

the United States, seeing itself as a “city on a hill,” may be the last Whig nation. But—and this was Butterfield’s point—we must not view the Whigs’ times as mere prelude to

our own. *Nobody’s Perfect* fails to explain how the “new Whig” interpretation of history improves on the old.

—GERALD J. RUSSELLO

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## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

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### *SCIENCE IN THE SERVICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS.*

By Richard Pierre Claude. Univ. of Pennsylvania Press. 267 pp. \$42.50

In this wide-ranging survey, Richard Pierre Claude argues that fighting for human rights falls within the bailiwick of scientists and physicians. A professor emeritus of government at the University of Maryland, Claude also shows how scientific abuses of the past have engendered reforms. The grotesque “experiments” of Nazi scientists, for example, led to adoption of the Nuremberg Code and internationally accepted ethical guidelines. The Holocaust’s lessons also inform what Claude terms “the moral backbone of international human rights law,” the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, whose adoption in the late 1940s, amid early Cold War tensions, represented a near-miraculous accomplishment.

Scientific tools have done much to reveal violations of the Declaration and other human rights codes. Genetic markers have been used to identify massacre victims from Argentina to Bosnia, and statistical analysis helped establish the pattern of abuses against ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and against Filipinos under Ferdinand Marcos. Claude calls for human rights groups to undertake more such studies, rather than rely mainly on the weaker evidence of case reports of human rights violations.

Most books on human rights, even highly acclaimed ones, focus single-mindedly on declarations, conventions, codes, and power-brokers. To his credit, Claude also considers non-governmental organizations, which, as he writes, “provide much of the driving force in the global human rights movement.” He discusses, among others, the Southern Center for Human Rights, which forced Georgia’s largest jail to provide treatment to HIV-positive inmates, and the Nobel Prize-winning International Campaign to Ban Landmines.

Claude largely credits the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for the fact that “sectarian definitions of science are widely eschewed, and racist and sexist attempts to slant the work of science are subject to unfettered criticism.” But he faults scientific organizations for not sufficiently educating their members and the broader public: “To use their human rights, people need to know about them.” It’s a cause to which this book will most certainly contribute.

—SHERI FINK

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### *THE TROUBLE WITH NATURE: Sex and Science in Popular Culture.*

By Roger N. Lancaster. Univ. of California Press. 442 pp. \$55 cloth, \$21.95 paper

Men are from Mars, women are from Venus. Aggression is an evolutionary survival strategy. Homosexuals are born, not made. Jealousy is nature’s way of promoting pair bonding, which gives offspring a better shot at success. These and other snippets of pseudo-scientific wisdom are dispatched by Roger Lancaster, an anthropology and cultural studies professor at George Mason University, with vigor and appropriate sarcasm.

His target, broadly speaking, is a concoction of sociobiology and “selfish-gene” theorizing that seeks to reduce all human behavior and psychology to brain functions controlled by genes. The eugenics movement of the early 20th century gave this kind of thing a bad name, and by the 1960s right-thinking (i.e., left-thinking) intellectuals embraced a loosely Marxist view in which human behavior was all about “cultural constructs” and had nothing to do with biology. But the Human Genome Project, Lancaster warns, signals the return of that never-vanquished bogeyman, scientific reductionism.

He dissects numerous press accounts of claims for genes that make people heterosexu-