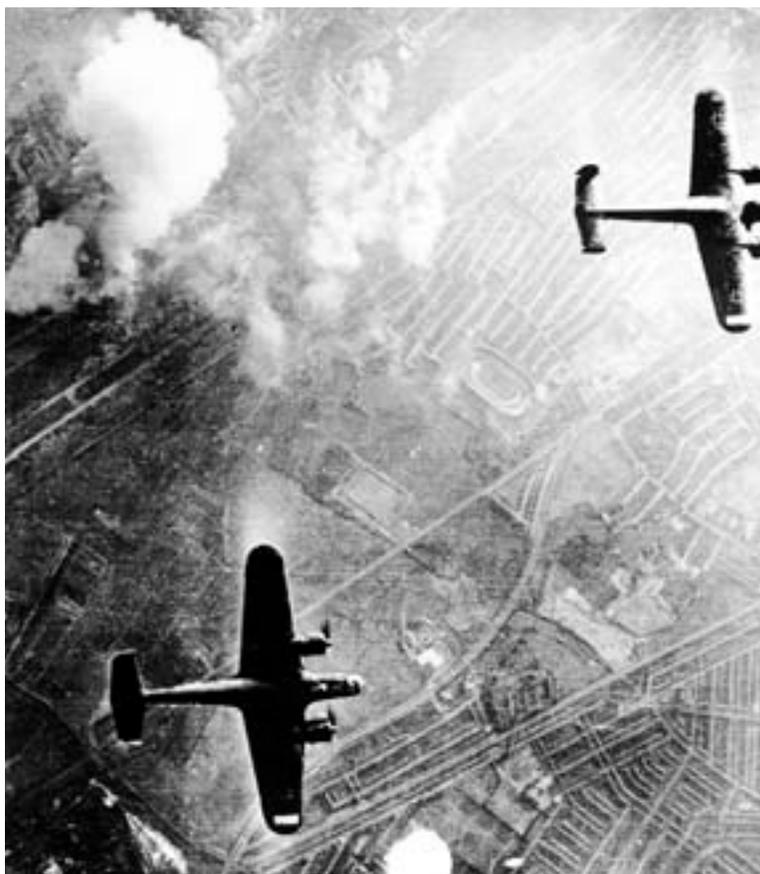
About 80 percent of the dozens of predictions in Wells's 1901 book, *Anticipations*, were at least partly right and 60 percent were "extremely accurate," writes Paul Crabtree, a retired federal analyst. Wells foresaw dramatic increases in the speed of travel, with most people transported in independent road

vehicles and only heavy freight moving by rail. He recognized the future of the airplane, but relegated it to a footnote. He expected the size of cities to expand exponentially until the New York metropolitan area encompassed 40 million people—it has 19 million residents today. He thought the "irresponsible" wealthy class would grow, as would a poor, uneducable underclass whom technology would render unemployable. He predicted the decline of marriage and an increase in childless unions. Machines and technology would become the primary means of waging war, he wrote; military victories would be won "in the

schools and colleges and universities." He foresaw English—"but perhaps French"—becoming the dominant world language. He recognized the globalization that is a hallmark of the world economy a century hence.

In later books, Wells forecast the use of atomic energy and the dropping of nuclear weapons from airplanes. In 1933, he wrote a novel that was only a few months off in predicting the date of the outbreak of World War II, according to Crabtree.

But as prescient as Wells was about technological change, he was clueless about religion and



A gas works erupts in flames as German bombers fill the sky over London in 1940. In a 1933 novel, H. G. Wells was only slightly off in predicting the date of the outbreak of World War II.

women. He failed to recognize the possibility of the rise of world faiths beyond a version of Unitarian Protestantism, which he expected to dominate. It apparently never occurred to him that women might go to work in numbers nearly equal to men.

## SCIENCE &amp; TECHNOLOGY

## Unfreeze Antarctica!

**THE SOURCE:** "Antarctica's Frozen Territorial Claims: A Meltdown Proposal" by Jill Grob, in *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review*, Spring 2007.

DESPITE ITS LACK OF NEARLY everything necessary to sustain human life, Antarctica is a surprisingly popular continent. Britain staked its claim in 1908, followed by New Zealand, France, Australia, Norway, and Chile. Argentina polished its effort to gain title between 1927 and 1957, while the United States and the Soviet Union reserved the right in 1959 to make ownership claims in the future.

The reason behind this land rush, unsurprisingly, is minerals and, quite

possibly, oil. They are thought to exist in large quantities under the polar ice, which is up to three miles deep in places. The "Gondwanaland hypothesis" holds that Antarctica is one of seven continents that broke apart from a larger landmass more than 150 million years ago, and that because minerals exist on the other six, Antarctica must have them as well. Coal and iron ore have already been found, writes Jill Grob, senior production editor of *The Boston College International and Comparative Law Review*.

Three of the seven claimants have staked out some of the same land, and during 1947–48 "war-like scuffles" broke out among the rivals. As the Cold War became more heated, the Soviets hoisted the hammer and sickle over a research station they had established on land claimed by Australia. And though scientific research continued peacefully, the United States called together an early coalition of the willing to work out a treaty governing the territory. The eventual document, the Antarctic Treaty of December 1, 1959, banned military uses of the continent and encour-

aged scientific research. Territorial claims were "frozen" and left unresolved. The continent is jointly governed by treaty "consultative" signatories, which can include only nations that conduct "substantial scientific research" there, effectively excluding any but the richest nations.

With the threat of accelerated global warming raising environmental concerns, the time has come for nations to drop their Antarctic claims, Grob contends. They are based on long-ago discoveries, geographic proximity, or connections via submerged mountain ranges, and are ultimately irresolvable.

Antarctica should become an unclaimed global commons where scientific research can take place that will benefit all humankind, Grob says. This may require increased United Nations involvement, or merely a broadening of the conditions under which interested countries can become consultative signatories to the 1959 treaty. In any case, Antarctica is too important to the global environment to be held hostage to the concerns of nations "hoarding their frozen claims."

## ARTS &amp; LETTERS

## The Heavy Hand

**THE SOURCE:** "Divine Comedy" by Julian Gough, in *Prospect*, May 2007.

WHY ARE MODERN LITERARY novels so earnest, so praiseworthy, so serious, and in the

words of novelist Julian Gough, "so bloody dull"? Why is tragedy overvalued and comedy underrated? Such undeserved inequality, he says, goes back two millennia. Many writers believe that the

ancient Greeks considered comedy to be the superior form of literary endeavor, but tragedy, instead, has reigned supreme for centuries as the defining spirit of great literature. The "Best Young American Novelists" list published by the noted literary magazine *Granta* this year featured 21 writers, all exploring death, sorrow, and uncertainty.

Comedy originally superseded

tragedy, Gough writes, because it is a “god’s-eye view” of life: a “dirty, funny, violent, repetitive cartoon” of humanity’s flawed self. Tragedy was the mere human perspective: Existence was weighty, sad, and deadly. Comedy allowed humankind to stand on Mount Olympus and laugh at itself. The mismatch in reputation between the two dramatic forms was partly a result of simple survival. Only 11 of Aristophanes’ comedies are extant, vastly outnumbered by the tragic works of Aeschylus and Sophocles—and 18 by Euripides alone. Aristotle’s 350 BC treatise on tragedy is available for \$8.76 online, while his presumed companion volume on comedy has disappeared.

When ancient literature was rediscovered in the Middle Ages, tragedy was at hand, and Europe was receptive. The ascendant Christian Church had been founded on tragedy—the “sadistic murder of a man by those he was trying to save, whose fatal flaw was that he was perfect in an imperfect world.” The Bible, the revealed word of God, “apple to Armageddon, does not contain a single joke,” Gough notes.

From Aphra Behn’s novel *Oroonoko* (1688) to the present day, the novel has been biased toward the serious and the weighty. Outlier comic writers such as Rabelais, Cervantes, and Voltaire stand out for their satiric view of authority, and all three spent time in jail. University creative writing departments teach the heavy touch. But “serious” writing is out of sync with popular culture, Gough writes. The

language of the American literary novel has drifted away from “anything used by human beings anywhere on earth” and has lost its mass audience.

Forget Henry James, Gough argues. His advice to his peers: Steal a page from Bart Simpson and Tony Soprano.

## ARTS &amp; LETTERS

## Manna from Manhattan

**THE SOURCE:** “The Andy Warhol Museum of Modern Art in Medzilaborce, Slovakia” by Július Gajdos, in *Kosmas*, Spring 2007.

BEFORE BILBAO THERE WAS Medzilaborce. The art world expected Medzilaborceans to be filled with gratitude when the United States, Slovakia, and the Andy Warhol Foundation gave the small mountain town an art museum. But when a boxy white former communist cultural center was reopened as the Andy Warhol Museum of Modern Art in 1991, much of the reaction in the impoverished community of 6,000 was hostile and contemptuous, writes Július Gajdos, professor in the Institute of Arts and Design at the University of West Bohemia, in the Czech Republic. Installed in one of the most inaccessible areas of Slovakia, 370

When Andy Warhol was asked about his origins, he answered, “I came from nowhere.”

miles from Bratislava, the capital, the museum aroused jealousy among many Slovaks, who said that the benighted people of Medzilaborce were ill prepared to build a tourist industry, much less to appreciate pop art. Indeed, some deeply religious townspeople denigrated Warhol as a decadent homosexual.

The museum was the brainchild of Warhol’s brother John Warhola and Michal Bycko, a teacher at the Medzilaborce Primary Arts School. Bycko began working to create the museum in 1987, the year Warhol died. Now the curator, Bycko sought to honor not only Warhol but his parents, who were born nearby and immigrated to the United States in 1913. Warhola donated some of his brother’s possessions—a snakeskin jacket, Brooks Brothers ties, and sunglasses. The Warhol Foundation lent about 20 works, including some Marilyn Monroe portraits, Campbell’s Soup I and II, a Red Lenin print, and a painted photo of Queen Ntombi Twala of Swaziland.

Awkwardly, Warhol himself, when asked about his origins, answered, “I came from nowhere.” But his mother’s strong influence—she signed some of his pictures at the beginning of his career—suggests the importance of his Slovakian heritage, Gajdos says. Julia Zavacky Warhola also painted and designed sculpture. A chandelier shaped like an angel in the foyer of the museum was modeled after a drawing, almost a scribble, made by Julia. She had a

whimsical touch, creating paintings of the houses in her village showing them with hens' legs, according to Gajdoš.

Warhol's art—the museum has two concrete Campbell's soup cans flanking the entrance—was not embraced in eastern Slovakia during his lifetime. His mother sent some of Andy's drawings to her family in the 1970s and '80s, but they threw them out when they moved.

But Medzilaborce residents have warmed to Warhol and his fans in the 16 years since the museum opened. A hotel was built across the street, and a fountain erected around a statue of the artist. The number of visitors has gradually increased, most of them coming from abroad, judging by the signatures in a guest book. Gajdoš says the residents of Medzilaborce have come to recognize the value and importance of the museum “through others.”

## ARTS &amp; LETTERS

## Waiting for Cecil: A Widow's Tale

**THE SOURCE:** “The Literary Wife: Working With the Widow” by Peter Stanford, in *The Independent*, May 20, 2007.

SOME BIOGRAPHERS PREFER that their work be grounded in the written record, untouched by the memories and myths of family and intimate friends. Most to be shunned, perhaps, is the devoted wife. “The figure of the literary widow, guarding the great man's work and tending the flame of his reputation, is a



Cecil Day-Lewis attends the theater with his second wife, actress Jill Balcon, in 1957. Balcon served as a source for an authorized biography of the late poet and critic that discussed his infidelity.

familiar one,” notes Peter Stanford, a journalist and the author of numerous books.

But Stanford took the opposite tack. To write his authorized biography of lionized poet Cecil Day-Lewis (1904–72), he relied heavily upon the actress Jill Balcon, Day-Lewis's second wife, with whom he had two children (food writer Tamasin and Academy Award-winning actor Daniel). Balcon had been the first reader of much of Day-Lewis's work and, since his death, has edited several editions of his poetry.

But she also carried old hurts. Day-Lewis had a wandering eye that led him to pursue several extramarital affairs during their

more than 20 years of marriage. And Balcon resented the central role the novelist Rosamond Lehmann still occupies in discussions of the poet. (Lehmann and Day-Lewis were lovers for the decade before he met Balcon.)

Balcon was leery, with reason, of helping Stanford to write a book. Indeed, her late husband wrote a gently satirical poem, “The Widow Interviewed” (1965), about a woman who fetishizes her attachment to “The Poet.” After overcoming reservations, however, Balcon proved a game and valuable source, Stanford says. They hit upon a formula to determine what was off limits for treatment in the book, *C. Day-Lewis: A Life*, published earlier

this year. If it was in Day-Lewis's frequently autobiographical poems, detective novels, or several works of prose—even as subtext—it was fair to discuss.

Stanford has always been in the camp of biographers who believe it's necessary to like their subjects in order to write about them. And he did grow to admire the charismatic Day-Lewis for his idealism, "his refusal to accept easy answers in his struggles between duty and love," and "his consistent commitment to public service." But the biographer's close cooperation with Balcon also led

him to observe the wounds that Day-Lewis's infidelity and sometimes cruel treatment of her had inflicted.

"I felt guilty for putting her through it, but it was necessary and invaluable for the biography for it highlighted the greatest contradiction in Day-Lewis's character," he writes. "One part of him craved domesticity and the exclusive love of a woman who was in many ways his soul mate. Yet another part of him remained forever dissatisfied."

Stanford concludes that his book benefited tremendously

from his collaboration with Balcon, and that she managed to avoid the pitfall to which literary widows can fall prey: forcing biographers to "draw a veil" over their husband's betrayals, sometimes punishing uncooperative writers by refusing them permission to quote a single line of the subject's work. Many biographies have been crippled by such restrictions. "Contrary to the popular stereotype . . . , this book was for her, I came to appreciate, an act of unlocking and sharing a memory that she has held so very close to her for so long."

## OTHER NATIONS

# India's Creamy Layer

**THE SOURCE:** "The Effectiveness of Jobs Reservation: Caste, Religion, and Economic Status in India" by Vani K. Borooah, Amresh Dubey, and Sriya Iyer, in *Development and Change*, May 2007.

NO NATION HAS EMBRACED affirmative action more fervently or for a longer period of time than India. When the British pulled out in 1947, India's new constitution "reserved" jobs for untouchables and other disadvantaged groups that had suffered centuries of oppression. Twenty-three percent of government jobs were set aside for members of "scheduled castes" and "scheduled tribes." Now a controversial new law calls for reserving another 27 percent of public-sector jobs and slots at the nation's top universities for members of "other

backward classes."

The change comes as India is struggling to meet the booming

economy's demand for educated workers. Vani Borooah, Amresh Dubey, and Sriya Iyer, economists at the University of Ulster, North-Eastern Hill University in India, and St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, argue that since 1947, the reservations policy has resulted in the "scheduled" groups getting only



Medical students in cities across India demonstrated last year against proposals to reserve up to 50 percent of seats in the nation's elite universities for students from the "backward" classes.

about five percent more good jobs—defined as salaried or wage paying positions, rather than casual work—than they would have secured otherwise. They reached their conclusion by comparing the status of men in various “scheduled castes” to similarly educated and trained Muslim men, who got no help from affirmative action.

The new affirmative action policy, which would expand the number of workers covered and university positions reserved from 23 to 50 percent, will not help the “backward” groups the new legislation is intended to benefit, the authors say. Most of the beneficiaries will be the well-off groups within each caste—known as the “creamy layer.” These are skilled workers who would likely have been hired anyway. And India’s rural poor, for most of whom higher education is beyond reach, won’t benefit at all.

The group most in need of help is made up of Muslims, the authors write. Widely discriminated against and excluded from the reservation set-asides, they make up 14.7 percent of the nation’s population, but only a tiny fraction of the Indian workforce. Many Muslim parents believe that discrimination is so severe that their sons will never be hired for salaried or wage-paying jobs under any circumstances, the authors note. This leads parents to “devalue the importance of education as an instrument of upward economic mobility.” More than a third of Muslim men are illiterate, compared with only 10 percent of Hindus.

Instead of increasing the number of reserved jobs and university

Critics say a new affirmative action policy in India will not help the “backward” groups, but rather the “creamy layer” within each caste.

places, the better plan would be to tackle the dysfunctional primary and secondary schools of India that serve all castes and religions. Many lack learning materials and even teachers. Before the deprived children of India can succeed in the country’s fabled Indian Institutes of Technology and Management, they need a solid grounding in the three R’s.

#### OTHER NATIONS

## Egghead on Downing Street

**THE SOURCE:** “An Intellectual in Power” by John Lloyd, “Lessons From History” by Iain McLean, and “An American Liberal” by Geoff Mulgan, in *Prospect*, July 2007.

AMERICANS HAVE ELECTED AS president a polio survivor and a peanut farmer, a baseball team owner and a movie actor, but Britain has now chosen a politician of an almost rarer breed: Prime Minister Gordon Brown is an intellectual.

Brown, who served as chancellor of the exchequer under Tony Blair for nearly 10 years before becoming prime minister, holds a Ph.D. in history from Edinburgh University and has written books on such topics as poverty, greed, the early history of his party, and, most recently, courage. He heads the Labor Party, but reads American neocons such as James Q. Wilson and Gertrude

Himmelfarb. He can cite Harvard’s Samuel Huntington on the clash of civilizations and other theories and is on close terms with serious Christian writers. “Most politicians scan books for an idea or two,” writes Geoff Mulgan, director of Britain’s Young Foundation. “Brown actually reads them.”

Although Brown rarely talks publicly about religion, politics is, to him, about helping society act as a moral community rather than just a collection of individuals, Mulgan says. Brown’s focus on morality is often attributed to his upbringing in the Scottish church as the son of a Presbyterian minister. The new prime minister is steeped in the Bible, even as British society becomes more secular and multicultural, and he seeks out writers who go beyond the “simplicities of neoliberal individualism.” These include Americans such as Robert Putnam, author of *Bowling Alone* (2000), and Francis Fukuyama, author of *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992).

“His sources of influence are very American, or to be more precise, northeast American, drawn from an academic culture where rigorous rationalist Enlightenment thought has fused with a vigorous Protestantism,” according to Mulgan. Brown’s economic views, says John Lloyd, a writer for the *Financial Times*, started out just to the democratic side of socialism. Today they are that of a market liberal. His favorite book on globalization endorses it.

Brown joins a formidable roster of British intellectuals at 10 Downing Street, notably Winston

Churchill (1940–45, 1951–55), A. J. Balfour (1902–05), Lord Rosebery (1894–95), and W. E. Gladstone (1868–74, 1880–85, 1886, 1892–94). Not all have succeeded. Historians rank Churchill and Gladstone among the best prime ministers, writes Iain McLean, an Oxford professor of politics. Balfour and Rosebery are considered among the worst.

## OTHER NATIONS

## Thirty Years of Waiting

**THE SOURCE:** “Performing the Nation, Prefiguring the State: The Western Saharan Refugees, Thirty Years Later” by Jacob A. Mundy, in *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, June 2007.

CONDITIONS IN THE WESTERN Sahara refugee camps near barren Tindouf, Algeria, have measurably improved since the United Nations brokered a cease-fire between Morocco and Polisario independence fighters more than a decade ago. But as life has become slightly less harsh in the tent encampments, much of the impetus for compromise in the tangled 30-year war has disappeared, writes Jacob A. Mundy, a Ph.D. candidate at the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies at the University of Exeter, in England.

Western Sahara, a former Spanish colony that hugs the Atlantic Ocean south of Morocco, is one of the most desolate places on earth. Virtually all food is imported, and temperatures can go from below freezing at night in winter to above 130 degrees in summer, with seasonal winds propelling an incessant barrage of sand. Only .02 per-

cent of Western Sahara’s land is arable, and the sole known resources are phosphates and iron ore, which are extracted from mines on the opposite side of the country from the refugee camps. Energy companies have recently begun to explore for offshore oil.

When Spain abruptly pulled out of the colony as Generalissimo Francisco Franco lay dying in 1975–76, both Morocco to the north and Mauritania to the east invaded. Half the population fled to Algeria, which offered strong support for the Polisario. Refugees in the “temporary” camps—initially almost all women, children, and the elderly—have been fed and sheltered for more than 30 years by international aid agencies. Malnutrition and anemia have been rampant, with as many as half of all pregnancies ending in miscarriage.

An asymmetrical war raged for 15 years. The Polisario—made up of independence fighters from a linguistic group called the Sahrawi—engaged a much larger Moroccan army, which gradually erected a 1,500-mile wall to isolate the guerillas in the eastern desert. Mauritania withdrew early from the fight, but King Mohammed VI of Morocco pledged that “we shall not give up one inch of our beloved Sahara, not a grain of its sand.” In 1991, the United Nations brokered a cease-fire, promising the Sahrawi a referendum on the future of the territory, but the plan has foundered.

After the 1991 accord, the Polisario fighters moved into the refugee camps, bringing with them cash and the beginnings of a market economy. The cash came from

Spanish pensions for Sahrawis who had served in the colonial security services, remittances from family members abroad, and gifts from Spanish families, who host an estimated 10,000 children every summer. The camps now have a few cars, mud houses, and small businesses. Their growing affluence, according to Mundy, encourages the refugees to pursue more economic opportunities in the camps rather than participate in the peace process.

Mundy says that Westerners are mistaken if they think harsh conditions in the refugee colonies will pressure the Polisario to compromise with Morocco. That moment seems to have passed. Beginning in the 1990s, former U.S. secretary of state James A. Baker, acting as a UN envoy, worked out a compromise: The Polisario would rule the Western Sahara semi-autonomously for four years. After that, Morocco would get a plebiscite, allowing all residents of the territory—including new settlers—to choose continued semi-autonomy, integration, or independence. The Polisario agreed. Morocco flatly refused. Baker resigned soon after.

Today, an intifada is steadily growing inside the Moroccan-controlled areas. An anti-compromise “reform” faction, committed to “all the homeland or martyrdom,” has arisen within the Polisario, which has been led by Mohammed Abdelaziz. There appears to be little interest in deal making. The refugees would “rather live in their self-made exile than return to an uncertain future in a Moroccan Western Sahara.”

Also in this issue:

Sarah L. Courteau  
on the Bible's harlot  
queen

Jan Swafford on  
20th-century music

David Beers on  
irony after 9/11

Martin Walker on  
Europe's dark  
century

Hara Estroff  
Marano on child's  
play

Hannah Holmes  
on allergies

Brendan Boyle on  
Platonic thought

John Brady Kiesling  
on diplomats

# CURRENT BOOKS

REVIEWS OF NEW AND NOTEWORTHY NONFICTION

## Intelligence Tests

Reviewed by David J. Garrow

RARE IS THE BOOK THAT RECEIVES AN official response from the U.S. government. This past summer, the Central Intelligence Agency angrily greeted the publication of Tim Weiner's *Legacy of Ashes* with a lengthy press release fashioned on taxpayer-funded time. Through "selective citations, sweeping assertions, and a fascination with the negative," the CIA complained, "Weiner overlooks, minimizes, or distorts agency achievements." That the agency devoted personnel resources to write its own review is a testament not only to the reputation and accomplishments of the book's author, a *New York Times* reporter who has covered the American intelligence community for two decades, but also to the intense scrutiny that community has endured in the years since September 11, 2001. In fact, the CIA's conspicuously defensive stance is fully in keeping with its entire history.

Many attentive people may think that the CIA was vastly more successful and skillful in the 1950s and '60s than it has been over the past quarter-century, but Weiner proves otherwise in this impressively comprehensive history, which relies on more than 300 interviews with CIA officers and veterans as well as a sizable trove of recently declassified

material. Right from its creation in 1947, the CIA spawned one disaster after another: first sending literally "thousands of foreign agents to their deaths" in ill-planned efforts to insert anti-communists behind Soviet lines in the early years of the Cold War, then failing to foresee both the outbreak in 1950 of the Korean War and, soon after, a sudden Chinese onslaught across the China-Korea border that inflicted massive U.S. casualties. Not one of the 200 CIA officers stationed in Seoul during the war spoke Korean.

Agency-sponsored coups in 1953 and '54 that overthrew the governments of Iran and Guatemala are among the CIA's most storied exploits, but Weiner persuasively contends that neither adventure redounded to America's advantage because both countries quickly fell under the rule of repressive regimes. Nonetheless, the two coups "created the legend that the CIA was a silver bullet in the arsenal of democracy," Weiner writes. As former U.S. ambassador to South

### LEGACY OF ASHES:

The History of the CIA.

By Tim Weiner.  
Doubleday.  
702 pp. \$27.95

### SPYING BLIND:

The CIA, the FBI, and the Origins of 9/11.

By Amy B. Zegart.  
Princeton Univ. Press.  
317 pp. \$24.95

Korea Donald Gregg explained, “The agency had a terrible record in its early days—a great reputation and a terrible record.”

The 1961 Bay of Pigs fiasco, in which CIA-trained Cuban exiles botched an invasion of their homeland, revealed the agency’s ineptitude at its worst, and on October 4 the following year, at the onset of the Cuban Missile Crisis, “99 Soviet nuclear warheads came into Cuba undetected.” Those disasters did not dissuade John and Robert Kennedy from dispatching CIA covert operators hither and yon,

If the CIA’s covert paramilitary record was abysmal, its anti-Soviet espionage efforts were no better.

especially in other futile efforts to oust Fidel Castro, and in the aftermath of John Kennedy’s assassination the agency “hid much of what it

knew” about the Kennedys’ anti-Castro plots from new president Lyndon Johnson.

If the CIA’s covert paramilitary record was abysmal, its anti-Soviet espionage efforts were no better. “Over the whole course of the Cold War,” Weiner recounts, the agency “controlled precisely three agents who were able to provide secrets of lasting value on the Soviet military threat,” and all were exposed and executed as a result of sloppy tradecraft and Soviet penetrations of U.S. intelligence. The CIA could not duplicate our enemies’ success at infiltration: During the Vietnam War, for example, it failed to penetrate the North Vietnamese government in any fashion. And because it refused to deliver bad news to the Johnson White House, which had a pronounced distaste for such reports, the agency’s war analyses became politically debased.

Weiner does credit an atypical 1966 CIA report, *The Vietnamese Communists’ Will to Persist*, with greatly influencing Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara to turn away from rosy expectations of U.S. triumph in Vietnam. This is just one of many particulars related in

the book that belie the CIA’s charge that Weiner’s “bias overwhelms his scholarship.” But the politicization of the agency’s analytical reporting continued apace throughout the 1970s and ’80s, particularly in its wildly overstated estimates of Soviet economic strength and the size of Moscow’s nuclear arsenal.

The agency’s problems got even worse when William Casey took the reins under President Ronald Reagan in 1981. The Iran-Contra weapons-for-hostages scandal reflected what Weiner calls “a culture of deceit and self-deception at the CIA,” a disease that metastasized in the late 1980s and early ’90s, when the CIA knowingly passed to the White House reports whose sources were Moscow controlled but that it used nonetheless—and “deliberately concealed that fact.” The CIA had no advance clue whatsoever about the decline and implosion of the Soviet Union between 1989 and 1991, and the sudden end of the Cold War left the agency without a clear agenda for the following decade. It was embarrassingly slow to grasp the growing danger of Islamic terrorism. In the mid-1990s, Weiner reports, “a total of three people in the American intelligence community had the linguistic ability to understand excited Muslims talking to each other.”

*Legacy of Ashes* thus demonstrates that the two infamous intelligence tragedies of this decade—the failure to prevent the 9/11 attacks and the false reports of Iraqi biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons programs—were not idiosyncratic or exceptional errors. Instead, they were wholly in keeping with the CIA’s history. On Iraq, Weiner emphasizes, the CIA delivered bad information not for “political reasons” involving a desire to curry favor with Bush administration leaders, but because of sheer incompetence: “The CIA had based its conclusions on Iraqi biological weapons on one source,” an Iraqi defector bent on Saddam Hussein’s ouster, and its findings about chemical weapons on “misinterpreted pictures of Iraqi tanker trucks.” Contradictory infor-



President George W. Bush speaks at CIA headquarters alongside Porter Goss, the last CIA director to oversee the entire U.S. intelligence community. In 2004, Congress plucked that job from the agency and handed it to a new intelligence “czar.”

mation from a French intelligence source (Iraqi foreign minister Naji Sabri) “that Saddam did not have an active nuclear or biological weapons program” was brushed aside.

Reform efforts since 2001, including the creation of the post of “intelligence czar” for oversight of the nation’s 16 intelligence agencies (formerly a function of the CIA director), actually represent “continuity masquerading as change,” Weiner argues. Today, despite huge budget increases, the agency has “the weakest cadre of spies and analysts in the history of the CIA,” and many of its traditional clandestine activities have been usurped by the Pentagon, whose own intelligence capabilities have mushroomed since the 1991 Gulf War. In the years since, the agency has been downgraded to a “second-echelon field office for the Pentagon,” tasked with fulfilling Defense Department information requests.

But in another new book, Amy Zegart, a polit-

ical scientist at UCLA, argues that any meaningful improvement in U.S. intelligence coordination and effectiveness will require the president and Congress to take on the Defense Department rather than accede to its dominance. That would be no small job. So as to maintain the independence of the Defense Department’s intelligence operations, “Pentagon officials and their turf-conscious congressional supporters have been torpedoing intelligence reform forever,” Zegart bluntly complained in *The Washington Post* this summer.

*Spying Blind* is a thorough examination of those reform failures. In it, Zegart sifts through hundreds of intelligence recommendations in a dozen reports between 1991 and 2001, and findings by the 9/11 Commission and congressional committees in the years since. She concludes that not only was 9/11 insufficient “to jolt U.S. intelligence agencies out of their Cold

War past,” but also that “future adaptation—to terrorism or any other threat—is unlikely.” Her pessimism is rooted in both the military’s understandable desire to focus intelligence resources on short-term tactical needs, rather than long-term strategic analysis, and the Pentagon’s political stranglehold on reform efforts.

The 2004 law that created the so-called intelligence czar, Zegart explains, “triggered a scramble for turf that has left the secretary of defense with greater power, the director of national intelligence with little, and the intelligence community even more disjointed” than it was before 9/11. The new position simply adds one more bureaucratic layer to the existing multiplicity of separate entities. The government’s continuing inability to impose centralized management on the entire intelligence community, she believes, is “disastrous.”

Zegart deplores the consensus view that lays the failures of September 11 at the feet of individuals in both the CIA and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. If success and failure hung on individual leaders, she says, fixing intelligence agencies would be easy. The real causes of failure are organizational. For example, Zegart credits the FBI with realizing, before 9/11, that its internal information sharing and case coordination needed dramatic improvement. But, as she cogently recapitulates, the Bureau failed to act on clues

various agents had identified that pointed to the impending attacks.

Neither *Spying Blind* nor *Legacy of Ashes* devotes as much attention as it might to what, currently, is perhaps the most pressing and widely overlooked intelligence policy issue: the increasingly common outsourcing of thousands of traditional government jobs to private companies headed by recent retirees from the CIA and other agencies. (The *Spy Who Billed Me*, a blog by political scientist R. J. Hillhouse, is a most instructive source on this trend.) Weiner does remark that “patriotism for profit” has become such a growth industry that the CIA in effect has “two workforces,” and corporate employees are far better paid than public ones. “Jumping ship in the middle of a war to make a killing” is so appealing, he asserts, that the CIA faces “an ever-accelerating brain drain.”

If the privatization of government intelligence work is so grave a problem, congressional inquiry and prompt policy change appear imperative. Yet though *Legacy of Ashes* and *Spying Blind* demonstrate that the U.S. intelligence community remains embarrassingly substandard, both books also make plain that the chances for meaningful improvement are virtually nil.

DAVID J. GARROW is a senior fellow at Homerton College, Cambridge University, and the author of *The FBI and Martin Luther King Jr.* (1981), among other books.

## Was the Lady a Tramp?

Reviewed by Sarah L. Courteau

IT’S THE BAD GIRLS OF THE BIBLE WE REMEMBER best: the deceitful Eve, the perfidious Delilah, the ex-sinner Mary Magdalene. But it may be that none has lodged more firmly in the imaginations of Good Book readers than Jezebel, the idolatrous foreign queen who led the king of Israel astray and then got hers when she was thrown from her palace balcony by double-crossing eunuchs, trampled by

horses, and finally devoured by dogs.

Since this memorable cameo in the ninth century B.C., Jezebel’s name has become synonymous with wickedness and promiscuity, right down to the present day, when it attaches to a line of mid-priced lingerie and a recently launched blog that

### JEZEBEL:

The Untold Story of the Bible’s Harlot Queen.

By Lesley Hazleton.  
Doubleday.  
258 pp. \$24.95

flogs “Celebrity, Sex, Fashion. Without Airbrushing.” But the ignominy that trails the woman is undeserved, insists Lesley Hazleton. Rather, it’s the product of a smear by the ancient authors who told her story in the books of Kings. Hazleton, a one-time Middle East journalist and former psychologist, seeks not merely to rinse the mud off the old girl but to elevate her as a paragon of enlightenment and tolerance for the 21st century.

Jezebel’s story appears in 1 and 2 Kings, which tell the saga of the Israelite monarchy from its creation under David, through its division into Israel and Judah, to the eventual dissolution of those two kingdoms at the hands of mighty neighbors. The books of Kings—except for the postscript about Judah’s destruction—were likely written in the sixth century B.C., after Israel had recently fallen to the Assyrians and its southern neighbor, Judah, feared a similar fate at the hands of the Babylonians.

“It was the perfect time to write a polemical history,” Hazleton suggests, “one that would explain why the north had collapsed, and act as an object lesson for the south.” That lesson? Don’t worship false gods. The fall gal? Jezebel. Once Hazleton establishes this crude motive, she assigns Kings’ “Judean authors” the anonymity of a Greek chorus. Perhaps she is depending on her lengthy bibliography, which includes Richard Elliott Friedman’s landmark book *Who Wrote the Bible?* (1987), to fill in the gaps. (Friedman fingers the prophet Jeremiah and his scribe as Kings’ chauvinistic storytellers; other scholars point only to Mosaic reformers.)

Hazleton pieces together her entertaining version of Jezebel’s story with reportage from biblical locales, close readings of the Hebrew, bits of history, and asides about everything from the myths surrounding sacred prostitution to how dogs have been regarded in the Middle East through time. Interspersed are imagined scenes from Jezebel’s life that rely on considerable invention, but the poverty of Hazleton’s materials doesn’t faze her. She attacks the project with the interpretive certitude necessary to contradict

everything we think we know about the painted lady who spurred Israel’s downfall and was the prototype for the Whore of Babylon in the book of Revelation.

The account of Jezebel’s three decades in Israel is related disjointedly in several passages scattered throughout Kings. Married off by her father, a king of the seafaring Phoenicians, to the successful Israelite warrior-king Ahab—likely in order to reinforce a political alliance—Jezebel showed up in the land of Yahweh with a raft of deities. Instead of forcing her to abandon this retinue, her new husband built a temple for Baal (a biblical catchall name for several gods), made a symbol of Asherah (a variation on Jezebel’s fertility goddess, Astarte), and allowed Jezebel to import several hundred priests and priestesses.

Elijah, the Israelite prophet, enraged at this open idolatry, pronounced a curse: no rain. Three years into a devastating drought, he issued a challenge: He and the Baalite priests would prepare



Queen Jezebel met her end when she was thrown to the dogs, but history was hardly through with her.

separate offerings on Mount Carmel, then see whose god struck a match. Elijah triumphed when fire—a bolt of lightning, Hazleton presumes—consumed his altar. He led the slaughter of the loser Baalites, brought rain to Israel, and skipped all the way back to the city in front of Ahab's chariot. Whereupon Jezebel threatened to kill him, and he fled south to Judah.

Hazleton's story, to this point, mostly elaborates on the Bible account. From the Mount Carmel episode onward, she begins to dispute the Kings story, for it reflects badly on her heroine. Jezebel, in her eyes, embodies liberalism, tolerance, and political pragmatism. Hazleton's chief evidence for this characterization appears to be Jezebel's polytheism, though why worshipping more than one god means one plays nice with others Hazleton never explains. The revered prophet Elijah, a wilderness dweller, is the true villain—and nemesis to the cosmopolitan Jezebel, though Kings doesn't indicate that they ever met face to face. For his monotheism, Hazleton labels Elijah a fanatic ideologue, and even his hygiene comes in for a drubbing.

Hazleton has her work cut out for her if she's to thoroughly redeem Jezebel. The queen's sexual depravity, which has been received as gospel, is easy enough to refute. There's no evidence that she seduced anyone—including her own husband—with come-hither glances. Even the Kings writers who had it in for her never hint at promiscuity; her harlotry was idol worship.

But Jezebel did have blood on her hands. According to the Kings account, during those dry years she ordered Yahweh's priests killed. This massacre, oddly, is mentioned almost in passing. But it's there nonetheless. And so Hazleton argues from her own conclusion. When 1 Kings 18:4 says Jezebel "cut off" the priests, it means she merely ended official support, and the line nine verses later that says she slew them outright was a late edit by another agenda-pushing scribe. "Such an act would have been both self-defeating and out of character," Hazleton sniffs. (Apparently, banishing hundreds of priests and severing their livelihoods was not.)

And so it goes. Hazleton dismisses as a fabrication Jezebel's clumsy yet successful scheme to do away with Naboth, the owner of a vineyard Ahab covets. "Jezebel would have been infuriated at the very idea that such ridiculous overplotting could be attributed to her." Nevertheless, according to Kings, it sealed the fate of both Ahab and Jezebel, whose deaths Elijah then predicted in bloody detail.

Once Ahab (in Hazleton's depiction, a peace-loving diplomatist who only fought when he had to) died in battle, two of Jezebel's sons ruled in succession. But a new king, Jehu, was secretly anointed and killed the son then on the throne. When Jezebel heard that Jehu was heading her way next, according to Kings, "She painted her eyes, and adorned her head, and looked out of the window." This has been portrayed by some as a seduction attempt, but Hazleton steps in and, convincingly, explains the moment in Jezebel's favor: "She will not quaver, will not buckle at the knees, will never dream of pleading for her life. . . . She will exit boldly, every inch a queen." Instead, the dogs get their dinner.

As if Hazleton's attempt to rescue Jezebel from the Kings writers' calumnies weren't ambitious enough, she's also intent on drawing meaningful modern parallels. Fortunately, she confines these to a few short passages. Today's Elijahs are religious hard-liners of all stripes, but "radical Islam" gets the most ink. She compares Elijah's mindset toward errant Israel to that of top Al Qaeda lieutenant Ayman al-Zawahiri, who has advocated "internal jihad," and she insists on calling Elijah's prediction of Jezebel's death by dogs a "fatwa." These tenuous analogies are stretched to breaking when she describes the antithesis of blind zealotry as "the true spirit of Jezebel." Despite Hazleton's earnest attempt to make Jezebel over into a model of tolerance, the phrase is hardly reassuring.

Retellings such as *Jezebel* are the vogue, and Hazleton has made them her specialty. In *Mary: A Flesh-and-Blood Biography of the Virgin Mother* (2004), she did a kind of sinner-to-saint portrait in reverse, conjecturing that Mary could

have conceived Jesus when she was raped by soldiers, and portraying her as a midwife and member of the resistance against King Herod. *Jezebel* is more akin to *Wicked*—the novel by Gregory Maguire adapted into a hugely successful Broadway musical—which presents the *Wizard of Oz*'s Wicked Witch of the West as a sadly misunderstood character, a feisty young feminist born with green skin.

*Jezebel*, too, is best read as a fairy tale—one that riffs on lively historical material. That's not to say that Hazleton's reconsideration isn't valuable. For nearly 3,000 years, conceptions of

Jezebel have fossilized around the bones of her story in Kings. In filling in the blanks, Hazleton reminds us how little we really know of Jezebel, and of so many other biblical characters who have become mere articles of faith. Perhaps Jezebel was just a misunderstood foreigner. Perhaps, when she was bad, she really was horrid. But to imagine her, as Hazleton does, as a teenage bride homesick for the smell of the sea, is to extend to her, for a moment, the grace that history has not.

SARAH L. COURTEAU is literary editor of *The Wilson Quarterly*.

## Music Recital

Reviewed by Jan Swafford

Over the past decade, *New Yorker* music critic Alex Ross has established himself as one of our most talented practitioners of the art of the feuilleton, the popular journal piece. He thereby carries on a great tradition of musical writers including Hector Berlioz, Claude Debussy, and George Bernard Shaw. Now, for the



Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951)

first time, Ross has turned his feuilletonist's sensibility to a longer form, the book, and he's made a terrific debut on the big stage.

*The Rest Is Noise* aspires to present "the 20th century heard through its music." The book is a series of sweeping set pieces, held together by recurring characters and themes—such as the promiscuous adventures of a few notes from Richard Strauss's *Salome* that were nicked by several other composers. Each chapter tells the story of a period or train of thought and centers on the main composers of the time. We start with Strauss and the fin de siècle; tour the century's tonalists and atonalists (those who used traditional scales and chords, and those who didn't); are introduced to Americans, from Charles Ives and Aaron Copland through the contemporary music organization Bang on a Can; and observe the fraught careers of composers under Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler. Rather than present composers in biographical blocks, Ross has them come and go in the passing parade, turning up in different chapters and settings: Igor Stravinsky in Paris and later in

### THE REST IS NOISE:

Listening to the Twentieth Century.

By Alex Ross. Farrar, Straus. 640 pp. \$30

America, Arnold Schoenberg in Vienna and America. (So many of the greats came here to die.)

Does the book succeed as a history of the 20th century told through its music? To a degree, though most of the text focuses on classical music and composers rather than social and political matters. There's relatively little on popular music and jazz, but Duke Ellington and crossover types such as Kurt Weill and the minimalists get their

Arnold Schoenberg, Igor Stravinsky, and Béla Bartók wrote powerful and influential music, and also form a spectrum of musical possibilities.

due. Ross, however, does something equally worthwhile: He weaves classical music deeply into the fabric of life and culture.

The book tells a compelling, epic, and entirely human story. It's a scholarly work, with a formidable train of endnotes, but it doesn't read that way. Ross is the rare author who knows his stuff technically but can write about it for everybody. His prose is lucid and engaging, and he has a particular gift for conjuring the sound and ef-



Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971)

fect of music. Often, he manages to be analytical and evocative at the same time. In Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*, for example, "the crawling sextuplet figures in the winds and the ghoulishly bouncing string figures in the Introduction come from Debussy's *Nocturnes*."

For a critic, Ross goes light on judgment. Abstaining from the brilliant snarkery of his *New Yorker* colleague, the movie critic Anthony Lane, Ross is less an enthusiast or finger shaker than a first-rate reporter. Here and there he calls something a "masterpiece" in passing, but he doesn't get too excited about it. All the same, a personal pantheon shows through. The long-standing critical consensus is that the Big Three of Modernist music are Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Béla Bartók, to which we can add the cult figure Anton Webern. These men wrote powerful and influential music, and they also form a spectrum of musical possibilities: Schoenberg, the often dissonant and forbidding atonalist; Stravinsky, who started as a Russian Romantic, turned neo-primitive, turned neoclassicist, and finally took up Schoenberg's technique after that rival was safely dead; Bartók, with his Hungarian folk accent and a style that embraced consonance and dissonance, tonality and atonality; and Webern, who made Schoenberg's 12-tone system more systematic still.

Instead, judging from the space devoted to them and the warmer prose they elicit, the heroes of Ross's book are Dmitri Shostakovich, Jean Sibelius, and Benjamin Britten. These three are more tonal and more backward looking, each in his distinctive style, than the other trinity (except Stravinsky in his neoclassical phase). Ross can wax downright rhapsodic about these composers, as when he writes of Sibelius's *Fifth Symphony*, "The swan hymn transcends the depiction of nature; it is like a spiritual force in animal form." Meanwhile, he repeatedly identifies Schoenberg and his pupils Webern and Alban Berg with the demonic atonalist composer Adrian Leverkühn in Thomas Mann's novel *Doctor Faustus*, who proposes to "take back" Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* once and for all. The association is oblique, but

Ross's apparent intention is to paint the traditional trinity with a tincture of the unholy.

This realignment of the usual 20th-century pantheon, tacit though it is, may raise some eyebrows. But it's a fresh and interesting way to examine the era while highlighting great composers who bucked the historical trends. Besides, if Ross presents some of the traditional big guns in a cloud of sulfur, he is still informative and astute when he discusses them. The Schoenbergian 12-tone row (a pattern of the 12 notes of the chromatic scale used as the basis for the harmony and melody of a whole piece) is central to much atonal music, and Ross efficiently shows us how it works.

And in his biographies, he brings to the job a fine-tuned skepticism toward the kind of propaganda that artists are apt to dispense about themselves. For example, he's not snookered by Schoenberg's protests that he's simply a good old Beethoven/Brahms traditionalist, whose music you should whistle in the shower. The book presents Schoenberg as the revolutionist he was, and provides horse's-mouth quotes to support the characterization. For instance, the composer once wrote in a letter that he strove for "complete liberation from all forms, from all symbols of cohesion and of logic."

Ross shows less interest in *why* Schoenberg obfuscated his agenda in public. He was indeed steeped in tradition, more so as he aged, and he had no intention of overthrowing the past—though he did intend to overthrow the tonal system, and in private said so. Still, his career confirms the truth of the old quip, "Even paranoids have enemies." I suspect that Schoenberg portrayed himself as a traditionalist partly to dodge the blows of his enemies—and who can blame him?

In his treatment of the composers who seem to move him most, Ross looks beyond the surface of their music to examine influences, inspirations, and mortal threats. Shostakovich is a case in point. Of all the musicians who witnessed the twin holocausts of the midcentury, Hitler's and Stalin's, Shostakovich was the composer with the most tal-



Béla Bartók (1881–1945)

ent and the most passion, and he had an abiding empathy with Jewish suffering. He bears an irreplaceable musical witness to the horrors of his time. The man who went through the war in Russia, who in the Stalin era watched so many friends disappear, who endured decades waiting for the knock on his own door, understood in his guts what he was talking about. Listening to the final Shostakovich string quartet is like stumbling on a pile of bones in a forest.

Most of the time, though, Ross confines himself to evoking the experience of hearing pieces rather than, say, the voluptuous malaise of the *fin de siècle*, or the social and spiritual ideals behind atonal music. He attaches the usual label "visionary" to Ives but doesn't quite explain what the vision was. Nor does he present a grand unified theory of Modernism. (Given the labyrinth of crosscurrents in all the arts of the century, that may be wise.) Fortunately, Ross is a deft painter of musical surfaces, and a fine turner of phrase. On the American composer who first used the element of the unpredictable in his pieces, "It was [Morton]

Feldman who set loose the imp of chance.” Only once in a while does a phrase run off the tracks, as when, in a Bartók finale, “Brass play secular chorales, as if seated on the dented steps of a tilting little church.”

Even in the riveting chapter dealing with Soviet music under Stalin, Ross’s prose and point of view remain at a certain remove, though he aptly portrays an era when writing funny chords or obscure sonnets could earn you a bullet in the head, and the humiliation of artists was a state concern at the highest level. Ross lets Shostakovich get exercised in his own words, recounting the composer’s anguish when in 1948 he was forced to recite a public apology for “decadent formalism” or one of the other aesthetic capital crimes: “I read like the most paltry wretch, a parasite, a puppet, a cut-out paper doll on a string!”

Ross has keen antennae for ironies: the Central Intelligence Agency secretly funded an avant-garde music series; Broadway show-tune writer Stephen Sondheim studied with 12-tone high priest Milton Babbitt (who himself wrote a musical comedy—unproduced); in Hollywood, Schoenberg was friends with George Gershwin

and Harpo Marx. Recalling a more deadly irony, Ross reminds us that Stalin and Hitler were unusual politicians in that they were passionate and knowledgeable about the arts. This is the reason they felt obliged to murder so many artists. The weary conclusion to draw, I suppose, is that when modern rulers seriously turn their attention to the arts, artists better run.

*The Rest Is Noise* commits some sins of omission and commission, but this is a book concerned with the big picture. In that it’s a splendid success, thorough and well researched, eminently readable, with a sense of storytelling hard to find in books of music history. Seven years into a new century, it’s time to start toting up the last one, and Alex Ross has proved himself the right person to provide some perspective on this “abundant, benighted” era. He consistently connects classical music to the life of creators and of cultures, and so conveys as few writers do the human reality of the music. As Charles Ives put it, “Music is life.”

JAN SWAFFORD is a composer and writer living in Massachusetts. He teaches composition, theory, and musicology at The Boston Conservatory, and is author of *The Vintage Guide to Classical Music* (1992), *Charles Ives: A Life With Music* (1996), and *Johannes Brahms: A Biography* (1999).

## IN BRIEF

### ARTS & LETTERS

## Drawing an Audience

COMICS LOST MOST BOYISH READERS TO video games and MTV decades ago. Since then, the audience for comics has consisted primarily of college-to-middle-aged males interested in tales about grown men punching each other. But that readership is broadening to include women, children, and other Johnny-come-lately fans, thanks to a wave of movie adaptations (*Sin City*, *Ghost World*) and award-winning books (*Perse-*

*polis*, *Fun Home*). These readers are less interested in Snoopy than in psychologically realistic stories, and are less captivated by episodic superhero yarns than by book-length literary comics—graphic novels.

To find its bearings, this new audience may seek a critic’s handholding and a greatest-hits anthology, available, respectively, in Douglas

### READING COMICS: How Graphic Novels Work and What They Mean.

Douglas Wolk. *Da Capo Press*. 405 pp. \$22.95

### AN ANTHOLOGY OF GRAPHIC FICTION, CARTOONS, AND TRUE STORIES.

Edited by Ivan Brunetti.  
*Yale Univ. Press*.  
400 pp. \$28



*Maus*, Art Spiegelman's graphic novel about his father's Holocaust experiences, renders in black and white a story of complex grays.

Wolk's essays and Ivan Brunetti's collection of American alternative comics. Alternative comics, a comic-book genre roughly analogous to independent films, have been gaining popularity since Art Spiegelman published the first volume of *Maus* in 1986. A memoir about how Spiegelman's father survived Auschwitz, *Maus* showed that comic books could handle weighty themes as well as literature could.

Great comics—such as *Maus*, which depicts the Jews as mice and the Germans as cats—can wake us from the way we habitually see the world. This is because the artist's style itself can suggest an entire worldview. Frank Miller, on whose work the movies *Sin City* and *300* are based, produces slats of rain that are, in Wolk's description, "cruel, freezing splinters of ink and light." Chester Brown, author of the blackly humorous series *Ed the Happy Clown*, draws with "a poker-faced, almost ascetic approach, with the tone of an eccentric but very patient explanation."

While a work of literary fiction may succeed by executing certain conventions beautifully, the thrills comic books offer derive from their curious imperfections. Wolk, a music writer, presents comics as kitsch pop-cultural products. His book, part history and part commentary, sometimes reads less like a critical treatise than like anthropological field notes from a comic-book convention. He frequently comes off as a fan rather than a critic, but he does provide a kind of surrogate adolescence spent in dank shops stocked with trading

cards of naked warrior-princesses and coffin-like boxes of *X-Men* back issues.

To enjoy reading comics, Wolk suggests, you must appreciate the medium's offensive surprises, flagrant silliness, bad exclamatory writing, and burps of onomatopoeia. His collection includes discussions of comic-book authors such as Grant Morrison, a psychedelic genius who has claimed that aliens abducted him in Kathmandu. Similarly, cartoonist Brunetti's anthology includes many countercultural artists whose aesthetic resembles that of his own main work, a misanthropic comics series called *Schizo* that depicts the author stabbing himself in the eye and beheading and raping the planet Earth.

The last half of Brunetti's book, however, includes artists of a more literary bent, such as Daniel Clowes and Chris Ware. This gives the collection as a whole the feel of a bildungsroman, gradually increasing in maturity and sophistication as it moves toward the end.

What if this sophistication represents a threat to the genre rather than a natural evolution? Because comics traditionally have been a pulp medium, they've been able to portray the world with a liberating strangeness, unconstrained by taste or codified literary standards. The effort to reach a mainstream audience may accomplish what no supervillain ever could: It may gentrify the comic book.

Take, as an example, Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home*, a graphic novel-memoir recounting the

author's relationship with her father, a closeted gay man. *The New York Times* named it a notable book of 2006. The tale, which is not dissimilar from a heavy-handed *New Yorker* short story, caters to the taste of readers who wouldn't otherwise like comics. While great comic artists, like great painters and filmmakers, enrich their medium with a paradigmatic visual style, Bechdel's stiff illustrations merely reiterate the text. It's a comic book with closed-captioning. Brunetti's anthology, in contrast, shows how visually sophisticated the strangest American comics can be.

—Ken Chen

## The Cold Eye

IN SEPTEMBER 2001, WHEN the call went forth to chasten the ironic impulse in American life, it seemed, well, rather ironic. The nation had been

### CHIC IRONIC BITTERNESS.

By R. Jay Magill Jr.  
Univ. of Michigan Press.  
273 pp. \$25.95

attacked by apocalyptic fundamentalists, and media commentators were blaming the likes of Jerry Seinfeld and Bart Simpson. *Time* essayist Roger Rosenblatt wrote, "The ironists, seeing through everything, made it difficult for anyone to see anything. The consequence of thinking that nothing is real . . . is that one will not know the difference between a joke and a menace." *Vanity Fair* editor Graydon Carter predicted "the end of the age of irony."

Six years on, such pious prescriptions have proven "disastrous," in the view of R. Jay Magill Jr., a writer and illustrator and the former executive editor of *DoubleTake* magazine. If our political leaders had spiked their worldview with a dose of irony after 9/11, perhaps they'd have sensed blunders in the making. How ironic, then, is a war on terror that produces more terrorists. Or U.S. officials' depriving people of rights and liberties to prove that America is a bulwark of democracy.

In fact, it's the "critical tool" of irony that can help address the societal ills for which irony is often blamed: selfishness, civic apathy, hypocrisy, self-absorption, the loss of "our sense of proportion and self-restraint and humility." Magill's "big,

happy irony family"—which encompasses the ways we "express intentions through language [that] are frequently askew of their literal meaning"—includes satire, so formidable in its power to scold while also amuse.

Magill draws a vital line between the thoughtful ironist and the sarcastic slacker. And he places the ironic citizen at odds not only with the religious conservative, but also with the cynic, who assumes the world is hopelessly "brutish" and who "has given up entirely on performing a social role." (The book's title plays off philosopher Peter Sloterdijk's observation that "chic bitterness" is the favored style of cynics just out for themselves.)

The ironist, by contrast, believes that society can be improved. To be effective, though, this reformer must remain true to self, shielded from phoniness by ironic detachment. As essayist Randolph Bourne wrote in 1913, "The ironist is ironical not because he does not care, but because he cares too much."

The mutual distrust between people who are ironic and people who are not is at least as old as Socrates, whose pretense to ignorance for the sake of revealing truth offended the forthright Aristotle. Magill deftly traces the evolution of intellectual thought about irony, parsing Kierkegaard, Hegel, Nietzsche, and others, and he mulls the achievements of some of the great practitioners of our day, including the ultra-self-reflexive author Dave Eggers and Stephen Colbert, creator of a pompous television alter ego. (Very little is said, though, about how blacks, Native Americans, and others have refined ironic humor to cope with injustice and skewer their oppressors.)

Magill does chronicle how both sensibilities—the one that seeks godly certitude, and the other that tweaks it—have been woven into America's intellectual DNA from the beginning. One grandson of the great colonial fire-and-brimstone preacher Jonathan Edwards was Timothy Dwight, a gifted political satirist. Two centuries before *The Onion* began publication, Philip Freneau was zinging Federalists with his own hilarious fake news stories. The ironic tradition

has been passed from Washington Irving to Mark Twain to Jon Stewart, and Magill declares, "Satire is again serious business."

But as Christopher Lasch noted two decades ago, the ironic stance is more defensive than proactive. It's the natural crouch of a person bombarded with lies in an over-commercialized public realm. If irony is hot again, does this signal that Magill's ideal ironists are on the march, their imaginations revved for political reform? Or has irony become merely a personal style of coping? What does it mean if everyone is in on the joke, but the joke is still on us?

—David Beers

## HISTORY

# A Road Trip Through History

IN THE YEAR BEFORE THE millennium, Dutch journalist Geert Mak traveled through Europe in a small van furnished with a mattress and a hotplate, on one of the world's most thoroughly depressing journeys. His lively yet erudite account of the continent's preceding century of wars, genocides, and gulags, and of its subsequent recovery, originally published in daily installments in the pages of Holland's *NRC Handelsblad* newspaper, has become a bestseller across Europe.

The chapter titles trace Mak's itinerary of grief and misery. He commemorates World War I at Ypres, Verdun, and Versailles, and World War II at Dunkirk, St. Petersburg, Vichy, Stalingrad, Monte Cassino, Dresden, and Auschwitz. To mark the 20-year truce between those two wars against German ambition he visits Guernica, Mussolini's birthplace at Predappio, Hitler's holiday spot in Berchtesgaden, and Winston Churchill's country house at Chartwell. At each stop Mak digs up historical documents, conducts interviews, and makes his own shrewd observations, producing a rumination that blends diary,

### IN EUROPE:

*Travels Through the Twentieth Century.*

By Geert Mak. Translated by Sam Garrett. Pantheon. 876 pp. \$35

travelogue, and popular history.

In recalling the Cold War, Mak unaccountably avoids Yalta, scene of the 1945 meeting of Churchill, Joseph Stalin, and Franklin Roosevelt, where the contours of postwar Europe began to congeal. Instead, he visits the scenes of the three doomed revolts against Soviet domination—East Berlin in 1953, Budapest in 1956, and Prague in 1968—and then the Gdansk shipyards, site of the Polish Solidarity movement's formation, with happier results, in 1980. Then on to Chernobyl and Srebrenica and Sarajevo, where the history of Europe's suicidal 20th century comes full circle. In one of those coincidences too remarkable for anything but real life, the century of Euro-

pean disaster that began with the assassination of the Austrian archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914 ended in the 1990s with the Serbs' dreadful siege of that same city.

In the intervening years, Europe had changed beyond recognition. "European unification was—and is—above all a unique peace process," Mak writes. More than that, it has become an economic miracle, spreading prosperity along with peace wherever the paternalistic arm of the European Union bureaucracy may reach. In his travels of 1999, Mak was struck by the poverty of much of Eastern Europe as it underwent the transition from communist inefficiency. Seven years of growth later, the old Warsaw Pact lands are enjoying a boom. Having joined the European Union with a per capita income that was less than a third the EU average, these countries have incomes now above 60 percent of the average and rising fast.

In fact, today's Europeans live rather well. "Europe still cannot hold a candle to the dynamism, flexibility, and energy of American society," Mak notes, "but when it comes to quality of life the average citizen of the Old World—particularly its western regions—has quietly left his

A Dutch journalist gives a lively yet erudite account of Europe's 20th-century wars, genocides, and gulags, and of its subsequent recovery.

American cousin in the dust.” Citing such yardsticks as life expectancy, vacation time, social security and retirement, public health, and transportation, he concludes that America “is no longer Europe’s shining example.”

But Mak’s review of Europe’s self-inflicted disasters leaves him nervous about the future. He cites the forebodings of veteran Luxembourg premier Jean-Claude Juncker, who mourns the way the British, the French, and others have managed to block the EU from becoming a single federal superstate. “I don’t think the generation after us will be able to put together all those national biographies in such a way that the EU will not be split back into its national components—with all the dangers that entails,” Juncker has said. And in much of Europe, Mak fears, democracy is “a fairly recent phenomenon and hardly to be taken for granted.” Further, “there is no European people. There is no single all-embracing community of culture and tradition that binds together . . . the Northern-Protestant, the Latin-Catholic, the Greek-Orthodox, and Muslim-Ottoman.”

And so Mak returns us to the importance of Sarajevo. Europe proved incapable of resolving the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s; once again, the United States had to intervene to settle a European war. And instead of signaling an end to wars of European nationalism, the siege of now predominantly Muslim Sarajevo from 1992 to 1996 may have been the opening salvo of a new confrontation between traditionally Christian Europe and the surging rival faith of Islam. As Mak reports, today the most popular name for newborn boys in Amsterdam, his hometown, is Mohammed.

—Martin Walker

## Hide and Seek

SHORTLY AFTER CLASSES started this year, tag was banned from yet another playground, this one at an elementary school in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Chasing offended some sensibilities. In

defending the decision, an administrator noted that only two parents had raised objections to the new rule. At a time when children’s play seems under siege, Howard Chudacoff’s history—the first of its kind—arrives to tell us what we are letting slip away.

“Children have always cultivated their own underground of unstructured and self-structured play, which they did not often talk about with adults,” says Chudacoff, a history professor at Brown. To peek into this private world, he has consulted dozens of diaries written by children, both historical and contemporary. Even in the Puritan America of the 1600s, when play was considered “the devil’s workshop,” children slipped off and chased each other in the woods.

But for the past several decades play has been “colonized” by adults, who now firmly prefer indoor environments for their children or, if they must play outdoors, structured, supervised activities—think Little League, founded in 1939. It’s a travesty, Chudacoff suggests, to call “play” a pursuit in which adults push kids as young as eight to train so hard that they develop the overuse injuries found, until recently, only in professional athletes well along in their careers.

The “sheltered-child model” of childhood isn’t new. As the urban middle class started to grow in the mid-19th century, so did the idea that children’s physical and emotional development should occur in a protected environment. In the 20th century, the idea gathered force through the writings of John Dewey and Sigmund Freud and the explosive growth of the toy industry, which today grosses \$25 billion a year. But it was the onset of the polio epidemic in the early 1950s, Chudacoff says, that ushered in the age of hyper-vigilance. From then on, “professionals fixated on safeguarding youngsters from every possible hazard,” both real and imagined.

Probably because children not so long ago did enjoy unstructured and improvised play, the mere mention of the word tends to conjure sweet memories of childhood among adults. Not in Chudacoff. He is constantly wiping sentimental-

### CHILDREN AT PLAY: An American History.

By Howard P. Chudacoff.  
New York Univ. Press.  
269 pp. \$27.95



*Snap the Whip* (1872), by Winslow Homer

ity off the spectacles of those writers—from Edward Everett Hale to Annie Dillard to ordinary mortals—whose descriptions of their own childhoods in letters, autobiographies, and diaries he draws on. While Dillard describes halcyon days when her parents fostered her talents and supervised her activities, she also writes that there were times when they did not “get involved with my detective work, nor hear about my reading, nor inquire about my homework.” Dillard may emphasize her parents’ nurturing, but “her freedom to pursue her own curiosity was undoubtedly achieved by escaping the ‘supervised hours,’” Chudacoff drily notes.

The beauty of genuine play is that it reflects the world as kids—rather than adults—see it. Through play, children not only develop their own culture but learn what they can and can’t do by taking risks. This, neuroscientists and other researchers tell us, is what helps prepare children for adulthood. Play fosters decision making, memory and thinking, speed and flexibility of mental processing. Play makes brains nimble, capable of adapting to a rapidly evolving world.

Yet play is the very thing that today’s adults sacrifice to their anxieties about their children’s

futures. It’s their own emotional need, however, that parents are heeding when they overprotect their children even as they push them to the point of injury on the ball field: success, success, success. Chudacoff finds particularly worrisome children’s seeming acceptance of these adult incursions on their autonomy, when kids before them were never so complacent.

But he’s too smart to be entirely bleak. Yes, today the very important underground of children’s play—removed from watchful adult eyes—is rare outdoors and seldom involves spontaneous groups of neighborhood kids and schoolmates. But it can be found indoors—mostly in kids’ engagement with video and computer games. Adults rail about video games to the extent that the grownups haven’t managed to completely domesticate children’s play. “In their seclusion, children are partaking of a kind of autonomy, one that consumer society has expanded for them,” Chudacoff writes.

His history demonstrates that the topic of play is anything but trivial. And by showing us where we’ve been, he can help us decide where, as a culture, we want to go.

—Hara Estroff Marano

## American Black Sheep

AARON BURR—GRANDSON of the preacher Jonathan Edwards, distinguished veteran of the War for Independence, and our third vice president—was one of the United States' great villains, an American Napoleon whose ambition knew no bounds, a lady-thrilling Lothario, a modern Catiline who plotted against the Republic.

Such, at least, was the popular reputation of the man among his contemporaries, and it's the view that has endured to this day. But,

Historian Nancy Isenberg says that "everything we think we know about Aaron Burr is untrue."

writes University of Tulsa historian Nancy Isenberg, "everything we think we know about Aaron Burr is untrue."

Even granting the author some dramatic license, that's a provocative statement. Isenberg describes Burr's rise—from an ambitious young New York lawyer and assemblyman to state attorney general to U.S. senator to vice president—with an eye toward *Making a Point*. What results is a mix of great biography and special pleading.

To take the special pleading first, flip to the event for which Burr (1756–1836) is best remembered. On the morning of July 11, 1804, Burr and former Treasury secretary Alexander Hamilton exchanged gunfire in Weehawken, New Jersey. Burr had challenged Hamilton to a duel in response to defamatory remarks by Hamilton that a third party passed on to a newspaper, and had refused to settle for Hamilton's half-apologies. Hamilton missed by a mile; Burr did not miss.

Isenberg says that Hamilton may have fired first (most historians say otherwise), that he meant to discharge his weapon, and that to the very end he was minding his reputation (he converted to Episcopalianism on

his deathbed and was eulogized as a religious man). That Hamilton had made a show of adjusting his pistol and donning his spectacles before the duel Isenberg trots out as evidence to rebuff "modern historians who see Burr as the aggressor."

But those historians have a good point. Burr was angry at Hamilton for working to deprive him of the presidency. In the election of 1800, Burr received the same number of Electoral College votes as his running mate, Thomas Jefferson, and it fell to the House of Representatives to sort out the mess. (The hastily ratified Twelfth Amendment ensured that this would never happen again.) In part due to Hamilton's lobbying efforts, Jefferson became president. When Jefferson dropped Burr from the ticket for his 1804 reelection campaign, Burr ran unsuccessfully for governor of New York, with Hamilton again working against him behind the scenes. Burr's resentment ran deep.

After Hamilton's death, Burr escaped trial for murder and served out the remainder of his vice-presidential term. He presided over the impeachment proceedings against Supreme Court justice Samuel Chase with distinction, and delivered a farewell address to the Senate so touching that there was "a solemn and silent weeping for perhaps five minutes" after he finished.

Burr then moved west to establish a settlement in the Louisiana Territory whose inhabitants would double as a private army. War between America and Spain appeared likely; Burr and his men would invade and conquer Mexico so that it could be annexed to the United States. But political opponents feared that instead he wanted to found his own breakaway empire. He was soon arrested and put on trial for treason.

Isenberg's determination to vindicate Burr pays dividends in the courtroom drama. She puts readers in the jury box and walks them through the twists and turns of the legal battles. The government did an awful job of

### FALLEN FOUNDER:

The Life of  
Aaron Burr.

By Nancy Isenberg.  
Viking. 540 pp. \$29.95

making its case, and Burr's team calmly but forcefully tore it apart. Reasonable doubt? Of course.

However, in passages about the trial and Burr's postacquittal exile in Europe, where he moved to escape creditors and political adversaries, alert readers will get the sense that he was up to something more. Burr did speak of western secession, at least in general terms. And while in Paris, he asked Napoleon to give him a few frigates to challenge the Spanish in North America—using Florida as his base of operations.

Does that make him a traitor? No. But it does raise old suspicions anew, and that's not all to the bad. Isenberg, for all her attention to the public's perceptions of Burr, doesn't seem to get that his villainy is the chief reason we find him so fascinating.

—Jeremy Lott

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### Animal Needs

HUMAN BEINGS HAVE always relied on plants and animals for survival, but only recently have many plants and animals begun to rely on us for theirs. Perhaps no creature exemplifies this biological role reversal better than the American buffalo.

In *A Buffalo in the House*, R. D. Rosen uses the story of one buffalo's entry into the home and hearts of a southwestern couple to illustrate the current plight of wild bison. Sculptor Veryl Goodnight needs a buffalo calf to serve as a model for a piece memorializing her ancestors' role in the survival of bison. Her husband, Roger Brooks, a retired commercial airline pilot who flew secret missions for the CIA in the 1960s, needs something more than the occasional competitive soccer game to occupy his time. And an orphaned buffalo calf needs a mother.

**A BUFFALO IN THE HOUSE:**  
The True Story of a Man, an Animal, and the American West.

By R. D. Rosen. New Press. 242 pp. \$24.95

So Veryl and Roger fly to Idaho from their ranch on the outskirts of Santa Fe to collect Charlie, whom they name after cattleman Charles Goodnight, Veryl's great-great uncle, who helped save bison from the brink of extinction at the turn of the 20th century. Charlie lives in the couple's house until he reaches 400 pounds, and Roger spends many hours walking and playing with him. Months later, when Roger takes him to a ranch to live with other buffalo, Charlie has trouble adapting and injures himself running headfirst into a fence. Using the story of Charlie's subsequent struggle for survival as a framework, Rosen recounts the tragedy of North America's heaviest land mammal.

Bison, which are native only to North America, once numbered between 30 and 40 million in the United States and played a key role in the ecology of the Great Plains. Yet over the course of a few decades, they were nearly annihilated. By the 1830s, buffalo were virtually eliminated from the East Coast, and by the 1840s they were mostly gone from the American West. The only substantial population left roamed the Great Plains.

The re-introduction of the horse to America, improved firearms, the completion of the transcontinental railroad, and the wrath of cattle ranchers intent on protecting grazing lands all contributed to the decimation of the buffalo. And it was their misfortune that they supplied the Plains Indians with food, clothing, and shelter, making them targets for



*Buffalo Bull, Grazing on the Prairie (1832–33), by George Catlin*

wholesale extermination by those who wished to exterminate the Indians as well. Though Meriwether Lewis had recalled seeing “innumerable herds” less than a century earlier, by the late 1880s the American buffalo was almost extinct.

More than 250,000 buffalo exist in the United States today, but only an estimated 15,000 of them live in the wild. The largest wild herd, of about 4,000, is in Yellowstone National Park, but even these animals are routinely killed by state and federal authorities, most frequently because they wander out of the park and onto grazing lands designated for cattle.

*A Buffalo in the House* provides an engaging history of the species and alerts readers to their current precarious existence in the wild. But the central story of Charlie and his family isn’t captivating enough to sustain a book-length narrative. Much about the daily interactions between Charlie and his keepers was passed on to Rosen secondhand, and some of the drama that he saw in this story “about the outer limits of human friendship with a wild animal” is lost in his retelling.

Nevertheless, Charlie’s short life highlights the fraught relationship between humans and wildlife. Roger Brooks allowed a wild buffalo to live in his house because he loved it, an arrangement that ultimately contributed to Charlie’s untimely death. Yet such passion—balanced with careful attention to the needs of wild creatures—is necessary if the animals that have come to depend on us are to survive.

—Brian Spak

## Gesundheit!

ALLERGIES ARE NOTHING new, but in recent decades the number of Americans whose immune systems overreact to various inhaled, ingested, and merely brushed-against allergens

has burgeoned. A huge amount of research now focuses on allergies—including the extreme respiratory response known as asthma—which today afflict more than 50 million Americans. But while improved drugs deliver relief, a clear explanation for the epidemic remains elusive.

*Breathing Space*, by science and medical historian Gregg Mitman of the University of Wisconsin, Madison, belongs to a curious class of books, natural histories of disease. In tracing the birth and vigorous growth of hay fever in the United States, he charts a common cycle: Humans settle somewhere, environmental degradation results, then they pick up and move somewhere new.

Hay fever was first described in 1819 by a doctor in the United Kingdom who noticed a link between the haying season and his own watery eyes and chest congestion. But the disease was soon common in North America, where the rest of Mitman’s history unfolds.

That history is largely a series of flights. From eastern cities where ragweed thrived in empty lots and beside expanding roadways, wealthy Americans fled to mountain resorts. From Chicago they hied to northern Michigan. And from the plains they ascended to Denver, or turned south to the desert town of Tucson. Hay fever resorts catered to the refugees, offering not just clean air but also fine food and recreation.

The food was a problem. It was locally grown, on plants that produced pollen. The recreation was problematic, too: These playgrounds attracted thousands of people. More humans meant more housing, and more housing meant fewer air-cleansing forests. In the North, cleared lots invited weeds; in the desert, sprawling development spawned traffic, and the traffic stirred up dust. Sometimes allergy refugees relocated permanently to these breath-saving climes, killing, by increments, the thing they loved. Migrants to Denver brought cars, and smog was born. Migrants to Tucson couldn’t live without

### BREATHING SPACE:

How Allergies Shape Our Lives and Landscapes.

By Gregg Mitman. Yale Univ. Press. 312 pp. \$30

lawns and shade trees. Pollen counts soared.

The first half of *Breathing Space* makes a persuasive case that humans, when sickened by the environment they create, will move on. But as a species, we're so high-maintenance that we unavoidably transform the new environment into the old one. Mitman has gathered some delightful artifacts to illustrate his narrative—period brochures from hay fever resorts, cartoons tweaking upper-crusty sneezers, and a quaint photograph of an herbicide truck saturating the roadside to kill ragweed (and very likely many other living things). Other asides—on the history of train transport in Michigan, for instance—contribute to an uneven tone and a wobbly narrative line.

Absent—and oddly so, given Mitman's thesis that disease and environment evolve together—is the mention of two relatively recent developments in allergy and asthma. One is the hygiene hypothesis: A robust body of research shows that infants benefit from gut microbes (filth, in other words), which inoculate the immune system and prevent the overreaction that is allergy. The other is the impact of climate change. Ragweed, the poster child for allergenic plants, is expected to produce more pollen per plant as carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere rise.

Halfway through *Breathing Space*, Mitman abandons the subject of hay fever and human migration. After a brief treatment of inner-city allergy (cockroaches and industrial pollution replace ragweed as the culprit), he turns to criticizing our cultural tendency to treat symptoms. The ensuing history of air conditioners, vacuum cleaners, air-tight housing that traps allergens indoors, and pharmaceutical marketing is not uninteresting. But it's not exactly news. What's provocative is Mitman's notion that the way humans break ground can so profoundly transform an ecosystem that we can't live in it anymore.

—Hannah Holmes

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

## Platonic Thoughts

RALPH WALDO EMERSON remarked admiringly of Plato, "An Englishman reads and says, 'how English!' a German—'how Teutonic!' an Italian—'how Roman and how Greek!' . . . Plato seems,

to a reader in New England, an American genius. His broad humanity transcends all sectional lines." Simon Blackburn thinks Emerson was essentially, but not entirely, right, and in this volume of the Atlantic Monthly Press's Books That Changed the World series, he traces the vexing appeal of Plato's mighty *Republic*.

Plato (c. 428 BC–c. 347 BC) wrote the *Republic* in Athens around 375 BC. By then he had come to loathe the city, which he regarded as little more than an ignorant rabble ruled by corrupt demagogues. The *Republic* seeks to demonstrate what a truly just city looks like and, in the process, to expose Athens—which had executed Plato's teacher, Socrates, some two decades earlier—as a sham.

The *Republic's* central claim, spelled out in a dialogue between Socrates and several interlocutors, is that justice and happiness stand and fall together. Not because good consequences—a fine reputation, say—follow from being just, but because justice itself is so great that nothing gained by injustice could be greater. By "justice," Plato means more than honoring agreements or obeying the law. A just person does these things, but only because his soul is rightly ordered: Reason rules over desire. The same goes for a just city. The wise rule, the rest obey, and justice is the result.

Blackburn, a philosopher at the University of Cambridge, isn't buying it. What about Machiavellians who coolly check their passions so that they can practice even greater injustice—and who seem happy to boot? He has in mind those enfants terribles, American neoconservatives, but his more intriguing example is from the Peloponnesian War. In 416 BC, Athens sent 10,000 men

**PLATO'S  
REPUBLIC:**  
A Biography.

By Simon Blackburn.  
Atlantic Monthly Press.  
181 pp. \$19.95

against the tiny island of Melos, which fielded scarcely 500. The Melians asked Athens's envoys to respect their neutrality, and got this response before they were slaughtered: "The strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must." The Athenians, Blackburn says, showed precisely the sort of dispassionate self-governance that Plato associates with justice. Yet they acted unjustly, and were none the worse for it.

Blackburn's criticisms don't end there. Plato's ideal rulers are philosopher-kings who make Blackburn shudder—probably because he knows what despots ruling in the name of wisdom have done. "In so far as Plato has a legacy in politics," he writes, "it includes theocracy . . . , militarism, nationalism, hierarchy, illiberalism, totalitarianism, and the complete disdain of the economic structures of society."

If its argument fails and its politics frighten, why, in the words of Plato scholar M. F. Burnyeat, is there "always someone somewhere . . . reading the *Republic*"? Perhaps for the same reason that someone is always looking at the sun. Both are enormous and abiding, absolutely of this world yet alien to it. And both are things of beauty.

Many remember the *Republic's* haunting metaphor of the cave, to which Blackburn devotes several chapters. But for my money, the *Republic's* beauty arrives more casually. When, for example, Socrates senses a friend growing weary during the discussion, he urges, "We must station ourselves like hunters surrounding a wood and concentrate our minds, so that our quarry, justice, does not vanish into obscurity."

Blackburn calls this "tedious dramatic buildup." Others call it poetry. Blackburn is a philosopher whom John McCain might like—straight-talkin', no-nonsense. This sensibility suits tartly argued earlier books by Blackburn such as *Truth: A Guide* (2005) and *Being Good: A Short Introduction to Ethics* (2001), but he can't quite figure out what to make of the *Republic*. Still, he is awed by the purity of Plato's demand that we change our lives. In the end, he can't help but admire what Virginia Woolf called

"the love of truth which draw[s] Socrates and us in his wake to the summit where, if we too may stand for a moment, it is to enjoy the greatest felicity of which we are capable."

—Brendan Boyle

## The Ambassadors

FAITHFUL SERVICE TO HER Majesty's government earned British diplomat Carne Ross the privilege of being a well-placed pawn during the disastrous exercise in Anglo-American self-deception that became the Iraq war. But he

atoned brilliantly in 2004, testifying before a British commission about how intelligence reports were misused to fabricate an Iraqi threat to the United Kingdom. He then resigned from the civil service to found Independent Diplomat, an international organization that supplies diplomatic expertise to not-quite-states such as Kosovo and Somaliland.

In his memoir, Ross describes with elegant humility his 15-year apprenticeship in the British diplomatic service. The Foreign Office recruits presentable generalists. With no formal training even in diplomatic protocol, they must cope with trade policies, centrifuge technology, and knotty issues in international law. Despite the State Department's vastly larger size and budget, U.S. diplomats are expected to do much the same, so Ross's book is a fine introduction to the diplomatic profession for American readers.

The best portions of *Independent Diplomat* are drawn from Ross's years at United Nations headquarters, where he served from 1997 to 2002. There he was tasked with defending UN sanctions on Iraq against charges that they had caused the deaths of 500,000 Iraqi children. Those sanctions were imposed to compel Saddam Hussein to destroy his chemical and biological stockpiles and dismantle his nuclear program. High-level defectors confirmed that by 1996 he had

**INDEPENDENT  
DIPLOMAT:**  
Dispatches  
From an Unac-  
countable Elite.

By Carne Ross. Cornell  
Univ. Press. 243 pp. \$25

done so. But by the time Ross arrived for his assignment, the presence or absence of “weapons of mass destruction” no longer figured in policy discussions. Washington demanded that sanctions continue until Saddam’s regime fell. As the faithful servant of a loyal U.S. ally, Ross crafted diplomatic doublespeak to prevent Iraqi reality from undermining U.S. policy.

In 2002, Ross took a sabbatical to study political philosophy on a fellowship at the New School University. There, he learned the rudiments of epistemology. Thus armed, he posits that his UN discussions were so detached from the real world because they were confined to a narrow subset of linguistic terms. Further, he concludes that diplomats are ignorant, arrogant, and unaccountable, and should be replaced by supranational parliamentary bodies and by direct negotiation between “lifelong experts” who understand their state’s interests on the issues they study better than any diplomatic generalist could.

If Ross had consulted primatologists instead of philosophers, he might have reached a less bleak verdict on his profession. At bottom,

civil servants are social primates. They derive happiness from their standing within a competitive hierarchy. Parroting conventional belief is prudent proof of loyalty. In the competition for status, discordant facts (e.g., that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction) cripple their possessor. Most diplomats, therefore, edit their perceptions ruthlessly.

But societies do not survive long without accurate information about potential threats. A few genuine diplomats—and Ross was on the road to becoming one when he resigned—are tolerated for their ability to shed their social blinders and observe the foreigners around them. Through personal relationships built on mutual trust, they trade the information needed to craft politically viable alliances against common dangers.

Despite his conclusion that the diplomatic profession ought to be abolished, Ross’s own organization presupposes the value of diplomats’ skills. Perhaps even he would agree that only in rare moments of exceptional self-government is self-immolation the most honorable option for an experienced diplomat.

—John Brady Kiesling

**Credits:** Cover, *Starting Line* (1991), by Bart Forbes, © 2007 United States Olympic Committee; p. 13, © 2007 National Geographic; p. 14, © Hulton-Deutsch Collection/CORBIS; p. 15, © Bettmann/CORBIS; p. 17, AP Photo/Mustafa Quraishi; p. 18, AP Photo/Elizabeth Dalziel, File; p. 20, AFP Photo/Hoang Dinh Nam; p. 23, Kambou Sia/AFP/Getty Images; p. 25, *Jefferson* (1975), by Jamie Wyeth, © Jamie Wyeth; p. 27, © Musee de la Ville de Paris, Musee Carnavalet, Paris, France/Archives Charmet/The Bridgeman Art Library; p. 28, *Portrait of William Short (1759–1849)*, by Rembrandt Peale, Oil on canvas, 30 1/2 x 25 1/8 ins. (77.5 x 63.9 cm), Muscarelle Museum of Art at The College of William and Mary, Gift of Mary Churchill Short, Fanny Short Butler, and William Short; p. 29, *Maria Cosway*, (1785), engraving, by Francesco Bartolozzi, Courtesy of Thomas Jefferson Foundation/Monticello; pp. 33, 65, Photo by Alex Wong/Getty Images; p. 36, Francis Miller/Time & Life Pictures/Getty Images; p. 41, *The Collector*, 1993 (acrylic on canvas on wood) by P. J. Crook (b. 1945) Private Collection/The Bridgeman Art Library; p. 47, Jay Myrdal/Getty Images; p. 48, The Granger Collection, N.Y.; p. 50, AP Photo/Kevork Djansezian; p. 53, *Pollice Verso* (1872), oil on canvas, by Jean Leon Gerome, © The Bridgeman Art Library; p. 57, © Minnesota Historical Society/CORBIS; p. 59, 20th Century Fox/The Kobal Collection; p. 63, © Herscovici/Art Resource, N.Y.; p. 69, Reuters/Ian Waldie; p. 71, Jeff Haynes/AFP/Getty Images; p. 72, © PhotoPQR/Le Progres/J. Philippon; p. 74, © The New Yorker Collection 1994 Edward Koren from cartoonbank.com. All Rights Reserved; p. 79, © Museum of the City of New York/CORBIS; p. 82, AP Photo; p. 85, Photo by Evening Standard/Getty Images; p. 86, Raveendran/AFP/Getty Images; p. 91, AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite; p. 93, Engraving by Gustave Doré; p. 95, The Art Archive/Museum der Stadt Wien/Dagli Orti; p. 96, The Art Archive/Culver Pictures; p. 97, The Art Archive/Béla Bartók House Budapest/Dagli Orti; p. 99, Panel from *Maus: A Survivor’s Tale*, by Art Spiegelman, © 1986 by Art Spiegelman; p. 103, *Snap the Whip* (1872), by Winslow Homer, oil on canvas, 12 x 20 in. (30.5 x 50.8 cm). Gift of Christian A. Zabriskie, 1950 (50.41) © The Metropolitan Museum of Art /Art Resource, N.Y.; p. 105, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C./Art Resource, N.Y.; p. 110, Quinceañera (2001), by Carmen Lomas Garza, oil and alkyd on wood, 36 x 48 inches, Photo by M. Lee Faterree, Collection of National Museum of Mexican Art, Chicago, Ill.; p. 112, © By permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library.

## Crooked Tiara

QUINCEAÑERA, A PRIZE-winner at last year's Sundance Film Festival, stoked mainstream interest in the Latina coming-of-age celebration that served as the movie's backdrop. In *Once Upon a Quinceañera*, Julia Alvarez examines this rite of passage more directly and finds it rife with contradictions.

The *quinceañera*—the term refers both to the event and to the girl it celebrates—is frequently compared to a sweet sixteen party, but the analogy is limited. Celebrated on a girl's 15th birthday, it usually includes a religious (typically Catholic) service, symbolic gifts, and plenty of pageantry. Traditionally, a court of 14 young couples represents the girl's previous years of life and performs choreographed dances.

**ONCE UPON A QUINCEAÑERA:**  
Coming of Age  
in the USA.

By Julia Alvarez. Viking.  
278 pp. \$23.95

Various celebrated throughout Latin America for centuries, the *quinceañera* once signaled a girl's readiness for marriage. Now, what it marks is more ambiguous—particularly in the United States, where the event has become increasingly popular since it was imported when immigrants began heading north in large numbers in the 1960s.

Alvarez, a writer perhaps best known for her novel *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents* (1991), documents a *quinceañera* held in honor of a Queens, New York, girl named Monica, while weaving in memories of her own adolescence at a Massachusetts boarding school, visits with her family in the Dominican Republic, and her preoccupation with narratives and rituals that can empower women. She also visits Latino communities in Texas and California and on the East Coast, and interviews anyone who has a hand in putting on a *quinceañera*—event planners, priests, seamstresses, bakers, photographers, wise aunts and grandmothers.



*Quinceañera* (2001), by Carmen Lomas Garza

The modern American incarnation of the *quinceañera* can be an outrageous production with a six-figure budget, themed cruises, and a profusion of anything pink and princesslike. Monica's celebration, a catered reception at a modest venue, is closer to the norm. The girls in her court are dressed as Disney heroines—popular choices, especially Cinderella, for these occasions. (A Hummer limo replaces the pumpkin coach.) As with the wedding and bat mitzvah industries, websites, magazines, and vendor expos support these distinctly American *quinceañera* iterations.

Yet there's a dark edge to all the frills and fun, says Alvarez, an "odd disparity between the fantasy the ritual enacts and the facts of these young girls' lives." A late-1990s study conducted by the organization now known as the National Alliance for Hispanic Health reported that Latinas in U.S. high schools have higher rates of teen pregnancy and attempted suicide, and lower graduation rates, than their peers.

Healthier alternatives to the extravagant blowouts do exist, Alvarez suggests, citing the primarily Mexican custom of welcoming *madrinas* and *padrinos*—friends and relatives who purchase the girl's ball gown, pay the musicians' fees, and so on. In this way, the entire

community invests in the young celebrant. Yet the gifts the girl receives—including a ceremonial first pair of high-heeled shoes and last doll—send a "clear message": "We expect you to get married, have children, devote yourself to your family." That message might seem merely old-fashioned but for Alvarez's reminders about these girls' teen pregnancies and underrepresentation in higher education.

Alvarez is forthright about the book's limitations. She's conscious that the *quinceañeras* she interviews are just kids, who find her incessant questions a drag ("This is becoming annoying," one girl complains). And she concedes that for all her earnest desire to revise the *quinceañera*, her guilty conscience whispers accusations of cultural betrayal.

Her internal struggle shows how difficult cultural change can be—and also reveals one of the book's chief strengths: the author's sensitivity and fierce compassion. When Monica is formally presented to her party guests, Alvarez rises and joins in the wild applause, "though I've seen the behind-the-scenes ropes and pulleys, often frayed or snapping, that are holding this moment in place."

—Jynelle Gracia

#### CONTRIBUTORS

■ **David Beers** is founding editor of *The Tyee*, an online magazine based in Vancouver, British Columbia, and is author of *Blue Sky Dream: A Memoir of America's Fall From Grace* (1996).

■ **Brendan Boyle** teaches classics at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. His reviews have been published in *The San Francisco Chronicle* and *The New York Sun*.

■ **Ken Chen** is a lawyer practicing in New York City. His work has been published in *The Boston Review of Books* and *Best American Essays 2006*.

■ **Jynelle Gracia** is a writer and editor based in Washington, D.C.

■ **Hannah Holmes** is the author of *The Secret Life of Dust: From the Cosmos to the Kitchen Counter*, *the Big Consequences of Little Things* (2001) and *Suburban Safari: A Year on the Lawn* (2005). Her latest book, tentatively titled *A Field Guide to the Human Animal*, will be published next year.

■ **John Brady Kiesling**, a U.S. diplomat for nearly 20 years before his resignation in 2003, is the author of *Diplomacy Lessons: Realism for an Unloved Superpower* (2006). He lives in Athens.

■ **Jeremy Lott**, the Warren T. Brookes Journalism Fellow at the Competitive

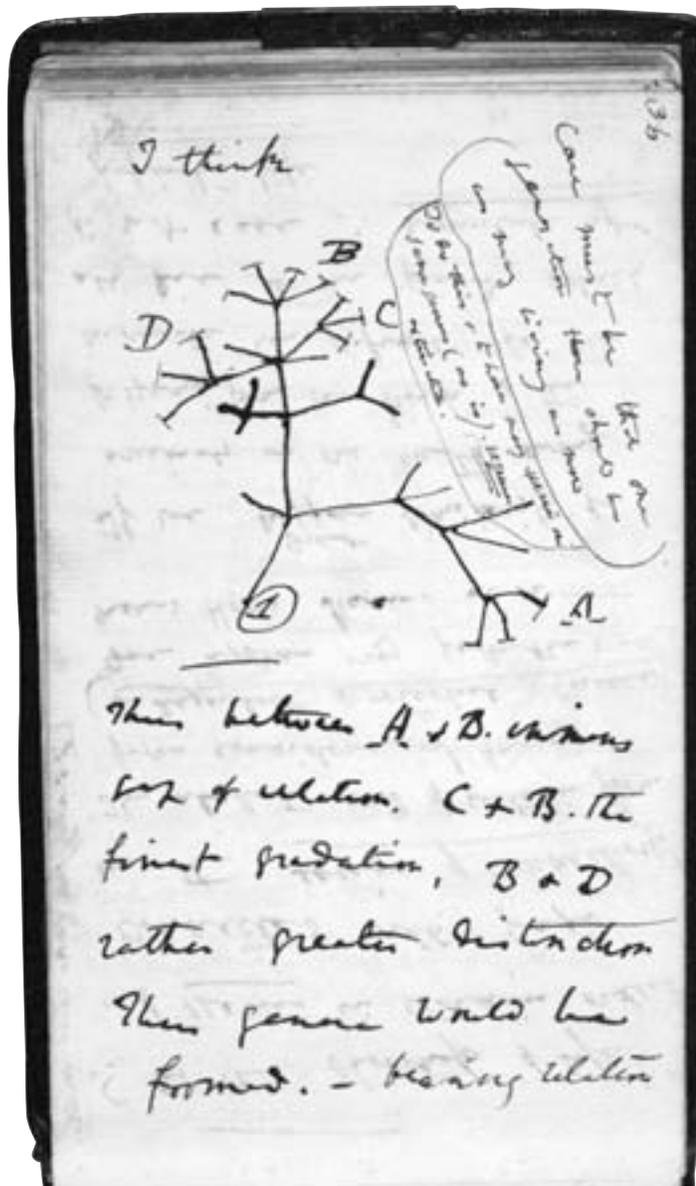
Enterprise Institute and author of *In Defense of Hypocrisy* (2006), is writing a book about the vice presidency.

■ **Hara Estroff Marano**, editor at large of *Psychology Today*, is the author of *A Nation of Wimps: The High Cost of Invasive Parenting*, to be published next year.

■ **Brian Spak** is a grant writer at the Smithsonian's National Zoo, in Washington, D.C.

■ **Martin Walker**, senior director of A. T. Kearney's Global Business Policy Council and editor emeritus of United Press International, is a senior scholar at the Wilson Center.

# PORTRAIT



A page from Charles Darwin's notebook

## Humble Origins

In August 1837, Charles Darwin opened his notebook and wrote, "I think." Underneath these words he sketched a crude—but momentous—tree of life. Inking the thin lines, Darwin postulated that all life forms on earth are related through common ancestry. Over millions of years, new species evolved from old. This idea radically departed from the widely held belief that life

on earth was created as we know it today. Darwin drew this tree only one month into his analysis of the data from his travels aboard HMS *Beagle*, but 22 years passed before he published *On the Origin of Species*. The notebook, along with other Darwin manuscripts and personal belongings, is on display at Chicago's Field Museum through January.



Woodrow Wilson  
International  
Center  
for Scholars

# The Wilson *Legacy*

“A place to hear the truth about the past and hold debate about the affairs of the present, with knowledge and without passion.”

—Woodrow Wilson, October 21, 1896  
Princeton, New Jersey

## *A bequest*

A bequest to the **Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars** allows you to make a charitable contribution without making a cash donation today. By remembering the Woodrow Wilson Center in your will or revocable trust, you may reduce your estate taxes as well as achieve other benefits, such as:

- Your **assets remain in your control** during your lifetime.
- You can **direct your gift** to a particular purpose or program at the Center.
- You can **change your bequest** at any time.

To learn more about making a bequest to the Woodrow Wilson Center, please contact the Development Office at 202.691.4172 or via e-mail at [development@wilsoncenter.org](mailto:development@wilsoncenter.org).

[www.wilsoncenter.org/legacy](http://www.wilsoncenter.org/legacy)

# Master of Arts in Diplomacy - Online



**Because the world is subject to change**

**International Business Negotiations. Peacekeeping Operations. Foreign Aid. Post-conflict Nation Building. Non-Governmental Conflict Management.** Do you have the skills to be effective in our complex political world and take your career to the next level? Consider an online Master of Arts in Diplomacy degree with a concentration in International Conflict Management, International Commerce or International Terrorism from Norwich University—completed on your own time—and become a leader in your field.

**Flexible.** Career; meetings; deadlines; family commitments—we know there's no such thing as a normal day. Complete your coursework any time, any place.

**Fast.** Earn your degree in less than two years, not five—from a fully-accredited university with 187 years of academic heritage.

**Focused.** Master the critical thinking skills to excel in effective diplomacy, intercultural communication, and negotiating. Our international expert faculty have been there, done that, and know what you need to be effective and advance your career.



**NORWICH**  
UNIVERSITY™

Online Graduate Programs

**Learn more:**

[www.diplomacy.norwich.edu/wqm](http://www.diplomacy.norwich.edu/wqm)

1-800-460-5597 ext. 3378