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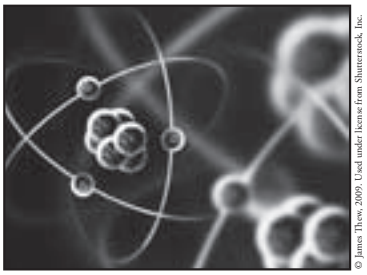

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FEATURES

ON THE COVER: Illustration by Gordon Studer.

DEPARTMENTS

EDITOR'S COMMENT

The Spirit Moves Us

One of the curious things about entrepreneurship, our subject in this issue's cover cluster, is how much its spirit transcends economics. That's not to say that entrepreneurs don't love a big payday, but I doubt that many Americans launch businesses strictly for the money. What's distinctive about American entrepreneurialism is that it's about independence and self-creation—the pursuit of happiness—as much as it is about money.

Decades ago, when I drove with my father against the weekday morning traffic to the family business, he seldom failed to shake his head in pity for the poor tied-and-jacketed drones headed the other way. Never mind that for most of the year he worked six days and many hours a week and never enjoyed the security most of those people did: He was his own boss. The business, Chestnut Grove Nursery, became successful, spawning several additional ventures, but the trophy house my father built would fit in the basement of the average McMansion today. What satisfied him most, he said in one of his rare confessional moments, was providing a livelihood for so many people. (As a boy, I counted their time cards; at one point, there were more than 50.)

In the grueling recession of the early 1970s my father almost lost everything, clinging to the Grove and the house. He finally managed to get out with enough money for a decent retirement, living contentedly until his death last fall.

Some of these thoughts about entrepreneurialism came together recently when my daughter sent me a link to a YouTube video, a mash-up combining the opening sequence of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* overlaid with the theme music from *Dallas*. Only then did it dawn on me what we'd found so engaging about these two favorite television shows. Their main protagonists capture the two sides of the entrepreneurial spirit—*Dallas*'s shark-like yet compelling independent oilman, J. R. Ewing, and *Star Trek*'s noble explorer, Captain Jean-Luc Picard. Call it the J. R. Picard formula. As long as America has it, there's reason for optimism.

—Steven Lagerfeld

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THE ARAB CONUNDRUM

David Ottaway covers a remarkable amount of ground with clarity and skill ["The Arab Tomorrow," Winter '10]. However, he portrays the political options available to the Arab world a bit too starkly. He writes that Arabs face two "contrasting models of [their] future": a highly materialistic path of Western-style modernity and a violent path of radical Islam. But, as Ottaway notes a few paragraphs later, there is also a peaceful Islamic political option.

Many Arab societies are deeply religious. For political institutions to gain legitimacy, they may need to have a religious character, and this can take a peaceful and progressive form. For example, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt put forward a political platform in the 2005 parliamentary elections that invoked Islamic principles to support accountable governance, constraints on state power, the rule of law, competitive elections, and protection of many civil and political rights. Similar ideas have appeared among Islamic groups elsewhere, most notably in the Justice and Development Party in Morocco.

The evolution of an Islamic take on these ideas will be shaped, in part, by how the region's political leaders receive them. The Brotherhood's relatively progressive platform met with a harsh response from the Egyptian authorities. When the Brotherhood did well in the 2005 elections (winning nearly 20 percent of the seats in Parliament), the Mubarak regime arrested thousands of Brotherhood supporters, confiscated the organization's financial assets, and adopted a constitutional amendment that banned "any political activity based on a religious point of reference." Not surprisingly, the Brotherhood retrenched. Recent internal elections have brought a less progressive strand of leadership to the party's fore. The United States said nothing as this process unfolded—believing, perhaps, that all Islamists are radical or potentially radical and must therefore be excluded from political life. At a time when the United States is trying to improve relations with the Islamic world, such a stance is self-defeating. It is also self-fulfilling. If peaceful political participation by Islamists is criminalized, those who seek to broaden the role of Islam in society will have no choice but to turn to violence.

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In "The Arab Tomorrow," David Ottaway spends much of his time retelling the conventional narrative of the last three or four decades of contemporary Middle Eastern history. Yet this narrative is deeply flawed, reading much like regimes' official accounts of the recent past.

By far the biggest defect is Ottaway's inexplicable failure to explore the implications of trends to which he makes passing reference. He notes the emergence of a young, seemingly cosmopolitan elite, but what does this group mean for the trajectory of the Middle East? Are these individuals collectively a force for modernization and progressive political change, or do they represent a new constituency for autocracy? What does Egypt's apparent slide mean for the region and U.S. policy? Is the intransigence of Israel—he refers to Jerusalem as "immovable"—indicative of critical social changes under way in Israeli society? If so, what does that mean for peace or U.S.-Israeli ties or Israel's place in the region? Ottaway doesn't even probe how the present political ferment in Iran may affect the Arab world. Given the profound and lasting ways Iran's revolution influenced its neighbors to the west, this oversight is especially glaring.

Steven A. Cook

Author, Ruling but Not Governing: The Military and Political Development in Egypt, Algeria, and Turkey *(2007)*

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David Ottaway aptly captures the shift in the Arab center of gravity, from the Egypt of Gamal Abdel Nasser and Anwar el-Sadat to the globalized Arab states of the Persian Gulf. Yet, in his analysis, Ottaway has far more to say about the past and the present than where the Arab world is heading. The Arab world's future is very unlikely to replicate its past. For one, the age of common Arab action is over. The 20th century put too many strains on the Arab nationalist ideal that Egypt once epitomized under Nasser. By the dawn of the 21st century, the Arab world had emerged as a system of 18 states (if one is to include the Palestinian Authority, and exclude such Arab League outliers as the Comoros, Mauritania, Djibouti, and Somalia), each with domestic interests transcending the common Arab good.

Within each Arab state, the challenge is to provide for the needs of its young and growing population. The real problem facing Arab governments is not so much an ideological confrontation between Islam and materialism, as Ottaway argues, but provision—of education, jobs, housing, and a stake in the future for the next generation. Young Arabs will give their allegiance to those who address their needs.

The competition is on between Arab states and their domestic opposition movements in providing for the needs of their citizens. The popularity of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and Hamas in Gaza suggests that the Islamists are at present ahead. Yet it need not be so. Western states would do better to help Arab governments provide for the human development of their citizens than to make half-hearted efforts at promoting democracy. The future stability of the global community lies in fulfilling Arab needs today.

Eugene Rogan

Author, The Arabs: A History *(2009)*

Director, The Middle East Center

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David Ottaway masterfully captures the new power dynamics in the Middle East. Ottaway makes clear that Egypt was the natural leader of the Arab world until Anwar el-Sadat's death, with its large, diverse economy and a population that might have emerged as a model for other Muslim societies to follow. Gamal Abdel Nasser drove Egypt into a ditch, and Sadat's assassination pinched off his reforms and seated King Hosni on the throne of what has become a stagnant republican monarchy comparable to Syria's or Libya's. Ottaway notes that Middle Eastern politics throbbed until 1948 with resentment of British and French colonial policies, and have throbbed ever since with resentment of Israel (and America). Suspicion of some distant force is a key piece of identity.

Egypt alone might have lit a way out of that dark tunnel, but Ottaway sees little hope of that now—Cairo is poor, sclerotic, and utterly dependent on the kindness of foreign donors. Rich sheikhdoms, with tiny Arab populations and vast pools of exploited Asian labor, will never be a model, even with al-Jazeera broadcasting from shrewd little Qatar. Iran has tried to be a model—hence its activism in Gaza, Lebanon, and Iraq—but the Shiite-Sunni divide

stands in its way, and triggers sporadic bloodbaths across the region. Clearly, President George W. Bush's call for a "forward strategy of freedom" in the region—headlined by the Iraq war—was premature. Where elections have been held, parties such as Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood scooped up seats, and Bush dropped his "freedom agenda" like a hot potato. Whither the Arab world? Who knows? But this essay brilliantly summarizes the situation, and the dearth of good options, in 2010.

Geoffrey Wawro

Author, Quicksand: America's Pursuit of Power in the Middle East *(2010)*

General Olinto Barsanti

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THE VIEW FROM PAKISTAN

Robert Hathaway's article ["Planet Pakistan," Winter '10] offers a measured, nuanced "American" perspective on the complex strategic, political, and economic problems of a country that defies easy answers. He rightly identifies Pakistan's denialism about Islamist terrorism and its paranoid views about a foreign (read "U.S.") hand in destabilizing Pakistan as key factors complicating the fight against terrorism.

Two points invite comment. First, Hathaway suggests that Pakistan's army has had an epiphany: It no longer sees India as Pakistan's mortal enemy and has duly turned its guns on militant Islamists. Yet he fears that the country's "pathetically weak" governing institutions will nullify this opportunity. While this apparent "strategic" rethink on the part of the military is in itself questionable, this view begs [*Continued on page 9*]

DEFENDING HUMAN RIGHTS IN RUSSIA

Karinna Moskalenko, an animated woman in her mid-fifties with short, feathery brown hair, exudes a remarkable air of ingenuousness. A resigned weariness would seem more natural for Russia's foremost human rights lawyer given her high-profile and embattled clientele, which includes Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the imprisoned Yukos chairman, and Garry Kasparov, the chess-grandmaster-turned-political-malcontent.

At a recent Woodrow Wilson Center event on Capitol Hill, Moskalenko expressed ambivalence about the prospect of Russia's graduation from the strictures of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, which denies most-favored-nation status in trade relations to certain states characterized by nonmarket economies and restrictive emigration policies. While narrow in scope, this amendment to the Trade Act of 1974 served as a symbolic rebuke of the Soviet Union's human rights failings. The still-standing law was the subject of two days of discussion in early February organized by the Henry M. Jackson Foundation; the Center's Kennan Institute, which focuses on Russia and other former Soviet states; and the Wilson Center On the Hill program. The latter was responsible for the first day's prestigious setting: a stately meeting room in the House of Representatives' Rayburn office building, where the audience, which included House members and staff, munched quietly on sandwiches and potato chips.

In the early 1970s the Iron Curtain was especially impenetrable, and Soviet citizens wishing to emigrate were forced to pay a costly "education tax," which essentially prohibited them from leaving. On top of that, tens of thousands—many of them Jews—were flatly refused exit visas. Known as "refuseniks" in Soviet parlance, they were the targets of personal and professional discrimination. While Russia long ago loosened its emigration restrictions and opened its economy—advances the United States recognizes by annually exempting Russia from the amendment's trade restrictions—Moskalenko reasoned that it made little sense to permanently graduate Russia from Jackson-Vanik given Moscow's continuing indifference to human rights.

Her argument resonated with some. Last year was an "extraordinarily bad" one for human rights in Russia, said panelist Sarah Mendelsohn, the director of the Human Rights and Security Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. At least 10 prominent Russian human rights activists and journalists were killed, and the number of applications Russians filed with the European Court of Human Rights protesting the rulings of Russian courts ballooned to almost 14,000. All the while, Moscow turned a deaf ear to the outcry of Russia's small human rights community, and the world's superpowers sidestepped any confrontation with the Russian government.

Still, panelists disagreed as to whether the repeal of Jackson-Vanik should be contingent on improvements in human rights in Russia now. "The time for Jackson-Vanik is over," said Sam Kliger, the director of Russian Jewish affairs at the American Jewish Committee. President Bill Clinton acknowledged Russia's full compliance in 1994, he pointed out, even though the country remained formally subject to the law. "To [maintain] a moral standard, we have to be fair."

The Wilson Center On the Hill program was established in the spring of 2008 to enable Center scholars and programs to share their work directly with lawmakers, and the presence of Hill staffers injected a dose of political reality into the discussion. Russia had no chance of graduating from Jackson-Vanik, argued one young staffer, as few members of Congress were familiar with what it intended, and no one wanted to be seen as going soft on Russia. "When it comes to bringing a bill to the floor that says that we're giving something to Russia, very few people in Congress would be willing to back that."

Toward the end of the luncheon, Lyudmila Alexeeva, the slim and pale 82-year-old chairwoman of the Moscow Helsinki Group, Russia's oldest and most venerable human rights organization, gestured impatiently for the microphone. The Jackson-Vanik Amendment was anachronistic, she conceded through a translator, but some concessions should be extracted from Russia if it were to be formally lifted. After all, she said, "the only constitutional right we have left in Russia is to leave."

[*Continued from page 7*] the question: Why are these institutions so weak in the first place? They are weak primarily because repeated military intervention and rule has prevented the institutionalization of civilian government. The lawlessness, insecurity, and economic crises now engulfing Pakistan are mainly legacies of General Pervez Musharraf's military rule, not the result of civilian errors.

Second, Pakistani suspicions of U.S. policy stem not just from grievances over Washington's military and strategic "betrayals," as Hathaway seems to think, but also from the glaring contradiction between its pro-democracy rhetoric and its geopolitically expedient alliances with repressive military dictators, including Musharraf. Of course, the ultimate responsibility to stabilize Pakistan, establish the rule of law, and deliver social improvements rests with its people. One can only hope with Hathaway that the civilian aid–focused Kerry-Lugar bill represents a shift in U.S. policy that will help Pakistan achieve those goals. Still, in fighting terrorism, the United States continues to prefer short-term "under the table" dealings with the Pakistani military and intelligence agencies to more transparent bilateral engagement.

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It's true that many Pakistanis are inclined to peddle conspiracy theories and attribute each explosion, riot, and car accident to the "hidden hand"—a euphemism for nefarious spy craft by Indian, American, Israeli, or even Pakistani intelligence agencies. And it's also correct that many Pakistanis seem to underestimate the severity of the threat posed by the Taliban and their cohorts.

Yet while the "Editor's Comment" for the winter issue promises that Hathaway will show "how the world appears through the eyes of another," I sensed little, if any, attempt by the author to empathize. Robert Hathaway enunciates the grievances of the Pakistanis with an air of condescension, as if these grievances themselves were mere conspiracies. Yes, the religious culture of Pakistan has grown more conservative since the 1980s, but the madrassas were built, and the guns supplied, with funds provided by American and Saudi intelligence agencies. The commentators who spent last fall accusing every other foreigner of being an undercover Blackwater operative were vindicated, in part, when Secretary of Defense Robert Gates recently admitted that Xe Services, as Blackwater is now known, was, in fact, present in the country (following a string of denials from the U.S. Embassy).

Denial and scapegoating are, without a doubt, as central to many Pakistanis' worldview as milky tea and kebabs are to their diet, making "Planet Pakistan" an oftentimes dangerous and bemusing place. But Pakistan may also be more critical in terms of international security today

than any other country in the world; readers and policymakers would benefit from analyses that consider *why* Pakistanis hold certain opinions.

Nicholas Schmidle

Author, To Live or to Perish Forever: Two Tumultuous Years in Pakistan *(2009)*

Washington, D.C.

UNEASY ALLIES

Thomas Rid's article aptly and compellingly describes escalating tensions between Al Qaeda and the Taliban ["Cracks in the Jihad," Winter '10]. It is worth adding that the phenomenon Rid emphasized has, at least in some form and to a certain extent, existed for years.

Journalists and scholars studying Al Qaeda and the Taliban have discerned distinct strains between the two groups dating back to Osama bin Laden's return to Afghanistan in 1996. As the Taliban sought to consolidate its grip over Afghanistan, bin Laden became a high-profile irritant with his provocative press conferences, and even more so with Al Qaeda's attacks in August 1998 against American embassies in East Africa, which provoked U.S. air strikes against targets within Afghanistan. Even as the Taliban grew increasingly frustrated with Al Qaeda, the Taliban's leaders continued to tolerate its presence, in part because bin Laden and his group provided the Taliban with money and weapons that it needed in its fight against the Northern Alliance.

Rid raises the question of whether a similar "glue" remains to bind the two groups together today. Does Al Qaeda still need Afghan territory from which to operate, or has it found substitutes in northwest Pakistan, Yemen, or even amid ungoverned regions and urban centers worldwide? And does the Taliban still need the finances and firepower for which it once relied on Al Qaeda? Rid's interesting piece helpfully focuses us on these pressing questions.

Joshua A. Geltzer

Author, U.S. Counter-Terrorism Strategy and al-Qaeda: Signalling and the Terrorist World-View *(2009)*

Editor in Chief, Yale Law Journal

New Haven, Conn.

CHAVEZ'S LARGER LEGACY

Richard Rodriguez wrongly concludes that Cesar Chavez "died . . . as a loser," and describes the United Farm Workers as "largely a failure" ["Saint Cesar of Delano," Winter '10]. Both history and current social movements defy Rodriguez's conclusions.

Prior to Chavez's bid to create a farm workers' union, every effort had failed. Agribusiness ensured that farm workers were excluded from the shelter of the National Labor Relations Act, and that they lacked federal protections for union organizing afforded most other workers.

Chavez began his impossible quest without money or political connections. He had little more than a strong background in community organizing and deep religious faith. By the end of the 1960s, the man Rodriquez calls a "loser" had spawned the largest consumer boycott in U.S. history and the nation's broadest grassroots movement for farm workers ever. In 1975, Chavez's union won enactment of the nation's first Agricultural Labor Relations Act. To this day, the measure provides farm workers in California with far greater protection than they receive in other parts of the United States.

The UFW began to decline in 1982, and its membership today is greatly diminished. But Cesar Chavez and the UFW's legacy transcend current membership rolls. This legacy is found in social movements shaped by UFW strategies and tactics, and in many UFW alumni who have spent decades working for social justice.

Randy Shaw

Author, Beyond the Fields: Cesar Chavez, the UFW, and the Struggle for Justice in the 21st Century *(2008)*

Berkeley, Calif.

Most observers have completely overlooked, misunderstood, or distorted the complexity and impact of Cesar Chavez's religious politics. Some, like Richard Rodriguez, emphasize Chavez's saint-like qualities. Others, like Miriam Pawel, view him through the prism of emotion-driven sensationalist journalism.

Even while they err, both Rodriguez's essay and Pawel's book, *The Union of Their Dreams*, are essential contributions toward a greater appreciation of an architect of history who, of course, was all too human. Rodriguez reframes Chavez in terms of a Catholic mythopoesis, with an imitation of Christ cut from the cloth of St. Francis of Assisi. If Chavez was a loser, his losses were redemptive. Yet what Rodriguez identifies as Mexican cultural nihilism is actually the legacy of a catechism that justified the horrors of colonialism. Why does he impugn

the Christian empire's bastard children rather than its promiscuous Church Fathers?

Rodriguez employs creative hyperbole in service of his greater narrative. Chavez never attempted to enlist sympathy fasters, as Rodriguez suggests. He prohibited them. His was a singular pontifical rule. Still, while his theology of sacrifice was unmistakably Catholic, his optimism and sense of democratic change were as Baptist as Martin Luther King and apple pie.

I disagree with Rodriguez that Pawel's work is thoroughly "unsentimental." It is fraught with a hagiographical sentimentality favoring the apostate Chavez devotees who lived to retell the story. Like so many others, she ignores the voice of Chavez himself, who worked tirelessly to derail the many expectations and public fictions that surrounded him; chief among them was that he would spend the rest of his life devoted to legal battles and organizing in the fields.

Our understanding of Chavez is best served by an appreciation of his complexity. He never intended to be interpreted easily: His life demands careful exegetical attention, not glib emotionalism.

Luis León
Author, La Llorona's Children: Religion, Life, and Death in the U.S.–Mexican Borderlands *(2004)*
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WHERE'S MATTHIESSEN?

Thomas Swick's article drew my admiration and some sympathy ["Not a Tourist," Winter '10]. But how could he discuss travel writers of our century and not mention—not once—Peter Matthiessen! In my opinion, Matthiessen is one of the most articulate, sensitive, and knowledgeable writers. And he has been almost everyplace on our earth: Alaska, Siberia, Canada, Asia, Australia, Oceania, South America, and New Guinea. He won the National Book Award for *The Snow Leopard* in 1978 and the same award for fiction in 2008 for his revised trilogy set in the Florida Everglades frontier, *Shadow Country.*

Marsha LaHue
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FINDINGS

BRIEF NOTES OF INTEREST ON ALL TOPICS

RIP?

Dead right, and wrong

King Tutankhamen became big news in February, more than three millennia after his death, when newly released DNA analyses indicated that he probably died of malaria. For Howard Markel, though, the Tut study raised as many questions as it answered.

"Respecting the dead after burial is sacred across all ethnicities and religious beliefs and time periods," said Markel, director of the Center for the History of Medicine at the University of Michigan. "Does a famous person lose that?"

In Markel's view, the decision to dig up human remains ought to depend on whether the research would enhance our knowledge of history or our understanding of disease today. The Tut study satisfied both criteria, he said: It revealed not just a cause of death but also vast information about King Tut's family tree. It also yielded some of the earliest examples of the malaria parasite, and thus the opportunity to learn how the parasite has changed over time.

Not all such studies will qualify. "Some people have wondered if Abraham Lincoln had Marfan's disorder [an inherited connective-tissue disorder]," Markel said in an interview. "Does that really change our knowledge of Lincoln, what he did, how he conducted the Civil War? Someone asked me whether we should dig up Isaac Newton and see if he had Asperger's syndrome. Well, we don't have a gene for Asperger's. But even if we did, how would that change our understanding of Newton's contributions or his brilliance or anything else?" In Markel's view, the dead should be disturbed only for good reasons.

But what if it's the dead who disturb the living? That can depress property values, Eric J. Gouvin writes in *Law and Magic: A Collection of Essays* (Carolina Academic Press). In two instances, courts tried to protect unwary buyers. In California in 1983, a judge held that a house's grisly history—10 years earlier, a woman and her four children had been murdered there—constituted a material defect that the seller should have disclosed. In New York in 1991, a court canceled the sale of a Victorian home because the seller had failed to reveal that many people considered the place haunted; indeed, the seller herself had talked publicly of supernatural visitations.

At a February news conference, Egyptian antiquities expert Zahi Hawass reveals that King Tutankhamen—whose mummified remains lie in a glass case—most likely died of malaria.

"Applying the strict rule of caveat emptor to a contract involving a house possessed by poltergeists," the New York judge said, "conjures up visions of a psychic or medium routinely accompanying the structural engineer and Terminix man on an inspection." The seller should have revealed that the house was believed to be haunted.

Alarmed by the rulings, real estate agents began lobbying. According to Gouvin, many states enacted laws stipulating that sellers need not disclose a home's "psychological" defects. Oregon passed a law saying that a seller was not required to reveal that the property had been the scene of a crime, and witchy Massachusetts excused sellers from disclosing any "alleged parapsychological or supernatural phenomenon." Haunted-home buyers, unable to get relief from judges, now must seek out exorcists.

Total Recall

White House cleaning

The historian Robert Dallek thinks it's time to put an additional safeguard in place against presidential malfeasance.

Writing in *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (March), Dallek faults the impeachment process as unwieldy. Better, he says, to let the voters decide whether a president should continue in office. Under Dallek's plan, which would require a constitutional amendment, 60 percent of the House and Senate could place a recall measure before the electorate. If a majority voted in favor, the president and vice president would be ousted and the Speaker of the House would become president.

"There seems little danger that the recall provision would be abused. Only two governors have been recalled in the last century, including Gray Davis in California, where Arnold Schwarzenegger has given the recall a good name," Dallek remarks. A national recall could "help keep our all-too-flawed presidents and their administrations on the straight and narrow."

Infantile

Mother Roosevelt

During the 1932 presidential campaign, Eleanor Roosevelt spent a few months as an editor. Publisher Bernarr Macfadden—whose *New York Evening Graphic,* a gossip rag, was nicknamed "the Pornographic"—recruited her to edit his proposed "high-class" magazine on child care, *Babies, Just Babies.* According to Mark Adams's biography of Macfadden, *Mr. America* (Harper), Roosevelt received $500 per issue, with a proviso that the fee would increase to $1,000 if her husband won the presidency.

Eleanor Roosevelt in 1932

"Babies!" editor Roosevelt wrote in the inaugural issue. "Can you think of anything more wonderful?"

Adams says *Babies, Just Babies* "was a source of more ridicule than revenue—the *Harvard Lampoon* published a parody called *Tutors, Just Tutors.*" After the election, Mrs. Roosevelt resigned. It seemed "the most sensible thing to do," she told Macfadden. And *Babies, Just Babies* stopped publishing.

Disinforming the World

Operation INFEKTION

Around the world, lots of people have discerned a U.S. government conspiracy behind AIDS. Much of the blame for that belief falls on the Soviet Union, Thomas Boghardt reports in the Central Intelligence Agency's journal *Studies in Intelligence* (December 2009).

In 1983, the KGB arranged for an anonymous letter to appear in *The Patriot*, an Indian newspaper funded by the Soviets. Purportedly from an American scientist, the letter said that AIDS "is believed to be the result of the Pentagon's experiments to develop new and dangerous biological weapons." (The letter referred to the "virus flu" rather than the flu virus; KGB English was often shaky.) In 1985, a Soviet newspaper published the AIDS allegation and cited the seemingly independent *Patriot* as its source.

The disinformation campaign

next passed to the East Germans. Soviet bloc spies frequently relied on what they called "useful idiots." Operation INFEKTION, as it was known, found one in Jakob Segal, a respected East German biophysicist. "How Segal was actually brought into the process is not known with certainty," Boghardt writes, "but in all likelihood 'evidence' of the U.S. origins of AIDS would have been given to him in personal meetings." Segal came to believe that AIDS most likely stemmed from an experiment gone awry. The American government had developed the disease as a biological weapon and infected prisoners with it, not realizing how quickly it would spread once the men were released.

Reporters took Segal seriously. By late 1987, his theory had appeared in more than 200 periodicals in 80 countries, according to Boghardt. In a meeting with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev that year, Secretary of State George Shultz complained about the AIDS disinformation as "bum dope."

The effects of the campaign outlasted the Soviet empire. In 1990, Britain's Channel 4 aired *AIDS: The African Legend,* a credulous West German documentary about Segal's ideas. In the early 1990s, news outlets in Canada, Sweden, and elsewhere published interviews with him. A 1992 survey found that 15 percent of Americans considered it probable or certain that "the AIDS virus was created deliberately in a government laboratory."

"Once the AIDS conspiracy theory was lodged in the global subconscious," Boghardt writes, "it became a pandemic in its own right."

Blowing Smoke

Asthma, then and now

Allergists urge asthma sufferers to stay away from smoke, whether from tobacco or other sources. But that wasn't always the case. In *Medical History* (April), Mark Jackson recalls a time when doctors advised asthmatic patients to light up.

In the 19th century, many sufferers treated their asthma by smoking the stalks and roots of jimsonweed, known as stramonium. In 1835, one doctor endorsed stramonium as an asthma treatment that had the added benefit of producing "a grateful forgetfulness and a balmy oblivion, like opiates." An 1860 asthma treatise advocated smoking stramonium each night to "keep the disease at bay." By the end of the century, many companies were marketing stramonium cigarettes or stramonium powder that an asthmatic could burn in a bowl, inhaling the smoke.

This 19th-century advertisement touted stramonium-laced cigarettes as a cure for asthma.

The stramonium prescription largely died out by the middle of the 20th century, as doctors concluded that smoke worsens bronchial inflammation. But there may have been something to the treatment: Some of today's asthma inhalers administer atropine, an alkaloid derived from stramonium.

Thieves in the Night

Blitz brigands

The Nazi blitz of 1940–41 drew Londoners together. The bombing "caused a great surge of determination—a feeling of unity—to sweep this island," Edward R. Murrow reported after one rough night in 1940. But not everyone shared in the warm feelings.

"Occasionally people returned from air raid shelters to find their houses unscathed but burgled," David E. Nye writes in *When the Lights Went Out* (MIT Press). Houses hit by bombs would often be hit by thieves too. One man remarked, "It's the funniest bomb I ever come across. . . . It's blown every bag open and knocked the money out, it's even knocked the money out of the gas meters, yet it didn't break the electric light bulb in the basement."

Nobel Peace Price

Post-Oslo payback

The Nobel Peace Prize doesn't always promote peace. In *Political Science Quarterly* (Winter), Ronald R. Krebs argues that it sometimes fuels repression.

After the Dalai Lama won in 1989, Tibetans grew more forceful in their protests. Krebs says they believed that "with the world focused upon them, thanks to the prize, the Chinese authorities would prove more lenient." Instead, China forbade public religious ceremonies, imprisoned and executed dissidents, and staged an intimidating military parade. "If the Nobel Committee was sending a message, so too was the Chinese government," Krebs observes. He thinks a similar dynamic played out when Aung San Suu Kyi of Myanmar won the Nobel in 1991 and when Shirin Ebadi of Iran received it in 2003.

"When awarded to promote domestic change, as it has been more often in recent years," Krebs writes of the prize, "it in fact mobilizes the forces opposed to change and impedes liberalization."

Touched

Gould standard

The piano virtuoso Glenn Gould was known for his eccentricities. Some of his recordings feature him humming (or, to some ears, groaning) over the music. He wore coats and gloves even in hot weather. And he hated physical contact. One instance of unwanted touching provoked him to cancel concerts and file a lawsuit, Brian Dillon recounts in *The Hypochondriacs* (Faber & Faber).

Eccentric pianist Glenn Gould samples Steinways several years before his touchy encounter.

In late 1959, Gould visited the Steinway & Sons piano company in New York City. An employee named William Hupfer, in Hupfer's account, patted him on the shoulder. Gould said, "Don't do that; I don't like to be touched." Hupfer apologized.

Within a few weeks, Gould was complaining of severe pain in his left hand. "When X-rayed the shoulder blade was shown to have been pushed down about one-half an inch," he claimed in one letter. In another, he wrote, "At the moment it looks very grim." In 1960 and 1961, he canceled many of his concerts and spent a month in a full-body cast. One of his physicians later said that Gould was physically fine.

A year after the incident, Gould filed a $300,000 suit against Steinway. He claimed that Hupfer had "brought both his forearms down with considerable force on plaintiff's left shoulder and neck," thereby injuring "the nerve roots in his neck and spinal discs in the neck region."

A few months later, Gould met with Henry Z. Steinway, president of the company, to discuss a settlement. Gould said he would drop the suit for just $9,372.35—his medical and legal expenses, omitting the costs he had incurred for canceled concerts. Steinway, relieved, agreed.

Evidently no longer in pain, Gould resumed his concert and recording schedule as well as his relationship with the piano company. Steinway instructed his staff to treat Gould politely when he appeared at the offices, but never to touch him. "The reasons for this," he said, "are self-evident."

—Stephen Bates

The Rise of Juristocracy

When rights are at issue, Americans instinctively turn to the courts. It is an undemocratic habit that they have exported, along with the underlying institutions, with dismaying success.

BY JAMES GRANT

The United States may not be the world's indispensable nation, as its secretary of state famously claimed a dozen years ago, but it has certainly been the indispensable inspiration in the global spread of democracy. The irony is that while this has not led to a great deal of imitation of American institutions such as the presidency, the single most widely replicated feature of the American political system is also its most undemocratic one.

Since the end of World War II, there has been a worldwide convergence toward U.S.-style judicial supremacy—or what some observers now call "juristocracy." In both long-established and new democracies, as Ran Hirschl shows in his excellent book *Towards Juristocracy* (2004), constitutional reforms have taken political power away from elected politicians and shifted it to unelected judges. When democracies were established in Southern Europe in the 1970s, in Latin America in the 1980s, and in Central and Eastern Europe and South Africa in the 1990s, they almost all included a strong judiciary and a bill of rights.

Of the mature democracies that have embraced juristocracy in the postwar rights revolution, Israel is one of the most extreme examples. As Aharon Barak, the president of the Israeli Supreme Court from 1995 to 2006, once claimed, "Nothing falls beyond the purview of judicial review. The world is filled with law; everything and anything is justiciable." Even the most contentious questions—such as "Who is a Jew?"—were questions for the court to answer. Barak made it clear that the main influence on his approach was the U.S. Supreme Court, the decisions of which were "shining examples of constitutional thought and constitutional action."

From the beginning, Americans have embraced and idolized the notion of fundamental, higher-order, immutable law that is somehow superior to politics. It is a view that entails rights enshrined in a constitution and interpreted by judges, who extend their authority over ever larger domains. In the 20th century, the U.S. Supreme Court demonstrated an increasing readiness to

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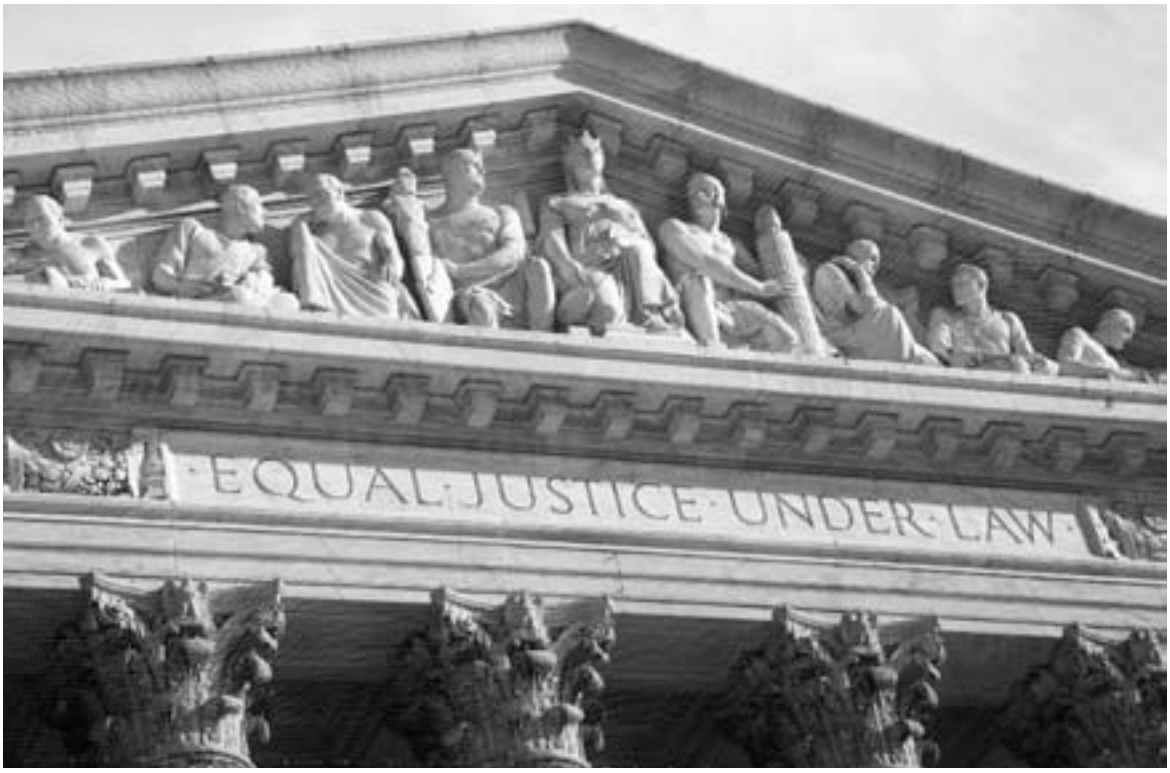

With its far-reaching powers, the U.S. Supreme Court is the envy of jurists around the world and increasingly a model for political reforms.

actively resolve politically controversial issues, from *Roe v. Wade* (1973), which established the right to abortion, to its decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* earlier this year, which overturned legislation that barred corporations from sponsoring political ads to influence elections—a "devastating" ruling, as President Barack Obama described it, which "strikes at our democracy itself."

Modern judicial activism is in many ways an expression of the old belief that democracy must be tempered by aristocracy—an idea that was prevalent in the late 18th century and now masquerades in democratic garb. The main vehicle by which judicial activism has been brought about is, of course, the language of rights. Coinciding with the articulation of the secular, anti-religious feelings of the Enlightenment, the flourishing of constitutional debate in the 18th century witnessed regular appeals to the idea of inalienable natural rights, which took on a sacred role. But it was only in the latter half of the 20th century that the idea (now described as human rights) became an intrinsic part of legal and political discourse. For many today, a world without rights enforced by a judiciary is unthinkable. Especially in undemocratic regimes and in new or unstable democracies beset by deep corruption and other ills, rights-based judicial review is a necessary protection against arbitrary government. But in ostensibly healthier democracies, it inevitably comes at a cost.

Until recently, parliamentary systems such as Britain's were firmly based on the belief that rights-based judicial review has a price not worth paying. Britain is one of the few remaining countries that lack a written (or codified) constitution. That is not to say that Britain does not have a constitution—or that it does not take rights seriously—but rather that the constitution is to some extent flexible, and that the protection of human rights is contingent on the democratic will of Parliament. From this perspective, a bill of rights is merely, in the words of one constitutional specialist, "the statement of a political conflict pretending to be a resolution of it."

Rights, as political claims, must compete with other political claims, must fight the political fight—a conflict that is not resolved by using rights as trumps. In what circumstances should, say, liberty prevail over security and vice versa? By handing such decisions to the judiciary, juristocracy denies citizens their democratic right to participate in the political decision-making process.

In their responses to the inescapable choices—between rights and democracy, minority rule and majority rule, law and politics—the prevailing views in the United States and Britain in recent times could not have been further apart. Paradoxically, however, in the Revolutionary era—a critical period for both the U.S. and British constitutions—the American republic was largely influenced by a British practice in which public debate was suffused with a culture of law. Law was seen as a critical part of intellectual life and something that all educated gentlemen should study.

At the same time, however, the two countries began to diverge in their approaches to law. One reason for this was the different way the Enlightenment was felt on each side of the Atlantic. Whereas in Britain the Enlightenment had the effect of reducing respect for law, which was now seen as tradition bound and reactionary, in America lawyers were among the most radical thinkers, and largely replaced the clergy as the dominant force in American culture and public affairs. Believing that parliamentary tyranny was just as bad as royal tyranny, many American colonists placed their faith in fundamental law enshrined in a constitution—as John Adams famously put it, "a government of laws and not of men." Even Thomas Paine, an otherwise radical democrat, wrote admiringly in *Common Sense* (1776) that "in America the law is King. For as in absolute governments the King is law, so in free countries the law ought to be King."

At the time of the Founding, there was a strong demand in America for information on English common law—that long tradition of judge-made law derived from the wisdom of the judicial elite but said to embody the common sense of the nation. For Americans, by far the most influential defense of that tradition was Sir William Blackstone's famous *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765–69), which became so influential that in 1775 Edmund Burke announced that "they have sold nearly as many of Blackstone's *Commentaries* in America as in England." Common law was used to support claims of natural rights. According to Roger Sherman, who helped draft the Declaration of Independence, the British constitution was rooted "in the law of God and nature," and the colonies adopted common law "not as common law, but as the highest reason."

In Britain, however, Blackstone's views were severely criticized. One of the first to take him on was Edward Gibbon, who attacked Blackstone's defense of the mysteries of common law (with its roots "in barbarous ages, and since continued from a blind reverence to antiquity") as an attempt to perpetuate the privileged status of lawyers and judges in society. Gibbon argued that just as the clergy of all religions preferred traditional law to written law, so too did the lawyers, because it secured their status as the law's sole interpreter. The legal establishment, for obvious reasons, had an interest in making the law as obscure as possible.

Even more scathing than Gibbon was Jeremy Bentham, the utilitarian philosopher and jurist, whose criticisms of Blackstone were published in 1776 in a book titled *A Fragment on Government*. Having listened to Blackstone's lectures as a student at Oxford with "rebel ears," Bentham pursued a lifelong campaign against his work, one that was to prove critical in the development of the British constitution. Bentham is perhaps most famous for his claim that there are no inalienable natural rights, which he dismissed as "nonsense upon stilts." Rights for him were only political claims and opinions. The common-law tradition, he argued, was nothing more than an attempt to substitute the opinion of judges for that of the people as expressed in legislation. Why, he asked, should we prefer the opinion of the few to that of the many?

Although Bentham was opposed to the American Revolution when he wrote these criticisms of Blackstone, in his later years he came to embrace democracy, and to see America (or, as he preferred to call it, the "Anglo-American United States") as the best example of democracy in action. But Bentham also recognized that while the "plague of despotism," by which he meant English rule, had been driven out of the United States, there remained the "plague of lawyers." In America, as Alexis de Tocqueville was later to put it, the aristocracy

of lawyers and judges provided a bulwark against the "excesses of democracy." They "secretly oppose their aristocratic propensities to the nation's democratic instincts, their superstitious attachment to what is old to its love of novelty, their narrow views to its immense designs, and their habitual procrastination to its ardent impatience." With the growth of what Alexander Hamilton called a "sacred respect for constitutional law," the law became a "civil religion" in secular America, and even progressive liberals started to praise the Supreme Court, not as a conservative bulwark against democracy but as an instrument of evolutionary progressive change.

It has long been assumed that in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) the Supreme Court unilaterally asserted the power, without any basis in the Constitution, to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional. This is wrong. The decision was relatively uncontroversial at the time, and there is overwhelming evidence to suggest that the power of judicial review was intended by some of the Framers. "Right from the nation's beginning," writes Gordon Wood, one of the leading historians of the period, the judiciary "acquired a special power that it has never lost." That is not to say that the Court was at first keen to exercise its power. It was only gradually, over the following two centuries, that judicial review came to mean judicial supremacy.

However, judicial review was far from uncontested at the time. Perhaps its most important critic was Thomas Jefferson, even though he was himself a lawyer who advocated a prominent role for lawyers in public affairs. Jefferson thought that most Americans, obsessed as they were with English common law, had completely lost sight of republicanism. Another great critic was James Madison, who believed that safeguards against the "excesses of democracy" were to be found in the checks and balances of the American political (as opposed to legal) system—a system that he, contrary to Jefferson, saw as partly aristocratic in design. As Madison noted in *The Federalist* 51, any power supposedly outside politics, such as the judiciary, could not be trusted, because it could easily end up espousing the views of an unjust majority or result in the tyranny of the minority, and "may possibly be turned against both parties."

Although Jefferson was committed to inalienable human rights, he had much in common with the more radical Bentham. Ignoring Madison's advice that a bill of rights could actually limit the people's rights (by restricting protection only to enumerated rights), Jefferson argued strenuously that the Constitution was inadequate without one—a view Madison was eventually compelled to accept. But Jefferson did not believe in a strong judiciary; in fact, he wanted to tame the judiciary and turn it into "a mere machine." Yes, the judiciary could enforce the Bill of Rights, but such enforcement would not entail judicial review of legislation, because the judges did not have a monopoly on the interpretation of the Constitution. Jefferson was deeply opposed to the common-law tradition because he thought that the only legitimate law was legislation emanating from the will of the people.

THOMAS JEFFERSON INSISTED on a bill of rights but he also hoped the judiciary would be "a mere machine."

That said, America's democratic tradition has never really been dominant. American constitutional history has instead been defined by the view of Hamilton, who argued that the "learned professions truly form no distinct interest in society" and, as such, were "an impartial arbiter." Responding to popular attacks on the aristocratic propensities of lawyers, but maintaining their belief that democratic politics was something to be feared, American lawyers in the early republic tried to convince themselves and the public that the judiciary was indeed independent and impartial. The ideal of the separation of powers was Montesquieu's "enthusiastic but mistaken tribute" to the British constitution, the philosopher Isaiah Berlin lamented, which misled Blackstone and resulted in the principle's being "much too faithfully adopted in the United States."

One of the main problems with the separation of powers theory is that it led to the erroneous belief that a strict distinction could be drawn between lawmaking and judicial decision making, the former being the legitimate function of the legislature. Justice Antonin Scalia is among those (now in a minority) who insist that judges should not "make" law; they should simply apply and interpret legislation. Judges, he insists, should not appeal to the idea of a "living constitution" or look to the purpose of the law or the intention of the legislature. If they do, they will be making a judgment based not on what the law in fact is but on what it ought to be. Instead, judges should look to the original meaning of the text. Scalia is ardently opposed to common-law tradition, chiefly because of his understanding of democracy: Unelected judges should not be lawmakers. As he sees it, only if judges follow the original meaning can judicial review be fully democratic and neutrally conducted.

AT THE START OF THE 20th century, liberals were strong believers in the virtues of judicial restraint.

But few today take seriously this conservative focus on the original meaning, which requires historical study (Bentham would say ancestor worship) and can give rise to countless competing interpretations. Most American legal thinkers instead take a view similar to that of the classical common-law lawyers. For them, when judges decide cases, they are applying the law that already exists in the form of the community's common principles, which may change over time. With their training and experience, judges, in this view, are best placed to work out what the community's common principles are (or, more accurately, what they ought to be). As Alexander Bickel wrote in his seminal work *The Least Dangerous Branch* (1962)—which derived its title from Hamilton's description of the judiciary—the Supreme Court is the "guardian" of the nation's values, a role it has vastly expanded in recent decades.

The most prominent modern defender of this kind of judicial supremacy is Ronald Dworkin, the doyen of liberal legalism. Writing in *The New York Review of Books* last year, Dworkin criticized Justice Sonia Sotomayor for perpetuating the myth that law can be neutral with regard to political morality when, in her confirmation hearings, she repeatedly claimed that her constitutional philosophy was simply "fidelity to the law." Dworkin rightly saw this as a meaningless statement, and used the occasion to drive home his message that legal judgment requires a controversial decision based on principles of morality. For him, the very idea of neutrality is absurd.

Originally, liberals held quite a different view of the judiciary's role. It had become obvious to progressives at the start of the 20th century that the courts act politically. This was a time of conservative rulings, exemplified by *Lochner v. New York* (1905), in which the Supreme Court, reading its laissez-faire values into the Constitution, struck down a law limiting the working hours of bakers on the grounds that it was an unconstitutional interference with freedom of contract. The era marked a turning point in America for progressive jurists, of whom Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes was a prominent early example. In his dissent in *Lochner,* Holmes called for judicial restraint and argued that, in a democracy, the legislature and not the courts should decide such controversial issues. The legal realists, as these jurists became known, acknowledged that judges' political biases played a key role in judicial decision making, and that judicial decision making unavoidably entailed judicial lawmaking.

After the Court started to issue progressive rulings during the New Deal, however, liberal criticism petered out. Earl Warren's tenure as chief justice (1953–69)—which is most famous for its decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) outlawing racial segregation in public schools—was every bit as political as the *Lochner* era. Liberals found it very easy to agree with the Court's judicial activism because the justices were reading their liberal values into the Constitution. The difficulty, however, was that having supported the Court's increased

Colonial Americans revered the law, but as William Hogarth's *The Bench* (1758) suggests, that view was not widely shared in the mother country.

politicization during the Warren era, liberals found it difficult to make any tenable criticisms when conservative rulings reappeared during the tenure of Chief Justice William Rehnquist (1986–2005). Dworkin had argued that judges should decide cases according to their political morality, and that was precisely what the Rehnquist Court—with its apogee in *Bush v. Gore* (2000)—was doing (and what the Roberts Court continues to do).

The conversion of American liberals to the case for a political role for the Court coincided with the growth of support around the world, accelerated by World War II, for judicially enforceable human rights—culminating in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. According to the philosopher John Gray, this trend was an important development of "the older liberal project, or illusion, of *abolishing politics*, or of so constraining it by legal and constitutional formulae that it no longer matters what are the outcomes of political deliberation." In a democracy, this is unacceptable, which is why the British system, based on the legislative supremacy of Parliament, has generally sought to resolve questions of human rights by turning to elected politicians rather than unelected judges.

The British system, however, is far from perfect. Take, for example, the fact that government ministers continue to derive many powers from the monarch and not from Parliament. This and other problems (such as the ability of the government to con-

trol Parliament through its backbench members) generally stem from the insufficiency of parliamentary power. But rather than strengthen Parliament to ensure more effective accountability, Britain is strengthening the power of the courts. In *The New British Constitution* (2009), Oxford professor of government Vernon Bogdanor explains that, almost without anyone noticing, "a new constitution is in the process of being created before our eyes." The traditional supremacy of Parliament is being undermined, and the judiciary is now taking center stage.

In the 1990s, the British courts—without any constitutional basis—began to use the language of fundamental constitutional rights. In 1998, Parliament itself passed the Human Rights Act, incorporating into domestic law the catalog of basic rights (such as the rights to life, privacy, and free expression) set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (1950). The act, which Bogdanor approvingly calls the "cornerstone of the new British constitution," did not give judges the power to declare legislation unconstitutional, but it seems inevitable that they will move in that direction. This was made explicit last fall, when the new Supreme Court of the United Kingdom replaced the House of Lords as the highest court in Britain. According to Lord Collins, who is one of its 12 justices, the new court will become like its U.S. counterpart: "perhaps not so pivotal as the American Supreme Court, but certainly playing a much more central role in the legal system and approaching the American ideal of a government of laws and not of men."

If Britain does have a new constitution, it is unique in the manner in which it has been created. More than 10 years ago, at the outset of New Labor's constitutional reforms, David Marquand, a public intellectual and former Labor MP, described the changes as "the muddled, messy work of practical men and women, unintellectual when not positively anti-intellectual, apparently oblivious of the long tradition of political and constitutional reflection of which they are the heirs, responding piecemeal and ad hoc to conflicting pressures." Infatuated with the U.S. Constitution and ignorant of their own, British politicians are in danger of losing a system that, in the words of Lord Balfour in 1928, is happily conducive to "the never-ending din of political conflict."

For every defender of liberty, however, the desire to put one's faith in the courts is especially great when, as now, civil liberties are being eroded in the name of national security. The U.S. Supreme Court's ruling in *Boumediene v. Bush* (2008), upholding the right of habeas corpus for foreign detainees in the Guantánamo Bay prison, was rightly seen as a great success. But even in this area, faith in judges can be misplaced. The usual stance of the judiciary when national security is at stake is—entirely understandably, of course—to defer to the executive. For example, in the famous wartime decision *Korematsu v. United States* (1944), the Supreme Court upheld an executive order authorizing the evacuation and detention of American citizens of Japanese descent from the West Coast. Such decisions can sap the energy from the political process. What better way for a president to defend his actions and quash debate than to point to the favorable opinion of judges?

It would be wrong to take this objection to the judiciary's guardian role too far. On many occasions, the courts have held the executive to account. From a democratic point of view, this is perfectly acceptable when the executive has exceeded the powers established by Congress. But, for the reason that Congress—unlike the courts—is democratically accountable to the people, Mark Tushnet, one of America's shrewdest constitutional commentators, has argued that judicial review should be abolished except when expressly sanctioned by Congress. The U.S. Constitution, he writes, needs to be "taken away from the courts."

Notwithstanding the recent constitutional reforms in Britain, Parliament continues to dominate the British constitution. "The British people," said Lord Bingham, the recently retired senior judge in the House of Lords, "have not repelled the extraneous power of the papacy in spiritual matters and the pretensions of royal power in temporal in order to subject themselves to the unchallengeable rulings of unelected judges." This was essentially Jefferson's argument. Only by turning away from juristocracy and back to figures such as Jefferson, can America—and the world—produce a system in which democracy will be capable of flourishing. ■

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Something Old, Something New

When the *WQ* published its first issue in 1976, the term "Internet" had just been coined. How times have changed! This spring, the *WQ* unveils its new Web site, the culmination of long deliberation and a painstaking design process.

As our faithful readers know, while the *WQ*'s looks have changed over the years (dare we say they've improved with age?), its commitment to balanced and authoritative writing about what matters most hasn't wavered. While we're still the same magazine you fell in love with, the magazine's production expenses continue to mount. We pride ourselves on running a tight ship—readers who drop by our offices at the Woodrow Wilson Center are often surprised to find a staff of just five editors—but belt-tightening can only take us so far. We refuse to compromise on quality—a bold line to draw in this era of dwindling page counts and shrinking articles.

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The Conscience of A Collector

As the years go by and his first editions gain in value, a once starry-eyed book collector is faced with questions beyond price.

BY JEFFREY SCHEUER

1. A REDISCOVERY

On a spring trip to Oregon in 2005 to look at colleges, my son and I stopped at Powell's bookstore in downtown Portland—a vast emporium of the printed word. After browsing for several hours, I discovered a magnificent rare-book room on an upper floor. To enter it was to penetrate a hushed sanctuary, a glass-enclosed, carpeted space with an entirely different ambiance from the rest of the store. Another hour passed as I browsed the modern first editions. I could easily have spent a whole day in there, grazing over titles, authors, bindings, covers, inscriptions, dedications. I had come home.

More than two decades earlier—almost in another life—I had collected modern first editions of American and British literature. I even wrote a few books myself, although I have found writing to be a solitary business, rewarding but costly. Before leaving the store, I impulsively purchased two books: a first edition of *Knight's Gambit* (1949), an obscure collection of short stories by William Faulkner; and a lovely two-volume 1930s edition of Alphonse Daudet's novella *The Tartarin of Tarascon,* a French adventure tale inspired by *Don Quixote,* originally published in 1872.

Jeffrey Scheuer is the author of *The Big Picture: Why Democracies Need Journalistic Excellence* (2007) and *The Sound Bite Society: How Television Helps the Right and Hurts the Left* (2001).

The Faulkner book was a perfunctory addition to my long-dormant collection. The Daudet volumes were more of an homage; my grandfather had once owned a painting based on the Tartarin story. I felt a great contentment after the visit to Powell's. I had reconnected with something in my past; I had become a collector again.

2. A LEGACY

Collecting may have been in my blood: My grandfather had been an avid acquirer of fine art. I was too young to share his singular passion during his lifetime, but in later years I remembered how he glowed whenever he talked about paintings or stood in their presence. He taught me about the pleasure of collecting—and much else. And he taught himself one of life's most rewarding tricks: not just to discern or appreciate, but to feel in one's very being the transformative power of art.

A highlight of his collection was a Van Gogh oil painting of a stagecoach inspired by the same Daudet novella that I purchased in Portland. As I later discovered, the classical scholar and translator Robert Fagles wrote a poem about this painting:

> *. . . I can smell the women, the leather, the dank straw,*
> *hear the bells and barking, see the stallions*
> *plunging south—*

Antiquarian bookstores, such as Boston's Brattle Book Shop, above, attract buyers who judge books by their covers—and their inscriptions and dust jackets.

Mount the ladder, draw it up,
the voice of the old diligence of Tarascon,
clear as a post horn calling Tartarin,
"Drive me, little hunter—
harness a team of four and crack your whip.
Provence, a highway paved with dreams is waiting—
You and I will travel like the wind!"

My grandfather would have liked that poem. (It was published in a book titled *I, Vincent* in 1978, four years after his death.) He revered not just paintings but the human stories behind the canvases: the trials of the artists, the quirks of dealers and collectors, the sometimes tortuous careers of the works themselves. Paintings, for him, told stories, and stories were life.

3. A PASSAGE

One benefit of aging is a deeper and less cerebral appreciation for arts and letters. In my twenties, collecting had seemed like a kind of piety toward my education and interests; now that I was in my fifties, it was more an end in itself. But if anyone asked why I bothered to collect books, I would still have to condense a complex set of motives into a simple statement: because I like them.

I began collecting modern first editions in the 1970s, during a year of graduate work in London. My records show that my initial purchases were made at Maggs Bros., a bookshop in Berkeley Square with the musty elegance of the better London antiquarians. The books were a couple of first editions of Joseph Conrad, including a copy of *Lord Jim*, which cost £50, or about $80 at the time.

When I stopped collecting, in the early 1980s, it was less a conscious decision than a natural life passage. It never felt like an ending. My little collection reflected the knowledge, interests, and curiosity I had acquired in col-

lege, where I had studied philosophy and literature. I had amassed about 200 American first editions, mostly 20th-century fiction, and another 100 or so British and Irish works. The emphasis was on favorite authors, including Conrad, Virginia Woolf, Mark Twain, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and William Faulkner. Now I had a family, a career, and other interests. Meanwhile, the books were there on my shelves to peruse, and for the pleasure of their mere presence.

I'm not sure why I stopped collecting. Acquiring books as an investment never occurred to me, but at some point I began to wonder whether such a collection had any cultural value beyond the pleasure it afforded the collector. And as I resumed the avocation, old questions inevitably reappeared: Where would the books end up after I was gone? Would they simply reenter the rare-book market and be scattered among other collectors in an endless cycle?

IN CONTRAST TO INVESTING in the stock market, collecting books poses little if any downside risk, barring theft or natural disaster. You can take rare books to the bank.

4. A RECKONING

Shortly after returning home to New York from the trip to Oregon, I heard that the annual Antiquarian Book Fair was about to take place in Manhattan. Attending the fair for the first time in several decades, in the cavernous armory on Park Avenue, I reintroduced myself to several book dealers whom I remembered. And as I wandered the long aisles and browsed the dozens of booths, I overheard a number of collectors saying, in effect, "I can't afford the prices anymore; I'm looking to sell, not to buy."

It dawned on me that the books I had purchased in the late 1970s and early '80s had not simply doubled or tripled in value; in many cases they had appreciated by multiples of 10 or 15, or even more. The flip side of the coin was that many coveted modern first editions were now out of reach. The copy of *Lord Jim* that had cost me the equivalent of $80 was now worth several thousand; likewise Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own,* put out by the Hogarth Press in 1929, which I had picked up in London in 1979 for £21—about $35 at the time. I felt a bit like Rip van Winkle.

A number of factors determine the market value of a rare book. (Prices are set by dealers; bargaining is seldom tolerated.) One is the literary quality of the author and the particular work. For example, a classic such as *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is wildly expensive in a first edition, as are some fine books by lesser writers, but not Hemingway's *Across the River and Into the Trees* (1950), widely considered one of his worst. Other factors include the rarity of its first edition, and especially the first printing of that edition (if there was more than one), with the size of the press run, which is typically smaller for older books, also coming into play. The overall physical condition of the book, in particular the condition of the dust jacket, if it has survived, also matters, as does the presence of an autograph or inscription by the author. (Jackets, which first began to appear in the early 20th century, add greatly to the value of a book if they survive in good condition. More vulnerable than the books themselves, jackets may tear, chip, stain, discolor, or be damaged or destroyed by owners, and are routinely discarded by libraries.)

An owners' signature, a personal inscription, a bookplate, a dust jacket from which the printed price has been clipped (usually a diagonal cut on the upper-right corner of the inside left flap), and any deterioration—chipping, foxing, fading, or other marks of shelf wear or decay—all lessen the value of a book. But in the end, of course, it comes down to what other collectors or dealers are willing to pay.

Rare books in general have appreciated at a rate far exceeding inflation. A rough guess, based on my own collecting experience, would put the figure at 12 to 15 per-

cent a year for high-quality books in good condition. The supply of vintage titles is dwindling as they filter into long-term collections and libraries. They don't make first editions of Faulkner anymore, and newer books are printed in larger runs; for instance, Ian McEwan's novel *Solar,* published in April, saw a first press run of 300,000 copies. Demand seems to be steady or rising.

But even that 12 to 15 percent estimate overlooks an important fact. When one is dealing in known quantities—major books by recognized authors—there is little chance of their losing value, as long as their condition is preserved and there is a marketplace of collectors. So, in contrast to investing in the stock market, collecting books poses little if any downside risk, barring theft or natural disaster. You can take rare books to the bank.

Re-energized after the Book Fair, I began updating my collection records for each volume. This turned out to be an arduous task, involving the painstaking revision of lists from an original computerized inventory and a lot of crosschecking and fact-finding. In the course of this housekeeping, I discovered that I hadn't entirely given up collecting after all. In fact, I had quietly added a dozen or so rare books to my shelves over the years and forgotten about them. What I had stopped doing was thinking of myself as a collector.

It was not long before I began bidding for rare books on eBay. There is a compulsive quality to electronic bidding; it's rather like electronic solitaire. There's also some risk involved, particularly because you can't see and handle a book before buying it and must rely on descriptions and photos, but there's enough reward to make it worthwhile. At first, there seemed to be something grubby or mercenary about the anonymous bidding process, but I soon got over that. It's too much fun.

Part of the pleasure is in the sheer suspense of not knowing whether your bid will hold. And there are occasional great bargains to be had, if one selects and bids carefully. (My most recent coup was a signed copy of Malcolm Cowley's 1941 book of poems *The Dry Season,* for less than $50.) In general, I have found that with dealers the best values are in the low range, below about $200 or $300, and with eBay they are even lower. When I first began collecting, I was able to find many attractive volumes for under $100; these are getting scarcer—except occasionally on eBay. Very few books have lured me above the $1,000 mark, and I'd be less likely to pay more on eBay than with a dealer. One exception was a signed first edition of Norman MacLean's 1976 gem *A River Runs Through It and Other Stories.* I simply had to have it. More recently, I found a copy of Rupert Brooke's *1914 and Other Poems* in a used-book store in New England for $35; it proved to be a first edition and worth considerably more. I felt uneasy that the seller either didn't know the book's true value or was unable to find a market for it.

I have no doubt overpaid for a few books as well. I remain an amateur collector in a field where professional dealers have a fair advantage in their greater knowledge of books and the market. At this point I have no desire to sell books, and neither the time nor the interest to acquire the sometimes arcane knowledge that would elevate me to the next level: knowledge about the minutiae of particular titles, their printing histories, and "points"—the otherwise trivial errors, corrections, and other distinguishing marks that help to indicate (but do not always prove conclusively) just how valuable a given copy of a given book is.

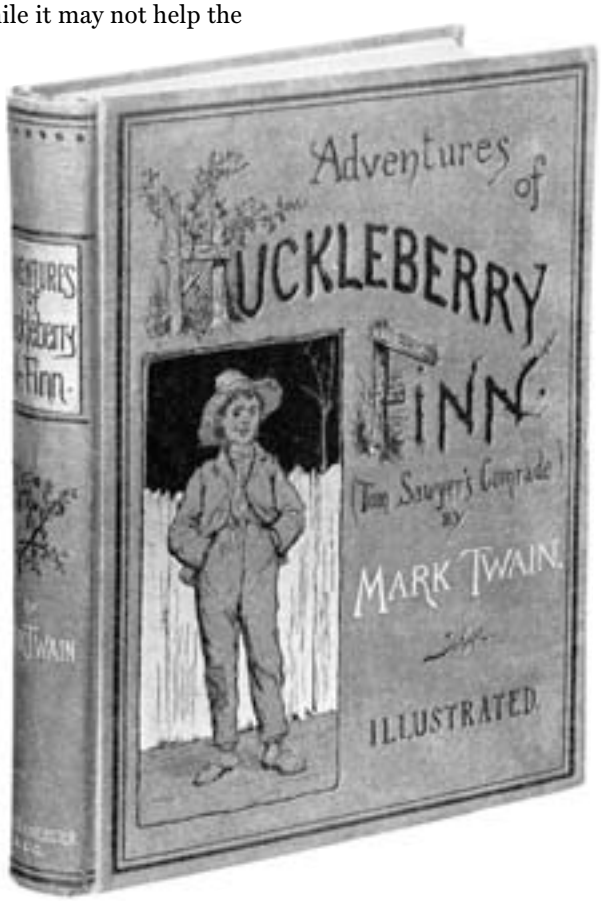
Of course, I prefer books in good condition. But I don't much care about the finer distinctions in the condition of a book or its jacket that can sometimes mean large differences in value. Normally, there is no intrinsic or material difference between a first and a later edition, except that the first is scarcer and older (sometimes only by a matter of weeks). Yet I have seen a copy of Hemingway's *Men Without Women* with a second-issue dust wrapper listed for $4,000, and another with an unrestored (and scarcer) first-issue jacket listed for $28,500.

5. TO HAVE AND TO HOLD

Since returning to the collectors' fold, I have come to see my collection overall more as an investment—though no less a reflection of my passion for literature. The change was an inevitable but bittersweet result of the growth of the collection and the passage of time. On one hand, I see nothing intrinsically

wrong with investing in rare books as a way of conserving their value, whether material or cultural. It is done with artwork all the time; and unlike collecting works of art, collecting books does not mean sometimes withholding them from the public. Fortunately, great literature will survive even when, in the relatively near future, the earlier editions have all turned to dust. Until then, while it may not help the world and does no obvious service to literature, keeping those early books alive a century or two longer through personal attachment and care is probably not a bad thing.

Yet despite that conviction, I was uneasy at first about my shift of perspective. It was like discovering a Mercedes in your garage where you had left a Volkswagen years before. You aren't sure how it happened, you're a bit shy about taking it out on the road, and you're not used to being seen in a Mercedes. And at some level, the idea of saving books for posterity conflicts with the idea of potentially making money off them. You can't have it both ways—or can you?



A first edition of *Huckleberry Finn* can cost as much as a new car.

My enthusiasm for collecting hasn't waned, but this new awareness has been a decidedly mixed blessing, involving a loss of innocence. It has replaced some of the idealism with which I began collecting years ago, when I was only conscious of costs and not of possible future gains. Collecting is more complicated than before—but in some ways more enjoyable.

Although I had hoped to round out my collection, in the months after my Portland epiphany I soon saw that it would take another 150 to 200 acquisitions just to bring my American literature to a vague threshold of completeness, and doing that would take years. First editions of certain classics are now approaching six figures (and are probably good investments nevertheless). A first American edition of *Moby-Dick,* for example (which was published in London a month before its November 1851 release in the United States), was recently listed for $67,500. Titles such as Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (an inscribed copy of which was recently listed for $150,000) and Fitzgerald's *Flappers and Philosophers* are similarly out of reach for most collectors in jacketed first editions.

But if anything, this makes collecting more interesting, forcing one to think more strategically about purchases. It is even perversely comforting to know that some items are unobtainable, because it's a reminder that collecting is open-ended: No general collection can ever be complete. I have the 1930 Random House edition of *Moby-Dick,* powerfully illustrated by Rockwell Kent, and for me that is more than good enough. On the other hand, I recently passed on a reasonably priced but jacketless copy of Zelda Fitzgerald's *Save Me the Waltz* (1932)—a blunder, as an affordable copy may not come around again.

6. COLLECTING AND CULTURE

Questions about collecting in general, and its purpose, have shadowed me since my rediscovery of rare books in Portland. They parallel questions about my grandfather and art: Why does one bother amassing a

collection, and for whose ultimate benefit? What, if anything, gives such a collection value—cultural, financial, emotional, aesthetic—that is greater than the sum of its parts? Or is the sum of the parts enough?

The fact is that a collection takes on a life of its own in the mind of the collector, and thus acquires a subjective value—even a reality—beyond what any observer might see in it. It is invariably a reflection of its creator; if it weren't, collecting would simply be a form of investment. So to collect is to indulge in a kind of myopia, if perhaps a useful or at least harmless kind.

Book collecting is widely perceived as a "civilized" preoccupation—perhaps too much so. Collectors aren't public servants or natural nobility; we aren't the ones who write the stuff. At best, we are useful stewards who care for the books and pass them on to posterity.

Paintings and sculpture are clearly different as unique artifacts; one must consider issues such as public access, and the risks and rewards of letting them travel for exhibitions. But I have found no way to reconcile the cultural ideal of preserving copies of great books in their original form with the reality of their monetary value.

In less noble moments, the idea of treating rare books strictly as investment vehicles has a powerful allure: Forget about the complicated business of cultural stewardship, and just buy, sell, and have fun. This avoids the dilemmas and dithering about cultural vs. material values. Material values are decided for you by the marketplace. At the same time, it would be nice to return to the innocence of my early days as a collector, when I looked at books and saw only their beauty.

Ultimately, of course, neither of these blinkered approaches succeeds on its own. Like paintings, rare books straddle the line between culture and mammon, and that is at least part of what makes them so interesting. That's the Catch-22, as it were, of collecting.

More than 30 years have passed since my grandfather's death. His small but highly regarded collection is owned by a foundation and ensconced in a university museum. But with succeeding generations, similar questions arise on a larger scale: How should such a cultural resource be managed for posterity? Where should it be housed? Who, in the end, should decide its fate, and when *is* that end? And what is the value of the collection as such—the particular assemblage of works in it? Could it be equally or more valuable to society if dispersed to other collectors or institutions? Collections are all about personal attachment, and attachment is good, but it is subjective. How could anyone walk into my library and feel what I feel?

I can't help cringing at the thought of my book collection being broken up and auctioned off, even to other passionate collectors. Why amass it merely to disperse it again after a time? Yet many collectors have done precisely this, even in their lifetimes, and with enthusiasm. For instance, the author Cyril Connolly amassed a great library of rare books only to sell them off at Sotheby's auction house. In his later years, the American collector Helmut Friedlaender likewise sold his collection at auction, and then turned around and began a new one. I can't explain why my particular volumes somehow belong together, let alone in my keeping.

First and foremost, one wants the books to be safe, knowing that, as paper objects, they won't last forever. They should be accessible to people who care about them, although such access could only shorten their life expectancy. Just as great watercolors must not be overexposed to light, some rare books are too fragile to be handled often or read casually. Shut away in climate-controlled vaults, they might seem of little value to anyone. Yet maybe that is exactly where they belong, after all: in time capsules, so that future cultural historians can see, and explain to others, how we stored knowledge and imagination.

Book collecting may not be the best use of my time, but it is a rewarding hobby, and a great game. In my case, it's above all an homage to writers I admire, but it's also the impulse to collect, to organize, to somehow reflect through one's own exertions a larger cultural landscape. Certain aspects of it continue to puzzle me. But all puzzles don't need to be solved; some things—especially beautiful things—can remain mysteries. If we cannot find answers, we can at least follow Rilke's advice and learn to love the questions. ■

America's Changeable Civil War

A century and a half after the first state seceded from the Union, a lively debate over what caused the Civil War continues.

BY CHRISTOPHER CLAUSEN

As the Civil War Sesquicentennial approaches cruising speed, North and South look a great deal more alike than they did on the eve of the war's last great anniversary just 50 years ago. That much-heralded celebration coincided with the rise of the civil rights movement with a precision that was almost too good to be true. A century after Gettysburg, President John F. Kennedy had just proposed the bill that would become the Civil Rights Act of 1964. When the centennial of Appomattox rolled around, Congress was about to pass the 1965 Voting Rights Act, and few people were paying much attention to ceremonies on old battlefields.

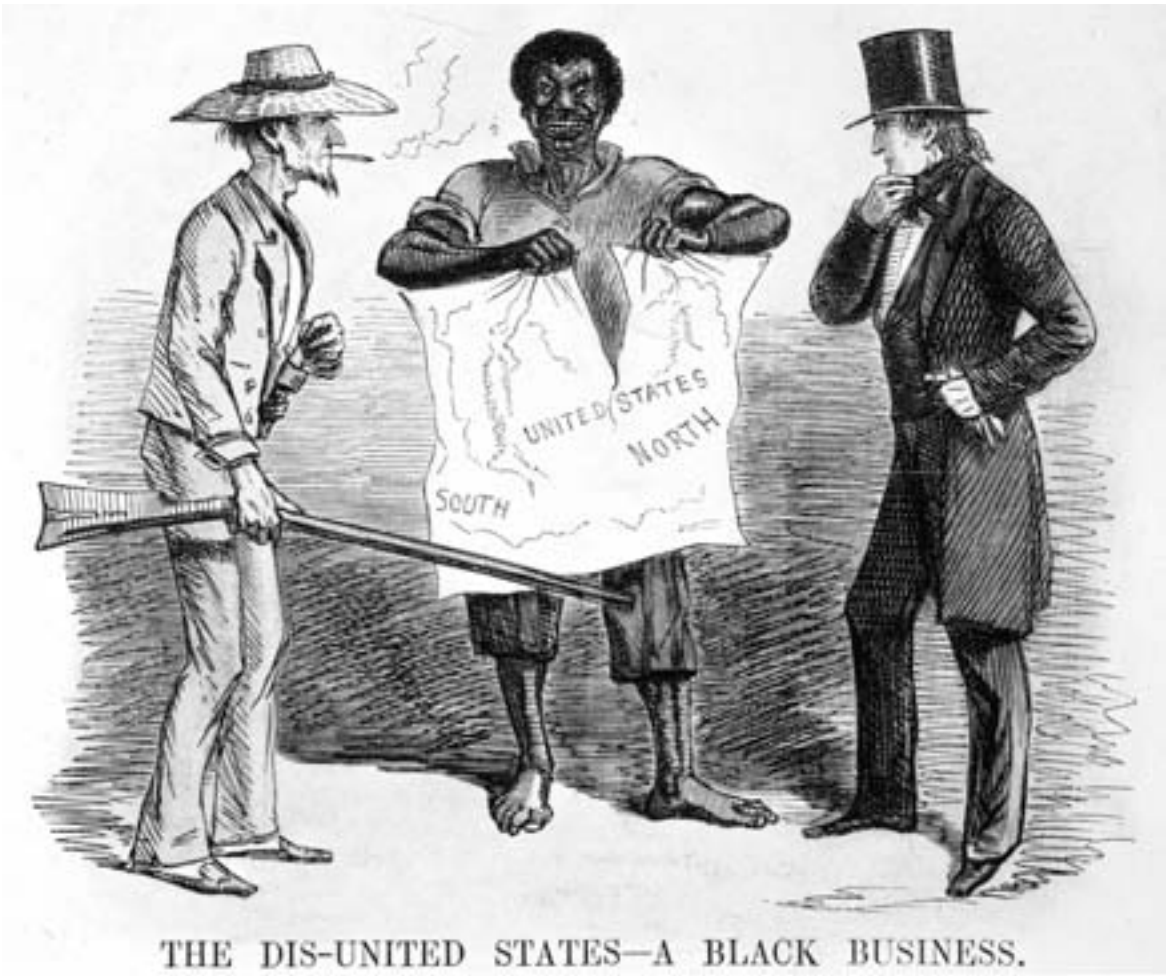
The fact that the White House is now occupied by a man born during the Civil War Centennial to a mother from Kansas and a father from Kenya represents a historical development hardly imaginable at the time, yet all but the most regressive now accept it as perfectly natural. The major civil rights laws of the 1960s are so well established that whatever disagreements may arise in their application, few Americans understand—or can even imagine—what life was like without them. Sometimes progress takes the form of historical amnesia.

Yet the question of what the Civil War was about, and therefore what was actually won and lost, is less settled than you might expect after 150 years. Both sides fought with determination, but their motives were shifting and sometimes ambiguous. To add to the confusion, as soon as conflict ended, the losing party readjusted its position sufficiently to win back in peacetime not only a more positive historical reputation, but some very tangible benefits.

When Jefferson Davis of Mississippi resigned from the U.S. Senate after his state left the Union—the second to do so, after South Carolina seceded on December 20, 1860—he made a much-praised speech explaining his reasons. The essence of it was simple: "We but tread in the paths of our fathers when we proclaim our independence . . . not in hostility to others, not to injure any section of the country, not even for our own pecuniary benefit, but from the high and solemn motive of defending and protecting the rights we inherited, and which it is our duty to transmit unshorn to our children." Defenders of the South since the war have taken much the same position. The 11 states that briefly constituted the Confederacy left the Union, they have said, for much the same reason the original 13 colonies left the British Empire. They fought to protect what they considered inalienable rights.

Not only did most secessionists believe in the constitutionality of their actions, the Pulitzer Prize–winning histo-

Christopher Clausen, the author of *Faded Mosaic* (2000) and other books, writes frequently about the Civil War and historical memory.



No ambiguity about the cause of the approaching American Civil War is evident in this 1856 British cartoon, but its view was not universally shared.

rian James M. McPherson has argued; they did indeed represent "traditional rights and views" about the relationship between the states and central government, views about which the North had largely changed its mind since the adoption of the Constitution. That is not to say that slavery was not the fundamental issue, in McPherson's view; it was indeed slavery, he asserts, that made the North-South division deep and irreconcilable. The election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860, along with a Republican Congress hostile to the interests of the South, led those who favored secession—an overwhelming majority of white Southerners, McPherson concludes—to feel that the North had violated the compact embodied by the Union. Secession amounted to a preemptive counterrevolution against the Republicans' revolution.

Whether or not they owned slaves, Southerners almost universally professed the doctrine known then and now as states' rights, grounded in the federal system as originally understood, at least by the followers of Thomas Jefferson. When the South lost, states' rights lost with it, and the unquestionable supremacy of the central government has been with us ever since. That abstract phrase "states' rights" as used before the Civil War immediately prompts the question, states' rights to what? "The right to own slaves," McPherson explains, "the right to take this property into the territories; freedom from the coercive powers of a centralized government."

There is, of course, no logical connection between local

autonomy and racial oppression. Insofar as they coincided in this instance, it was an accident of history, as some perceptive contemporaries recognized. Bound up with the defense of an odious institution to which the South had committed itself in word and deed were some positive values—the federal system, limited government, the defense of one's homeland against long odds—that many Americans in both the North and the South would continue to profess. Lord Acton, the English apostle of liberty, strongly supported the Confederacy while loathing slavery. "History," he explained, "does not work with bottled essences, but with active combinations." Acton defended his position by arguing that a federal structure like the American one, whose balance of central and local powers he felt the North was destroying, would be the best means for a future united Europe to avoid the dangers of nationalism. He was a man in some ways clearly ahead of his time.

REDUCING THE CIVIL WAR to a dispute over slavery almost requires portraying it as a conflict of good against evil.

For the seven states that seceded first, however, distinguishing between slavery and states' rights was a waste of breath. These were the Cotton States, and four of them—South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, and Texas—issued mini-declarations of independence explaining what possessed them to end a union that had begun in revolution 85 years earlier. Fortunately for the Confederacy, whose success depended in large part on achieving recognition and assistance from antislavery Europe, these declarations, with their tedious legalisms and tendentious histories of the slavery controversy in American politics, went largely unread. South Carolina complained that Northerners had systematically shirked their constitutional obligation to return escaped slaves and were now inciting "servile insurrection." Texas made similar claims in pseudo-Jeffersonian language, adding for good measure that the federal government had failed to protect white Texans from raids by hostile Indians and Mexican "banditti." In a rare lapidary sentence, Jefferson Davis's Mississippi candidly proclaimed: "Our position is thoroughly identified with the institution of slavery—the greatest material interest of the world."

Because slavery is one feature of the American past that long ago lost all its defenders, explaining the war solely in these terms almost requires portraying it as a conflict of good against evil. Many academic historians who fervently support diplomatic compromise and peace processes in today's world largely endorse the Lincoln administration's refusal of those means in the 1860s and its determination to prevail unconditionally, no matter what the scale of death and devastation. This shift in the interpretations of historians became dominant after the civil rights movement and can be seen even in the titles of major works, as the Mississippi novelist Shelby Foote's evenhanded *The Civil War: A Narrative* (1958–1974) was soon challenged by McPherson's more militant *Battle Cry of Freedom* (1988). The Lincoln administration's gradual transition from reluctant prosecutor of a war undertaken merely to save the Union to the Emancipation Proclamation and, by 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment, is one of the familiar legends of American history.

Less familiar is the postbellum change of emphasis by Southern writers in their depiction of the motives behind the Confederate cause, from the defense of slavery to the more abstract and sympathetic protection of limited government, states' rights, and the freedom of a local majority to decide its own political destiny. Identifying their new nation inextricably with slavery made foreign support more difficult to attract, especially once the North decided it was explicitly fighting for emancipation. By the same token, once defeat came, Southerners who wished to save something from the ruins needed to redefine their reasons for resisting so valiantly. This necessity applied not only to the historical record, but also to their immediate political needs in grappling with Reconstruction.

Edward A. Pollard, a Richmond newspaper editor, began writing a history of the war almost as soon as it began and published several installments while it was still going on. In explaining secession to Southern readers in 1862, he recounted at length the controversy over slavery from its beginnings through the Missouri Compromise of

Nearly 30 years after he was hung for trying to foment a slave rebellion, abolitionist John Brown still stirred feelings strong enough to inspire this sentimentalized depiction of his 1859 trip to the gallows.

1820, the Compromise of 1850, and Bleeding Kansas down to what he saw as the North's treachery in embracing Hinton Rowan Helper's antislavery tract *The Impending Crisis of the South* (1857) and John Brown's effort to start a slave rebellion with his raid at Harpers Ferry in 1859. Treachery was, Pollard maintained, the basis of nearly all Northern politics, and was demonstrated even by those Northerners who seemed to share Southern convictions about the scope of federal power: "While acting with the South on empty or accidental issues," he complained, "the 'State Rights' men of the North were, for all practical purposes, the faithful allies of the open and avowed consolidationists on the question that most seriously divided the country—that of negro slavery." Sneering at the successive compromises that had averted war for so long, Pollard praised the militancy of South Carolina and ended his account of the war's background with a portentous description of the state of affairs on the day of Lincoln's inauguration: "Abolitionism and Fanaticism had not yet lapped blood. But reflecting men saw that the peace was deceitful and temporizing; that the temper of the North was impatient and dark; and that, if all history was not a lie, the first incident of bloodshed would be the prelude to a war of monstrous proportions."

When Pollard published a complete version of his history for a national audience in 1866 under the title *The Lost Cause*, his account of the war's background underwent considerable alteration. Although "a political North and a political South" were already recognized when the Constitution was adopted, slavery was not really the issue. "The slavery question is not to be taken as an independent controversy in American politics. It was not a moral dispute. It was the mere incident of a sectional animosity"—that is, a pretext for the North's jealousy of the South's greater power in the early Republic.

While protesting that Southern slavery "was really the mildest in the world," Pollard declared tactfully that "we shall not enter upon the discussion of the moral question of slavery." As an institution, it was gone forever; defending it now would simply prejudice Northern readers further against the South. Instead, he repeated, "the slavery question was not a moral one in the North, unless, perhaps, with a few thousand persons of disordered conscience. It was significant only of a contest for political power, and afforded nothing more than a convenient ground of dispute between two parties, who represented not two moral theories, but

In 1870, President Ulysses S. Grant signed the 15th Amendment, guaranteeing African Americans the right to vote—a promise that was soon bargained away.

hostile sections and opposite civilizations." Needless to say, Southern civilization in Pollard's eyes was more elevated and honorable than that of the "coarse and materialistic" North.

Pollard's immensely popular book quickly became the standard Southern history of the war, a status it retained for decades in part because it made slavery a side issue in a war that was really fought by the South for states' legitimate rights and by the North for sheer power. This position, still popular among Southern commemorative organizations and Confederate reenactors, made possible the abiding romantic image of the Lost Cause. It was not made up entirely out of whole cloth. As a Virginian, Pollard had pointed out even in 1862 that the states of the upper South (Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, and Tennessee) chose not to secede over Lincoln's election and left the Union only when the North began a war of coercion against their departed sisters. Since Virginia was the most important Southern state, site of more battles than any other, and home of the preeminent Confederate hero, Robert E. Lee (a man who had reluctantly followed his reluctant state out of the Union), its motives and sufferings were crucial to rehabilitating the failed Confederacy itself.

Another newspaper editor, Henry Grady of Atlanta, proved even more successful at restoring the South's honor by retouching the historical record. "The New South," a much-reprinted 1886 speech Grady delivered to an audience of New Englanders, stands as a completed monument to a civilization that had fought gallantly for eminently moral reasons, lost through no fault of its own, and was now starting anew better than ever—a region of honorable gentlemen and pure ladies whom any nation would be proud to embrace as fellow citizens. After paying graphic tribute to the poor "hero in gray with a heart of gold" returning from Appomattox to a devastated homeland, he turned to the demise of slavery: "The South found her jewel in the toad's head of defeat. The shackles that had held her in narrow limitations fell forever when the shackles of the Negro slave were broken. Under the old regime, the Negroes were slaves to

the South, the South was a slave to the system." Without slavery, the South was far better off than it had been before the war. "The New South," Grady announced, "presents a perfect democracy," in which former masters and former slaves alike would experience "the light of a grander day." It was an age of florid oratory.

When he spoke of the war itself, Grady, whose father had died for the Confederacy, was less conciliatory. "The South has nothing for which to apologize. She believes that the late struggle between the States was war and not rebellion, revolution and not conspiracy, and that her convictions were as honest as yours. I should be unjust to the dauntless spirit of the South and to my own convictions if I did not make this plain in this presence. The South has nothing to take back." For Grady and his enthusiastic audiences, the outcome of the war spoke for itself, and his assurance that the New South fully accepted reunion and emancipation left no fundamental issues unresolved. As Shelby Foote described the beginnings of postwar harmony, "the victors acknowledged that the Confederates had fought bravely for a cause they believed was just and the losers agreed it was probably best for all concerned that the Union had been preserved."

After 1865, then, Southern apologists hardly ever claimed that the country or the region would have been better off had slavery survived. States' rights, of course, was another matter. A decade before Grady put the final rhetorical seal on it, the subtle alteration in the Southern position had encouraged Northerners to revert to what might be called "default federalism," a more traditional understanding of the constitutional system modified only by the conclusion that slavery and secession had been settled for all time. Fifteen years after Fort Sumter, ordinary citizens in the North and their political leaders were looking for an exit strategy from a devastated, occupied, but still defiant South in the throes of the bitterly hated Reconstruction. The outcome of the 1876 presidential election was disputed amid massive fraud, and a commission ultimately had to settle it. The eventual result was a bargain that historians today, following C. Vann Woodward's classic *Reunion and Reaction* (1951), uniformly denounce as the shameful beginning of an era of segregation and white supremacy that lasted until the middle of the 20th century.

The South agreed, in effect, to allow the Republican candidate, Rutherford B. Hayes, to take office. The new president and congressional leadership agreed in turn to withdraw the last occupation troops from the South and let the vanquished run their ruined states according to their own prejudices. Broadly speaking, state governments were free to pass any laws that did not overtly challenge the authority of the federal government or outrage the elastic conscience of a national majority. So long as they made no attempt to secede or reinstitute slavery, white Southerners were free to build monuments to the Confederate soldier in every county seat, romanticize the Lost Cause to their hearts' content, and deny the rights of citizenship to anyone with a visible fraction of African DNA.

This agreement, sometimes referred to as the Compromise of 1877, finally ended the Civil War, though at a heavy cost. That it sold out the recently freed slaves is beyond question. So, unfortunately, is the fact that a deal of this sort was unavoidable. If you force the inhabitants of 11 states to remain part of your country after defeating them in a conflict that took 600,000 lives, but shrink from ruling them indefinitely by martial law, you have to compromise sooner or later in ways that may distress future generations. As Woodward expressed it in a 1958 speech at Gettysburg College, the North had fought the war and imposed Reconstruction for three reasons: to save the Union, to abolish slavery, and, more equivocally, to bring about racial equality. The first two aims were achieved and soon accepted, however grudgingly, by the South. The third, seemingly assured by constitutional amendments and supporting legislation, was bargained away for most of another century.

"It would be an ironic, not to say tragic, coincidence," Woodward wrote on the eve of the Centennial, "if the celebration of the anniversary took place in the midst of a crisis reminiscent of the one celebrated." Now that that second crisis too is a matter of history, its timing a hundred years after secession seems nearly inevitable. By that time Southerners and Northerners had fought on the same side in two world wars, and the solidity of the Union was beyond question. The rusty, clanking apparatus of institutionalized inequality had finally become such a widely recognized contradiction to official American values, highlighted both by our Cold War adversary's propaganda and our own television news broadcasts, that the days of the post–Civil War compromise were clearly numbered. Without ever fully agreeing on the rights and wrongs of the war itself, the nation at last attended to its most ignominious legacy—the hard bargain through which reunification had been accomplished. ■

Poland's New Ambitions

Two decades after Solidarity's triumph, Poland is leveraging its geography and aid dollars to pay forward the support its struggling democratic movement received from abroad.

BY ANDREW CURRY

In 1980, a group of shipyard workers made a daring stand in the Polish city of Gdańsk, establishing an independent workers' union in a so-called workers' state run by a tiny elite. Fervor for the union spread rapidly. Within a year, more than 10 million Poles—80 percent of the work force—joined Solidarity or one of its branches. The trade union evolved into a political movement, using strikes and protests to force concessions—on freedom of speech, the right to strike, and the right to travel—from the country's communist regime. Poland became an island of unrest in the heart of the Soviet bloc. In December 1981, under heavy Soviet pressure, the Polish government, led by Wojciech Jaruzelski, declared a state of martial law. Soldiers and tanks claimed the streets, and thousands of Solidarity leaders were jailed. Strikes were brutally crushed by riot police, and the trade union was banned.

Janina Ochojska—then a 26-year-old astrophysicist at the Polish Academy of Sciences, in Toruń—was active in the Solidarity movement. She remembers listening to the radio when martial law was imposed: "When friends were arrested, Radio Free Europe mentioned the names of these people and we felt secure. The world knew about the arrests. We felt that we are not alone." Over the next decade, support from abroad would take on an outsize importance in Poland. Sources as diverse as the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and the Catholic Church covertly funded Solidarity's underground activities. Electrician-cum-Solidarity leader Lech Walesa received worldwide recognition when he was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1983, though he didn't travel to Norway to accept it, fearing he would not be allowed back into Poland. Broadcasters including Radio Free Europe, Voice of America, and the BBC provided an alternative to state-controlled media.

Ochojska, who had suffered from polio as a child, traveled to France for medical treatment in 1984. There, she volunteered with French organizations putting together convoys of donated medicine and food bound for Poland. She returned in 1989 to a changed country. After months of negotiations between Solidarity leaders

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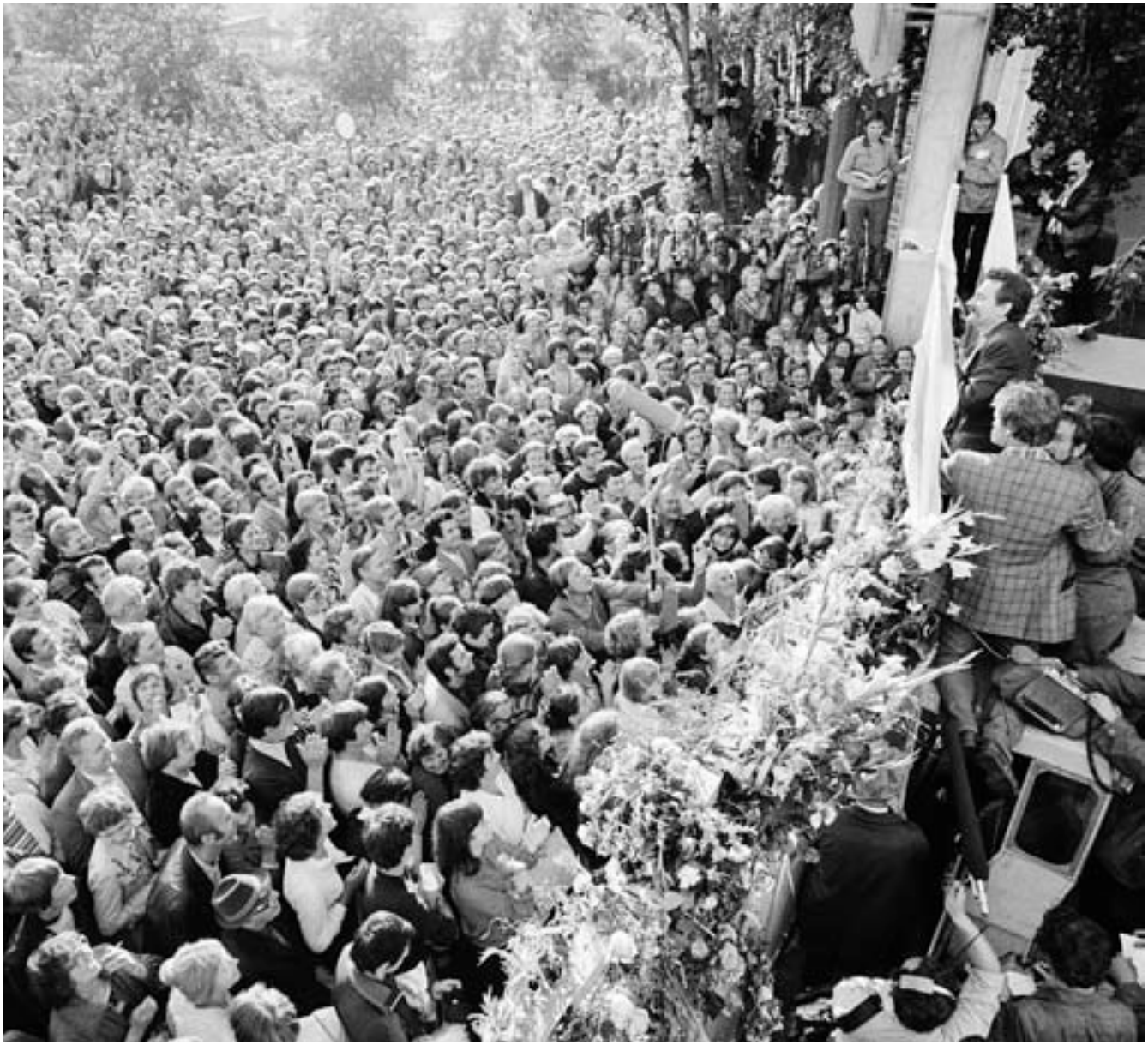

Solidarity leader Lech Walesa addresses a crowd of workers during the 1980 shipyard strike in Gdańsk. Today, the spirit of Solidarity, which began as a local labor movement and inspired a national cri de coeur for freedom, informs Poland's democracy promotion efforts abroad.

and the communist regime, the trade union, now a full-fledged political party, had handily won the nation's first free elections in decades. But Poland faced a harsh reality. While the Solidarity movement had been a tour de force of self-help and organization, Poland's economy was in tatters after a decade of repression and international sanctions. In 1990, the inflation rate was 686 percent.

Cities choked on pollution from huge, inefficient factories; the countryside, where fields were still plowed

with horses, was mired in poverty. Poland became a charity case. Between 1990 and 1994, it received nearly $36 billion in aid, $5.5 billion from the United States alone. The Marriott in downtown Warsaw was booked solid for years with experts from the United States, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (derisively dubbed the "Marriott Brigades"). The "shock therapy" prescribed by Western economists, including Harvard's Jeffrey Sachs, led to the shuttering or privatization of dozens of state companies.

Ochojska and other Poles refused to accept that their country was helpless, even in its weakened state. When war broke out in the Balkans in 1992, Ochojska recalls, "it was very hard to know near us was a terrible war, and Poland did nothing. In this moment, Poles were ready to help but needed someone to tell them how." That December, she organized an aid convoy to Sarajevo, just as she had seen French donors do to help her own country. A mention on Polish radio resulted in an outpouring of donations, enough to fill a dozen trucks. Over the next decade, Ochojska organized convoys to Serbia, Chechnya, and Kosovo; her ad hoc missions eventually turned into the Polish Humanitarian Organization (PAH), the country's largest independent aid agency, with projects in dozens of countries.

As Poland's economy righted itself, the number of activists and aid programs in the country grew. In morphing from protest movement to political party, Solidarity faltered. But its independent spirit and dedication to democracy remained a strong current in Polish politics. Postcommunist elections have gone to parties on the right and the left, but a commitment to engagement with Poland's eastern neighbors and integration with Europe has been a constant. Though Polish zloty are spent on humanitarian projects such as Ochojska's, the country has created an identity for itself by invoking the legacy of Solidarity in its approach to foreign aid. Poland is not the only country in Europe to fund democracy promotion, but it is the only one to explicitly place such efforts at the top of the government's list of foreign assistance priorities.

Radio Racja, an FM station that broadcasts independent news and entertainment into neighboring Belarus, is backed by the Polish government.

Today, downtown Warsaw is a thicket of glass-and-steel skyscrapers, lit at night by neon signs and choked with traffic. Kiosks are jammed with hundreds of Polish magazines and newspapers, the products of a thriving media scene. Poland was the only country in the European Union not to suffer a recession last year; its economy, now the EU's sixth largest, grew by two percent despite the global downturn. Unemployment is below 10 percent, comparable to Germany's, and exports are close to $200 billion.

A new identity is evident in Poland's actions on the world stage. Led by activists such as Ochojska and by policymakers informed by Solidarity's legacy and determined to make the country a regional player, Poland is transforming itself. Polish development assistance abroad grew from $30 million in 2004 to $372 million in 2008.

That's a lot for a country that ranks near the bottom of the EU in terms of per capita income and barely a decade ago was an aid recipient itself.

Most of the money Poland contributes is funneled through international organizations such as the EU and the United Nations. Only a fraction of the rest ($83.8 million in 2008) goes to what most people would consider aid—tents for earthquake victims, food for starving children in Africa, or the clean water projects Ochojska promotes at PAH. Instead, Poland's priorities are influenced by its recent past, and its ambitions are essentially local. At the top of its aid list are a handful of countries in Russia's orbit, including Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova. According to the Polish Foreign Ministry, promoting democracy and building civil society are the top priorities. "That's our political competence," says Marek Ziolkowski, director of development assistance. "It's key in our foreign policy to take care of our good neighborhood."

Polish funding has flowed to efforts such as local government reform in Ukraine, training for Georgian journalists, and satellite and radio broadcasts in Belarusian. Poles know that successful democracy movements need steady, sustained help. "There's a common understanding that we got a lot of Western help, especially during the '80s under martial law," says Agnieszka Romaszewska-Guzy, the director of Belsat, a Belarusian-language satellite TV channel run out of Warsaw that is Poland's latest and largest effort to undermine the Belarusian government's information monopoly. "It would be difficult to find people more convinced of the effectiveness of this kind of opportunity."

Poland may be the most assertive of all the new EU countries in using its foreign aid budget to influence its neighbors. Poles look east darkly, as only a country invaded by its eastern neighbor three times in one century can. Other new EU members have been content to go along with the EU consensus on relations with Russia, acknowledging a Russian sphere of influence and overlooking Russia's authoritarian impulses in the interest of smooth economic relationships. In Warsaw, monuments to the victims of Soviet atrocities during World War II occupy prominent real estate in and around the Old Town. The idea of Poland as Europe's last frontier goes back centuries. "It's part of our national consciousness that we have two archetypes of our place in the world—as defenders of the West and as a bridge towards the East," says Adam Balcer, a political analyst at Warsaw-based think tank demosEUROPA. "It means we sometimes perceive the world in black and white."

POLAND MAY BE the most assertive of all the new EU countries in using its foreign aid budget to influence its neighbors.

From "soft-power" democracy promotion efforts to outspoken diplomacy, Poland has pushed hard against Russian influence and emerged as a leading—and sometimes the only—proponent of expanding the EU east to Ukraine and even Georgia. During Ukraine's 2004–05 Orange Revolution, then–Polish president Aleksander Kwasniewski flew to Kyiv to mediate between the old regime and the winners of elections there. Days after Russian tanks entered Georgia in 2008, Polish president Lech Kaczynski traveled to Tbilisi to show his support for the Georgian government; when Russian hackers targeted the Georgian government's Web presence, Poland's foreign ministry hosted Georgia's official Web site on its servers. Polish diplomats in Brussels have pushed the EU to adopt a more hawkish position on Russia and other authoritarian regimes, and enthusiastically support extending EU membership to Ukraine.

Poland has suffered for its trouble. It has been shut out of lucrative energy and pipeline deals and endured Russian economic embargoes—not to mention dramatic threats after it signed a missile-defense

deal with the United States hours after Kaczynski's return from Georgia. (A top Russian general warned at the time that Poland was "exposing itself to a [nuclear] strike—100 percent.") President Barack Obama canceled that deal in September in favor of a ship-based plan he said would be more effective against Iran. The ill-timed announcement, made on the 70th anniversary of the Soviet invasion of Poland in 1939, was received with dismay in Warsaw.

On a gray day last November I traveled to Bialystok, a city in eastern Poland that is in effect an outpost on the edge of Europe, to see what the country's democracy promotion looks like in practice. Bialystok is an industrial center of more than a quarter-million residents a few dozen miles from the border with Belarus, a country Kwasniewski calls "the last real dictatorship in Europe." Since Belarusian president Alexander Lukashenko was elected in 1994, he has consolidated his power, pulled Belarus closer to Russia, and, according to Poles, discriminated against the country's large Polish minority.

TODAY, 90 PERCENT of Poles think their country is in a position to support development in other countries.

Bialystok is not a pretty place. In the last two decades it has embraced capitalism with a vengeance—the façades of downtown buildings are hidden behind colorful signs advertising the dozens of small businesses inside, and the streets around the train station are crowded with kiosks selling everything from cheap clothing to fruit. A huge distillery on the city's outskirts supplies premium vodka to markets as far-flung as the United States and Japan.

In 2006, in response to a government crackdown on democracy activists in Belarus, Poland opened a sort of "Radio Free Belarus" in Bialystok. It was a symbolic gesture, a nod to the international broadcasts from the United States, West Germany, and the United Kingdom that sustained Solidarity in the 1980s. Radio Racja—"Radio Reason" or "Radio Right"—whose studios and offices fill the second floor of a building on a Bialystok side street, began broadcasting music and news over the border in March 2006. Unlike Radio Free Europe's shortwave broadcast, the FM station's 35-megawatt transmissions, from towers on the Polish side of the border, only penetrate about 75 miles into Belarus.

Station director Eugeniusz Wappa, 45, was active in the dissident movement when he was a history student at the University of Warsaw in the 1980s. He believes that even in the age of Internet radio, FM makes a statement because it is accessible everywhere. "We're real radio, not virtual. You can listen in your home, in your car, at work, 24 hours a day," he says, pausing to turn up the set on his desk. In the hallway outside, the mint-green walls are lined with photos of the station's broadcasters in action—and a blown-up photo of helmeted Belarusian riot cops tackling a protester.

Belarusian rock bands, most of them banned back home, are in heavy rotation; news shows feature everything from reports on traffic jams along the border and strikes at Belarusian factories to interviews with Belarusian dissidents. According to Wappa, the station's correspondents in Minsk, Grodno, and Brest are harassed regularly by the authorities. One memorable early story was filed by cell phone from the back of a police van.

Despite the pre-Soviet Belarusian flag hanging on the wall in the station's conference room, the reporters trickling in to put together the afternoon news programs evinced little revolutionary passion or optimism that change would come to Belarus anytime soon. Sergiusz Skulaviec, a slight, soft-spoken Belarusian journalist who left the country in 2006 to escape constant harassment from Belarus's KGB, said any meaningful improvement is 15 or 20 years away. That didn't dampen his determination to provide Belarusians with an alternative to state-controlled media. "For me, that's a long time. For a country, not so

Thousands of Poles, including these young people waving a historic Belarusian flag, packed a central Warsaw square in March 2007 to show support for street protests in Minsk, Belarus, against the repressive regime of President Aleksander Lukashenko.

much," he told me in accented Polish. "I don't know about my future, but in the long term these little steps won't be turned around."

Even if Radio Racja broadcasts mostly mundane fare—music, sports, and traffic—it's an important gesture for Poles, a way of paying forward the moral and diplomatic support Western Europe and the United States provided the country's dissident movement in the 1980s. Today, Radio Racja is the Polish Foreign Ministry's second-largest aid program, with almost $400,000 in state funding. More money comes from the Dutch and British embassies, which help pay for the station's Web site (www.racyja.com). When I visited, Radio Racja's office was abuzz. Barely 24 hours earlier, the station had added a radio tower near Brest, extending its coverage to nearly the entire Belarusian-Polish border. "It's a very emotional day for us," Wappa said.

Poland came through the turbulence of the 1990s with flying colors. But the mentality nurtured by that era of dependency is only now beginning to turn around. Just five years ago, less than two-thirds of Poles thought Poland was in a position to support development in other countries. Today, that proportion has grown to nearly 90 percent. The change may have something to do with the way aid money is

spent. The Polish aid that doesn't flow through official EU channels is distributed to Polish nongovernmental organizations, from PAH to Radio Racja, which may be an inefficient process from an economist's point of view (the average grant is $60,000) but makes it possible for ordinary people to get involved. "The main benefit of Polish aid is in Poland itself," says Maciej Drozd, a former consultant in Warsaw who now works for the Polish prime minister's office. "By giving money to these huge numbers of NGOs to go abroad, you raise global awareness and transform Polish society. I think it's key to name the mentality change that's going on. Five years ago, it was an absolute oddity for people to attend fundraisers for Africa."

After the Belarusian government cracked down on democracy activists in 2006, expelling student protesters from universities, Jan Malicki, the director of the University of Warsaw's Institute for East European Studies, spearheaded an effort to find scholarships and spots at universities in Poland for hundreds of the expellees. Why would students want to come to Poland instead of Germany or the United States? Malicki says it's a matter of perspective: "For people from the East, Warsaw is a true metropolis. It may be hard to imagine, but to someone from Minsk or Tbilisi, Poland is the West."

Today, the Institute for East European Studies hosts teachers from across the former Soviet Union, and offers summer courses for young activists from Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, and Ukraine. Malicki's small program, tucked into a few rooms on the University of Warsaw's downtown campus, is no anomaly: In 2008 Poland provided nearly 5,000 scholarships for foreign students, mostly from Belarus, Ukraine, and Kyrgyzstan. (America's Fulbright program, by comparison, provides about 2,600 scholarships for foreign professors and students to teach or study at U.S. universities each year.)

Poles are adamant that for students from places such as Georgia and Ukraine that are working through their own transformations, Poland's experience and know-how are a useful supplement to the cash and cookie-cutter advice American donors and consultants provide. "We are the children of our Central-Eastern European environment. Therefore, we are—by definition—in a slightly better position concerning the knowledge about the needs of our eastern neighbors than the U.S. or even Western Europe," Kwasniewski wrote in a recent e-mail interview. "We simply better understand and feel their problems and challenges. It is of course a truism, but we were exactly at the same position two decades ago."

Many in the Polish aid community have criticisms of the government's approach. They complain that aid distribution, spread over multiple competing ministries, is inefficient and opaque. While officials emphasize that Poland spends $372 million a year on foreign aid, more than any other Eastern European country, more than $20 million of that represents export credits to encourage China to buy Polish goods; another chunk is debt forgiveness for Cold War–era loans to Angola and Nicaragua, money Poland was never going to get back anyway. (Such statistical sleight-of-hand is fairly standard when countries calculate development assistance.)

Poland also isn't the most generous country among the EU's new members. Although it gives away the most money in absolute terms, it happens to be the largest of the countries that have joined since 2004. As a share of GDP (just .08 percent), its contributions actually place it near the bottom among EU donor countries. The Czech Republic and Hungary, for example, have a quarter as many people as Poland but give half as much aid. And less than 1 percent of students in Poland come from abroad, one of the EU's worst rankings.

What sets Poland apart—and makes it a model worth paying attention to—is its conviction that its past is an asset and a responsibility. Given limited resources, Poles are using foreign aid in a direct, concerted way that benefits themselves and their neighbors. Who better to advise and support democracy movements than people who forged one of the world's most successful ones just a quarter-century ago? Poland doesn't have a lot of experience with disaster relief or food aid, and may not be the most generous. But by concentrating on passing along their hard-won lessons to speed democratic change and economic reform in Eastern Europe, Poles may yet prove themselves the most effective. ■

The Entrepreneurial Edge

Can America Keep It?

The Great Recession has Americans thinking big—big job losses, big banks, big government. Yet it is the entrepreneurial spirit of smaller, often virtually invisible firms that supplies much of the economy's energy and most of its new jobs. The question now is whether the complex ecosystem that breeds entrepreneurs can be restored to health.

An Entrepreneurial Recovery

Big business gets the headlines, but thousands of upstart companies do most of the heavy lifting in the American economy.

BY CARL SCHRAMM AND ROBERT E. LITAN

No more Rodney Dangerfield moments in Washington for entrepreneurship: At long last, it's getting some respect. Although he was not elected on a platform aimed at helping entrepreneurs, President Barack Obama, facing the highest unemployment rate the nation has experienced in nearly three decades, is beginning to move them toward the center of his economic recovery plans. He embraced entrepreneurs near the beginning of his 2010 State of the Union address and has since outlined a series of steps to encourage "small business" to create new jobs: $33 billion in tax credits for hiring new workers and $30 billion in low-interest loans (from the Troubled Asset Relief Program) intended to spur community banks to lend to small business.

As a nation, we have tended periodically to forget the crucial role of entrepreneurs in our economic success. During the early 1970s, the U.S. economy was mired in a recession almost as deep as the current one, and citizens and policymakers alike worried for more than a decade that the United States was being eclipsed by Japan. Then, with some help from Washington, though not a lot—lower capital gains taxes and changes in pension rules that allowed the managers of pension assets to invest in venture capital funds—a legion of rising entrepreneurial companies transformed the economy. Few saw this change coming. All eyes were on the increasingly sclerotic large companies (think General Motors and U.S. Steel) that had dominated the economic landscape for more than a generation. The new firms—Intel, Apple, Microsoft, Federal Express, and many others—created not only millions of new jobs but what is, in effect, a new world.

People instinctively understand the importance of entrepreneurs. When asked in September 2008, at the height of the financial crisis, on whom the health of the economy depended, 70 percent of those in a survey sponsored by our foundation answered "entrepreneurs." This faith is not misplaced. A study by current and former Census Bureau researchers shows that virtually all of the net new jobs created in the United States between 1980 and 2005—roughly 40 million—were generated by new firms (five years old or younger). This is a remarkable statistic, for what it means is that all other firms collectively hired no more people than they let go: On net, they hired no one. A follow-up study focusing on 2007 found that this pattern had essentially continued. New firms accounted for two-thirds of net new jobs (hiring minus downsizing). The clear implication of these

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Americans launch more than a half-million businesses a year, even in recessions. Helping them grow is mostly a matter of creating the right conditions.

data: If policymakers want greater job creation, they should focus on the formation and growth of new firms. (The same lesson applies abroad, we believe, although good internationally comparable data do not exist.)

For rapid job and income growth, however, some new firms are better than others. It is the ones that "scale"—that grow rapidly in sales and employment—that disproportionately create new jobs and in the process are most likely to generate huge spillover benefits for other firms and people throughout the economy. Such firms (Apple and Google, and Microsoft when it was younger) are typically the vehicles for diffusing the radical innovations that transform the economic and social landscape and thereby do the most to raise our standard of living. In the past, such new firms gave us the automobile, air conditioning, the airplane, computers and most of the software written for them, and Internet search engines. We can't be sure what tomorrow will bring in emerging fields such as clean technology, bioengineering, and nanotechnology, but we can be sure that most of what they bring will be the product of innovative small firms that are unknown (or unborn) today rather than brand-name corporate behemoths.

Isn't this the worst of all possible times to start a business? Banks aren't lending to any but the safest borrowers. Consumers are scared by persistently high unemployment. But if history is any guide, we don't need to worry a great deal about these negatives. Since the 1990s, the number of new companies launched annually—from doughnut shops to biotech firms—has remained more or less constant at about 700,000. Half of today's Fortune 500 corporations were launched in either a recession or bear market. The same is true of the firms on *Inc.* magazine's annual list of the fastest-growing U.S. companies. The silver lining of recessions is that they bring down the cost of rent and labor. Furthermore, vastly cheaper computing and telecommunications make it easier to start and grow a business than ever before.

The current recession nonetheless may impede the growth of the future wannabe Microsofts and Apples, espe-

cially if those companies are in businesses that require lots of up-front capital, such as alternative energy or biopharmaceuticals. We won't know for several years whether we can count on the positive historical experience with start-ups in recessions repeating itself. But by then it will be too late, and meanwhile roughly 10 million jobs have disappeared and don't look like they're coming back very fast. Even the president's own Council of Economic Advisers is projecting that the unemployment rate will not fall to its pre-recession level until *2020, or maybe later*. That's not good enough. We need smart policies to encourage the formation and growth of many more new "scale" companies.

Some have suggested massive government jobs programs, like the New Deal–era Works Progress Administration, to get more people back to work. Even if we had the money and the political consensus for such an approach—which we do not—this would not produce the fresh crop of scale private-sector firms needed to sustain rapid growth over the long run. Nor is it likely that large existing firms, having downsized bigtime in this recession, are going to hire massive numbers of the currently unemployed.

Not having a lot of government money to spur new company formation and growth is not the end of the world, however. Ultimately, the ground rules that government sets for those who start and grow companies are more important than any money Washington might provide. Changing a few of these rules would go a long way toward encouraging more scale entrepreneurship that we urgently need now.

Import entrepreneurs: Let's begin by recognizing the shortsightedness of our current approach of giving talented foreigners temporary visas to come to the United States to study or work in a high-tech environment and then forcing them to go home. Roughly a million highly trained workers who are in the country on six-year H1-B visas will have to return after their visas run out. But why should they be sent home when, as the University of California's AnnaLee Saxenian and Duke's Vivek Wadwha have documented, skilled immigrants found or cofound 25 percent of successful U.S.-based high-tech companies?

Ideally, our immigration laws should be changed so that every immigrant who earns a scientific or technical degree at an American university also gets a green card stapled to his or her diploma. That would give approximately 60,000 highly trained people a year a shot at contributing to America's future.

If this proposal is too politically ambitious—because of fears that immigrants will "take jobs away" from other Americans—the United States should at least establish a job creator's visa for immigrants who start new companies. Visa recipients might include graduates of our schools, workers with expiring H1-Bs, and even people who arrived in the United States on tourist visas. One proposal in circulation would reduce the amount of capital immigrant entrepreneurs must post in order to qualify for legal entry into this country (currently $1 million). That is a good idea, but a better one would be to permit entry by immigrants with the skills but not the money to launch companies. It would make sense to give them a chance by providing a grace period in which to establish a business, extending their stay once they begin hiring workers, and then granting them the equivalent of a green card once their employee count passes some threshold (say, five workers).

By definition, immigrants who make jobs for Americans don't take them away from other Americans. Even the most ardent opponents of looser immigration policies surely can understand this.

Encourage university entrepreneurs: Much if not most new knowledge being created every day comes to light in our nation's research universities. There is a law—the Bayh-Dole Act of 1980—that was passed to encourage the diffusion of this research, by giving the universities intellectual property rights in the commercialization of federally funded research (more than $30 billion annually). Yet in their efforts to coordinate management of their faculties' commercial activities, universities have unintentionally developed barriers to rapid commercialization of many inventions by requiring faculty innovators to work only through the universities' own technology licensing offices (TLOs). This practice is analogous to requiring professors to publish only through their home universities' presses, which of course is never done because it is recognized that it would exert a deadening influence on scholarship. The TLOs, in search of one or two "home runs," are typically overburdened, and often do not have the time or resources to handle the commercialization opportunities of many or most faculty members. There is an easy fix: Allow competition in licensing (while leaving in place agreements splitting royalties between faculty and their employers) by allowing faculty innovators to choose their own licensing agent. The federal government can push this along by requiring universities to allow this sort of academic freedom

as a condition for receiving federal research dollars.

Make it easier to go public: In the wake of the corporate accounting scandals that ensnared Enron and other companies a decade ago, Congress in 2002 enacted the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, imposing a bundle of new auditing and corporate governance requirements on all publicly traded companies. It was thought that Sarbanes-Oxley would impose very few additional costs while vastly improving the accuracy of corporate financial disclosures. Since then, costs have proven to be much higher, while the number of companies going public has dropped sharply.

If it is too expensive to go public, successful companies in need of capital for expansion will find it more attractive to sell out to bigger firms. But the larger and usually more bureaucratic acquirers can kill the entrepreneurial spirit and innovativeness that drove the companies to be successful in the first place. Neither Skype (acquired by eBay) nor YouTube (bought by Google), for example, have become the commercial successes they might have been had they gone public. Suppose that Microsoft had sold itself to IBM instead of going public. Does anyone seriously think it would have been as successful an IBM-managed company?

There are solutions for this. Either exempt smaller companies from Sarbanes-Oxley (as a bill passed by the House of Representatives would do) or, better yet, let shareholders vote on whether their companies should adhere to the law's most onerous provisions, such as verification of the adequacy of their internal controls (an expensive process that audit firms largely do by "checking the boxes"). That is the approach suggested by economist Henry N. Butler and law professor Larry E. Ribstein.

Legitimate entrepreneurship as a worthy career path: Young people who tell their parents that they want to start a company are likely to hear groans and loud warnings about all the risks. That is not the message they should be hearing. We need to encourage American youth to be venturesome. For years, our foundation has supported the teaching of entrepreneurship at the college level as a way to expose students to what it takes to be an entrepreneur. Such courses are useful, but as with so many things in life, people are most inclined to benefit from instruction when they are actually engaged or about to be engaged in the activity itself. That is why we see more immediate results from our shorter six-week course for working adults and our new one-week course for unemployed workers who are looking to shift careers.

At the college level, the most exciting things seem to be happening outside the classroom, in programs that are loosely affiliated with universities. The Launchpad program at the University of Miami provides an "entrepreneurs' door" at the university's career counseling center, which in its first 18 months attracted 1,000 students and spawned more than 20 businesses. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Venture Mentor program, which counsels MIT students and faculty engaged in entrepreneurial ventures, is the most successful effort of its kind in the country. Our own Kauffman Labs runs a competitive process for identifying and then mentoring and nurturing entrepreneurs whose businesses are likely to scale.

FLEDGLING COMPANIES that are bought by larger firms seldom reach their full potential.

Young people ought to be encouraged to think about an entrepreneurial career even before they go to college. The Junior Achievement program and the inner-city–focused Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship already do good work at the high school level. William Green, the University of Miami provost who thought up Launchpad, has floated a simple but potentially powerful idea: Why not have colleges and universities ask applicants whether they have started a business, and if so, to describe what they have learned from the experience? Anybody who has seen the lengths to which students will go to get into good schools knows what will happen. That simple question would motivate many more students to try their hand at entrepreneurial activities, without costing a single federal nickel. It's the kind of acorn from which many oaks may grow. Add up the other acorns we have advanced here, and we might get back the economic forest we used to have. ■

Schumpeter's Children

Even when big business was incontestibly king, entrepreneurial forces drove the American economy and powered its periodic renewals. Today, there are worrisome signs that the game is up.

BY MARGARET B. W. GRAHAM

A Rip Van Winkle awakened today from a 35-year slumber would be amazed to see such exemplars of "creative destruction" as Bill Gates and Steve Jobs lionized as popular heroes and corporate leaders. A generation ago, entrepreneurs were marginal, faintly disreputable figures and the corporation was a comfortingly solid if boring institution run by sober industrial statesmen. For most of the 20th century, the large corporations they ran—including such emblematic behemoths as General Motors and AT&T—dominated the U.S. economy, providing the slow but steady technical innovation and the reliable if not exciting returns that ensured the nation's economic progress, until they faltered and downsized toward the end of the century.

That, at least, is the popular view. In this telling, the emergence of Gates, Jobs, and legions of other innovating entrepreneurs was a sudden, almost heaven-sent eruption of creativity that came just in time to save a stagnating U.S. economy from ruin. The more complex reality is that while large corporations did increasingly dominate the economy after the turn of the 20th century, beneath the surface there was a complex and evolving set of relationships among big corporations, enterprising individuals, and smaller firms. The corporation itself became entrepreneurial. These "hidden" relationships have provided the American economy with its special capacity for renewal—its entrepreneurial edge—distinguishing it from those of many other developed nations, with their government-blessed national champions or zaibatsu-like groupings of companies and banks.

The emergence of the entrepreneur-hero in the late 1970s was less a radical break with this history than another turn of the wheel. A decade into the new century, the wheel is still turning, propelled by several underlying forces that shape the potential for entrepreneurship: access to capital through financial innovation, the patent system, intellectual property law, research and development, and antitrust policy. But in none of these areas can recent developments be called favorable. Financial innovation, which supplies new ways to raise precious capital,

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is the essential ingredient in nurturing entrepreneurship, but today most of the energy in finance is pouring into the creation of instruments designed chiefly to enrich the intermediaries. Increasing amounts of investment capital are flowing into these and other high-yield investment vehicles. Foreign markets are also attracting more capital. Even venture capitalists are struggling. We may have seen the end of the entrepreneur-hero for at least a generation, and no revival of the innovative large corporation of the mid-20th century is in sight. America is in danger of losing its entrepreneurial edge.

Iconoclasts such as Apple's Steve Jobs have defined the modern entrepreneurial era, but new and daunting obstacles stand in the way of the generation that is striving to succeed them.

Never in American history have entrepreneurs enjoyed greater prestige than during the period that culminated in the second industrial revolution of the late 19th century, when railroads, steel, electricity, chemicals, and other businesses grew into vast national enterprises, and iconoclastic figures such as Thomas Edison and Henry Ford amassed great fortunes by bringing remarkable new products to the American public. By World War I, however, this revolution had already entered a phase of consolidation, and the war effort only strengthened the new emphasis on the systematic application of scientific management and increased coordination between government and the corporate world.

There was still room in the 1920s for the celebrity tycoon and the upstart business enterprise, but the environment was changing. The railroads and other free-wheeling enterprises of the earlier era were renowned breeders of political corruption, and the glittering wealth of the moneyed classes glared ever more harshly in con-

trast to the hardships of the nation's farmers and urban poor. In this atmosphere, large centralized corporations headed by industrial statesmen such as Owen D. Young, chairman of General Electric from 1922 to 1939, increasingly took center stage. Unlike the entrepreneurs of the past, the typical new corporate leader was an establishment figure, often college educated, always socially and politically well connected. The term *entrepreneur* took on a negative connotation, signifying the eccentric individual who was all too likely to be disruptive to the well-integrated organizational system. For decades, that connotation would stick. A whole generation would pass before baby boomers and their children would forget the appeal of job security and embrace the excitement of risk taking, along with the higher returns associated with financial insecurity.

THE CHALLENGE FOR entrepreneurs in the 1930s was to anticipate science-based inventions and use them to shape the path of technological change for profit.

Beneath the shallows of public opinion, however, fundamental forces were remaking the entrepreneurial role. As economist Joseph Schumpeter (who gave currency to the phrase "creative destruction") observed in the 1930s, individual entrepreneurs in the past had mainly sought business opportunities by exploiting particular inventions that came to them or the changes they stimulated; now the challenge was to anticipate science-based inventions, combine them, and use them to shape the path of technological change for profit. *Innovation* had become the essential entrepreneurial act. And Schumpeter saw in the emergence of innovation-oriented corporations such as the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa) and a new breed of corporate managers such as Alfred P. Sloan of GM that, increasingly, entrepreneurship would be the business of large organizations.

Still, the Roaring Twenties offered abundant opportunities for new enterprises of all sizes. Suburbanization, rising incomes, and increased leisure time created new consumer markets for big-ticket items. Buying was made easier by low interest rates and, toward the end of the decade, the widespread availability of installment plans for purchases of furniture, cars, and other consumer durables. In Hollywood and beyond the new entertainment industries boomed, encouraging movie entrepreneurs such as Mary Pickford and Mae West. Rising automobile ownership increased Americans' mobility and their sense of personal freedom.

The iconic growth business was wireless radio, a science-based industry that crossed over from the military to the consumer market. During World War I the federal government assumed control of the wireless industry for military purposes, placing American Marconi under GE. Then, in 1919, at the behest of the U.S. Navy, the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) was endowed with near-monopoly control of radio patents and spun out from GE as a private company. In the decade after Pittsburgh's KDKA took to the air with the nation's first commercial broadcast in 1920, the number of households with radios climbed to 14 million, creating opportunities for entrepreneurs in every field from the design and production of radio sets to advertising and enhanced retailing.

The pace of change—a popular book of 1927 called it "the new American tempo"—was frenetic, forcing even the most established firms to develop nerve endings more attuned to the public's shifting tastes. Even Ford Motor Company was forced to react, finally replacing the Model T it had promoted as durable and changeless—available in any color a customer wanted "so long as it is black," as Henry Ford famously declared—with the newly redesigned Model A to better compete with GM's varied offerings. A new symbiosis developed between large and small enterprises, with bigger firms striving to return to settled patterns as quickly as possible while smaller ones rushed to introduce fresh product lines and businesses and to find new ways to mediate the

relationship between large firms and their customers. Auto companies benefited from the rise of independent dealer networks and garages; radios were sold and repaired by independent dealers and repair shops; huge national department store chains found their voices through advertising firms such as J. Walter Thompson that specialized in new forms of market research.

On Wall Street, financial innovation opened doors for many companies, fostering growth in emerging industries such as aviation and radio along with mergers and consolidation in more established fields. The rise of more sophisticated capital markets was a boon to both lone entrepreneurs and their corporate counterparts, freeing the former from the need to raise money on their own and providing large companies with the wherewithal to gobble their competitors. According to one study, the 1920s saw more new stock issues than any other period in the century. Mutual funds were another important financial innovation of the decade. They made it possible for a whole new set of investors to contribute to pools of available capital while enjoying the benefits of diversified portfolios at affordable prices.

All of this, of course, changed after 1929. With the onset of the Great Depression, Washington stepped in to coordinate and fund major pieces of the economy in order to combat joblessness, restore economic stability, and, later, mobilize industry for war. The Depression reduced the chances of survival for start-up firms and killed off many existing ones.

For large companies that survived, however, the 1930s offered a chance for a technology-enhanced form of corporate entrepreneurship. Freed from the overheated demands of the Roaring Twenties' carnival marketplace, they were able to pursue long-term business opportunities built on a foundation of organized invention: BF Goodrich investigated artificial rubber; RCA strove to achieve a working television system; DuPont pushed ahead with nylon and other artificial fibers. With the advent of science- and capital-intensive technologies, such as sound and later Technicolor in films, the freewheeling days were over. Practical entrepreneurs found themselves shut out of this more corporatized economy, and the door would remain closed for 50 years.

At the heart of the more consolidated corporate entrepreneurship was the corporate research laboratory. Only a handful of pioneering research laboratories had existed before World War I, but more than 500 firms set up such institutions in the decade after it. DuPont, Alcoa, Kodak, GM, RCA, and many other companies turned to research and development (R&D) for new product ideas and ways to execute them. Their corporate godfathers had high hopes. If the modern corporation was going to succeed on the basis of efficiency, rationality, and orderly technical innovation, then what better institution to put at its center than the well-managed laboratory, stocked with degree-bearing engineers and scientists? In many cases the laboratory was to act as the company's standard-setter and the arbiter between different divisions of the corporation formerly controlled by stubborn and unruly craftsmen. It also tied the corporation to other laboratories, university-based researchers, scientific societies, and government agencies such as the National Bureau of Standards and the Patent Office. The day when amateurs and basement tinkerers could play a developmental role in high-growth industries seemed clearly in the past.

That wisdom was confirmed by America's experience in World War II. With Washington as maestro, the nation rapidly produced vast quantities of K rations, B-29 bombers, and everything in between, while researchers marshaled by the government from industry and the universities designed and built the atomic bomb and made rapid technological strides in fields such as radio and radar.

For American policymakers, the war offered a powerful example of what the economy could accomplish if directed and optimized by the federal government, and they believed they could most efficiently accomplish their goals through large corporate entities. At the heart of the shift was the Cold War agenda of exploiting designated technologies to maintain and improve the nation's defenses—avionics, electronics, new materials, aeronautics. If there was room for smaller entrepreneurial companies in this grand design, it was chiefly as second- or third-tier contractors to now giant firms.

The wartime cooperation of administrative government, university, and private industry coalesced in the troubled peace of the Cold War decades under a decidedly military command-and-control model. Prewar cor-

porate laboratories had mainly focused on industrial and consumer products—artificial fibers, telephone systems, lighting, photography, and glassware. In the postwar era, a much-expanded portion was allocated to defense applications, with the Defense Department controlling the research agenda. Nonmilitary agencies of the federal government were also expanding, and the Social Security Administration, the Internal Revenue Service, and other agencies generated huge demand for data-processing systems. For most high-tech companies, government was a significant and lucrative part of their business.

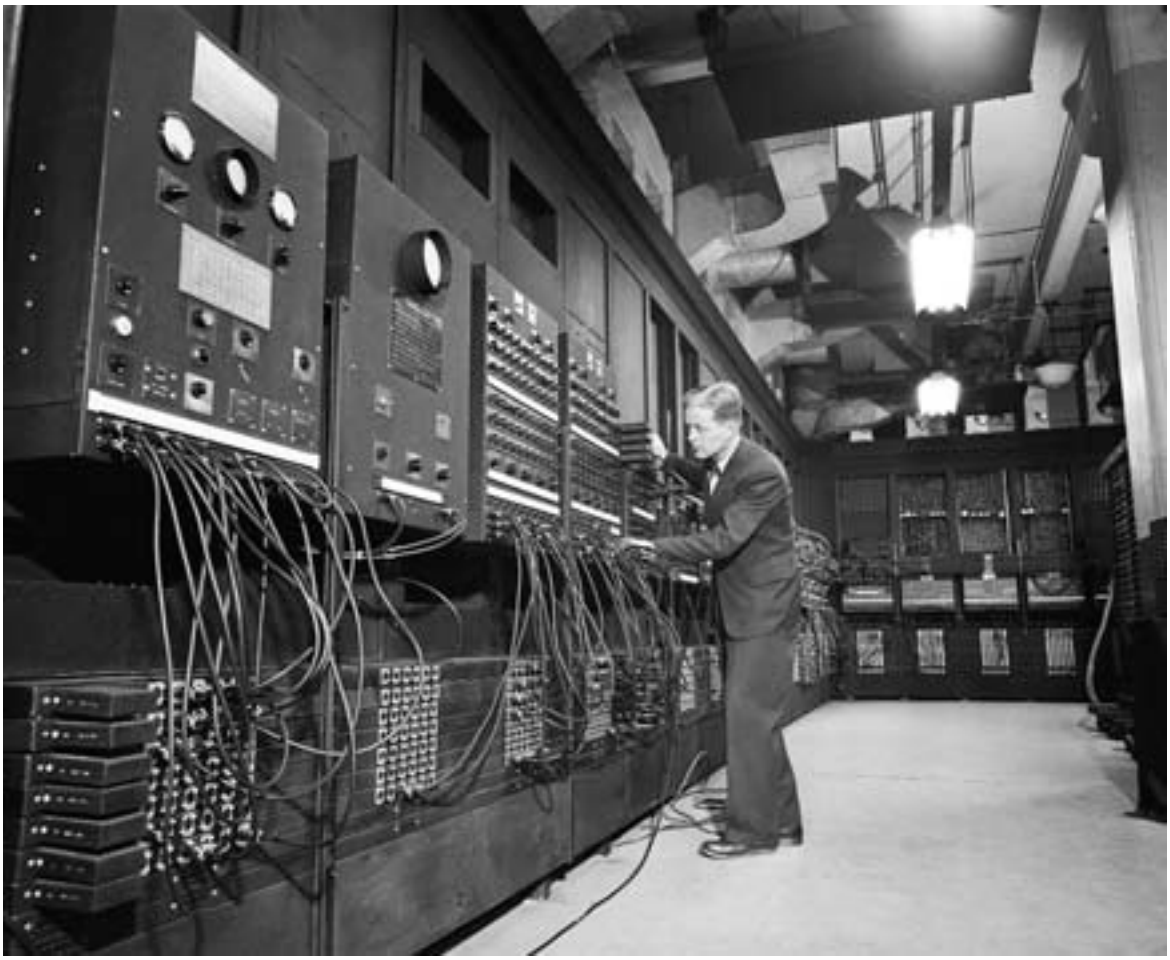
A few areas remained open to freelance entrepreneurs, but even here the federal influence was strong. Residential construction was one such industry, but it was stimulated by government programs aimed at housing returning servicemen. Large developments such as New York's Levittown and California's Daly City were the norm. The new postwar domesticity, with mothers at home tending large families, created demand for mass entertainment, with opportunities in television advertising, production, and recording, as well as in retail television dealerships and repair services. For the most part, however, the economy revolved around large corporations, and entrepreneurship was the business of big organizations.

It was, nevertheless, in this seemingly unpromising soil for smaller enterprise that the seeds of the post-1970s entrepreneurial era were sown. A big window of opportunity opened with the coming of computer technology, first known as the calculator. During World War II, several teams of inventors at different universities had developed analog versions of the "electromechanical calculator" designed to do the challenging computational tasks required to control modern weaponry. Few of the inventors recognized that the new devices might also have commercial applications. The exception was the team of electrical engineer J. Presper Eckert and physicist John W. Mauchly at the University of Pennsylvania, creators of the famous wartime ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer), who saw that these machines could be used to automate the information-processing tasks facing large corporations and government bureaucracies.

The experience of the Eckert and Mauchly Computer Corporation demonstrates the difficulties that faced small entrepreneurs of all kinds, even high-tech entrepreneurs. Chief among them was financing. Needing vast and unpredictable amounts of money, early computer developers of all sizes took on a combination of military contracts and commercial orders to fund the initial development of their machines. Eckert and Mauchly could raise only shoestring financing, and that for a mere fraction of the development needed for the UNIVAC, the commercial version of their famous wartime creation. In 1950 the company was sold to Remington (later Sperry) Rand.

Much of the early innovation in computers was the work of large firms such as RCA, GE, and Sperry Rand. The company that ultimately dominated the computer industry during the 1950s and '60s, IBM, prevailed not because it was the inventor or even the technology leader, but because it offered an additional innovation, designing a managerial and technological support system that gave customers what they needed to make computer investments profitable. For decades, IBM's approach gave it a virtual monopoly, impenetrable by competitors and closed to outside suppliers.

In historical terms, however, Big Blue's reign was brief, and early stumbles pointed to the kinds of opportunities that would become more common for individuals of an independent inclination with the right expertise and a taste for risk. In 1962, H. Ross Perot, who was for several years IBM's leading salesman, left to set up a competing data-processing company, Electronic Data Systems, which subsequently made him a multibillionaire. Even as IBM dominated mainframe computers, partly through its spectacular success with the novel System/360, it stumbled against more nimble competitors such as Digital Equipment Corporation in the next-generation minicomputer market of the 1970s. In its haste to play catch-up after the debut of the Apple II personal computer in 1977, IBM outsourced the development of the operating system for its own PC to Harvard dropout Bill Gates and his partner Paul Allen at fledgling Microsoft. Simultaneously it handed the microchip design to Intel, only recently launched by Gordon Moore and other defectors as a spinoff from Fairchild Semiconductor. Both Microsoft and Intel soon grew bigger than Big Blue, which, like many other estab-



John W. Mauchly tends to the ENIAC, one of the world's first working computers, which he and J. Presper Eckert built during World War II. The pair later blazed an information age pathway by launching their own computer company, which they were eventually obliged to sell to a larger firm.

lished high-tech companies, subsequently went through a period of downsizing and restructuring before emerging as a technology and services company.

IBM was not alone in its travails. By the 1970s, successful innovation by large corporations had become more the exception than the rule. The postwar business system, with its foundation of guaranteed returns for companies based on cost-plus contracts in the defense sector, eventually encountered diminishing returns. Companies that controlled fundamental patents, such as the spectacularly successful corporate innovator Xerox, hid behind patent protection, while others found ways to turn regulations to their advantage. Lacking serious competition in a world of oligopolies and plush government contracts, high-tech companies seemed to show that the rewards of corporate entrepreneurship could be had without the risks. Investors fell in love with this picture, but there was one problem: cyclicality. Profits could be "lumpy" in a system built on big contracts that expired and major products with limited life spans. Wall Street had a solution: the corporate conglomerate.

It was the conglomerate movement of the 1960s and '70s that effectively put an end to the entrepreneurship of large corporations. Technology-based companies that had suffered from volatile stock prices because of the uncertainties of innovation were seduced by investment banks into acquiring unrelated businesses with different risk characteristics. Owning a portfolio of countercyclical businesses would even out their returns, the bankers said.

As corporations such as Ling-Temco-Vought and ITT transformed themselves into conglomerates, they soon found that unrelated acquisitions with different management characteristics and capital requirements undercut their ability to carry out the steady product innovation they needed to renew their core businesses. In the 1960s even mighty RCA acquired a variety of unrelated firms, then stumbled badly in consumer electronics and other areas in the 1980s. RCA's tattered remnants were reabsorbed into GE. Other once reliable corporate entrepreneurs also faltered, including Eastman Kodak with its disc camera, AT&T with its picture phone, and Polaroid with its repeated attempts to innovate in electronic cameras.

Ironically, the corporate laboratory itself also began to undermine the entrepreneurial capacities of many larger firms. Government-funded research, with its onerous reporting requirements, fostered bureaucratization in the big labs. And the increasingly cumbersome Cold War control and security provisions attached to military R&D contracts sharply restricted the circulation of scientific knowledge. At the same time, corporate structural reforms originally designed to strengthen the labs by putting them on an equal footing with other divisions of the corporation had the opposite effect. Caught up in bureaucratic struggles for resources, laboratories tended to focus on patenting and licensing at the expense of innovation in order to put a hard dollar value on their contribution to the corporate weal. For many large technology-based companies, such as Texas Instruments and RCA, licensing revenues for proprietary technologies became more important than the innovations the technologies were supposed to support.

Eventually, these practices made formerly innovative corporations vulnerable to smaller and more creative competitors. At AT&T's fabled Bell Labs, researchers looking for ways to radically increase telecommunications bandwidth, for instance, proved no match for the smaller and more agile Corning Glass Works, which in 1984 supplied the fruits of its research to AT&T's mortal enemy, MCI Communications. The optical fiber revolution thus began some 20 years earlier than AT&T had planned. The smaller MCI, emboldened by the breakup of AT&T on antitrust grounds, used the new fiber optics to give AT&T the first serious competition it had faced.

Despite the generous pay and big budgets of corporate laboratories, many of the most brilliant inventors and scientists, especially those with entrepreneurial leanings, began pursuing their ideas and aspirations in less comfortable surroundings. Most started out with financial help from friends, family, and others, and the successful ones eventually secured procurement contracts from larger enterprises. In cases that were rare at first, start-ups gained support from a new form of financing, venture capital. In Silicon Valley, more than a few garage shrines mark the spots where famous high-tech companies got their start. William Hewlett and David Packard, Steven Jobs and Steve Wozniak, Paul Allen and Bill Gates, along with less well known experimenters such as Ed Roberts, designer of the Altair computer kit, laid the groundwork for new high-tech enterprises in driveways, garages, and college dorm rooms.

These new inventor-entrepreneurs stepped into a world undergoing several extraordinarily helpful transformations. Some of these changes were the products of purposeful business decisions and government policy choices, but many arose from less predictable sources, not the least of which was the maturing of the baby boom generation. Having come of age resisting the war in Vietnam, boomers associated big business with destructive uses of technology, such as napalm, and rejected both its bureaucratic structure and the boring sameness of its products. From this countercultural generation would come a new kind of consumer—and a new kind of entrepreneur.

The boomers were receptive to cheaper, foreign-made, and just plain different goods, from Volkswagen Beetles to Japanese-made transistor radios. Their skepticism about Cold War verities led to demands for reduced military budgets, and they rejected the excesses of military procurement symbolized by such urban legends as the Pentagon's infamous $5,000 toilet seat. Baby boomers demanded cleaner air and water, consumer protection, product safety, and environmental controls. As the federal government shifted the focus of regulation to these areas, newly deregulated industries such as airlines, communications, and utilities attracted individual entrepreneurs, giving rise to major ventures such as MCI and Southwest Airlines.

Another transformational force came in the late 1970s, when the information revolution got a fortuitous second wind as it swept from institutional to consumer products. Independent software and peripherals, home computers, and computer games took the entire computer business

in such different directions that by the end of the century, many of the industry's early powers—GE, RCA, and AT&T—were out of the game altogether, leaving plentiful opportunities for newcomers. And a decade later, the end of the Cold War gave consumer industries a jolt of fresh energy when new technologies of extraordinary power were released from the government laboratories where they had been sequestered—database technologies, computer imaging for animation and gaming, supercomputers, satellite technologies, and spacecraft.

Other shifts in government policy also played a significant transformational role. The Bayh-Dole Act of 1980 released universities from the requirement that they cede control of discoveries made with federal funding to the government, unleashing a new generation of entrepreneurial researchers. More help came from the patent system. For a variety of reasons, the number of patents filed in the United States had dropped dramatically in the 1960s and '70s. One cause was federal antitrust policies dating as far back as the New Deal, when federal regulators began targeting corporations that were hoarding and trading their own intellectual property while buying up and suppressing patents that threatened their control of technological change in their industry. The remedies won by antitrust lawyers often required companies such as AT&T and RCA to license patents to their competitors, and some corporations simply refrained from patenting, resorting to secrecy instead. In the early 1980s, however, rising foreign economic competition prompted a change in federal antitrust enforcement and a reform of the patent system. The patent downturn of the previous decades was reversed.

Yet even the remarkably favorable conditions of the 1970s and '80s would not likely have yielded the great flowering they did without one crucial element: access to new sources and forms of capital. A wave of financial innovation began in the 1970s, that notorious decade of "stagflation," or slow growth and high inflation. A dearth of capital coupled with very high interest rates starved new ventures and hampered even established firms. Michael Milken emerged in the early 1970s with a solution that would make him one of the most controversial entrepreneurs in Wall Street history. His employer, Drexel Burnham Lambert, was a minor player on Wall Street and willing to give something novel a try. Milken's innovation was to create a market for newly issued high-yield bonds, known as "junk" bonds. Now companies with low credit ratings and little hope of securing financing on the corporate bond market could find other investors hungry for riskier but higher-yielding investments. Milken famously wound up in jail on securities and tax charges and Drexel was forced to shut its doors, but, after a short pause during the stock market crash of 1987, the junk bond market thrived.

MICHAEL MILKEN'S innovation was to create a market for "junk bonds," and that market gave birth to another innovation, the leveraged buyout.

That market gave birth to another innovation, the leveraged buyout, often masterminded by specialized firms such as Kolberg Kravits Roberts, in which borrowed money was used to take over companies, strip their assets, and conduct layoffs, with the streamlined firms then sold at eye-popping profits to other investors. The vast sums of money accumulated in private hands through this process in the 1980s and early '90s provided pools of capital that could be used to finance new enterprises. Many large bureaucratic companies—some lethargic, others just unlucky—either disappeared or were downsized and reorganized, releasing expertise and other resources to be picked up by more entrepreneurial leaders of high-growth companies.

Venture capital supplied yet another powerful financial force. Banks and wealthy individuals had always invested in business start-ups, but their resources and taste for risk were limited. Between 1968 and 1975 as many as 30 venture capital firms formed or reformed in Silicon Valley, just in time for the semiconductor revo-

In the 1970s, Michael Milken created the "junk" bond market that financed many entrepreneurial ventures, but he later ran afoul of the law. He is shown here leaving a New York City court in 1989.

lution and the shift from transistors to integrated circuits. With hugely successful deals such as the launch of Intel (which went public in 1971), venture capital established itself as an important power. The industry also got significant boosts from a reduction in the federal capital gains tax in 1978 and a 1979 federal law that declared it "prudent" for pension funds to devote a portion of their portfolios to riskier investments, opening the way for them to put money into venture capital.

Cash wasn't the only thing of value venture capitalists supplied. They also sat on the boards of the companies they invested in, guiding them through the business thickets until they could go public. Needing tangible evidence of achievement—and something to sell if an investment went sour—venture capitalists often insisted that companies they invested in develop a patent portfolio, which was one reason why so many patents were filed in the 1980s and '90s.

More than a few stunning venture capital successes had a transformative effect on the economy, from companies such as Apple and Genentech in the early years to Google 20 years later. Enabled by the commercialization of the Internet, venture capital–supported companies such as Amazon and eBay developed business models that supported the efforts of thousands of smalltime entrepreneurs to reach new markets. Unfortunately, by the late 1990s the allure of the Internet as a catalyst for new enterprises attracted huge amounts of unwary money into venture capital funds at just the time when the first generation of professional fund managers were retiring. Not surprisingly, when their young, inexperienced successors poured the new money into fields they considered "hot," the casualty rate among new companies was high. In the latter stages of the stock market's "irrational exuberance," dot-com firms that did *not* receive venture capital financing were more likely to survive than those that did.

By the turn of the 21st century, venture capital had matured into an industry. In the geographical areas where the firms were concentrated—Silicon Valley, Austin, and Boston—they supplied up to a third of all

capital used for start-ups. But the excesses of the dot-com boom were still working their way through the system. Venture capital firms that did not fail outright faced not only a backlog of prior investments that required continued infusions of cash but a client base of investors who now wanted greater and more secure returns than the firms were able to offer. In important areas such as biosciences, would-be entrepreneurs found it harder and harder to raise early-stage money, while recent start-ups faced difficulties in refinancing for the growth phases of their businesses. Venture capital, it turned out, had become a misnomer, its practitioners risk averse, seeking the same secure returns and high yields as other investors. Initial public offerings plummeted from the hundreds a few years ago to fewer than 10 in 2008 and 2009.

If past patterns were a reliable guide to the future, today's capital scarcity would favor large corporate entrepreneurs. In the wake of the worst financial downturn since the Great Depression, most of the smaller entrepreneurial companies that avoided bankruptcy have been running for cover. Many biotech start-ups and medical device companies, for example, have welcomed their own takeover, even at heavily discounted prices, by large pharmaceutical companies. But few large U.S. corporations are in a good position to vigorously pursue innovation. They are under intense shareholder pressure to produce bigger profits as they compete for investor dollars with higher-yielding leveraged investments available through hedge funds and private equity outfits. In a development uncomfortably reminiscent of the 1920s, low interest rates have allowed such firms to use cheap money to increase their leverage and funnel dollars into investments with more certain or much higher returns than technology-based start-ups. Some of the pension funds and endowments that suffered most in the financial crisis reportedly are trying to make up their losses by taking on even riskier investments. None of this is good news for entrepreneurs.

The intense pressure for higher yields on investments threatens to stifle entrepreneurial behavior in all its forms. Only a few companies, such as Google, and large foundations, such as Skoll or Gates, have preserved the independence to follow their own investment agendas. In a few high-priority domestic areas for government funding, such as alternative energy and information technology systems for medical applications, resources are still available for individual entrepreneurs and small firms. Certain Internet-enabled fields, especially social networking, are attracting private funding and individual entrepreneurs. But while the Internet is shoving aside venerable businesses, from newspapers to the recording industry, many of its leading companies are still trying to figure out how to get their customers to pay for their products.

Meanwhile, globalization and privatization are encouraging broader shifts in investment patterns. High-growth markets such as China, India, and Brazil are claiming investment capital that U.S. domestic corporations might otherwise have invested in entrepreneurial ventures. At the same time, immigrant entrepreneurs with experience and profits from earlier U.S. ventures and access to home-country networks are redeploying their assets back home, encouraged by governments eager for overseas investment. The wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan have created new business opportunities in outsourcing—which is essentially privatized government—but few of the firms in this field are giving entrepreneurship a good name.

Throughout the modern era, financial innovators have played an indispensable role in launching fresh waves of entrepreneurship, and they are once again hard at work designing novel investment vehicles. But few of today's new products are likely to foster creative enterprises. Investors can now buy shares of patent portfolios, for example. Their promoters promise that this will provide entrepreneurs with speedier returns on their intellectual property. It is even possible to invest in lawsuits involving intellectual property. One thing we know about such offerings is that they will enrich the financial intermediaries who assemble them. They will also gum up the works with endless unresolved patent suits, raise the costs of innovation, and promote even higher levels of financial risk taking. Creative finance can be the lifeblood of entrepreneurship, but today it is more like a parasite, with entrepreneurs increasingly in service to finance rather than the other way around. Unless that changes, entrepreneurs are likely to play a far smaller role in renewing the U.S. economy than they have in the past. ■

China's Other Path

For all of China's economic achievements, the heyday of its entrepreneurs lies more than 20 years in the past. Renewing that era's rural capitalism would yield more balanced growth and go a long way toward reducing today's trade tensions.

BY YASHENG HUANG

Most people take it for granted that today's rising tensions between the United States and China over trade and the value of the yuan will be resolved (or not) in the corridors of central banks and finance agencies in Beijing and Washington. It is far more likely, however, that the solutions will be found hundreds of miles from Beijing—in the scattered villages and small towns of rural provinces such as Hunan, Sichuan, and Guangxi.

Make no mistake: The onus for the most severe global recession since 1929 lies squarely on the United States, with its lax supervision and excessive leverage in the financial sector. But there is an important background factor: a global economic imbalance in which some countries consume too much and other countries consume too little, and China is the biggest country in the latter category. Any progress it can make in bringing domestic consumption more in line with production will do a great deal to reduce trade tensions with the United States and restore order to the global economy.

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Where should China begin this adjustment process? Many Western economists fix their eyes on Shanghai and other urban export powerhouses. These economists have not seen much point in thinking about the Chinese countryside except as a source of cheap labor for the cities. Visiting Shanghai or Beijing, they are dazzled by impressive new airports and block after block of spanking new skyscrapers—many built with government money—and mistakenly conclude that China's growth is a creation of its strong state. For the most part, these economists don't see rural China as a source of economic dynamism.

They are half right. Rural China today has low levels of income growth and consumption. But it is wrong to assume that the countryside is economically inert. In fact, China's economic resurrection began 30 years ago in some of its most backward places, and for more than a decade tens of millions of private enterprises that blossomed in these remote spots produced a powerful surge of strong and balanced growth. One of the solutions to today's global economic imbalance is to encourage the Chinese leadership to rekindle the same rural entrepreneurial spirit that it all but snuffed out in the 1990s.

One set of statistics illustrates the importance of

Shanghai is the iconic city of China's economic boom, but it is home to only a handful of the country's largest privately owned firms. The city's success is mostly the product of government spending, state-run companies, and investments by foreign-owned firms.

the China that lies beyond the coastal cities. Although they constitute the majority of the population, the 700 million rural Chinese account for less than one-third of China's consumption. In the past 30 years, the growth of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) has averaged almost 10 percent a year. By contrast, rural consumption during the past 20 years has grown only three to five percent annually. That means that a lot of Chinese output has to be consumed elsewhere, mostly overseas.

I said 20 years rather than 30 for a reason. Rural consumption actually grew very rapidly in the 1980s, the first decade of economic reforms, often matching or even surpassing GDP growth. China in that decade witnessed the most impressive consumption gains in the history of the People's Republic.

What is the difference between then and now? Two words: rural entrepreneurship. In the 1980s, in the wake of Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping's 1978 market-freeing reforms, businesses based in the hinterlands were at their most vibrant and China's domestic consumption grew rapidly. That had a twofold effect. First, new jobs and rising incomes were created for the rural Chinese multitude, who were then able to spend even more on goods and services. Second, the growing appetites of rural consumers attracted the attention of entrepreneurs eager to sell to them. The hottest economic action was in the nexus of manufacturing and services—simple processed foods and small manufactured goods that these entrepreneurs could peddle to rural consumers and, more important, their richer urban cousins.

Many of the new businesses sprang up in what economists call the "nontradable" sector, producing goods and services that did not lend themselves to sales in distant markets. Growing China's service sector to a level more in line with international norms—

Far from the spotlight, Sichuan, Anhui, and other rural hotbeds of entrepreneurialism (shaded) pioneered Chinese development in the 1980s.

from its current 40 percent of GDP to something more like 60 percent—would do much to ensure the country's rapid growth while at the same time reduce trade tensions with the United States. But this is easier said than done. One reason why rural commerce prospered in the 1980s is that it was easier then for entrepreneurs from outlying areas to set up shops and stalls in the cities. Today, with strict registration and licensing controls, Chinese cities boast mammoth shopping malls—many of them empty—but they are largely bereft of the small, bustling market fairs that dotted the streets in the 1980s.

Most people associate entrepreneurship with people like Bill Gates: lone heroes who start out humble—often, apparently, in garages—and grow big companies by pioneering breakthrough technologies. But in much of the developing world, this narrative is simply irrelevant. For one thing, poor countries don't have many garages, because they don't have many cars. What they do have is a lot of poor people who will not soon be either big producers or big consumers of high technology. The issue is how to grow income and create jobs, and when it comes to that, nothing beats the low-end service sector that is the domain of rural entrepreneurs.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the modern history of entrepreneurship in China has been written by its rural people. They single-handedly created the miracle growth of the 1980s and early '90s at a time when the ideological risks of venturing into commerce and the market economy were still substantial. As recently as the mid-1990s, rural entrepreneurs accounted for 30 to 50 percent of private-sector activity in *urban* China. Today, their share is far smaller, as they have given ground to a new group of entrepreneurs in technology, retail, and real estate. But rural business ventures still have a huge potential to create employment and income opportunities, and because the developed economies have yet to recover from the economic crisis of 2008–09, this is one of the toughest policy challenges now facing the Chinese leadership.

One of my favorite success stories out of the many that could be told about the 1980s is that of a man named Nian Guangjiu. In 1982, Nian made it big by selling a product with a distinct flavor and a brand name to match: Idiot's Seeds, which are fried, salted sunflower seeds that Chinese consume as a snack food. This is a classic nontradable good—produced for Chinese tastes and appetites and sold on domestic markets. Nian, a farmer in the impoverished eastern agricultural province of Anhui, "the Appalachia of China," held a rather low opinion of himself, which is reflected in the name he gave his snacks. (The

name was not always helpful. When he proposed to set up a scholarship fund at a local school, the teachers balked at the idea of bestowing an "Idiot's scholarship" on students.) But by 1986 he was selling his sunflower seeds in many of the biggest cities in China, reaping profits large enough to put his company in the top 10 percent of private businesses in the country.

Many of China's leading manufacturing firms are based in backward rural provinces such as Guangdong and Hunan. The first indigenously designed automobile to reach Western markets, for example, will probably come not from Shanghai but from the agricultural hinterland of Nian's Anhui Province, home of Chery Automobile, which builds small cars for the domestic market. China's largest food-processing and agribusiness firm, the Hope Group, is based in the interior province of Sichuan, the country's biggest producer of rice, wheat, and other crops. The four brothers who founded the business, originally as a purveyor of quail eggs, held highly prized permits that allowed them to live in urban areas, but they went to rural Sichuan in search of greater economic freedom.

Of all of China's provinces, Zhejiang is the true center of entrepreneurial activity. It was a rural backwater in the 1970s, with 32.2 million of its 37.5 million people living in the countryside at the end of the decade. Today, it boasts the nation's most successful e-commerce business, Alibaba, and its largest auto component supplier, Wanxiang. Located south of Shanghai, it is home to no less than half of China's largest private-sector firms. Because its growth is powered by a large number of micro entrepreneurs, a bigger portion of the benefits flow to local residents, creating more consumption bang for each buck of GDP growth. Over the past 20 years, Zhejiang has devoted a larger share of its GDP to consumption than have neighboring coastal provinces.

The experience of Zhejiang and other outlying provinces shows how important it is to invest in the social capital base of a country. I have found in my research that the first generation of rural entrepreneurs were far better educated than their nonentrepreneurial peers. In the China of the 1970s, a junior or senior high school education was still considered a luxury, but many of those early entrepreneurs had that level of schooling. During the 1960s and '70s, Mao Zedong pursued disastrous economic and political policies, but his government mobilized huge resources to improve rural literacy and health. While these investments did not foster economic growth at the time, they did in the 1980s, when Deng Xiaoping moved the country toward a market economy.

THE WEST'S BIGGEST misconception about China is that its growth has been the product of globalization.

Contrast China with India, the other major rising power in the developing world. As early as 1965, China boasted better basic education and longer life expectancy for its citizens. This is probably the foremost reason why so many Chinese in the countryside turned to entrepreneurship in the 1980s while very few rural Indians do so, even today. Academic research shows that human capital, not physical capital, is always the more critical enabling factor in economic growth. This is China's true advantage over India, not the length of its highways.

The second factor behind rural China's economic takeoff was a series of policy reforms by the government. The West's biggest misconception about China is that its growth has been the product of globalization. In fact, domestic liberalization has played a far more important role. Economists use this term loosely to describe the changes Deng Xiaoping began in 1978. In particular, Deng got localization right.

In the 1980s, rural China, then home to more

Jack Ma's Internet company, Alibaba Group, is one of many big private firms based in Zhejiang Province, which was a rural backwater in the 1970s.

than 80 percent of the Chinese population, was a hotbed of reform, notably financial liberalization. Private finance was allowed, and some informal finance was legalized, enabling private businesses to get short-term loans and raise equity capital outside official channels. Around the same time that Muhammad Yunus launched his microfinance revolution in Bangladesh, China began to roll out its own version of this financial innovation. Entrepreneurship flourished in places such as Zhejiang Province rather than in many of the urban centers for a very simple reason: Rural China has always been freer than urban China, and it was quick to seize on the new opportunities.

Since 2000, China has become a global export powerhouse and the biggest recipient of foreign direct investment among developing countries. These are laudable achievements, but the reduction of poverty trumps them both, and so far nothing has matched Deng's rural reforms in accomplishing this. It is often noted that China has reduced poverty by 200 million people in the last 30 years, but it is rarely recognized that more than half of the reduction occurred during the first few years of rural reform, as a careful analysis by economists Martin Ravallion and Shaohua Chen of the World Bank shows.

In smaller countries, foreign trade can have a huge impact, but for a continental country such as China, the most important forces come from within. In the early 1980s, reforms were pioneered by two interior provinces, one, Anhui, virtually unknown to Westerners, the other, Sichuan, best known for its association with spicy food. In both provinces, peasants themselves started reforms, and the biggest contribution of the political leadership both in the provinces and in Beijing was that it allowed the peasants to figure out what to do and how to do it. The experiences of these two provinces are case studies of how entrepreneurs everywhere succeed—they need

freedom, and they need confidence in the stability of policies.

One important byproduct of reform was the township and village enterprises. TVEs are famous in China for powering the rural industrialization in the 1980s and early '90s that reduced poverty and raised productivity levels. The vast majority of them were run by private entrepreneurs—makers of cement, fertilizer, and many other products. In contrast to the arrangement in other countries, where high-value-added manufacturing operations are concentrated in a few urban centers, in China, people created and worked for TVEs with manufacturing operations in far-flung rural areas. The income of these Chinese increased quickly as they transitioned from low-value-added agriculture to higher-value-added industrial and service-sector work without having to endure the typically traumatic process of migrating to the unfamiliar and often hostile city centers.

China in the 1980s was a hopeful place for the rural majority. But what happened in the 1990s? Let us revisit Nian Guangjiu, the sunflower seeds merchant. In September 1989 he was arrested on the charge of embezzling state property, an accusation so outrageous—after all, he owned his own company—that a higher court overturned the verdict. The same court nonetheless dispatched him to jail, albeit for the crime of "hooliganism," sentencing him to three years in prison for having had immoral relationships with 10 women. (Upon hearing the verdict, Nian reportedly commented, "No, 12.")

Nian's fate signified a new economic and political order for China's rural entrepreneurs. After the trauma of the Tiananmen Square crackdown in 1989, China's conservative leadership tightened controls on the private sector. Credit dried up, and because rural China had the larger private sector it was disproportionately affected. This crackdown eased beginning in 1993, but the leadership then began to shift its policy emphasis away from rural areas. The new pro-urban bias, a classic scourge of many developing countries, intensified. One consequence was a sharp reduction of financial resources flowing into rural China. Many of the unofficial financial operations that had supplied critical start-up funding to rural entrepreneurs were shut down, and the non-standard forms of finance they had relied upon (such as loans from extended-family members and informal groups) were criminalized. Some individuals were sent to jail for pooling capital to start their own businesses. My research shows that the percentage of rural households able to get access to credit fell by more than half from the 1980s to the '90s, and that fixed-asset investment in rural areas slowed drastically in the 1990s.

BY 2000, IT WAS CLEAR that globalization had arrived in China, and it was rapidly enriching the country.

This was virtually the same moment when many Western economists were forming their basic conceptions of China. They saw it aggressively courting foreign direct investment in the coastal cities as it rapidly built new highways and other infrastructure. In 1999, China ended a 13-year stalemate with the United States by making almost all the concessions necessary to win membership in the World Trade Organization. The conclusion was obvious: Globalization had arrived in China, and it was rapidly enriching the country.

But many observers failed to ask a basic question: "Where did the government of such a low-income country get the money to finance all this impressive urban infrastructure?" The answer: rural China. In the 1990s, as skyscrapers sprang up in Beijing and Shanghai, the rate of rural income growth went down. Low income growth then led to low consumption growth. Household consumption fluctuated between 40 and 45 percent of GDP throughout the 1990s but then began a decline in 2000, from 46

percent to today's 35 percent. (In most other countries, consumption usually averages between 60 and 70 percent of GDP.) This was the beginning of the economic imbalances that put production far ahead of consumption—facilitated, one should add, by demand created by excessive American consumption fueled by credit bubbles. The trade tensions with the United States and all the charges and countercharges about currency manipulation are basically the result of this startlingly low consumption/production ratio.

How did rural Chinese fare in the 1990s? Not very well. Their income growth rate fell sharply, from seven to eight percent annually in the 1980s to around four percent in the 1990s. At the same time, surcharges by the state on basic education and health care services rose, increasing economic pressures on families and reducing their ability to buy goods and services.

One avenue of material improvement remained open to rural Chinese: migrating to the coastal cities to work in factories. Many took this route. There is no question that the pay in urban centers was much better than it was on farms back home. But the flood of workers depressed wages in the cities. In Guangdong Province, average pay for migrant workers increased at only about one-third the rate that GDP did. Slow wage growth meant that Chinese migrant workers, unlike middle-class urbanites elsewhere in the world, were not able to consume much of what they produced. But the excess production had to find a market. China became an export-driven economy as a result.

It is rare in the economic arena to have one policy instrument that can solve multiple problems, but just such a tool lies within the grasp of China's leaders. To reduce its reliance on exports, to achieve more equitable growth, and to increase its efficiency, they need to rethink their policies toward the rural economy. China's policy elites are still in the grip of the traditional groupthink view that people from the countryside are fit only to contribute labor, not product and process innovations that we customarily associate with entrepreneurship.

In *The Other Path: The Invisible Revolution in the Third World* (1989), the seminal book that inspired the title of this essay, Peruvian economist Hernando de Soto showed the power of land and asset reforms in unleashing grassroots entrepreneurship in developing countries. In China, there is some encouraging evidence that the leadership group that came to power with President Hu Jintao in 2003 is finally beginning to show an appreciation of these forces. Some old policies are being repudiated. Modest land and financial reforms have been introduced, and at the just-concluded National People's Congress there was discussion of further lifting the residential restrictions that inhibit people's mobility in rural China. These changes point in the right direction, but they must be implemented on a larger scale if China is to repeat the growth miracle of the 1980s. The most convincing evidence that things are beginning to change is that manufacturers in coastal areas of Guangdong Province have begun to experience upward pressure on wages. That matters because it indicates that they now have to compete for workers with rural businesses in the interior, which seem to be reviving. This bodes well for China's efforts to rebalance its economy and move quickly toward a growth model powered by domestic income and consumption.

For the United States, it would be far more productive to help China with this transition than to berate it for its exchange-rate policies. This kind of change is not alien to China in the wake of Deng Xiaoping's reforms, and there is much that it can learn from the American experience creating the Small Business Administration and various credit-guarantee programs for entrepreneurs. Instead of making a case for freedom and individual choice on the grounds of human and political rights, which can be culturally contentious and divisive, the United States can frame the discussion in economic terms, highlighting its own considerable success at fostering a free and supportive environment for entrepreneurs. The United States has a deep and substantial interest in seeing China succeed in this transition, as do many millions of ordinary Chinese and all of those whose lives are tied to the global economic order. ■

IN ESSENCE

REVIEWS OF ARTICLES FROM PERIODICALS AND SPECIALIZED JOURNALS HERE AND ABROAD

ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

Recession's Lasting Impression

THE SOURCE: "Growing Up in a Recession: Beliefs and the Macroeconomy" by Paola Giuliano and Antonio Spilimbergo, in ***The NBER Digest,*** Jan. 2010.

Pundits and economists may have pronounced the recession over, but the ordeal will shake younger Americans' faith in meritocracy for years to come.

Using data from the General Social Survey for 1972 to 2006, Paola Giuliano of the Anderson School of Management at the University of California, Los Angeles, and Antonio Spilimbergo of the International Monetary Fund found that people who experienced a recession between the ages of 18 and 25 (the "formative years," according to psychologists) are more likely than those who experienced steady economic growth during those years to believe that success in life is the result of luck, not hard work. As a result, they are more inclined to support government's efforts to help those with less. However, they also tend to express less confidence in Congress and the executive branch. Giuliano and Spilimbergo say such shifts in public opinion can shape public policy for decades.

Intriguingly, experiencing a recession during the formative years did not seem to move people in either direction along a liberal-conservative spectrum. It's possible, Giuliano and Spilimbergo write, that a recession's liberal push—encouraging a generation to believe that success is more about luck and that government should intervene—is countered by an equally powerful conservative tug toward being skeptical of public institutions. The authors note that other studies have shown that where people tend to place themselves on an ideological spectrum is highly determined by demographics and their parents' political beliefs. Economic conditions are not likely to supplant those powerful influences.

Even on particular matters, the window for change is small. Beliefs about meritocracy are set in stone once one passes 25, but a person's trust in government can change in response to a recession up until age 40.

All this is to say that the past is never past. Any future recovery to the contrary, the specters of the great recession of 2008–09 likely have settled in for a good, long haunting of U.S. politics and policies.

ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

The Mother of Invention

THE SOURCE: "The Industrial Revolution in Miniature: The Spinning Jenny in Britain, France, and India" by Robert C. Allen, in ***The Journal of Economic History,*** Dec. 2009.

The Industrial Revolution, the hinge joining our modern world to our agricultural history, began in late-18th-century England. But why England? Why not France or, for that matter, India?

Scholars have long debated the question. One popular theory is that the Glorious Revolution of 1688 led to a secure property-rights system,

which encouraged investment, which in turn spurred innovation. Others going back to Max Weber have argued that culture was responsible—specifically, that Calvinist-flavored Protestantism made people "particularly rational and oriented towards economic achievement." A third possibility is that the gains of the Scientific Revolution a century earlier gave tinkerers the tools to improve production.

Robert C. Allen, an economic historian at Oxford University, doesn't dispute these theories. "Good law and good culture may have been necessary conditions for the Industrial Revolution," he writes, "but they were not sufficient." These features of British society were the *supply* that fed innovation. But without *demand* (on the part of producers), no one would have toiled away at the exhausting process of innovation. In England at the time, wages were relatively high, especially in relation to the cost of capital. That meant that new technologies, even costly ones up to a point, were cost-effective for producers if they reduced the need for labor. And thus it was England's high wages—not its legal system or religion or scientific knowledge—that drove inventors to their workshops.

The history of the spinning jenny (a machine that allows one person to spin multiple spools of thread at once) illustrates Allen's point. Invented in the 1760s by James Hargreaves, an illiterate weaver from Lancashire, and improved upon in England and America for several decades thereafter, the spinning jenny was rapidly adopted throughout England, but not in France and India. In those two countries, Allen explains, labor was cheap enough and capital expensive enough that investing in the machine didn't pay. It would be years before it made economic sense for producers in India and France to invest in industrial technologies.

Allen says the same story plays out around the world today: Technologies that are a good investment in wealthy countries often are not adopted in the developing world, where labor is cheap and capital improvements cost many times the average wage. In such places, choosing not to invest in newfangled equipment isn't the result of some sort of cultural deficit or institutional failure, but a rational response to economic considerations.

No need to get all wound up. With a spinning jenny, one woman can do the work of many.

ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

Measure for Measure

THE SOURCES: "Beyond GDP: The Quest for a Measure of Social Welfare" by Marc Fleurbaey, in ***The Journal of Economic Literature***, Dec. 2009, and "Measuring Quality of Life" by Renee Courtois, in ***Region Focus***, Summer 2009.

In the world of economic statistics, gross domestic product (GDP) is king. A measure of total economic activity, it reigns widely as the ultimate indicator of a society's well-being. Economists employ a related statistic, GDP per capita, or average income, to draw comparisons among countries and over time. But many critics say these numbers are misleading and that it's time to create other ways to measure quality of life.

They point to many flaws in the kingly statistic. For one, GDP rises when a country spends more in bad times, such as pumping up national defense during war, cleaning up after natural disasters, or paying for

more police officers during a crime wave. Environmental degradation goes unnoticed in GDP, as do intangible additions to quality of life such as time enjoyed in a public park. And GDP ignores the distribution of wealth and opportunity within a society; a country with an extremely wealthy elite may have a higher GDP per capita than one with a large middle class, but it is hard to say that such a society is better off.

Moreover, behavioral economists point out that even at the individual level, higher income does not always mean greater happiness. As people make more money, their material desires increase as well, a phenomenon economists have called the "hedonic treadmill." Thus, a country with a booming economy might not experience an increase in happiness.

Behavioral economists point out that a higher income does not always mean greater happiness.

But Marc Fleurbaey, an economist at the University of Paris Descartes, notes that economists are a long way from agreeing on alternative yardsticks of national well-being. He explores four proposed measures: corrected GDP, which assesses "nonmarket aspects of well-being"; "Gross National Happiness," which uses surveys, behavioral observations, and physiological measures to gauge how happy people are; Nobel-winning economist Amartya Sen's "capability approach," which seeks to measure individuals' opportunities; and "synthetic indicators," which combine data on nonmonetary aspects of well-being, such as health, literacy, and life expectancy. Fleurbaey supports further exploration of corrected GDP, happiness measurements, and the capability approach, but none of these are yet shovel-ready, so to speak.

But would a different measure of social welfare change policies? "Yes and no," writes Renee Courtois, a staff writer at the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond. Economists may wish it were otherwise, but at the end of the day, policies are made by politicians, not statisticians. Politics is a process for weighing competing priorities—economic growth, defense, and quality of life, to name a few. GDP may reign supreme among well-being indicators, but in real life, politicians are not transfixed by it.

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

The Not-So-Long Arm of the Law

THE SOURCE: "Beyond Protection" by Philip Hamburger, in ***Columbia Law Review***, Dec. 2009.

For years, legislators, executive branch lawyers, and the courts have been tied up in knots over the scope of the rights that must be accorded suspected terrorists. Are they due a civilian jury? Can they be detained without being charged? Philip Hamburger, a professor at Columbia Law School, says that a more basic question must first be addressed: Do American legal protections even cover such people at all?

Hamburger argues that a legal doctrine prominent during the American Revolution, the "protection principle," can help U.S. officials sort people into two groups: those who are protected by U.S. law and those who aren't. The protection principle is based on the long-neglected idea that allegiance to a sovereign and the guarantee of that sovereign's protection are reciprocal. Foreigners who enter the country in amity traditionally have enjoyed protection, but noncitizens who take up arms against the United States or pledge allegiance to enemy countries are neither bound nor protected by U.S. laws. (Under this logic, 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, whose trial in a civilian courts has been a subject of controversy, would not be entitled to such a trial.)

Today, the U.S. government relies heavily on geography in deciding whether its laws apply. A Supreme Court decision in 1950 "left open the possibility that prisoners of war, if held domestically,

might in some instances have a right to habeas." It's for this reason that the government has come to rely on facilities outside the United States, most notably the Guantánamo Bay detention camp, for holding suspected terrorists. But under the rubric of protection, geography matters less and allegiance matters more. Thus, even bringing enemies onto America's sovereign territory for detention would not imbue them with the rights afforded to Americans.

The beauty of applying the protection principle, Hamburger writes, is that by confining legal rights to a fairly well-defined group of people, officials can avoid watering down those rights, allowing "safety and civil liberty to coexist."

But the U.S. government has ignored the protection principle, lumping together Yaser Esam Hamdi, who was an American citizen at the time of his arrest in Afghanistan in 2001, with noncitizens under the label "enemy combatants." In a 2004 decision, the Supreme Court sent the cases of such combatants, including Hamdi, to military proceedings, apparently making it permissible for "a person within protection, even a citizen, [to] be denied judicial process and treated as an enemy." In Hamburger's view, "The Court . . . thus achieved the worst of both worlds," watering down rights for citizens and providing enemies with more due process than they are owed.

Of course, in treating detainees, the United States must abide by international treaties and notions of decency, he concludes, but "the power to act harshly should this become necessary" remains.

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

Peace Corps Follies

THE SOURCE: "Grow Up: How to Fix the Peace Corps" by Robert L. Strauss, in ***The American Interest***, Jan.–Feb. 2010.

On the eve of its 50th birthday, the Peace Corps finds itself in remarkably bad shape. Born of lofty Kennedy-era ideals, it has never come close to its founders' vision: an army of young volunteers who would ease the pain left by colonialism and bring new nations into the Western fold. Instead, the corps is a mess, sending "the wrong people to the wrong countries to do jobs that are ill defined and undersupported," contends Robert L. Strauss, a former Peace Corps country director for Cameroon.

EXCERPT

Kabul on the Take

[In Afghanistan,] there appear to be few transactions in public life that have not been overwhelmed by graft. Stand outside the municipal courthouse in Kabul, as I did, and you can talk to any number of people who will tell you about their recent purchases: hearings, judges, verdicts, settlements. At the checkpoints that mark virtually every traffic intersection in the capital, the police regularly demand bribes to let drivers through. It is not uncommon for drivers taking their trucks through the city to fork over money at two dozen posts. I paid a bribe just to walk inside Kabul International Airport.

And then, of course, there was August's presidential election. By the cautious estimates of international observers, [President Hamid] Karzai's supporters—that is, his government and the election workers under his command—falsified nearly a million ballots on his behalf. The vote stealing was astonishingly brazen. In the Shorabak region of Kandahar Province, Karzai loyalists detained the district governor (whom I interviewed) and effectively canceled the election. Inside Shorabak's local government office, Karzai supporters—otherwise known as election workers—falsified 23,900 ballots and sent them to Kabul. Every one of them was a vote for Karzai. . . .

As the corruption in the Karzai government has grown more blatant, a popular hypothesis has emerged to explain it: that officials in Karzai's government orchestrated the fraud in order to preserve their hold on the moneymaking apparatus that the government has become. "It's a moneymaking machine," one senior American official told me. How do you reform something like this?

—**DEXTER FILKINS**, a foreign correspondent for *The New York Times*, in ***The New Republic*** (March 1, 2010)

The corps has lucked out in one regard: No one pays it any attention. Its budget of $375 million—equivalent to the amount the United States spends every 28 hours in Iraq—is "dryer lint at the bottom of the federal budgetary pocket." Its one powerful friend in Congress, Senator Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), recently announced his retirement. And aside from presidential candidates' election-year promises to expand the Peace Corps, it remains outside the political limelight. Strauss says the organization should seize upon its relative obscurity to take risks and revive its fieldwork.

For starters, it should "get serious about working with serious partners." If a country doesn't have basic respect for the rule of law and press freedom, and a substantial commitment to economic development, the Peace Corps is just wasting its time.

The corps must also get smarter about whom it recruits for its more than 7,500 overseas postings. It has too many volunteers who sign on in the hope that "life overseas will stimulate personal growth and, ultimately, maturity." Forget it, says Strauss. "Life overseas in loosely structured, poorly supervised situations is, with few exceptions, a formula for boredom, depression, desertion, and generally getting into trouble." The Peace Corps should tighten its standards and hire more permanent staff. And those who join up should be sent to cities. More and more of the world's poor aren't out in the bush, but that's where the Peace Corps continues to send its eager recruits.

Get real, Strauss says. The corps' original vision is "wildly naive and excessively optimistic."

When you're in a hole, stop digging! The Peace Corps needs a new strategy to live up to its lofty ideals. Above, a volunteer helps repair a bridge in Colombia during the corps' early days.

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

No Martyr Left Behind

THE SOURCE: "When Heads Roll: Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Decapitation" by Jenna Jordan, in ***Security Studies***, Oct.–Dec. 2009.

Removing the leaders of terrorist groups, either by assassination or arrest, is a key strategy in combating terrorism. After the killing of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in 2006, President George W. Bush claimed that Al Qaeda had been dealt a "severe blow." But Jenna Jordan, a doctoral candidate in political science at the University of Chicago, begs to differ. Decapitation, as this tactic is called, is "not an effective counterterrorism strategy" and in fact

can "strengthen a group's resolve, result in retaliatory attacks, increase public sympathy for the organization, or produce more lethal attacks."

Jordan compiled a data set of 96 organizations, such as Hamas and Germany's 1970s-vintage Baader-Meinhof Gang, that experienced a total of 298 incidents of decapitation between 1945 and 2004. She found that as organizations grow and age, they become more resilient. For groups with fewer than 25 members, decapitation was successful 54 percent of the time in causing the group to fall apart. For groups with more than 10,000 members, it worked in just nine percent of instances. The age of a group was "highly significant" as well, with no groups that had been around for 40 years or more collapsing as the result of decapitation. Among organizations less than 10 years old, nearly a third dissolved after losing their leader.

Jordan also found that the success of decapitation varied greatly depending on what type of group was involved—religious, ideological, or separatist. Religious groups are particularly resilient, perhaps because they have "a sacred element that inspires a level of dedication not seen in other movements." Less than five percent of religious groups fell apart after decapitation. Ideologically motivated groups, on the other hand, are more susceptible to attacks on their leaders, collapsing one-third of the time. The data on separatist organizations were inconclusive.

How leaders are taken out of action turns out to matter a great deal. Arresting the top leader is less effective than killing him, possibly because he may still be able to communicate with supporters or because remaining players rally together in an effort to free him. But it's more effective to arrest second-tier leaders than to kill them, possibly because they provide intelligence to their captors or because there's no martyr whose memory unites remaining members.

Overall, Jordan observes, organizations whose leaders are targeted fail *less* often than others. Seventy percent of those that did not experience decapitation collapsed. It's possible that the assassination or arrest of a leader actually invigorates terrorist groups.

Of course, policymakers may be satisfied with wounding a terrorist group, even if it doesn't fall apart. But Jordan cautions against that, noting that groups that do survive may become even more lethal in the years following decapitation, as younger, more radical leaders take the helm.

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

System Failure

THE SOURCES: "Failed State" by William Voegeli, in ***Claremont Review of Books***, Fall 2009, and "California in Crisis" by Donald Cohen and Peter Dreier, in ***The American Prospect***, Feb. 1, 2010.

All can agree that California is struggling to make ends meet. But nailing down the causes of the Golden State's budgetary woes (a predicted $20 billion shortfall this year) has resulted in another left-right shouting match, with the two sides sharing little, if any, common ground, at least at first glance. Commentators on the left blame the state's inability to levy higher property taxes; on the right, they wag a finger at public-sector unions, which have extracted generous pay and pensions. But both sides recognize that the problems are structural: California's governing system is broken.

The proximate cause of the state's crisis is the recession. But a number of other hard-hit states have managed to avoid the sorts of massive cuts California will need to make in areas such as education and health care. The state is hardly poor. Its economy—$1.9 trillion in 2008—would be the eighth largest in the world if U.S. states were counted as independent jurisdictions. Despite such wealth, last summer the state sent IOUs to taxpayers to whom it owed refunds. State employees have had to take

furloughs three days per month, equivalent to a 14 percent pay cut. And California has the lowest credit rating of any U.S. state.

William Voegeli, a contributing editor of the *Claremont Review of Books,* writes that today's crisis is the result of a century-old Progressive legacy. "Rome wasn't sacked in a day, and California didn't become Argentina overnight," he observes. When Progressives took over the government in the 1910 state elections, they made it their business to "collapse the constitutional space between the people and the government." Their systemic changes—direct primaries, nonpartisan election of judges, recall elections, and popular referendums and initiatives—were motivated by a deep suspicion of "dirty" politics and self-interested parties and politicians. But these reforms empowered government administrators who had interests of their own. Now it is state employee unions that stand in the way of efforts to trim the state's budgets, Voegeli writes.

Donald Cohen, the president of the Center on Policy Initiatives, and Peter Dreier, a professor of politics at Los Angeles-based Occidental College, agree that the Progressive legacy plagues the state, but they single out Proposition 13, the 1978 initiative that restricted property taxes and required a two-thirds majority in the legislature to pass any state tax increases. As a result, California is "virtually ungovernable," Cohen and Dreier write. To make matters worse, in 1990 voters approved a ballot initiative imposing strict term limits on state legislators. As a result, many are policy novices, with little time and incentive to build interparty coalitions.

There's one thing everybody can agree on: The joke is on today's liberals, ideological descendants of yesterday's Progressives. Time and again, California's ballot initiatives have stymied liberal aims: Gay marriage was banned last year, bilingual education in 1998. But the state's fiscal gridlock is a disaster for all. The Progressives wanted the people to run the state, but today it's clear that the only thing the people have run is aground.

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

Hail, Divided Government

THE SOURCE: "The Curse of One-Party Government" by Jonathan Rauch, in ***National Journal***, Feb. 6, 2010.

What could be harder for a president than dealing with a Congress controlled by the opposition party? Try governing with your own party in power, writes *National Journal* columnist Jonathan Rauch.

America has two completely different settings: Mode 1 (unified government) and Mode 2 (split control).

America today has two completely different government settings: Mode 1 (one party controls both Congress and the presidency) and Mode 2 (split control). Mode 2 works better, Rauch contends.

The underlying dynamic is that today's Republican and Democratic parties have effectively no ideological overlap. When one party controls both branches of government, its policies alienate moderate voters. The minority party (Republicans for the time being) has every incentive to do what it can to help the majority fail at governing; it will reap the benefits come election

Unified government has not been smooth sailing for President Barack Obama, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. A Democratic loss in November could be Obama's gain.

time. Without any minority support, the majority must move to its own ideological center rather than the electorate's, in an effort to secure every possible vote from within.

In such a situation, the president must try "to hold together a governing coalition by slaloming: veering from left or right to center and back." This is what President Barack Obama has been trying to do for more than a year. "Every zig toward the center offends the party's base (too many compromises!), and every zag back toward the base upsets the centrists (he's just too extreme!), and the president looks weak and inconsistent," Rauch writes.

Mode 2 works in reverse. When the parties share power, they are forced to compromise, bringing legislation closer to the country's ideological center in the process. The president can position himself as the central mediator between the party ruling Congress and his own base. Governing will be easier for the president, and his popularity will improve.

Rauch says that recent history bears this out. In periods of unified government (Bill Clinton's first two years and George W. Bush's middle four), "Congress leaned too far left or right, the president was dragged off center, the country became bitterly polarized, independents grew disgusted, and the voters soon switched to Mode 2," Rauch writes. That may be just what happens in the upcoming midterm elections in November. Unlikely as it may seem, if Congress flips Republican, President Obama may stand to benefit.

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

The Paradox of the Welfare State

THE SOURCE: "What Is Living and What Is Dead in Social Democracy?" by Tony Judt, in ***The New York Review of Books***, Dec. 17, 2009.

Americans may complain about health care, schools, and crime, but they seem to have "difficulty even *imagining* a different sort of society," contends historian Tony Judt. Their thinking is biased by what Judt calls "economism"—"the invocation of economics in all discussions of public affairs." He calls for a "moral critique of the inadequacies of the unrestricted market."

The "propensity to avoid moral considerations" in our public discourse is "an acquired taste," Judt writes, and one that developed relatively recently. Classical economists of the 18th century were greatly interested in what Adam Smith called "moral sentiments." Smith wrote that the "disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and the powerful, and to despise, or, at least, to neglect persons of poor and mean condition . . . is . . . the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments." He could have been describing America today, Judt despairs.

Ironically, this "corruption" stems from the success of the welfare state. Social democratic policies enacted in the years following the Great Depression and World War II built the middle class and reduced inequality. People began to feel that the safety nets provided by the state were no longer necessary. "The paradox" of welfare states in America, as well as Europe, "was quite simply that their success would over time undermine their appeal."

By the early 1980s, Washington was at work undoing the welfare state, beginning with Reagan-era tax and employment reforms, followed by the deregulation of the financial sector, and culminating with welfare reform, in the shape of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 ("a more Orwellian title would be hard to conceive," Judt says). A "cult of privatization" promised efficiencies and profits that have proved illusory. Inequality grew, and today the United States has a distribution of wealth comparable to China's.

Judt says that the provisions of the welfare state—such as support for the needy and investments in public transit—do not always have to make economic sense in order to make "social sense." The benefits are not in dollars, but in the value of having a "good society"—which undeniably comes at a price. He heralds a new era of social democracy, designed to reassure people in what is an "age of insecurity." Imagining what such a society would look like shouldn't be so hard—the "remarkable achievements" of the 20th-century welfare state are an excellent model.

SOCIETY

Colluding Colleges

THE SOURCE: "That Old College Lie" by Kevin Carey, in ***Democracy: A Journal of Ideas***, Winter 2010.

It's pretty clear that sky-high tuition keeps postsecondary education out of reach for many Americans. It's not clear what's behind the ever-rising costs—up nearly 500 percent since 1980. Kevin Carey, policy director of Education Sector, a think tank based in Washington, D.C., contends that the fundamental problem is that consumers are being forced to shop for higher education on the basis of a college's reputation rather than the quality of the education.

Colleges are doing whatever they can to lock away "objective . . . information about how well [they] teach," Carey says. In the absence of clear information, buyers rely on judgments about the reputations of different institutions, which are often based on a school's wealth, admissions selectivity, and price tag. In a nutshell, the focus on image over educational improvements drives costs up, and drives teaching quality down, he asserts.

The most popular proxy for data on college caliber—the *U.S. News and World Report* annual rankings—bases 10 percent of a school's standing on spending per student, with additional points awarded for higher faculty salaries. "If an innovative college found a way to become more efficient and charge less while maintaining academic quality, its *U.S. News* ranking would actually go down," Carey writes. So, colleges spend huge sums on new facilities, state-of-the-art fitness centers, big-name researchers, and winning sports teams. Such visible investments help buoy a school's reputation, but they don't help students learn.

Beyond the top 10 percent of institutions, American higher education is a "sea of mediocrity," Carey writes. (In 2006, there were 11 million college students enrolled in 2,600 four-year institutions.) The average graduation rate for the less selective half of American four-year colleges is a woeful 45 percent. For low-income students, the situation is even bleaker—less than 40 percent get a degree within six years of enrolling. And many college degrees are empty qualifications: Less than one-third of adults with a B.A. can compare and contrast two newspaper editorials, and more than a quarter can't perform basic math calculations.

Carey says the federal government must tie programs that help students pay tuition (such as Pell Grants) to colleges' commitment to providing objective information on their institu-

EXCERPT

Fancy That

I have always fancied being bored on a huge and stylish scale. I'm talking Great Gatsby boredom, with everyone lying around in white clothes and floppy hats, sipping long drinks with cooling names, and being utterly and divinely bored. How sophisticated can one get, goes my thinking, that even when surrounded by the best things in life, it's not enough? Boredom wins through.

There's something exquisite about boredom. Like melancholy and its darker cousin sadness, boredom is related to emptiness and meaninglessness, but in a perfectly enjoyable way. It's like wandering though the National Gallery, being surrounded by all those great works of art, and deciding not to look at them because it's a pleasure just walking from room to room enjoying the squeak of your soles on the polished floor. Boredom is the no-signal sound on a blank television, the closed-down monotone of a radio in the middle of the night. It's an uninterrupted straight line.

—COLIN BISSET, a writer in Australia, in ***Philosophy Now*** (Feb.–March 2010)

tional performance. Hundreds of colleges already participate in assessments such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). The NSSE asks a sample of students how many books and papers were assigned, how many hours they spent preparing for class, whether they had group projects, etc. CLA test takers, freshmen and seniors, write long analytical essays.

However, Carey writes, the potent higher-education lobby has aggressively resisted efforts to make the results of such tests public, and Congress has refused to take even baby steps in that direction. But only increased transparency will push colleges to do what they are meant to do: teach.

SOCIETY

The Other Insurance

THE SOURCE: "Genetic Testing for Alzheimer's and Long-Term Care Insurance" by Donald H. Taylor Jr., Robert M. Cook-Deegan, Susan Hiraki, J. Scott Roberts, Dan G. Blazer, and Robert C. Green, in ***Health Affairs***, Jan. 2010.

An overwhelming majority of Americans who live to 65 will eventually require long-term care, but less than 10 percent over the age of 50 have long-term care insurance. Those familiar with nursing homes and home-health aides know that such care doesn't come cheap: National spending on long-term care topped $206 billion in 2005, according to Georgetown University's Health Policy Institute. "Virtually the entire U.S. population is at some risk of using more care than their assets can finance," write Duke public policy professor Donald H. Taylor Jr. and his coauthors.

Advances in genetic screening may upend how long-term care is financed. Taylor and colleagues found that when people learned they had a genotype that increased their likelihood of developing Alzheimer's disease, which sends 75 percent of sufferers to nursing homes, they were 2.3 times more likely to acquire long-term care insurance. The problem is that the availability of such genetic tests could flood insurance companies with more high-risk customers, undermining the financial logic of insurance. To contend with a pool of sicker clients, long-term care insurance providers would either have to raise the premium costs for high-risk individuals or raise all premiums. In either scenario, the increase would likely make insurance too costly for some individuals.

In order to prevent health insurance organizations from raising premiums for people with a genetic predisposition to disease, Congress passed the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act in 2008. But no such restriction applies to long-term care insurers. A few states have stepped in with anti-discrimination laws of their own. But if such safeguards become more expansive, Washington will face pressure to intervene, the authors write, either by requiring everybody to buy long-term care insurance or by providing costly subsidies to cover a greater number of people. Given the legislative circumlocutions that imperiled health care reform, the path forward for long-term care insurance seems murky indeed.

SOCIETY

Do Learning Styles Matter?

THE SOURCE: "Learning Styles: Concepts and Evidence" by Harold Pashler, Mark McDaniel, Doug Rohrer, and Robert A. Bjork, in ***Psychological Science in the Public Interest***, Dec. 2008.

Audio, visual, textual—most people are willing and eager to identify themselves as a certain type of learner. And it follows pretty quickly that they learn better and faster when teachers approach a lesson in their "style." Based on that logic, many school districts have poured money into training and materials to help teachers tailor their lessons to the various learning styles of their students. But haste makes waste, write Harold Pashler of the University of California, San Diego; Mark McDaniel of Washington University, St. Louis; Doug Rohrer of the University of South Florida; and Robert A. Bjork of the University of California, Los Angeles. There just isn't sufficient evidence to support customizing education in this way.

An industry of expensive seminars and guidebooks has sprung up premised on the so-called meshing hypothesis—that instruction is best absorbed when it matches a learner's preferences. In order to justify this industry's existence, a study would have to show that students, sorted by learning style, then randomly assigned to different instruction methods, performed better when they were instructed in the "correct" teaching style. Very few studies have attempted this, the authors report,

and of those that did, several had results that flatly contradicted the meshing hypothesis. The one study Pashler and colleagues thought might support it had serious methodological flaws, including data scrubbed of "deviant scores."

On the other hand, in what the authors deem "a particularly informative and well-designed study" of 175 participants, psychologists Laura J. Massa and Richard E. Mayer found "no tendency for better performance" among subjects who received information in their preferred format. Massa and Mayer concluded that their results gave zero support to "the idea that different instructional methods should be used" for different types of learners.

The appeal of learning styles isn't hard to understand. The idea of finding out "what type of person one is" probably has some "eternal and deep appeal." Parents love the idea that if their children aren't doing well, it's because they haven't received the proper style of instruction. But appealing as it may be, it's just not worth the cash until the evidence is there. Without firm support, the authors conclude, schools should not invest their limited resources in catering to students' supposed learning styles.

SOCIETY

Catch-22

THE SOURCE: "Down and Out in Chicago" by T. M. Luhrmann, in ***Raritan***, Winter 2010.

In Chicago, a seven-year wait confronts poor people hoping to move from homeless shelters to longer-term subsidized housing. Those judged psychotic, however, can make the move in only two weeks. Yet there are very few takers.

Stanford anthropologist T. M. Luhrmann tried to get behind the wall of mental illness to understand this mystery. She planted herself in the homeless shelters and drop-in centers of a tiny, two-to-three-block area with probably "the densest concentration of persons with serious psychotic disorder in the entire state of Illinois." The women she met refused to get the paperwork signed certifying their diagnosis of a psychotic disorder. One woman, Zaney, insisted she was not crazy despite the fact that she heard "angry but nonexistent" voices. When Luhrmann suggested several times that she just "pretend" to be crazy in order to get an apartment, Zaney would shake her head. "I'm not that kind of person," she'd say.

It's not that Zaney is unable to reflect or think straight, Luhrmann writes, it's that "crazy" means something different to her and the other women she met during her research—something akin to "weak." They see psychosis as something that "arises when a woman is not strong enough to cope with the difficulties of homelessness," and believe that "only those who give up the struggle to get out become flagrantly ill." Refusing help is a "kind of signal." It means: I am not crazy. I can survive on my own.

Luhrmann can see where these women are coming from. Many with severe psychosis are quite coherent and competent much of the time—they have to be, or they wouldn't survive on the street. It is a harsh world. "People in shelters say scathing, contemptuous things about each other and about people like themselves," Luhrmann writes. The most psychotic women—"the ones who are visibly talking to people no one else can see, who gesture to the empty air"—are the most scorned of all.

What makes it all the more difficult for them to accept a diagnosis is that to them the consequences of turning a deaf ear to the voices are dire. "This is the terrible dilemma of madness," Luhrmann writes, "that if you ignore the phenomena—if you tell yourself that the voices and the visions are twisted figments of your imagination—and you are wrong, the cost is very high, because the voices promise your own destruction." The philosopher Blaise Pascal relied on the same logic when he became a Christian in the 17th century. "If he believed and he was wrong, he risked being a fool, but if he did not believe and he was wrong, he risked eternal damnation. He chose belief. We live, all of us, in the gray zone of interpretation, judging what in our world is truly real."

Helping homeless people who are mentally ill, Luhrmann concludes, requires recognizing their reality. Some programs, such as one in New York City called Pathways to Housing, already do things differently. They don't mention psychiatric diagnoses, simply assisting those who are "obviously eligible." The casual screening seems to work—the program costs no more than conventional approaches.

PRESS & MEDIA

Chop Chop

THE SOURCE: "Cut This Story!" by Michael Kinsley, in ***The Atlantic,*** Jan.–Feb. 2010.

A little advice for newspaper editors: Cut to the chase, says Michael Kinsley, an *Atlantic* columnist. Crusty conventions prevent reporters from quickly getting to the point, and it's little surprise that readers don't hang around to trudge through excessively long articles and instead head in droves to Web sites that are eating print's lunch.

For example, a *New York Times* piece reporting the passage of a health care reform bill in November begins, "Handing President Obama a hard-fought victory, the House narrowly approved a sweeping overhaul of the nation's health care system on Saturday night, advancing legislation that Democrats said could stand as their defining social policy achievement." In Kinsley's estimation, fewer than half the words in this lead sentence say what happened. It includes unnecessary and unsurprising information. Unnamed Democrats bragged about their accomplishment? Really?

It's not just the leads that have problems. Stories are peppered with generic, unsurprising quotes from people no one cares about. Often, Kinsley says, these quotes are used because convention forbids reporters from stating their opinions, so they find someone who will speak for them, as though quotation marks "magically turn an opinionated story into an objective one." This ritual gesturing to objectivity also makes appearances when reporters qualify even the most mundane assertions, as in a story about how "the crackdown on some Wall Street bonuses may have backfired."

In the software industry, "legacy code" is what's left in updated programs so that they will still work with older operating systems. "The equivalent exists in newspaper stories," Kinsley writes, "which are written to accommodate readers who have just emerged from a coma or a coal mine." If someone doesn't already know that passing health care reform involves a "sweeping overhaul of the nation's health care system," or that Hillary Clinton tried and failed in this project during her husband's administration, then that person probably isn't going to be reading the article. The problem is that now, those who do know these things may not either.

At a time when newspapers are carefully watching their bottom lines, ditching outdated conventions may kill two birds with one stone by saving costly space and keeping readers coming back for more.

PRESS & MEDIA

Linking to the Obvious

THE SOURCE: "Online Information Sources of Political Blogs" by Mark Leccese, in ***Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly***, Autumn 2009.

Are blogs the future of journalism? Today, a number of the most popular political blogs have far more readers than prestigious print publications such as *The Nation* or *The New Republic.* But though many bloggers fancy themselves cutting-edge journalists, they aren't doing the heavy lifting required by actual reporting, writes Emerson College journalism professor Mark Leccese.

Leccese looked at six top political blogs—three conservative (Michelle Malkin, Instapundit, and Power Line) and three liberal (Daily Kos, Talking Points Memo, and Crooks and Liars)—over a one-week period in January 2008, at the beginning of the presidential primary season. Of the 2,087 links that appeared on the front pages of these blogs, nearly half (46.5 percent) directed the reader to mainstream media outlets, such as CNN or MSNBC. *The New York Times* was far and away the most linked-to source, with nearly nine percent of all links pointing to a page somewhere on its site.

Only 15.5 percent of links pointed to primary sources (in-

cluding government Web sites, think tank reports, and candidate's pages). Daily Kos and Power Line both outdid their competitors, with 26 and 18.8 percent of links, respectively, pointing to primary sources. Twenty-three percent of links went to other blogs and 15 percent connected to a blog's own prior posts.

When it comes to news gathering, blogs aren't a good replacement for mainstream newspapers. They are more like op-ed pages, digesting the day's news and spitting out commentary and analysis. But is that really journalism? Rebecca Blood, a longtime blogger and author of a handbook on blogging, writes, "Frankly, no. I am not practicing journalism when I link to a news article reported by someone else and state what I think—I've been doing something similar around the water cooler for years."

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

Who's to Blame?

THE SOURCE: "The Future of Blame" by James Q. Wilson, in ***National Affairs***, Winter 2010.

"Does the fact that biology determines more of our thinking and conduct than we had previously imagined," James Q. Wilson asks, "undermine the notion of free will?" Science is still a long way from reducing everything we do to genetic predisposition, but, Wilson wonders, if current trends continue, will it someday be "impossible to hold people accountable for what they do?"

The short answer is no. No matter what our genes influence us to do, Wilson argues, we always respond to other factors in our environment. "Many motorists drive faster than the speed limit," he points out, but "few will speed when they are being followed by a police car." Wilson, whose many books include *The Moral Sense* (1993), and who teaches political science at both Pepperdine University and Boston College, also argues that "no understanding of individual genes and brains—however sophisticated—could fully encompass all human behavior." That, he says, is "an important justification for a system of law grounded in personal accountability."

Where biology comes into play is in the degree to which we hold people accountable for their misdeeds, and how punishment is assigned. If a motorist suffers an epileptic seizure while driving and kills someone, the law will likely dictate some criminal charge, though probably less than murder. But the charge may be more severe if the motorist knew at the time of the accident that he or she had epilepsy.

Indeed, even if someone's predisposition makes that person commit a crime, laws (and sentences for breaking them) ought to retain a punitive component, in Wilson's view: "A punishment is fitting only if it incapacitates known offenders, deters would-be offenders, increases the chances of rehabilitating offenders, and expresses a solemn moral judgment about the wrongness of the criminal act." This system, on the surface, may seem unfairly harsh to someone biologically predisposed to commit a crime, but Wilson argues that it actually benefits such a person. "If we allow ourselves to think that explaining behavior justifies it, then we will have reduced the incentives for people who are likely to behave wrongly to avoid bad behavior," as well as eliminate any benefits to others already acting correctly.

> If biology explains behavior, virtue and depravity become equally meaningless.

It is this very yardstick, Wilson concludes, that "helps us define not only bad behavior but also good. If we believe modern science has explained malevolent behavior, we must also argue that it has explained praiseworthy behavior. Virtue then becomes just as meaningless as depravity—a state of affairs in which no society could hope to remain ordered or healthy."

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

The Islamic Word

THE SOURCE: "The Interplay of Technology and Sacredness in Islam: Discussions of Muslim Scholars on Printing the Qur'an" by Mohammed Ghaly, in ***Studies in Ethics, Law, and Technology***, Aug. 2009.

In the early 18th century, a small group of Turkish diplomats proposed the establishment of an Ottoman printing house. The Ottoman Empire had allowed Jews and other minorities to print books in Hebrew and other languages for decades, but many Turks thought it was a sin to print the Qur'an and other books about Islamic law. Constantinople's scribes (perhaps as many as 90,000) protested the possible loss of their livelihoods. Anticipating religious resistance, one of the diplomats requested a fatwa (religious pronouncement) from the Shaykh al-Islam, the head of the Ottoman religious bureaucracy, endorsing printing. The shaykh complied in part: Secular Arabic books could roll off the presses, but Islamic texts must continue to be transcribed by hand. In 1727, the first Arabic printing house opened in Constantinople (now Istanbul).

Mohammed Ghaly, a professor of Islamic law and theology at Leiden University in the Netherlands, writes that the Islamic scholarly community of that time had four major objections to printing Islamic texts: the use of materials regarded as impure (such as brushes made from boar bristles) in the printing process; the heavy pressure required for printing, which was considered inconsistent with the manner in which sacred texts should be handled; the possibility of mass-producing errors; and the risk that non-Muslim printers would come into contact with the Qur'an, which was strictly forbidden.

Beyond these legal arguments, Ghaly writes that printing was "needless" in Islamic society because of the primacy of a Qur'anic oral tradition. In fact, the word *Qur'an* is related to the Arabic verb meaning "to recite, read aloud." The oral tradition, not written texts, was authoritative, and it was incumbent upon all Muslims to memorize the Qur'an. Even today, Ghaly writes, Qur'anic recitation forms "a significant part of the 'auditory' background of everyday life." So while common people in the Christian world had little access to the Bible until Gutenberg's printing press (mid-15th century), the text of the Qur'an was well known by Muslim believers.

With time, the legal arguments subsided. Impure materials were removed from the printing process, the risk of errors was diminished by careful editing, and Muslims were trained to do the work. In 1832, more than a century after Shaykh al-Islam's decree, the first printed edition of the Qur'an came off the presses in Egypt, although it was recalled shortly thereafter because it contained errors. Today, of course, the Qur'an is widely available, not just in printed form but all over the Internet on sites such as www.Quran.com.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Better Science Through Failure

THE SOURCE: "Accept Defeat: The Neuroscience of Screwing Up" by Jonah Lehrer, in ***Wired***, Jan. 2010.

Want a Nobel Prize for physics? Try this: Build a radio telescope to search the far reaches of space, curse at it because all it ever seems to pick up is static, attempt to fix the problem by coating it with aluminum tape and scrubbing it clean of pigeon droppings, and then—when you're finally convinced the contraption is a complete failure—place a call to a fellow scientist who's trying to figure out how to measure cosmic debris left from the Big Bang. Pause while it sinks in that cosmic debris is causing your telescope's irritating static. Fourteen years later, book flight to Stockholm.

According to *Wired* contributing editor Jonah Lehrer, what happened to Bell Labs astronomers Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson, winners of the 1978 Nobel Prize for physics, is often the way science works. He cites the work of Kevin

Dunbar, a researcher who found in his study of scientific methods at four Stanford University biochemistry labs since the early 1990s that more than 50 percent of the experiments produced unexpected results. "The details always changed," Lehrer reports, "but the story remained the same: The scientists were looking for X, but they found Y." Dunbar's study showed that researchers almost always blamed mistakes for their surprising findings, even when the anomalies showed up multiple times. That persistent denial of what they were seeing, Lehrer writes, is "rooted in the way the human brain works."

"A possible eureka."

In the past few decades, he says, psychologists have "dismantled the myth of objectivity." Although scientists like to believe they are empiricists—that their work demands obedience to the facts—Lehrer says that more often people are "actually blinkered, especially when it comes to information that contradicts our theories. The problem with science, then, isn't that most experiments fail—it's that most failures are ignored."

Dunbar ran a separate experiment that pinpointed two brain centers that react to the unexpected. Students were shown film clips that recreated Galileo's famous experiment of dropping different-sized cannon balls from the Tower of Pisa. One clip showed a larger ball falling faster than a smaller one—a false representation of gravity's action—while the other displayed Galileo's discovery: The two balls would fall at the same rate. When college physics majors watched the manipulated clip, the region of their brains associated with perception of errors and contradictions, the anterior cingulate cortex, was activated. That's to be expected. But Dunbar also detected activity in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, an area that acts as a kind of "delete" key, suppressing unwanted information. The students, Lehrer writes, "didn't watch the video and wonder whether Galileo might be wrong. Instead they put their trust in theory, tuning out whatever it couldn't explain. Belief, in other words, is a kind of blindness."

Scientists, of course, can sometimes overcome this tendency. One strategy is to admit that what appears unreal is, in fact, a possibility. Researchers on the margins of mainstream society can also have an advantage, which may

EXCERPT

Pipe Dreams

Why do we choose to approach the most cutting-edge computer technologies of our brave new world using the language and concepts of cavemen? We talk of loading data "up" to somewhere—but where do we mean? Heaven? We transfer data via Ethernet cables as if data were "ethereal." Developers of tomorrow's computers talk excitedly about "cloud" computing. We don't marvel at a Ford factory and think the finished cars are the result of magical processes, but when we conceptualize the Internet, we become spiritual and nebulous.

—SIMON NORFOLK, a photographer whose work appears in public collections around the world, in ***The Baffler*** (Vol. 2, No. 1)

explain why, as sociologist Thorstein Veblen suggested in a controversial 1918 essay, Jewish scientists such as Albert Einstein thrived in the anti-Semitic culture of Germany. And Dunbar's research points to another fruitful avenue: diversity. The laboratories he studied all held regular group meetings where knotty problems were tackled en masse. Labs in which the scientists were all in the same field were much less efficient at solving such puzzlers than those that included researchers from unrelated fields, partly, Lehrer says, because the scientists were forced to explain their experiments in abstract terms that allowed for more creative ideas to emerge.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Skin Story

THE SOURCE: "The Naked Truth" by Nina G. Jablonski, in ***Scientific American***, Feb. 2010.

Hairless skin may not seem a very notable human trait when compared with our use of advanced tools or spoken language, but our fur-free epidermis is among the significant distinctions that set us apart from our closest primate relations, writes Nina G. Jablonski, a professor and head of the anthropology department at Pennsylvania State University.

Protohumans probably started losing their hair in response to a change in climate about three million years ago. The lush region in east and central Africa that sustained australopithecines dried out, and the fruits, leaves, tubers, and seeds that were once abundant disappeared, as did fresh water. These human ancestors had to abandon a relatively leisurely foraging way of life and take a more active approach to finding the calories and water necessary to keep them alive. It was also around this time that australopithecines began to hunt for meat. All this extra activity put these hairy human ancestors at constant risk of overheating; soon enough, that body hair thinned out.

Furry creatures employ specialized tactics to keep themselves cool: Dogs pant; cats lie low in the heat of the day. The little bit of hair that humans retain on the tops of their heads also helps people stay cool by shielding their scalps from the sun. But for primates, sweating is the modus operandi. And thanks to our nearly hairless skin and an abundance of eccrine glands (between two and five million), humans have the most efficient sweating system around—so efficient, in fact, that on a hot day it's possible for a human to outrun a horse in a marathon.

Jablonski writes that our unique skin led to the emergence of other distinctly human traits. She speculates that our skin and sweating abilities made possible "the dramatic enlargement of our most temperature-sensitive organ, the brain." Human modes of communication such as facial expressions and body language replaced raising our hackles. Skin may not be very deep, but it goes right to the core of who we are.

ARTS & LETTERS

Writing Into the Void

THE SOURCE: "The Death of Fiction" by Ted Genoways, in ***Mother Jones***, Jan.–Feb. 2010.

In the Internet age, everyone is a poet, a blogger, an e-mailer. More than 800 MFA programs around the country pump out a steady supply of newly minted wordsmiths. The death of literature, it would seem, has been greatly exaggerated. But in *Mother Jones,* Ted Genoways, the editor of the literary journal *Virginia Quarterly Review,* provides reason for pause. When everyone's a writer, no one's a reader—at least to judge from the state of American literary journals.

In these days of academic belt-tightening, literary journals, which proliferated on campuses in the last few decades, have become easy targets. Standard-bearers such as *TriQuarterly Review, New*

England Review, and *Southern Review* have seen their budgets and staffs slashed or are threatened with elimination altogether if they don't break even.

In their heyday half a century ago, Genoways notes, university-based literary journals were vital forums for serious fiction and public debate. "Consider this: When Wilbur Cross was elected governor of Connecticut in 1930, an unlikely Democratic victor in an overwhelmingly Republican state, his principal qualification was his nearly 20 years as editor of *Yale Review.*"

The fact is that no one reads such journals now, Genoways says. The average literary journal prints fewer than 1,500 copies. Yet the volume of submissions to these publications has exploded. In a blog posting on *Virginia Quarterly Review*'s own Web site after Genoways published his essay, the magazine's editors noted that every year 10 times as many people submit to the magazine as subscribe to it. "And there's very, very little overlap. We know—we've checked."

Writers know there's no audience for what they do—many of them aren't reading the stuff themselves—so, writes Genoways, they "have become less and less interested in reaching out to readers—and less and less encouraged by their teachers to try." The echo chamber has had an effect. Major magazines that once regularly published fiction have ceased to do so—*The New Yorker* and *Harper*'s being the exceptions. "One would think that the rapid eviction of literature from the pages of commercial magazines would have come as a tremendous boon to lit mags. . . . But the less commercially viable fiction became, the less it seemed to concern itself with its audience, which in turn made it less commercial, until, like a dying star, it seems on the verge of implosion." As evidence that fiction has ceased to concern itself with things that matter, he notes the dearth of fiction written about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; journalists and war vet memoirists have taken up the publishing slack.

The *Virginia Quarterly Review*'s editors noted that 10 times as many people submit to the magazine as subscribe to it. "And there's very, very little overlap. We know—we've checked."

Genoways proposes a new era of invigorated literary journals. "With so many newspapers and magazines closing, with so many commercial publishers looking to nonprofit models, a few bold university presidents could save American literature, reshape journalism, and maybe even rescue public discourse from the cable shout shows and the blogosphere." But that can only work if young writers "swear off navel gazing" and "write something we might want to read."

ARTS AND LETTERS

Grandeur in Stone

THE SOURCE: "Sculptors of the American Renaissance: Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Daniel Chester French" by James F. Cooper, in ***American Arts Quarterly***, Fall 2009.

The Civil War left both the North and the South bruised and battered, but the Industrial Revolution ensured that prosperity returned fairly quickly. Soon enough, the search was on for a culture appropriate to a rejuvenated America's growing role on the world stage. Thus dawned the American Renaissance, a period when "art was at the heart of American civic life," writes James F. Cooper, editor and publisher of *American Arts Quarterly.*

Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Daniel Chester French, arguably two of America's greatest sculptors, exemplified the period's mix of mastery, ambition, and gravitas. French is best known for *Lincoln*, the 19-foot-tall statue of the 16th president that sits inside the grand memorial on the National Mall, while Saint-Gaudens won praise for accomplished memorials to contemporary luminaries such as Robert Gould Shaw, the Civil War colonel who commanded one of the U.S. military's first black regiments, and Navy admiral David Glasgow Farragut. Both sculptors were inspired by the moral authority and aesthetic excellence of Greco-Roman sculpture. But they also had unique strengths and influences.

Of the two men's work, French's was more traditionally neoclassical. He was particularly concerned with shape and form; like Michelangelo's,

As a boy, Augustus Saint-Gaudens was one of thousands to pay his respects to Abraham Lincoln when the fallen president's funeral train stopped in New York City. In this bust made years later, Saint-Gaudens captures the president's thoughtful nature.

French's sculptures change "as one moves from one side to the other, each angle carefully composed for the benefit of the eye," Cooper writes. Take *Memory*, on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. The sculpture is of a young, melancholy woman gazing into an indirectly angled hand mirror; "the seated figure is twisted gracefully in contrapposto . . . presenting perfectly composed compositions viewed from any angle." French's "Romantic passion and robust talent" made his work particularly powerful, Cooper writes.

Saint-Gaudens trained at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where he was influenced by Modernism, which was then coming into vogue. In contrast to French's classical style, which aimed to portray an idealized image of a subject, Saint-Gaudens' approach is "realistic and naturalistic, intended to reveal the character of the sitter." Indeed, Saint-Gaudens' work, such as the bust of Abraham Lincoln with his bow tie charmingly askew, aim more for psychological realism than geometric harmony. "Mere physical beauty would detract from the spiritual essence he was seeking," Cooper writes of a memorial Saint-Gaudens crafted to historian Henry Adams's wife, Marian Hooper Adams, who committed suicide. Instead, Saint-Gaudens' work "has a soul."

Neoclassicism fell out of favor ahead of World War I, as artists grew enamored of the possibilities of abstraction. Many remarkable American Renaissance monuments were even destroyed. The reputations of French and Saint-Gaudens were spared such a drastic fate, but as men who "created great works that spoke to the nation," Cooper believes, they are still woefully underappreciated.

ARTS & LETTERS

The Invisible Hand

THE SOURCE: "Translators Struggle to Prove Their Academic Bona Fides" by Jennifer Howard, in ***The Chronicle of Higher Education***, Jan. 17, 2010.

Pity the literary translator, whose mission it is to be invisible, to "fade into the background, like a discreet waiter who keeps the glasses filled while remaining practically unnoticed." Translating fiction and poetry is a thankless task, one that earns little respect in the academy and little pay outside of it, writes Jennifer Howard, a senior reporter at *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

In academia, translation is often seen as a digression from serious scholarly work. As Mark Anderson, a Franz Kafka specialist at Columbia University, describes the prevailing sentiment, "Translation can take people away from criticism and theoretical thinking of an original sort." Before Anderson was tenured, the chair of his department advised him not to work as a translator because doing so would be viewed unfavorably by the tenure committee. Anderson opted to work under a pseudonym. "I think my chair gave me excellent advice," he says. Stars such as Robert Fagles notwithstanding, marketing specialists have downplayed the role of translators, often excluding their names from the covers of books they have brought into English, in the belief that translated work is a tough sell.

But the tides may be changing, Howard writes. More universities are offering certificates or degrees in translation. Some schools, such as the University of Texas, Dallas, now house on-campus translation centers. And small imprints emphasizing translated literature are springing up at university-affiliated publishing houses. At a few academic institutions, faculty personnel codes have been recrafted to consider the work of translation in hiring and promotion decisions.

Howard reports that a group of translators are trying to move the weight of the Modern Language Association—the nation's most prominent organization of literary scholars—behind the fight for greater recognition in the academy. But respect doesn't put food on the table, and job pickings remain slim in the humanities, for translators and scholars alike.

OTHER NATIONS

What Good Old Days?

THE SOURCE: "The Lost Community? Public Housing and Social Capital in Santiago de Chile, 1985–2001" by Manuel Tironi, in ***International Journal of Urban and Regional Research***, Dec. 2009.

Some might call it a miracle: In just two decades, Chile has nearly eliminated the slums and shantytowns that were once home to more than a fifth of the population of Santiago, its capital city. (Sturdier housing no doubt kept the death toll down in the February earthquake.) From 1992 to 2002, the country's housing stock increased by more than a million units—three-quarters of which were built with government assistance. But not everyone is happy. Critics charge that the new units—typically located in massive, impersonal complexes on the city's outskirts—have destroyed a sense of solidarity once prevalent in the shantytowns.

Nonsense, says Manuel Tironi, a sociologist at Pontifica Universidad Católica de Chile in Santiago. Less than half the respondents to a 1985 survey of low-income families reported having good relations with those who lived next door. In 2001, among residents of *villas* (newly constructed public-housing buildings), nearly two-thirds had good things to say about their neighbors. Moreover, the data from 1985 indicated that 13.6 percent of people had bad relations with neighbors, but only three percent of *villa* residents reported such ill feeling in 2001.

The data on community participation tell an interesting tale. Poor heads of household in 1985 were slightly more likely than *villa* residents in 2001 to be involved with a community organization (31 compared to 26 percent). But Tironi says this is statistical noise—both figures are within the expected range for low-income Chileans. However, the *villa* residents who were involved in one organization were much more likely to be involved in a second and even a third group than the shantytowners had been. In particular, Tironi saw a lot of overlap between neighborhood association and trade group membership among the *villa* residents. This sort of "participation intensity" may actually make groups more successful, he speculates, by enabling them to reach consensus more easily and trust each other more.

Tironi cautions that it's a mistake to see the fluctuations in community participation as the direct result of the style of housing people occupy. Community participation rates in the 1980s weren't low because people's accommodations were poor but because the regime of Augusto Pinochet "severely punished" participation in social organizations. Social scientists, Tironi writes, need to get over "their nostalgia for a mythical community shaped by trust."

EXCERPT

The Letdown of 1989

Just as we [in Czechoslovakia] were all embarking on this wildest of roller coaster rides, news arrived from across the Atlantic that history had just ended. We had reached, in the words of Francis Fukuyama, "the endpoint of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government." . . . The "end of history" thesis may have proclaimed the final victory for everything we had believed in for some time, and yet it left us a little puzzled and more than a little frustrated. It was like arriving at the greatest of parties only to learn that the guests had just left.

—MICHAEL ZANTOVSKY, chair of the Foreign Affairs, Defense, and Security Committee of the Czech senate and former ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United States, in ***World Affairs*** (Jan.–Feb. 2010)

OTHER NATIONS

Saffron Sorrows

THE SOURCE: "Myanmar's Perpetual Junta" by Mary Callahan, in ***New Left Review***, Nov.–Dec. 2009.

In September 2007, the world watched in amazement as thousands of Buddhist monks in saffron robes marched through the shabby streets of Yangon, the largest city in Myanmar, protesting a devastating increase in the prices of fuel and other commodities. A hail of military gunfire brought an end to the protests and left at least 30 people dead. How close did the monks come to bringing down Myanmar's military regime?

Not close at all, writes Mary Callahan, a political scientist at the University of Washington, Seattle. The 48-year-old junta still rules Myanmar, or Burma, as it is also known, with an iron fist. More than a decade of price controls on rice impoverished the country's large agricultural class, and though the controls have been lifted, widespread poverty prevails. Recently discovered oil and gas reserves have strengthened the government and funded a "luxury-laden parallel universe" for military higher-ups, while a third of children under five suffer from malnutrition.

In Callahan's view, the seeds of the regime's domination were sown during its colonial days. When the British annexed Burma to India in 1886, they ignited a widespread insurgency in the lower and central regions of the country. The raj responded by imposing a "brutal and intrusive form of direct rule."

Buddhist monks march through the streets of Yangon, Myanmar 's largest city, in September 2007 to protest the military junta's brutal rule. The government violently suppressed the demonstrations.

Traditional leaders and social structures were swept away. Rivalries between ethnic Burmans, by far the biggest minority group, and other ethnicities, such as the Kachin, Shan, and Karen, were encouraged.

World War II and a momentary Japanese occupation untethered the country from the British and ushered in a brief period of independence. But ethnic conflict continued, and in 1962 General Ne Win seized power in a military coup, ostensibly to prevent the ascendancy of a federation of minorities.

A 48-year-old military junta in Myanmar has withstood challenges from Buddhist monks, opposition parties, and even Cyclone Nargis without much sign of weakening its hold.

Repression, command economics, and xenophobia were central features of his 26 years in power.

A panicked junta doubled the size of the army and substantially increased spending on security after student uprisings in 1988, which it ultimately quashed. Infighting among groups that could serve as opposition enhances the junta's power. The National League of Democracy, the long-embattled political party of Aung San Suu Kyi, the 1991 Nobel Peace Prize laureate living under house arrest, is now "out of touch" with popular sentiment, Callahan observes.

When Cyclone Nargis tore through Myanmar in May of 2008, observers again watched to see if the junta, now led by General Than Shwe, would betray any weakness. Not much. A few foreign relief workers were able to enter the country, but the generals "insisted that they would take care of the needy."

CURRENT BOOKS

REVIEWS OF NEW AND NOTEWORTHY NONFICTION

Putting Theory to the Test

Reviewed by Edward J. Larson

WHAT DARWIN GOT WRONG.

By Jerry Fodor and Massimo Piattelli-Palmarini. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 264 pp. $26

Americans love conspiracy theories. Many still think that shadowy plotters continue to cover up the identity of JFK's "real" killers, and the popular notion that climate change is a hoax perpetrated by a cabal of self-interested scientists is now enjoying its second or third wind. The longest-running conspiracy theory in science, however, depicts a fiendishly complex effort by scientists over the past 150 years to prop up a bankrupt Darwinian theory in spite of what its critics see as massive and self-evident flaws. Although nothing in *What Darwin Got Wrong* suggests that the authors, Rutgers University philosophy professor Jerry Fodor and cognitive scientist Massimo Piattelli-Palmarini, believe that a conspiracy is afoot, their writing follows the usual pattern.

First, the authors set up a straw man. In this case, they do that by saying at the outset that the Darwinian theory of evolution involves two distinct parts: the concept of common descent, which holds that all plants and animals evolved from a common ancestor, and the theory of natural selection, which posits that random, inborn mutations in individuals selected by a survival-of-the-fittest process drive evolution forward. The authors stress that they reject *only* the latter theory, while erroneously contending that, historically, religious opponents have attacked only common descent.

Fodor and Piattelli-Palmarini's central thesis is that random, inborn mutations chosen by a survival-of-the-fittest mechanism cannot generate the observed diversity of species in the time that has elapsed since life began on Earth. They point to the many nonrandom influences on variation (such as gene regulatory networks, which control cellular processes, and horizontal gene transfer, in which an organism incorporates genetic material from another organism without being a descendant of that organism) debated among biologists today, and, somewhat separately, assert that natural selection logically cannot work. Their philosophical assault on natural selection has two parts. They argue that biologists simply err in speaking about selection without providing for a human, divine, or natural-law selector. Further, they throw in their version of the

shopworn philosophical argument that natural selection is a meaningless tautology: Of course, if fitness is equated with survival, only the fittest will survive. (In this sense, the Newtonian equation F = ma is a tautology too, yet physicists still find it useful.) Though the authors present their critique as new, it is similar to countless assaults on the theory of natural selection over the past century and a half. What this book adds is a useful survey of newer examples of non-randomness in evolution.

Contrary to their claim that common descent is the bugbear of those who dispute evolution, the historical controversy, especially in religion, focused on the idea of natural selection, which undermined natural theology by depicting the origination of species as a ruthless, random process, apparently inconsistent with the character of a loving Creator, rather than on the concept of common descent, which can posit God as the designer of benign evolutionary law. After all, as the illustrious late-19th-century American cleric Henry Ward Beecher said, "Design by wholesale is grander than design by retail." It is the theory of natural selection that still riles the intelligent design movement, many of whose leaders (such as Lehigh University biochemist Michael Behe) accept common descent.

Throughout the late 19th century and into the early 20th century, biologists hotly debated how evolution operated.

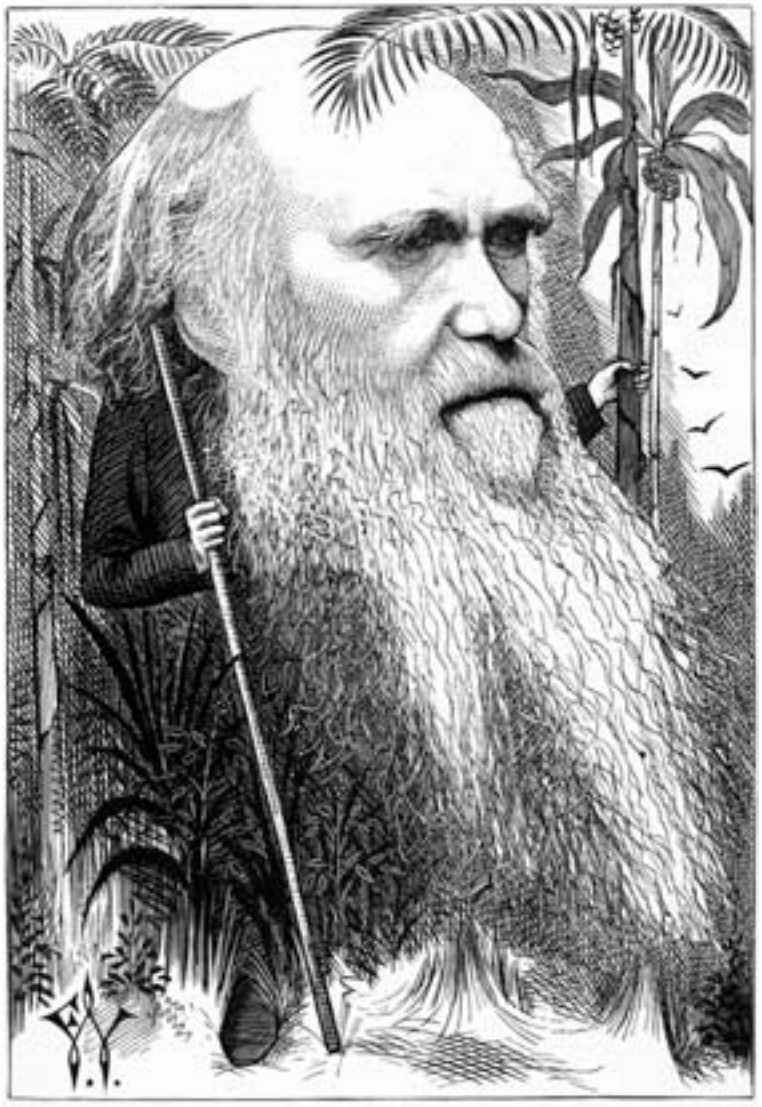
Even more bewildering is the authors' contention that Charles Darwin conflated common descent and natural selection into a single idea. Darwin clearly differentiated between the two parts of his theory, and recognized that the concept of common descent stood on a much firmer foundation. In 1863, he wrote to Harvard botanist Asa Gray, "I care much about Natural Selection; but that seems to me utterly unimportant compared to the question of CREATION *or* MODIFICATION." Eleven years later, when the conservative Princeton theologian Charles Hodge launched the American culture wars over evolution with his book *What Is Darwinism?* it was natural selection—not common descent—that led him to equate Darwinism with atheism. Analogous reasoning drove William Jennings Bryan to ignite the populist crusade against teaching evolution that culminated in the 1925 Scopes trial. Bryan had made his peace with common descent, at least for everything except humans; it was the use of a survival-of-the-fittest mechanism to explain human nature that enraged him.

The scientific community has never monolithically regarded natural selection as the sole mechanism of evolution. Certainly Darwin did not. He freely worked sexual selection, which involves the preference of certain characteristics by mates, and group selection, which propagates social qualities that help groups survive, into his account of evolution—particularly for the development of behavioral traits. Further, he recognized that selection alone could not cause evolution; selection would have to operate on phenotypic variation within species. Although Darwin initially believed that minute, random, inborn changes could supply much of the variation needed for selectionism to operate, even he retreated from this view. With the development of his theory of pangenesis in 1868, Darwin increasingly turned to the inheritance of acquired characteristics to supply the variation needed for evolution, which inevitably diminished the role of natural selection.

Throughout the late 19th century and into the early 20th century, biologists hotly debated how evolution operated, much as they still do today. Leading evolutionists were particularly divided over the cause of variation within species and the sufficiency of natural selection to drive the evolutionary process, the main concerns raised by Fodor and Piattelli-Palmarini. A survey of early-20th-century evolutionists would find significant support for at least four different theories of organic variation: Lamarckism, which relies on the heritability of acquired characteristics; orthogenesis, which

posits internal developmental forces within living things; gross mutation, in which new species are created in a single leap without an incremental process of natural selection; and hybrid crossing, in which existing gene-based traits flow from one species to another.

All of these theories relegate natural selection to a less fundamental role in evolution than it would have under a theory that relies on randomly generated minor variants of phenotypic traits to explain the appearance of new forms of life. By 1900, there was no scientific consensus beyond the essential fact of common descent. The sort of "Darwinian" thinking depicted in this book as hegemonic was actually in full retreat. Stanford University entomologist Vernon Kellogg captured the general sentiment when he wrote in 1907, "While many reputable biologists today strongly doubt the commonly reputed effectiveness of the Darwinian selection factors to explain descent, . . . the descent of species is looked upon by biologists to be as proved as part of their science as gravitation is in the science of physics." The doubts cited by Fodor and Piattelli-Palmarini as revolutionary today were widely held a century ago—and never disappeared.



Though widely accepted among biologists, Charles Darwin's theory of evolution remains as controversial in some quarters as it was when this 1873 sketch appeared.

In the mid-20th century, following the integration of classical genetics into evolutionary biology, a consensus emerged that, at least in large part, the gene pool held a sufficient reservoir of variation to fuel evolution through natural selection in response to isolation and environmental change. This so-called neo-Darwinian synthesis was selectionist, to be sure, but it did not exclusively rely on random genetic variation of the kind that this book decries as unable to fully account for evolution. Further, even as the consensus view hardened in the 1950s, many biologists continued to see hybridization as a critical source of variation, particularly in plants, and allowed for random genetic drift that evolved new species through the isolation of small groups rather than competition within large groups. In *What Darwin Got Wrong,* the authors concede that random genetic variation does cause evolution in some cases, a finding that is consistent with the neo-

Darwinian synthesis.

In recent years, as this book illustrates, the consensus view of evolution has softened again, in response to research suggesting additional sources for phenotypic variation beyond minor genetic alterations and preexisting diversity in the gene pool. These alternatives range from horizontal gene transfers and hybridization to developmental forces (or "evo-devo") and epigenetic modification. Even large-effect evolutionary mutations are back in vogue among some biologists. Such concepts may diminish or alter the role of natural selection, but they do not undermine the case for evolution. This book is at its best when summarizing these recent developments in evolutionary science. But the authors are wrong to suggest that they represent something fundamentally new in biology.

From Darwin on, biologists have discussed and debated how evolution operates. Science progresses by testing and improving old theories. Darwin continually adjusted his ideas during a lifetime of research. He was not dogmatic. First and foremost, like the authors of this book, he maintained the centrality of common descent to any rational understanding of life. Fodor and Piattelli-Palmarini assert that such recent developments as evo-devo somehow undermine the statement of legendary neo-Darwinist Theodosius Dobzhansky that "nothing in biology makes sense except in light of evolution." So far as I know, all the researchers the authors cite would side with Dobzhansky by asserting that nothing in their work makes sense except in light of evolution.

By writing under the title *What Darwin Got Wrong* and claiming that as outsiders they can connect the dots to undermine the supposed Darwinist hegemony in biology, Fodor and Piattelli-Palmarini do the discipline a disservice. They begin their book by noting, when they describe their straw-man view of Darwinism, that biologists typically deny being "'that' kind of Darwinist." But even Darwin was not "that" kind of Darwinist. Evolutionary biology is a robust and dynamic field that continues to enrich established theories through new research. If the theory of evolution were on the ropes, we'd hear about it first from ambitious biologists seeking to promote their research findings.

In their introduction the authors make a point of stating, "We both claim to be outright, card-carrying, signed-up, dyed-in-the-wool, no-holds-barred atheists." After studying the history and development of evolutionary biology for a quarter-century, I've yet to understand why this matters. A large number of scientists, including many evolutionary biologists, are religious. Some critics of evolution are secularists. Scientific theories should be judged on their merits as testable, naturalistic explanations for physical phenomena rather than on theological or political grounds. It is called methodological naturalism, and Darwin (who never called himself an atheist) pioneered its use in biology.

The authors explicitly accept these ground rules for doing science and concede that Darwin followed them in his work. "It is our assumption that evolution is a mechanical process through and through," they write. If it is, then by following Darwin's approach of hypothesis and testing, science should arrive at an ever closer approximation of how evolution operates. That is what we are witnessing today. The authors could have better served their stated cause of pointing out the diversity within evolutionary science and the breakdown of the supposedly hyper-rigid neo-Darwinian synthesis by stressing how far biologists have come using Darwinian methods rather than by presenting recent developments as a sharp break from the past. But if they had followed that approach, they might not have attracted much attention for their book.

Edward J. Larson is a law professor at Pepperdine University and the author of eight books, including *Evolution: The Remarkable History of a Scientific Theory* (2004) and *Summer for the Gods: The Scopes Trial and America's Continuing Debate Over Science and Religion* (1997), which won the Pulitzer Prize for History.

Celebrity Jane

Reviewed by Brooke Allen

JANE'S FAME: How Jane Austen Conquered the World.

By Claire Harman. Henry Holt. 277 pp. $26

A TRUTH UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED: Thirty-Three Great Writers on Why We Read Jane Austen.

Edited by Susannah Carson. Random House. 295 pp. $25

Not long after Jane Austen's death in 1817, at age 41, her brother Henry wrote a "Biographical Notice" to coincide with the posthumous publication of *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey*. "Short and easy will be the task of the mere biographer," he assured his sister's readers. "A life of usefulness, literature, and religion was not by any means a life of event."

Can any biographer in literary history have been less prescient? In the two centuries since Henry Austen made that assessment, curiosity about his sister's life, along with enthusiasm for her work, have reached a frenzied level, and her very name has become "an infinitely exploited global brand," as Claire Harman observes in her fascinating and beautifully written study of the shifts and changes in the novelist's reputation, *Jane's Fame*. Nowadays, Harman points out, "a glance along the 'A' shelf of any good bookshop will reveal a dizzying array of books on Jane Austen: study guides, biographies, source books, companions, books on Jane Austen and the theater, Jane Austen and food, and religion, and money, and the Romantic poets. . . . Jane Austen on film, in a social context, as a parson's daughter, as a sailor's sister, the historical Jane Austen, the postcolonial Jane Austen, Jane Austen's style."

Austen's consummate marketability extends far beyond books. As Susannah Carson, a doctoral candidate at Yale and editor of the anthology *A Truth Universally Acknowledged*, remarks, Austen has also inspired "board games, tarot card decks, figurines, Web sites, discussion forums, book club meetings, Empire-waist fashions, and so on." Along with Beatrix Potter and the House of Windsor, Austen is now one of the most reliable cash cows of the British heritage industry, with travel agencies offering tours of "Jane Austen Country" and television companies ever ready to produce the umpteenth version of this or that favorite Austen tale. Better still, her work delights not only the middlebrow book-group matron but the most highfalutin of literary theorists: Never before, perhaps, has so small an oeuvre (she wrote six novels) launched so many academic careers. By now Austen's name bears "such a weight of signification as to mean almost nothing at all," posits Harmon. "To many people, *Pride and Prejudice*, and even 'Jane Austen,' simply evoke the actor Colin Firth in a wet shirt."

How did this enormous industry grow out of this least showy of authors, a provincial lady so modest about her work (according to her nephew James Edward Austen-Leigh, who produced the first full-length Austen biography) that she wrote in secret and would hide

Jane Austen merchandise supports an entire industry. But it's her novels that deliver the goods.

away the slips of paper when she heard anyone approaching? Harman begins her book by demolishing that vision of the author as a pure canard. There is ample evidence that "Jane Austen never exhibited self-consciousness or shame about her writing and never needed to. Unlike many women writers of her generation—or stories about them—she had no struggle for permission to write, no lack of access to books, paper, and ink, no frowning paterfamilias to face down or from whom to conceal her scribbling. Her ease and pleasure in writing as an occupation are evident from the very beginning, as is the full encouragement of her family." Quite a few of her family members were published authors, including two of her brothers. All the siblings wrote, and they read each other's work with interest. Their proud father actually acted as his daughter's agent, sending around her early manuscripts to London publishers. Jane Austen considered herself a professional and was eager to earn money from her work.

She achieved considerable renown during her own lifetime and attracted a collection of fans that included Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Sir Walter Scott, and the disreputable Prince Regent, who let the author know that he would be pleased to have a novel dedicated to him. (She obliged—she could hardly have done otherwise, much as she disapproved of the man—with *Emma*.) She also earned a total of more than £700, not a bad sum for a supposedly retiring lady author of that period. But by the 1820s, only a few years after her death, Austen's books had gone "out of print, out of demand, and almost out of mind." In 1832 the publisher Richard Bentley purchased her copyrights, and over the next few decades the books appeared in a trickle, a few hundred copies a year. They "were not essential reading for the high Victorians and certainly were not 'beloved.' She had become a half-forgotten niche writer."

What changed? Harman says that Austenmania arrived in two major surges: one in the 1870s, after the publication of James Edward Austen-Leigh's memoir, the other in the wake of the burst of Austen film adaptations of the mid-1990s, including the phenomenally successful 1995 *Pride and Prejudice* miniseries (in which Colin Firth, as Mr. Darcy, appeared in the famous wet shirt) and the wonderful *Clueless*, a reimagining of Emma in contemporary Beverly Hills. Jane Austen was included in the *Dictionary of National Biography* in 1885; William Dean Howells lauded "the divine Jane"; the late-Victorian literary historian and critic George Saintsbury coined the term "Janeites" to describe her fanatic admirers. By 1905 Henry James, jealous as ever of the success of another writer—even a dead one—was grousing about "the body of publishers, editors, illustrators, producers of the pleasant twaddle of magazines; who have found their 'dear,' our dear, everybody's dear, Jane so infinitely to their material purpose, so amenable to pretty reproduction in every variety of what is called tasteful, and in what seemingly proves to be saleable, form." From a hundred years beyond James, one can only say he didn't know the half of it.

A Truth Universally Acknowledged: Thirty-Three Great Writers on Why We Read Jane Austen glancingly treats some of the same issues Harmon grapples with. It should be said right up front that the title is a misnomer. A few of the 33 are great writers (E. M. Forster, Eudora Welty, Virginia Woolf, Kingsley Amis, C. S. Lewis, W. Somerset Maugham, A. S. Byatt); the rest whom Carson includes are just writers. Plenty of great authors who have written brilliantly about Austen are left out: W. H Auden, Edith Wharton, George Henry Lewes (the most percipient literary critic of the Victorian age), and Willa Cather, among others, but then perhaps the collection would have poached on the territory of B. C. Southam's comprehensive two-volume *Jane Austen: The Critical Heritage* (1968, 1987).

The real treats in Carson's collection often come from writers you can't quite imagine as diehard Janeites. There is Martin Amis, for instance, who contributes a charming essay on *Pride and Prejudice*. "Why does the reader yearn with such helpless fervor for the marriage of Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy?" he wonders. "Why does the reader crow and flinch with almost equal concern over the ups and downs of Jane Bennet and Mr. Bingley?" Who

would have suspected the formidable Amis of such a sentimental streak? Or that he had read this favorite novel five or six times?

Curiously enough, much of the best work in Carson's book comes from academic critics. Ian Watt's examination of *Sense and Sensibility* in the context of late-18th-century philosophy is a model of lit crit at its best; so is Lionel Trilling's classic essay "Why We Read Jane Austen." In a dazzling analysis of some of the formal attributes of Austen's novels, Eva Brann points out that "no symbols, metaphors, mere patterns, or levels of abstraction are to be found in them. Certainly there are revelations, correspondences, significances. But nothing is ever there for mere form's sake or to suggest or stand for something else—which is why the novels so repel literary criticism."

C. S. Lewis had the gifts of both the creative artist and the scholar, and Carson has included his profound observations about *Mansfield Park*; he is the only commentator I have read (even including Kingsley Amis, who came close) who succeeds in making us understand just why Fanny Price makes such an unsatisfactory heroine, in spite of the Janeites' insistence that she is to be admired:

> Something must be put into the heroine to make us feel that the other characters are wrong, that she contains depths they never dreamed of. . . . But into Fanny, Jane Austen, to counterbalance her apparent insignificance, has put really nothing except rectitude of mind; neither passion, nor physical courage, nor wit, nor resource. Her very love is only calf love—a schoolgirl's hero worship for a man who has been kind to her when they were both children, and who, incidentally, is the least attractive of all Jane Austen's heroes. Anne [Elliot, in *Persuasion*] gains immediately by having for her lover almost the best. In real life, no doubt, we continue to respect interesting women despite the preposterous men they sometimes marry. But in fiction it is usually fatal.

To judge by the continued and even accelerated proliferation of Austen-related films, souvenirs, and books (of which both Harman's and Carson's volumes are manifestations), the surge of Austenmania that started in the 1990s is far from over. What new heights can Jane's fame reach, now that she has already conquered the world? Perhaps the current craze for Jane Austen book clubs may draw enthusiasts away from the miniseries and movies and tea towels and get them back, finally, to reading the books. For no filmed version of an Austen novel is really satisfactory: Of all 19th-century novelists, she dwells the least on the physical surfaces that are the essence of the cinematic art.

Brooke Allen's most recent book is *The Other Side of the Mirror: Travels in Ancient and Modern Syria*, which is forthcoming. She was named a finalist for the 2007 Nona Balakian Citation for Excellence in Reviewing from the National Book Critics Circle.

Matchmakers

Reviewed by Kay Hymowitz

MORE PERFECT UNIONS: The American Search for Marital Bliss.

By Rebecca L. Davis. Harvard Univ. Press. 317 pp. $29.95

It's taken a long time to grasp the consequences of the ice storm that hit the American family in the late 1960s. In the decades since, as the number of divorces and unwed mothers climbed into what previous generations would have thought of as the Twilight Zone, social scientists were reassuring. The American family was simply adapting to changing times, they said. Children are resilient, and at any rate they would be happy as long as their mothers were happy. (Scholars tended not to notice that the same revolution that was liberating women from dependence on men was also liberating men—from their

children.) But by the early 1990s, better data and more-sophisticated methodologies began to lead sociologists, demographers, and economists who study the family to change their minds. One after another, the nation's most prominent researchers—Sara McLanahan, Andrew Cherlin, Frank Furstenberg, Paul Amato, and others—looked at the data and saw trouble for kids.

By now, an expert consensus—in as much as consensus is ever possible in these matters—has coalesced around two conclusions. First, even when researchers control for a host of variables, children growing up with married parents do better on a wide variety of measures, from school performance to teen pregnancy rates, than those growing up with a single parent. Second, single-motherhood, being disproportionately concentrated among African-American and Hispanic women and those with less education, reinforces the nation's unacceptable rates of poverty and inequality. There remains strong disagreement about the causes and fixes, if there are any, for all of this, but the basic agreement stands.

Rebecca L. Davis, a history professor at the University of Delaware, is either unaware of or unimpressed by this consensus. It may not be immediately clear why this matters, since her book, *More Perfect Unions*, begins as a history of marriage counseling. But as her argument proceeds, a different subject comes into focus: Davis's skepticism that marriage serves an important public purpose.

More Perfect Unions contains a reasonable enough account of the arrival of marriage counseling on the American scene in the late 1920s. Mobile, increasingly affluent Americans, impatient with traditional restraints and distanced from potentially supportive kin, found themselves isolated while weathering the inevitable strains of marriage. Their predicament came to the attention of progressive reformers who were influenced by emerging ideas of social science, Freudian theories about neurosis, and the proto–sexual revolution of the flapper years.

Some readers will be surprised to learn that almost a century ago specialists had already come to believe that sexual satisfaction was integral to marital well-being. A number of the earliest counselors were physicians working out of birth control clinics, where they provided advice about both contraception and foreplay. Eugenics, a preoccupation among some progressives, was also often part of the counseling package. Paul Popenoe, founder of the California-based Institute of Family Relations (later the American Institute of Family Relations), perhaps the first marriage counseling clinic in the country and one of the longest lasting, educated couples about possible hereditary defects, as well as how to manage marital conflict.

In the 1930s, marriage counseling became its own therapeutic specialty; by 1942, it had its own professional organization: the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy. Though men dominated the leadership of the AAMFT, female social workers were increasingly on the front line as therapists. Davis periodically objects to the profession's reluctance, despite its connection to social work, to steer couples toward sources of material assistance that might relieve hardship straining marriages during these years. Everything else about her history, however, suggests that marriage counseling was bound to be a middle-class affair. With its theoretical origins in psychiatry, and its clientele and professionals almost exclusively female, it was talky and introspective, hardly the sort of leisure activity to appeal to guys on the factory line. Not surprisingly, counselors promoted relatively egalitarian relationships between husbands and wives. As Davis recounts, it was the progressive judge Ben B. Lindsey, founder of the juvenile courts and one of the first self-anointed marriage experts, who popularized the idea of "companionate marriage" among American audiences.

Still, marriage specialists did not go so far as to question the separate spheres of husbands and wives. As marriage came under the microscope of a new generation of midcentury social scientists, the goal was "marital adjustment," meaning, in part, adjustment to male breadwinning and

female domesticity. In the late 1930s and the '40s, psychologists turned to personality testing to uncover the secret of successful unions. In a foreshadowing of our eHarmony age, they even applied their invention to matchmaking by bringing together single men and women with similar interests and backgrounds. Davis suggests that these psychologists were on the wrong track, since so much marital unhappiness was due to women's frustration with their domestic lot. It's hard to know whether this is a projection of contemporary attitudes onto the past, but she is certainly correct that by the 1960s women were in outright rebellion against obsolete sex roles imposed by marriage; some feminists wanted to see the entire institution thrown on history's ash heap.

Unfortunately, Davis misses a number of opportunities to mine her history. Both social workers and their clients were usually female, meaning that marriage counseling often boiled down to women talking to women about their husbands. Davis makes nothing of this arrangement, yet surely it served to elevate the values of emotional closeness and communication in popular expectations of marriage. She notes how professionals encouraged conventional gender roles, yet fails to explore the extent to which modern work arrangements and the growing importance of childhood education locked men and women into separate spheres. This was Christopher Lasch's thesis in *Haven in a Heartless World* (1977), a crucial book on 20th-century theories of the family that is oddly missing from Davis's sources.

Nor does she fully delve into the rich topic of her subtitle. What was the American idea of marital bliss, and how much did counselors shape it? Did counselors want to "temper naively romantic youth," as she says at one point, or did they reflect the American "obsession with marital perfection," as she says at another? Over time Americans have abandoned the ideal of close, affectionate friendship of the companionate marriage model for the loftier notion of a "soul mate" union. Do those high expectations have anything to do with the fact that roughly half of American marriages end in divorce and 40 percent of children are born out of wedlock? The first marriage clinics had only a few hundred clients a year. Today, as Davis notes, "millions of couples seek help from marriage counselors annually." What do counselors tell all of those couples about their soul mate dreams? These questions are never raised, much less answered.

In large measure, this is because by her last chapter Davis abandons her ostensible topic—the history of marriage counseling—for the culture war. She turns her attention to what she views as the growing state interest in marriage, especially since the 1990s. During this time, local and federal governments experimented with religiously conceived covenant marriage and premarital counseling (both of them correctly described as failures), as well as welfare reform and the George W. Bush–era Healthy Marriage Initiative. Yet in quickly passing by the epochal rates of divorce and single motherhood—nothing to see here!—and ignoring the strengthening evidence of problems for children, she makes those looking for a way to stem the decline of the two-parent family seem overwrought. To that end, she often mischaracterizes motives, for instance by stating that the primary goal of welfare reform was "transforming the American family" rather than promoting self-sufficiency through work. Worse, she implies that racial animus was behind a lot of reform. The creators of the Minnesota Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood Initiative, for instance,

used "coded language" that "barely concealed their interest in targeting poor minority mothers."

This combination of strategic omission, error, and innuendo is on full display in Davis's discussion of the infamous 1965 Moynihan Report (*The Negro Family: The Case for National Action*). Daniel Patrick Moynihan, then an assistant secretary of labor in the Lyndon B. Johnson administration, was among the first to raise the alarm about changes in the family, specifically the black family, in the 1960s. Even as black male employment was rising, the number of female-headed households on the welfare rolls was increasing. This, he argued, would surely hamper black progress. Davis's take? Moynihan was painting all blacks with the same brush. But as the historian James T. Patterson remarks in his forthcoming book *Freedom Is Not Enough,* Moynihan explicitly distinguished the black middle class, whose families were largely intact, from fatherless ghetto families. Davis asserts that Moynihan's ideas became "policy gospel." In fact, charges of racism hounded Moynihan for years, and the subject of the black family was verboten in policy discussions for more than two decades. By that time, the proportion of black children born out of wedlock—most of whom would barely know their fathers—was well on its way to today's 72 percent.

Of course, Davis is free to argue that this statistic and the trends it reflects do not add up to be the social problem most scholars, not to mention the general public, believe them to be. Instead, she implies that the notion that marriage is a public concern is an "ideology" dreamt up by 20th-century marriage counselors, religious activists, and bigots. This is simply wrong. The social importance of marriage—rooted in ancient philosophy, religion, and law across cultures, and embraced by America's founders—was a product of the stability and rootedness it provided not only for children, but also for men, who are more likely to stick around if they believe the children they are raising are their own, and for women, who need help raising their young. Marriage counseling was a flawed and, it appears, largely unsuccessful attempt to square modern individualism with that universal arrangement.

You can say this ancient idea of marriage ain't so, or with women now financially independent, that it no longer holds true. But given how much better children fare when they grow up with married parents, you'd better make your case. *More Perfect Unions* doesn't even try.

Kay Hymowitz, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute and contributing editor of *City Journal,* is the author, most recently, of *Marriage and Caste in America: Separate and Unequal Families in a Post-Marital Age* (2006).

CONTEMPORARY AFFAIRS

Paths of Progress

Reviewed by Steven Lagerfeld

When I traveled to the struggling ski-resort town of Davis, West Virginia, this past winter, all the locals I met seemed to want to know how I had gotten there. They talked about the highway that has been inching their way for years. Most looked forward to the flood of tourists and prosperity they thought the project would bring, but others saw only the prospect of unwelcome change. Although Ted Conover writes about far more exotic places than hardscrabble West Virginia in *The Routes of Man,* he sees its conflict everywhere: The coming of new roads distills the modern dilemma over progress and its discontents.

THE ROUTES OF MAN:
How Roads Are Changing the World, and the Way We Live Today.

By Ted Conover. Knopf. 333 pp. $26.95

Somewhere in Conover's mind is the analytical intelligence of a social scientist, but his book is mostly a bracing immersion in a half-dozen places that have been or will be changed by highways,

with a few brief excursions into subjects such as the history of Roman road building. In Africa, he joins truckers hauling freight between the Kenyan port of Mombasa and the African interior, the route many believe carried AIDS to the wider world. China, the West Bank, and the Peruvian Amazon are among his other destinations.

In the tiny Himalayan village of Reru, the village headman consults a Tibetan Buddhist monk before giving the signal that a small group can set out on the treacherous Zanskar River—the ice "just the frozen skin of a hibernating giant below"—for the outer world. In the wintertime, the river is the only way to get to larger towns. Conover does not need to point out what we can plainly see: The road the Indian government is building to the Zanskar valley will undermine the authority of the headman and the monk, along with the villagers' traditional culture.

There is a refreshing absence of sentimentality in Conover's writing, but at times one wishes the social scientist in him would step forward with clipboard in hand and ask some direct questions. What do the villagers think about the oncoming road? The debate is left instead to a Swedish linguist who sees only purity in the Himalayan villages and corruption in the West, and a local teacher, who fiercely contends that the people of Reru are steeped in "too much culture, too much religion," and lacking in the doctors, teachers, and new ideas that the road will bring. As for Conover, he is sad to see a local family replace its beautiful thatched roof with a corrugated metal one, but, he asks, can you tell people they must live with a leaky roof for the sake of their traditional culture? The linguist's stance ultimately depends on an idealized, leak-free vision of Reru's way of life.

In the West Bank, Conover joins a Palestinian student named Khaldoon as he negotiates the web of checkpoints, patrols, and limited-access highways that are effectively restricted to Israeli settlers. (In his typically fair-minded way, however, he weaves in a sympathetic portrait of an Israeli officer.) Conover's last book, *Newjack* (2000), was about Sing Sing prison, and he sees a similarity between the two places. By dividing space into "discrete pieces and forbidding or restricting movement between them," the overseers can protect themselves while punishing the prisoners. "A blocked road," Conover writes, "is thwarted intention."

Roads are about freedom. In China, Conover rides shotgun with hard-living factory owner Zhu Jihong on a seven-day road trip with a group of joy-riding nouveaux riches, frequently reaching speeds of 100 mph or more. Like Americans in the 1950s and '60s, the Chinese can't get enough cars or build enough roads. Their high-speed rail projects may wow us, but in the next 25 years the government plans to build a freeway network bigger than the U.S. interstate system. The Chinese are going to create a riot of traffic and spew pollutants into the atmosphere, Conover concedes, but who are we to tell them they cannot have the kind of freedom—and fun—we have had? Freedom is the essence of progress, whether in China or West Virginia, and its costs and sheer, inescapable messiness are not reason enough to keep anyone at home.

"A blocked road," writes Ted Conover, "is thwarted intention."

Steven Lagerfeld is editor of *The Wilson Quarterly.*

Agents for Change

Reviewed by Christina Asquith

PARADISE BENEATH HER FEET: How Women Are Transforming the Middle East.

By Isobel Coleman. Random House. 319 pp. $26

As the United States continues its wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, promises to broaden women's rights in these two predominantly Muslim countries have not materialized. Millions of women in the greater Middle East still lack access to schooling and a political voice, are forced into child marriages, and are victims of honor killings and genital mutilation. In *Paradise Beneath Her Feet,* Isobel Coleman argues that in this traditional, deeply religious region, change is coming from within, but not in the ways many Westerners may expect or desire. Mus-

lim women are running for office; starting careers in banking, law, and medicine; and taking to university lecterns by embracing Islam, the very belief that many in the West see as subordinating them.

Coleman calls these women "Islamic feminists," using a term popularized by female Muslim scholars and activists. Some of the women Coleman profiles are well traveled, speak English, and are only moderately religious, but recognize the power of making an Islamic argument in order to subvert their society's patriarchal norm. They are reinterpreting the Qur'an and invoking examples from the Prophet Muhammad's own life to argue that women belong in business, the military, and other public spheres. Others Coleman writes about are more devout—they wear chadors, speak softly, and denounce Western women as antifamily, sinful, and spiritually vacuous. They seem less like feminists and more like fundamentalists who happen to be women.

Though it's clear she admires the Islamic feminists she profiles, Coleman, a senior fellow for U.S. foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations who focuses on the Middle East and gender issues, presents balanced reportage inflected with nuanced analysis of the subtle ways in which Muslim women are advancing. The book begins with a short history of women's rights in the Middle East, in which Coleman points out that Western intervention to promote women has typically had the opposite effect, by associating feminism with colonialism in the minds of Muslims. She convincingly argues, however, that expanding the opportunities for women has the ancillary benefits of improving literacy rates, reducing child malnutrition, and stabilizing governments.

The bulk of the book is given over to profiles of women activists from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan. Coleman has visited each of these countries except Iraq, and her prose is lively with on-the-ground scenes and the voices of the women she interviewed. She introduces women such as Afghanistan aid worker Sakeena Yacoobi, who teaches women, most of whom are illiterate, about the rights given to them in the Qur'an, and Haifa Jamal al Lail, the dean of an all-women university in Saudi Arabia, where women are trained to pursue high-powered careers in business and the sciences, yet are forbidden to show their hair, drive, or travel without a male guardian.

Coleman concedes that "some Islamic feminists will undoubtedly disappoint Western observers with their anti-Western, anti-globalization, and anti-Zionist views. Some do not condemn armed struggle as terrorism. Some of the more conservative women condone certain deeply entrenched social practices, like polygamy, that others believe to be repressive." For example, Iraqi member of Parliament Salama Al Khafaji, who covers her hands and ankles and refuses to shake hands with men, has been accused of being a puppet of the male clerics.

But, Coleman points out, piety is precisely what makes these women popular in countries from Pakistan to Morocco where most of society is deeply conservative. Whether that makes them women whom those in the West want to champion is another question. Coleman could have made more prominent mention of the good work of secular women. (After all, Al Khafaji came to power in Iraq thanks to a 25 percent quota of women in government won by mostly secular and Western women's activists.) Nor does she address where the rise of Islamic feminism will leave the many Christian, Jewish, and secular women in Muslim countries.

But the women she profiles offer us a rare peek into changing cultures in the Muslim world, and Coleman is an expert at homing in on the tiny details of a scene and then teasing from them a larger meaning. *Paradise Beneath Her Feet* is a pleasurable read and a scholarly work that will be of interest to those who champion women's causes abroad. Islamic feminism may not please everyone, but, Coleman writes, "if the advancement of women's rights in the Middle East depends on the removal of Islam, Muslim women will be waiting a long time indeed."

Christina Asquith, a former public policy scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center, is the author of *Sisters in War: A Story of Love, Family, and Survival in the New Iraq* (2009).

Suits and Ladders

Reviewed by John Prados

ARSENAL OF DEMOCRACY: The Politics of National Security—From World War II to the War on Terrorism.

By Julian E. Zelizer. Basic. 583 pp. $35

Attuned to the debates of the moment, political observers rarely step back to view the antecedents of current controversy. This is especially true for complex packages of issues, as the fiasco over American health care reform illustrates. Yet a wide lens is crucial when dealing with interconnected issues such as foreign policy. In *Arsenal of Democracy,* Julian E. Zelizer affords us an opportunity to scan that far horizon, surveying the history of the politics of national security from the late 19th century onward.

At the outset Zelizer, a professor of history and public affairs at Princeton, poses four questions: Is it Congress or the White House that drives national security? Do Democrats or Republicans hold the advantage in this field? How big should the U.S. government's national security apparatus be? And should the United States adopt a go-it-alone strategy on the world stage?

Zelizer trains his focus on the advantage question. As a result, much of the book reads like baseball journalism—which party is ahead, who scored which votes, what were the plays (treaty ratifications, etc.). There is value in this material. For instance, it would be useful to know how often congressional ratification debates have compelled presidents to alter agreements with foreign powers. Are Republicans or Democrats more likely to attack treaty provisions, and has the partisan balance shifted over time? But Zelizer fails to aggregate the welter of detail into any meaningful set of propositions save for the assertion that domestic politics often prevails in the making of foreign policy—not so startling.

Early on, Zelizer quotes Senator Arthur Vandenberg (R-Mich.), who famously declared after World War II that "politics stops at the water's edge," and asks whether security policy could ever be bipartisan. A fair enough question. But at the time there was a widespread public perception that a spirit of bipartisanship did exist, and, roughly through the 1970s, that sense of participation in a cooperative enterprise facilitated America's actions on the world stage. The contrast between President Harry S. Truman's intervention in South Korea and President Bill Clinton's in Kosovo is palpable. There were no congressional deliberations at all over Korea—and Republican legislators spoke approvingly of the intervention—whereas in the case of Kosovo, Republicans insisted upon congressional authorization, then largely opposed successive resolutions of support for U.S. bombing. Acquiescence to the Korean War may have owed something to bipartisanship—and Vandenberg was its architect.

Equally disappointing, Zelizer's box-score approach diverts him from illuminating his characters. Vandenberg remains a name on the page, as do a host of towering political figures in U.S. national security policy, including Styles Bridges (a NATO supporter), Hubert Humphrey (an initiator of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency), Barry Goldwater (active in many areas), and Richard Lugar (coauthor of legislation to secure nuclear materials). Yet much about how security policy developed can be learned from their experiences. Consider Dick Cheney, whose peregrination from the presidential staff (under Gerald R. Ford) to Congress, to the cabinet in the first Bush administration, endowed him with expansive views on executive power that he tried to institutionalize as vice president under the second President Bush. Some trace Cheney's Saul of Tarsus moment to his role elaborating the minority report of the 1986

Roughly through the 1970s, the sense of participation in a cooperative enterprise facilitated America's actions on the world stage.

joint congressional investigation of the Iran-contra Affair, in which he sought to protect a Republican president. While Zelizer deals with Cheney's report in detail, his narrative does not connect these dots.

Unfortunately, Zelizer's handling of key historical events creates confusion for the reader. A few examples: The United States began funding intercontinental ballistic missile programs during rather than after World War II. France "announced" it was leaving *South* Vietnam in July 1954 and would "allow" communists to rule the North (France, decisively defeated at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, withdrew from North Vietnam as a result of the Geneva cease-fire agreement, and announced it was leaving South Vietnam in 1956). Zelizer's account of the ending of the draft captures the main actions of this transformation but scarcely credits the key role of Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird. Sometimes the errors go beyond annoying to misleading: In rendering the Iran-contra Affair, Zelizer remarks that the National Security Council decided to use money from arms sales to Iran to fund Nicaraguan rebels, suggesting an official decision never made.

Zelizer concludes with a rumination. There is a school of thought, he writes, that maintains that insulating national security from politics is not a good thing, and another that accepts democratic pluralism but complains of the influence of interest groups on foreign policy. Zelizer argues that no single model suffices, and that "politicians have thus faced multiple forms of pressure when dealing with international threats." Politicians, he writes, should use these pressures to gauge sentiment, stir debate, and design policy. Yet as *Arsenal of Democracy* shows, they tend to exploit national security for political gain, and the national interest can be lost in the rush for power. This is not a fresh perception. Read *Arsenal of Democracy* for its play-by-play, not its analysis.

John Prados is a senior fellow of the National Security Archive. His most recent book, *Vietnam: The History of an Unwinnable War, 1945–1975* (2009), won the Henry Adams Prize of the Society for History in the Federal Government.

Garden Cities

Reviewed by Scott Kratz

PUBLIC PRODUCE: The New Urban Agriculture.

By Darrin Nordahl. Island Press. 177 pp. $30

America's relationship with food is dysfunctional. Obesity, childhood malnourishment, fast-food addiction, E. coli and salmonella outbreaks—the list of problems is as familiar as it is dismaying. Though average Americans are fundamentally disconnected from the vast industrial networks that disgorge their daily meals, they were not always so removed from food production. Even after the United States converted from an agrarian to an industrial economy, there were periods when large numbers of the country's citizens helped to grow the food they ate. During World War II, the public heeded the U.S. government's call to raise "victory gardens" to ease the strain of supplying canned goods to overseas troops. In 1944, an estimated 20 million victory gardens yielded eight million tons of food.

In *Public Produce,* city designer Darrin Nordahl describes how towns and cities are working diligently to tap that spirit again and create civic cornucopias. He has more in mind than the occasional community garden. He wants the largest landlord in most cities—the municipal government—to expand the uses conceived of for public places beyond recreation and aesthetic pleasure to include farming.

The reasons for such an effort are many, Nordahl contends. The availability of cheap energy to create crop fertilizer and transport food (produce travels an average of 1,500 miles to reach your local grocery store) is nearing an end. With climate change come weather anomalies that make our centralized food supply less dependable. Crops grown and eaten inside city limits reduce the risk of national food-borne epidemics and require much less energy to make it to the table.

In the eyes of urban agriculturalists, every vacant lot and roadway median is an opportunity to cultivate.

Most intriguingly, Nordahl writes, visible food production in downtown areas, street medians, and school yards increases food literacy: "Just being able to see the bounty and diversity of edibles in our environments can be educational and may prompt diversity in our diet, while making us more food fluent."

Some city governments are pioneering urban agriculture models. Chicago harvests honey from the roof of city hall and sells it to fund arts and culture programming. Portland, Oregon, is working to designate fruit trees for planting in city streetscapes. And Nordahl's own city, Davenport, Iowa, is encouraging "square-foot gardening," whereby apartment residents cultivate vegetables in raised beds on their balconies. The most effective way to promote urban agriculture, Nordahl declares, is simply to ensure that growing crops on public land is not illegal, as it is now in many communities. There's a lot of space to activate. In Chicago, for instance, 70,000 empty lots lie fallow. A third of the city of Detroit—40 square miles—is vacant.

At times, Nordahl's vision is overly idealistic or utopian. He imagines a world where people will not sue if they slip on rotten grapes littering city property and suggests that city gardening can be a cure-all for nearly every social ill, and even reduce crime. And he concedes that urban farming will meet only a small portion of the nation's food needs, which means that on its own it won't fundamentally alter large-scale agribusiness. But *Public Produce* is an admirable manifesto that addresses the myriad concerns about the way we grow and consume our food.

Scott Kratz is the vice president for education at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C.

HISTORY

Man on the Run

Reviewed by Max Byrd

FLIGHT FROM MONTICELLO: Thomas Jefferson at War.

By Michael Kranish. Oxford Univ. Press. 388 pp. $27.95

For many of Thomas Jefferson's contemporaries, the greatest scandal of his life had nothing to do with Sally Hemings. It was his sudden and hasty—his enemies said cowardly—flight on horseback from Monticello on the morning of June 4, 1781, just as a squadron of invading British cavalrymen began to gallop up the little mountain toward his house.

The invading soldiers were led by Colonel Banastre Tarleton, a ladies' man with a notoriously brutal streak. He and his men belonged to a much larger British army, commanded by Lord Cornwallis, that had been burning and pillaging Virginia for nearly six months. The capital, Richmond, lay in ashes. The state militia, almost without weapons and ammunition, had melted away, and the Virginia Assembly had retreated to Charlottesville. Jefferson, 38 years old, had just ended his second

and final one-year term as governor, but his replacement had not yet been elected. To capture the governor—not to mention the author of the Declaration of Independence—would have been an enormous coup for the British, and by all accounts Tarleton's men arrived at Jefferson's doorstep with a great clatter of horses and sabers.

Twenty-first-century historians may lift their eyes and see on the horizon the faint white sails of Comte de Rochambeau's French fleet, making south toward Yorktown, and off to the west the long, dark line of George Washington's Continental Army marching to meet them and trap Cornwallis. But in early June of 1781, none of this was visible. When the shaken assembly met in Staunton a week later, it seemed to many that an irresponsible Jefferson had abandoned his post at Monticello in a time of desperate need. An angry resolution was adopted that "an inquiry be made into the conduct of the Executive of this State for the last 12 months." Privately, there was much muttering about impeachment or censure. It was, says Jefferson biographer Dumas Malone, "the nadir of the entire public career of Thomas Jefferson."

The outlines of this episode have long been familiar to historians. Now, marshaling the primary sources, Michael Kranish, a reporter for *The Boston Globe*, has fashioned a brilliantly narrated account of the British invasion and Jefferson's problematic response to it. If Kranish's focus wobbles in the early chapters, where he devotes far too much time to a survey of pre-Revolutionary Virginia politics, he soon finds his center. From the moment the traitor Benedict Arnold swaggers onto the page, greedy, arrogant, helping to lead the British invasion, Kranish's prose picks up speed and energy. It would be hard to improve on his novelistic images: When the whole assembly flees smoldering Richmond, Jefferson's exhausted horse sinks under him on a country road, and the redheaded, bookish governor walks toward a nearby farm for help, "carrying his saddle and bridle on his shoulders."

Here, as in the best novels, characters ultimately drive the plot. In the highly satisfying manner of early American history, the same dramatic and absorbing people converge on the same time and place. Confronting Arnold and Cornwallis, we have the humorless, ubiquitous Marquis de Lafayette and Baron von Steuben, the hero of Valley Forge (severely critical of Jefferson's performance). On their heels come the great Washington, William Byrd III and his resourceful wife, Mary, the young James Madison, the still-younger James Monroe, even Daniel Boone, who makes a cameo appearance in the Charlottesville jail.

Yet on so crowded a stage, Jefferson still holds our eye. Stroke by stroke, a remarkable portrait emerges. There is the Jefferson quick to blame others when he fails to call up the militia in time. Jefferson the schemer, daringly plotting to kidnap Arnold out of the British camp. And Jefferson the hater, nursing a lifelong animosity toward Patrick Henry—the writer in him fascinated by Henry's oratory, the politician envious and fearful. When he heard that Henry favored a tax in Virginia that would fund Christian denominations, Jefferson shockingly wrote to Madison, "What we have to do I think is devoutly pray for his death."

A greater, nobler Jefferson also takes shape—a devoted husband and father, an executive capable of learning and changing, a firm and inspiring optimist. As for the Monticello raid, Kranish makes clear that Jefferson had no choice but to leave, and behaved reasonably, even bravely. Out of office, he reverted instinctively to the deepest part of his nature, scholar, not warrior, and consoled himself by beginning to write his one and only book, *Notes on the State of Virginia*. A year later, the Virginia Assembly found the charges against him baseless and offered the nearest thing to an apology. But the smear was impossible to erase. Twenty years later, in the presidential election of 1800, alongside charges of atheism and radicalism, Jefferson's flight from Monticello would take its all-too-predictable place in the politics of mud and scandal.

Max Byrd, a contributing editor of *The Wilson Quarterly*, is president of the Squaw Valley Community of Writers and the author of *Jefferson: A Novel* (1993).

The Cure That Killed

Reviewed by Colin Fleming

THE ARSENIC CENTURY: How Victorian Britain Was Poisoned at Home, Work, and Play.

By James C. Whorton. Oxford Univ. Press. 464 pp. $29.95

Arsenic gained its foothold in the imagination of 19th-century Britons as the go-to poison for murderers, figuring in many a Victorian potboiler. Though its primary purpose was to control the nation's burgeoning rat population, arsenic—a mining industry byproduct—looked an awful lot like household flour. It killed no more people than cholera or smallpox, yet it was a sensation in the medical reports and penny rags of the time. It turns victims the color of copper, scales their skin, and may cause such sensory overload that they can barely endure the touch of a finger. A single dose of as little as 300 milligrams (a mere hundredth of an ounce) can cause death within 24 hours, but even smaller quantities, repeatedly ingested, prove lethal over days or weeks.

James C. Whorton, a University of Washington professor of medical history, diligently recites the grim statistics—a third of all 19th-century British poisoning cases involved arsenic—but his narrative really gets going when he focuses on the utilitarian presence of arsenic in daily Victorian life that led to so many accidental poisonings. Arsenic was an able traveler, and readily mixed with barleys, grains, and a host of foodstuffs. A chap could poison himself at the local pub with a dram of what became known as arsenical beer, the hoppy killer. Whorton offers the tale of a two-year-old child who sipped from a bad batch, setting an impressively young standard for victimhood—and another for bad parenting—which is eclipsed several pages later with the revelation that infants were poisoned by tainted breast milk, a direct result of their mothers drinking tainted beer. Victorian England was a Doctor Spock–free zone.

Part of the problem with arsenic was its dual identity. It was not only an agent of murder, but a component of standard household items such as writing materials and gift wrap. It formed the basis of the pigment that colored the wrappers of sweets, and the dye in the paint that made little Billy's hobbyhorse glow all the brighter. Toy manufacturers were especially liberal in their use of arsenical paints. "Often the colors were only loosely applied and were easily removed by one of a young child's favorite activities, sucking," Whorton writes. "The wrapping on 'an ordinary sized cracker-box,' it was found, contained nearly 50 grains of arsenic"—hardly a benign quantity. Many children die in the pages of *The Arsenic Century*. So do their parents, given that arsenic could be unknowingly mixed up with various ingredients and cooked right into dinner.

If Britons somehow survived the hobbyhorse, the pub, and the dinner dumplings, their doctors could still do them in. Staffordshire physician Thomas Fowler touted arsenic as a cure-all, something so bad it had to be good—much as radiation would later come to be regarded—only it lacked any beneficent effects. In discussing the Fowler saga, Whorton gives *The Arsenic Century* the feel—and the efficiency—of a Wilkie Collins or Arthur Conan Doyle novel, bringing science to bear on then-popular culture. Fowler's book *Medical Reports of the Effects of Arsenic* was enough of a hit that other physicians were soon espousing the alleged benefits of arsenic. Some advised eating it, and a few willing patients did so, claiming it boosted sexual power, before dying horrible deaths.

If Britons somehow survived the hobbyhorse, the pub, and the dinner dumplings, their doctors could still do them in.

The Arsenic Century isn't meant to be an overt cautionary tale, but it does offer a sage warning for the present era. Given the rate with which new chemicals are introduced into work and home environments each year—often, as with arsenic, before their potential repercussions are fully grasped—we might well bear in mind the lesson of Victorian England's pernicious killer.

Colin Fleming, who is based in Boston, has written for publications including *Rolling Stone*, *Slate*, and *The New Yorker*. He is at work on a short-story collection and a novel.

The Seeds of Defeat

Reviewed by William Anthony Hay

THE BATTLE OF WATERLOO.

By Jeremy Black. Random House. 236 pp. $26

The Duke of Wellington's victory over Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo, fought in Belgium in June 1815, has become synonymous with utter defeat. But Wellington himself noted the difficulty of explaining this historic encounter: "Some individuals may recollect all the little events of which the great result is the battle won or lost," he later remarked, but none can recall their exact order or timing, "which makes all the difference as to their value or importance."

British military historian Jeremy Black has solved the conundrum by synthesizing competing accounts into a sharp narrative that locates the battle within the wider context of warfare during the long 18th century. Into this discussion he weaves an account of the clash between Wellington, a soldier steeped in ancien régime war methods, and Napoleon, the revolutionary who had upended Europe. Their personalities shaped the battle and its outcome, and are one reason why Waterloo remains a subject of enduring fascination. But Black draws on his considerable erudition and archival experience (he is a former editor of the journal *Archives*) to show that the Battle of Waterloo—which destroyed Napoleon's army and inflicted severe casualties on Wellington's multinational force (British, Dutch, Belgian, and German)—was more than a clash of personalities. It marked a pivotal event that made possible almost a century of peace in Europe.

The prolonged warfare sparked by the French Revolution, Black points out, had driven tactical innovation, but many of the events at Waterloo were determined by methods of warfare that had remained largely unchanged in the nearly 20 years of constant conflict since Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798. Both sides relied on close-quarters

The outcome at Waterloo was determined, in part, by the clashing personalities of Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington, pictured above.

fighting, which resulted in heavy casualties. Drill and discipline thus prepared units to remain intact and under their commander's control in the face of death and injuries. Deploying soldiers in close formations maximized the effect of smooth-bore muskets with limited accuracy, and also served to counter the confusion and low visibility caused by the smoke that clouded the battlefield after the first volley.

Yet 18th-century warfare had a more dynamic character than these precise deployments and strict training suggest. In the American War of Independence, both France (which intervened in 1778 on the American side) and Britain were required to project power overseas and operate in environments that demanded flexibility. From 1789 onward, the French Revolution cleared the way for military innovations—including conscription and the use of divisions, units of combined arms that could operate independently or together—that Napoleon developed and systematized. Massed infantry columns, which overwhelmed his enemies' defensive lines, as well as improved forms of technology such as more mobile artillery, were key to Napoleon's military victories. Black compares Napoleon to Britain's naval hero, Horatio Nelson, in his determination to engage the enemy and win.

The careers of Napoleon and Wellington traced intersecting trajectories during the decade before their encounter at Waterloo. Napoleon dominated Europe by defeating the armies of his rivals, but overreached by invading Russia in 1812. Wellington gained his first experience during failed expeditions in the Netherlands during the 1790s, then won renown in India in campaigns that consolidated British power in the subcontinent. He expressed confidence in his ability to take on the French, mainly because he regarded their innovative system as weak against troops with enough discipline to hold their position.

Waterloo came about as a result of Napoleon's bid to regain the French throne after his exile to Elba the previous year. The allied powers, busy negotiating a European settlement at the Congress of Vienna, scurried to respond. Napoleon first met a Prussian army whose defeat alerted Wellington to the location of the French army and deprived Napoleon of the element of surprise. At Quatre Bras and then two days later near the village of Waterloo, British infantry staved off French attacks. Wellington chose his ground well, encamping on a ridge that afforded him access to Prussian support. In the battle that followed, Napoleon's blunt attacks, using heavy cavalry and infantry in columns, met their match in Wellington's defensive formations of lines and hollow squares that enabled British infantry to withstand the shock of cavalry charges. It was the army that embodied change that was routed, and Napoleon's overthrow in France followed days later.

Waterloo was a crucial victory in what Black calls "the struggle against the unreason of tyranny" to bring Europe a century of peace and liberal capitalism. But the battle's toll on both sides prompted Wellington's reflection that nothing except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won.

William Anthony Hay is an associate professor of history at Mississippi State University and a fellow of Britain's Royal Historical Society. He is the author of *The Whig Revival, 1808–1830* (2005).

ARTS & LETTERS

Morgan's End

Reviewed by James Morris

A GREAT UNRECORDED HISTORY: A New Life of E. M. Forster.

By Wendy Moffat. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 416 pp. $32.50

The British writer E. M. Forster had sex for the first time when he was 37, in 1916, on a beach in Egypt, with a convalescent soldier, after decades of dithering and yearning. By that momentous day of "parting with Respect-

ability" (his words), Forster had already published four novels (*Where Angels Fear to Tread, The Longest Journey, A Room With a View,* and *Howards End*), all of which evaded his sexual inexperience. He had written a fifth, *Maurice,* that he feared to publish because of its explicitly homosexual content. Morgan, as Forster was known to friends, willed for the book's male lovers the idealized romantic arrangement and happy ending that he sought in his own life but could not pursue publicly lest he be Reading Gaoled. So *Maurice* was not published until 1971, the year after Morgan's death, and, ironic comeuppance for the dreamer, it's the least persuasive of his novels.

The final entries in E. M. Forster's steamy private diary were made public in 2008.

The "great unrecorded history" in the title of Wendy Moffat's biography is the roundelay of sexual approaches, evasions, couplings, swappings, and uncouplings shared over the years by Morgan and his circle of homosexual (queer but not yet officially gay) friends, lovers, acquaintances, and confidantes. "Though he burned great bonfires of ephemera," Moffat writes, "Morgan carefully preserved the record of his gay life. Thousands of unpublished pages of letters, diaries, essays, and photographs tell the story of the life he hid from public view. . . . Only in 2008 were the final entries in his private diary, restricted from view since his death, opened to readers." Moffat's frank account of how Forster balanced a public self with the private self revealed in the withheld materials might seem as rude as a home invasion had the man himself not left the door ajar and gambled that someone would eventually take a boot to it.

The broad details of Forster's life are familiar from previous biographies: fatherless childhood, a flowering in the moist male hothouse atmosphere of Cambridge, service with the International Red Cross in World War I, literary fame and international celebrity, time abroad in Italy, Greece, Egypt, India, and America. Moffat, an English professor at Dickinson College, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, views the life from the slant of sexuality, and that makes for a necessarily straitened perspective. The problem is not Forster's sexual orientation as such, but the primacy given it. Being homosexual may have been the central fact of Forster's life, but it's a fact implicated in a grand filigree of facts Moffat does not pretend to convey. They're available elsewhere. The sexual revelations here are golden and addictive—and surely respectable, because archival.

Though late to sex, Forster made up for lost time: "By the mid-1920s, Morgan began to get the hang of the double life. In answer to a query from Joe [the author J. R. Ackerley] he totted up a full accounting of his sexual partners: 18 to Joe's 200 or so. Morgan celebrated their variety if not their numbers." But then, he still had a lot of years ahead of him. He moved through the 20th century in the changing company of an honor roll of gay and bisexual celebrities, among them Ackerley, Christopher Isherwood, Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury gang, Siegfried Sassoon, Constantine Cavafy, W. H. Auden, Paul Cadmus, Lincoln Kirstein, Glenway Westcott, Benjamin Britten, and Alfred Kinsey (why not?). Yet, he confessed, none of his "intimates" was "eminent." The love of his life turned out to be a burly young British cop he met in 1930. It was in the cop's home that he died 40 years later, attended by the man's wife. The rules of attraction defy codification.

"So great and honest a writer and so humane a man" is Moffat's judgment of

Forster. One wants to believe her, though Forster emerges from this book a figure at once more complete and somewhat diminished—the price of full-to-overflowing disclosure. Though he may have chosen to record them, there are things about him that we never needed to know. For instance: "Riding in a carriage one afternoon, the mere thought that his wrist might brush the arm of the young Indian beside him made Morgan ejaculate into his trousers." (The squeamish may here wince less at Morgan's hair-trigger sensibilities than at the failure of Moffat's introductory participle to brush its intended noun.) A diary entry at age 82 assures an afterlife for the day's erection and orgasm: "The worm that never dies must have given its last wriggle this morning." Perhaps. The man did live till 91. And oh, that worm in its salad days. When he was close to 70, on a visit to America, Forster was taken to Central Park for, in Moffat's words, "a glorious night of casual sex." Only connect, indeed.

James Morris is an editor at large of *The Wilson Quarterly.*

A Word by Any Other Name

Reviewed by Sarah L. Courteau

HISTORICAL THESAURUS OF THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY.

Edited by Christian Kay, Jane Roberts, Michael Samuels, and Irené Wotherspoon. Oxford Univ. Press. 3892 pp. $395

Confess that you regularly consult a thesaurus, and you call your writing skills and even your intelligence into question, such is the ill repute into which this worthy reference has fallen. In a diatribe published in *The Atlantic* some years ago, Simon Winchester, author of *The Professor and the Madman* (about the making of *The Oxford English Dictionary*), lambasted Peter Mark Roget, the compiler of the granddaddy that spawned today's myriad online and school-bag versions. Many writers I know scoff when asked whether they ever crack one. Of course, using a thesaurus—in its basic form, a book that groups words with similar or related meanings—can result in travesties against the language, and even common sense, when a novice plucks a word he doesn't understand from an entry and substitutes it for thought. But to blame Roget for these crude mash-ups (the improvement of the phrase "his earthly fingers" into "his chthonic digits" is but one of Winchester's amusing examples) is like blaming Henry Ford when a blind man takes a Taurus for a spin.

A thesaurus can extract that word that's on the tip of your tongue but can't quite reach your lips. It reacquaints you with words you've forgotten and presents ones you don't know. It suggests relationships but usually doesn't spell them out—like a hostess who invites you to a party of well-connected guests where you're expected to circulate and make your own introductions. In our hypersearchable world, in which shelf browsing and even book skimming are on the wane, the thesaurus reminds us that precision isn't always a matter of predestined calibration. It can still be an informed choice.

The *Historical Thesaurus of the Oxford English Dictionary (HTOED)*—which contains almost every word from the days of *Beowulf* to the present, some 920,000 words and expressions in all—seems the sort of resource that has been sitting on reference shelves for decades. Yet it is the first historical thesaurus produced for any language, and made its debut only late last year. Based on the magnificent edifice that is *The Oxford English Dictionary,* and also drawing on *A Thesaurus of Old English,* the *HTOED* has been in the works since 1964, when University of Glasgow English professor Michael Samuels began plugging away at it.

The *HTOED*'s editors boast that it provides the context other thesauruses lack. It is arranged into three major sections devoted to

the external, mental, and social worlds, which are in turn divided into 354 categories (*Food and drink, Thought,* etc.), and then further categories and subcategories, from the most general to the most specific. (Roget divided his thesaurus into six broad classes, though most casual users simply flip to the index, unaware of his taxonomy.) Each word is listed with the corresponding year of first and, if applicable, last recorded use. Under the word *piety,* for instance, you'll find a list of words that have meant *piety* over the centuries, and then sub-entries for words that have to do with, but are not the same as, *piety. Sanctimoniousness,* a subcategory, lists words including *hiwung* (Old English), *lip-holiness* (1591), and *mawwormism* (1850).

Wordsmiths have known all along that the variety and coloration of the language make a precision-engineered thesaurus impossible.

The *HTOED* is only two volumes—one consists of entries, the other is an index—to the 20 that compose the *OED*'s second edition. Missing are all those quotations that make the *OED* such a wealth of, well, context; it won't offer enough linguistic handholding to stop the abuse that has given thesauruses a bad name. (Thesaurus abusers flock to Thesaurus.com anyway, and likely aren't interested in Old English words for *love.*) The *HTOED*'s lists, no matter how finely tuned, confirm what wordsmiths have known all along: The variety and coloration of the language make a precision-engineered thesaurus impossible. Reading the *HTOED* is a fascinating journey through 1,300 years of linguistic history, each entry a series of signposts to not-yet-scrutable destinations. It will send you straight to the dictionary, which is as it should be.

Sarah L. Courteau is literary editor of *The Wilson Quarterly.*

Intellectual Horsepower

Reviewed by Nikolai Slivka

FIRST WE READ, THEN WE WRITE: Emerson on the Creative Process.

By Robert D. Richardson. Univ. of Iowa Press. 101 pp. $19.95

"Stop if you find yourself becoming absorbed, at even the first paragraph." So advised Ralph Waldo Emerson on the perils of reading. As Robert D. Richardson eloquently shows in *First We Read, Then We Write,* this admonition is of a piece with Emerson's awareness, articulated in mordant comments throughout his life, that while reading is essential to good writing, it also insistently threatens to subdue the creative impulse. "Each of the books I read invades me, displaces me," he once complained.

The author of *Nature* (1836) and such seminal essays as "The American Scholar" and "Self-Reliance," Emerson (1803–82) believed that reading should be a vigorous culling of facts and ideas, directly in the service of one's own intellectual production. Too often, he observed, we read as sluggards, "drugged with books." Thus, he encouraged what we would call speed-reading: Turn "page after page, keeping your writer's thought before you, but not tarrying with him, until he has brought you the thing you are in search of." Most important, don't forget that "you only read to start your own team."

The comparison is between a team of horses getting under way and the mysterious process by which external stimulation leads to original work. In his comprehensive 1995 biography *Emerson: The Mind on Fire,* Richardson portrayed a thinker fascinated by this process. Shaken by the skepticism of 18th-century philosopher David Hume, Emerson was animated by the question of what independent creative force an individual could unassailably lay claim to: "My heart's inquiry is, whence is your power?" In the narrower ambit of *First We Read, Then We Write,* Richardson focuses on the practical dimension of literary creation, devoting chapters to Emerson's reading, word choice, attitude toward his audience, and sentence construction.

Richardson takes particular note of what he calls Emerson's "makeshifts" and "strategies." His central writing strategy was to keep journals, then draw from them whenever a project arose. Richardson claims that Emerson's "Rousseau-like belief that we are born not just good, but open—to the world and to others—led him to prize hints, glimmers, premonitions." The journals proved an apt vehicle not only for these wisps of thought, but also for the weightier cargo of fully developed prose that Emerson would later copy into his lecture manuscripts.

The journals' practical value depended on the elaborate index to which Emerson yoked them. Begun in 1838, within 10 years the master index was 400 pages long. The biographical listings numbered 839 names, and some entries—"Intellect," for instance—might include 100 references, each encapsulated in a few phrases and pegged to the page and volume containing the full passage. Emerson relied so heavily on his journals that he came to refer to them as his "savings bank."

Despite the journals, writing was a struggle. According to Richardson, in his creative life Emerson endured "cramp . . . , utter inglorious collapse, and the terrible power of mere mood." In his journal, he evokes the distress of a writer who at the end of a fruitless day must face loved ones and "return to the necessities and conversation of the household without the support of any product, and they must believe you and you may doubt that this waste can be justified." From this desolate scene, Emerson leaps to an optimism that Richardson rightly criticizes as forced and "formulaic": "The Saharas must be crossed as well as the Nile"; from "your absence of thought" comes a "purer splendor," and so forth.

The Emerson of *First We Read, Then We Write* inspires not through exhortation but by example. Richardson has beautifully educed how creativity springs from habit, self-awareness, the timely journal entry, the right book judiciously set aside.

Nikolai Slivka is a freelance writer living in Palo Alto, California.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Well, Isn't That Special?

Reviewed by David Lindley

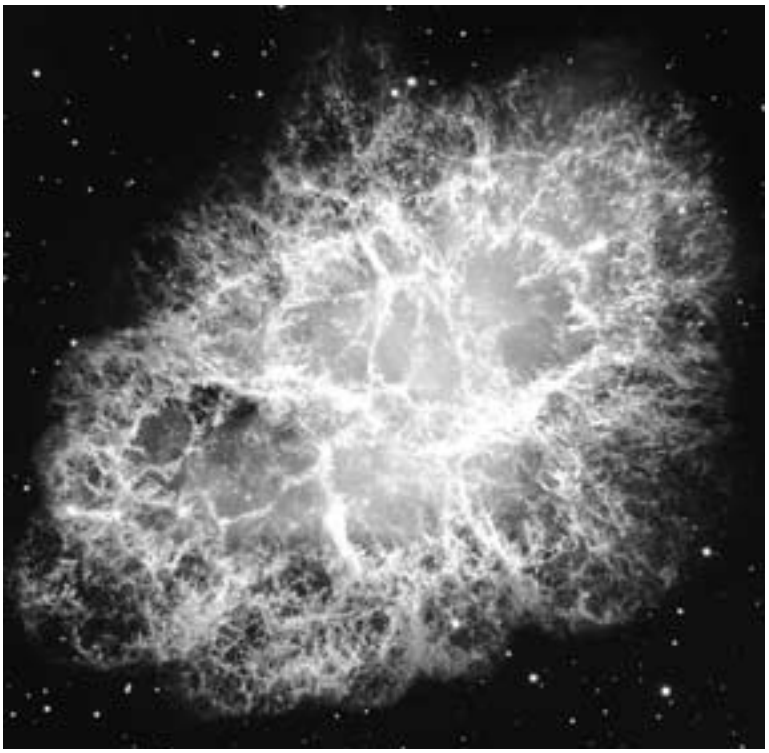
FROM ETERNITY TO HERE: The Quest for the Ultimate Theory of Time.

By Sean Carroll. Dutton. 438 pp. $26.95

Stars as well as human beings are born, grow old, and die. In the 19th century scientists proposed the dismaying notion of the "heat death" of the universe, according to which every hot thing becomes tepid while all cool things become warm, so that in the end all matter exists at the same middling temperature and the future is an eternal unchanging tedium. Physicists have a word for this general tendency toward decay and dissipation: entropy. And entropy, as Sean Carroll, a physicist and cosmologist at the California Institute of Technology, ably explains, is all about the directionality of time. The onward march of time fundamentally derives from something peculiar about the way the universe was born, and that's the puzzle Carroll attempts to resolve.

If you could watch a movie of two atoms bashing into each other and then bouncing apart, you could not tell which way time was running. A collision run backward in time obeys the laws of mechanics exactly as well as the same collision run forward. But think of a lot of atoms crashing about—milk being stirred into black coffee, for example—and a clear direction of time emerges. Stir that coffee as long as you like, and you will never see the milk collect itself in one spot to form a white island in a black sea.

Entropy, you may have heard, explains this. Entropy is a measure of disorder, and the second law of thermodynamics says that it can only increase. Highly ordered arrangements of atoms (the milk all in one place, surrounded by coffee) inevitably evolve, through the general commotion of atoms, into disorderly arrangements (the milk mixed up throughout the coffee). The fundamental reason is sim-



Why does time move forward? For cosmologists, it's one of the great mysteries of the universe.

ple: There are far more disorderly arrangements than orderly ones, so, as a matter of straightforward probability, changing systems are more likely to end up in disordered states.

Having set out these basic ideas with great lucidity, Carroll delivers the kicker. It's all very well to say that systems tend to go from low-probability states to high-probability states, and that that progression is fundamental to our sense of time marching forward, but who said that we have to start from a place of low probability? If the initial point of any system, whether we're talking about milk in coffee, life on Earth, or the big bang itself, were drawn randomly from the list of all possible states such a system might be in, it most likely would be a high-probability state with, entropically speaking, nowhere to go. Why, that is, wasn't the universe born into a state of heat death—by far the most likely state for any universe?

For a century or more, physicists have had to simply assume that the universe began in a special state endowed with low entropy, so as to allow thermodynamic room for all the interesting later stuff (galaxies, planets, people) to happen. But that's an uncomfortable assertion, because saying that the universe must have started in some special way implies a deep reason for that specialness that we haven't been able to figure out yet. Carroll claims that at least the glimmer of an explanation is finally in sight. To support that conclusion he travels through deep and mysterious realms of physics, ranging from the existence of time machines to the fate of quantum information swallowed by black holes. Carroll is an affable and enthusiastic guide, but I suspect many readers will need to take frequent time-outs to let their minds unboggle.

In his final chapter, Carroll draws on the increasingly commonplace (to cosmologists, anyway) idea that our universe is just one of many. In the picture he sketches, each universe grows old and boring in line with the classical idea of heat death, but in its dotage it can spawn baby universes that start with low entropy and live through an exciting phase of growth and activity before becoming boring themselves, so continuing the cycle. We know that we live in just such an exciting phase because our universe still has a lot going on. As for how elderly universes give birth to new ones, and why those young'uns start life with low entropy, you'll have to read Carroll's book, and you'll have to pay attention.

Carroll is admirably honest in acknowledging the degree of speculation here. It's legitimate to worry, I think, that his low-entropy baby universes only come about because he

has put together a number of unproven physical assumptions in just the right way. The specialness that he and other cosmologists are so eager to explain away may be there still, having been flushed out of one dark corner only to scurry into another.

David Lindley is the author, most recently, of *Uncertainty: Einstein, Heisenberg, Bohr, and the Struggle for the Soul of Science* (2007).

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

Jesus College

Reviewed by Aaron Mesh

SEEING THE LIGHT: Religious Colleges in Twenty-First-Century America.

By Samuel Schuman. Johns Hopkins Univ. Press. 326 pp. $50

Tell people that you graduated from a Christian college, and you can expect a common series of reactions. First they express wonderment at the exotic customs of these institutions. (At Covenant College in Lookout Mountain, Georgia, from which I graduated a few years ago, these included daily praise and worship before classes, mandatory pledges to abstain from drinking and sexual activity, and a performance of Neil Simon's play *The Odd Couple* from which most of the profanities and references to extramarital sex were excised.) Next comes the suspicion that you are a closet fundamentalist, secretly harboring the belief that homosexuals are eternally damned, or that Adam and Eve kept pet dinosaurs. Finally, there is a confession of relief that you graduated as someone "so normal."

In *Seeing the Light,* a brisk survey of 10 U.S. Protestant colleges—ranging from tiny New Saint Andrews College in Idaho, with a student body of 200, to Texas's Baylor University, with 14,500—Samuel Schuman attempts to correct some of the misconceptions. A chancellor emeritus at the University of Minnesota, Morris, Schuman is the author of *Old Main* (2005), a study of small liberal-arts schools much like his own. Noting that enrollment at religious schools is booming (the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities reports that during the 1990s its member campuses grew by nearly 50 percent), he turned his attention to these institutions, which, he found, are buoyed by "a strong sense of focused mission," since administrators don't have to worry about pleasing a wide swath of constituencies. But he also observed a tension between the aspiration to academic respectability and the effort to maintain an unwavering commitment to church doctrines, a paradox ubiquitously referred to in school curricula as "the integration of faith and learning."

Schuman's administrator sensibility makes him a better cultural analyst than investigative reporter. In visiting his subject schools (as well as three Roman Catholic colleges, for the sake of comparison), he relied chiefly on the testimony of students and faculty, who reported that religious belief is organically blended into the classroom, though never at the expense of rational instruction. This is reassuring, though one wonders what Schuman would have seen had he sat in on a lecture or two. If he did, he doesn't mention those firsthand findings. But he has an eye for the telling detail (Anderson College, a Baptist school in South Carolina, has soothingly renamed its chapel program "The Journey"), and he precisely dissects each school's traditions. "Perhaps what I am seeking to describe here," he writes in a chapter on the hermetically Presbyterian great-books program at New Saint Andrews College, "is a consequence of taking Calvinism with the utmost sincerity: There is belief and there is unbelief; there are the saved and the unsaved."

Schuman finds that America's Christian colleges, with roots reaching deep into the colonial era, are far from a monolithic arm of the religious Right: New Saint Andrews might as well be located on a different planet from Michigan's Calvin College, where

students vehemently protested the 2005 campus visit of President George W. Bush. But the schools face a common problem: Each seeks to facilitate intellectual inquiry while ensuring that graduates leave with the same central beliefs with which they entered—chiefly, that God exists, is engaged with the world, and personally cares for them. Thus, New Saint Andrews scholars read Charles Darwin's original texts on evolution "so as to understand, and be able to refute, his arguments." An undergraduate at Oral Roberts University, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, tells Schuman, "After four years of questioning, you are solid in what you believe." The kid does not consider the possibility that such assurance might not be the goal of a liberal arts education.

However, the secular academy is hardly less dogmatic. Schuman relays a colleague's scornful dismissal of Christian schools as "two-bit Bible colleges," and cites a 2004–05 study by the Higher Education Research Institute in which most college juniors reported that "their professors have never encouraged discussions of spiritual or religious matters, and never provide opportunities for discussing the meaning or purpose of life." Wherever you go to college, a mind is a difficult thing to free.

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Lingering Questions

Reviewed by Vu Tran

ABOUT A MOUNTAIN.

By John D'Agata. W. W. Norton. 236 pp. $23.95

Near the beginning of *About a Mountain,* John D'Agata reflects on the human search for meaning, "the dream that if we linger long enough with anything, the truth of its significance is bound to be revealed." Pursuing that truth is the aim of every ambitious writer, and for D'Agata—an experimental essayist who teaches creative writing at the University of Iowa—significance lies also in the pursuit itself.

In the summer of 2002, after helping his mother move to Las Vegas, he ended up lingering to investigate two local occurrences. One was the Senate approval of Yucca Mountain—90 miles north of Las Vegas—as the storage site for America's 77,000 tons of nuclear waste. The other was the death of a 16-year-old boy named Levi Presley, who on a hot July day jumped off the Stratosphere Hotel and Casino, the "tallest American building west of the Mississippi."

How these two events merge provides *About a Mountain* with an elegantly digressive structure and, surprisingly, some sustained dramatic suspense. D'Agata titles his chapters after the six basic questions of reporting (Who, What, When, Where, Why, and How), but this is strictly a framework for his literary bricolage of memoir, reportage, conjecture, and philosophical meditation. As we follow his investigations, we also hop aboard his dizzying exploration of everything from linguistics to ancient history, to Edvard Munch's painting *The Scream*, to Vegas politics, even casino signs. Rather than blur the book's central concerns, these erudite flights of curiosity help bring them into focus.

One of those concerns is our human pattern of engineering destructive activity and then obsessing over ways to either save ourselves or mask that activity's catastrophic consequences. Consider Las Vegas itself: a desert city so overreaching in its ambition and growth that Lake Mead—the largest artificial body of water in the world, built to sustain the city—has a 50 percent chance of drying up within the next dozen years.

Then consider Yucca Mountain, long touted by scientists and politicians as a "safe, and cool, and dry" repository for the deleterious fruit of our nuclear age. When 63,000 gallons of water were poured over the mountain to test how many years it would take for moisture to reach the repository, all 63,000

gallons reached it in less than three months. In the book's most compelling section, D'Agata describes the Department of Energy's theatrically absurd project to create a sign outside Yucca to warn off humans 10,000 years hence. If most contemporary English-speakers cannot read the Old English of *Beowulf,* written a millennium ago, how will they read a sign in any language 10 millennia from now?

Yucca Mountain may not only fail to mask our destructive activity; it also seems destined to exacerbate it. Apparently, the Obama administration agrees: Last year it cut funding for the project while it looks for yet another Yucca, a decision D'Agata notes skeptically in his appendix as a political move intended to appease wary voters.

Our relentless search for solutions to our self-created problems, D'Agata posits, has made us displace our grasp on reason and reality, on the problems (the questions) themselves. This is where his myriad investigations dovetail with suicide. D'Agata learns that Levi Presley was the fourth person since 2000 to jump off the Stratosphere, and that shiny Las Vegas has the country's highest suicide rate, though he hunts fruitlessly for someone in town to explain why. His investigation into the circumstances surrounding Levi's death is similarly stymied, yielding only arbitrary details of the boy's life (his affinity for Applebee's restaurants, purple-tinted glasses, a girl named Mary, etc.). So, eschewing psychoanalysis, D'Agata reconstructs Levi's journey through the Stratosphere's carnival of games and wares and advertisements, up its 1,149-foot tower, and to his death, in the book's most profound statement on the absurdity of how we as humans invent, communicate, and self-destruct.

About a Mountain is ultimately about that absurdity: the unreasonableness of reason. Yucca Mountain may be the most thoroughly studied parcel of land in the world, but its endless unknowns reveal "only the fragility of our capacity to know." The one certain truth is that we interpret the elusive universe at our own risk, that meaning—however one may confront or pursue it—is inevitably fluid, conditional, and ambiguous.

Vu Tran teaches literature and creative writing at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. His first novel, *This or Any Desert,* is forthcoming.

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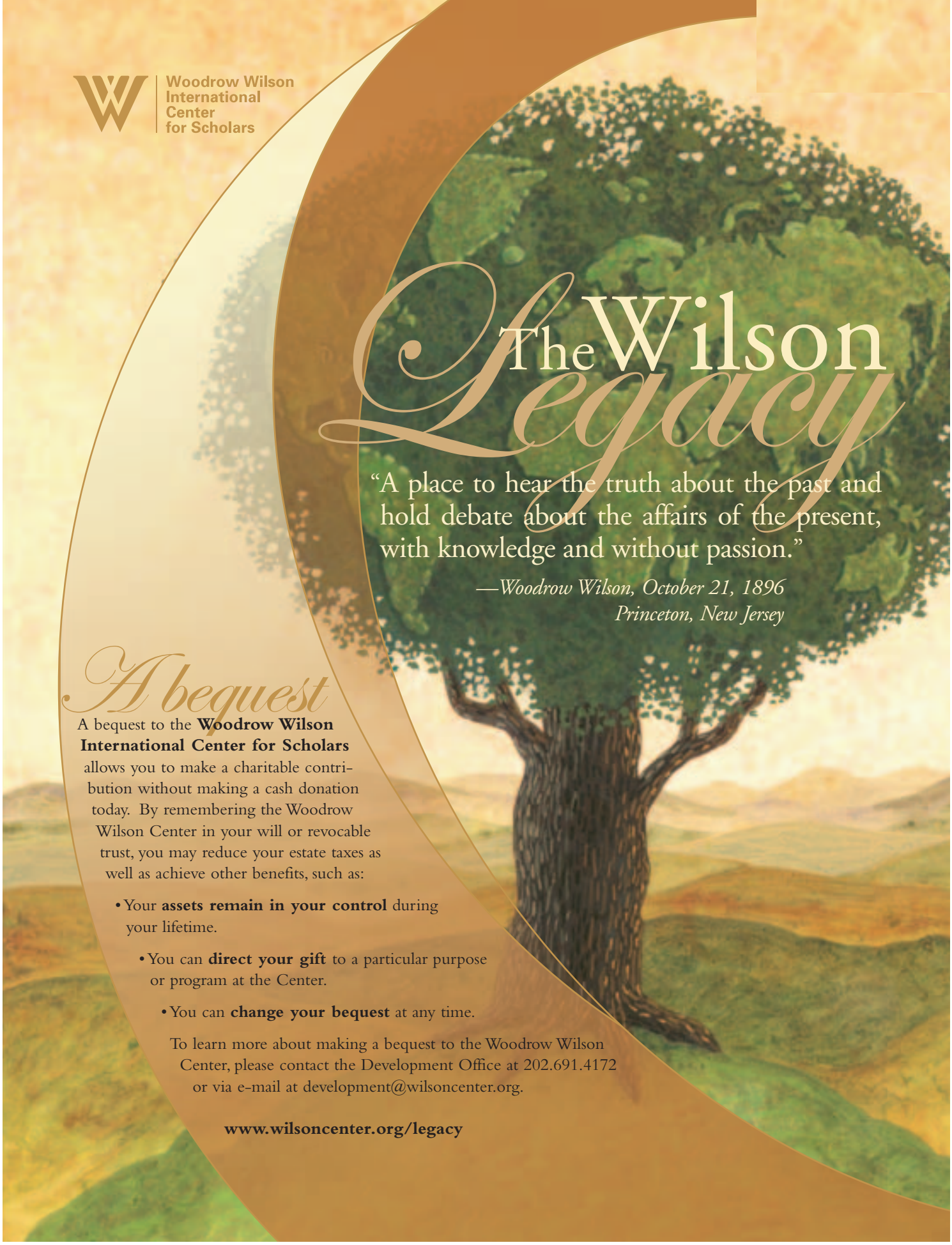

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