

# SPECIAL WOMEN'S ISSUE

Kellyanne Conway ♦ Maggie Gallagher  
Amber Lapp & W. Bradford Wilcox ♦ Frederica Mathewes-Green

DANIEL HANNAN  
ON THE EU

KEVIN D. WILLIAMSON  
ON TATTOOS

# NATIONAL REVIEW



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## Further Debate on the Origin of Species

As an avid reader of NATIONAL REVIEW, I'm honored that you would review my book *Darwin's Doubt*. Unfortunately, longtime intelligent-design critic John Farrell wildly misrepresents my argument and the current state of scientific evidence ("How Nature Works," September 2).

Contrary to what Mr. Farrell claims, *Darwin's Doubt* does not argue for intelligent design primarily based on the brevity of the Cambrian explosion, nor does it exaggerate that brevity. It affirms the widely accepted figure among Cambrian paleontologists of about 10 million years for the main pulse of morphological innovation in the Cambrian period that paleontologists typically designate as "the explosion." Nor does the book base its case for intelligent design upon "personal incredulity" about the creative power of materialistic evolutionary processes. Instead, it presents several evidentially based and mathematically rigorous arguments against the creative power of the mutation/natural-selection mechanism, none of which Farrell refutes.

The main argument of the book is not, as Farrell implies, a purely negative and, therefore, fallacious argument from ignorance. Instead, the book makes a positive case for intelligent design as an inference to the best explanation for the origin of the genetic (and other forms of) information necessary to produce the first animals. It does so based upon our experience-based knowledge of the power that intelligent agents have to produce digital and other forms of information. In formulating the argument as an inference to the best explanation, the book employs the same method of scientific reasoning as Darwin used in his *Origin of Species*.

Rather than engaging the actual arguments of the book, Farrell offers a spurious claim of out-of-context quotation, which has been amply refuted elsewhere by geologist Casey Luskin (see: [www.evolutionnews.org](http://www.evolutionnews.org)). A genuine engagement with the debates currently taking place in evolutionary biology would have been far more interesting. Neo-Darwinism is fast going the way of other materialistic ideas such as Marxism and Freudianism, but readers of Farrell's review sadly were not able to learn why.

Stephen Meyer  
Discovery Institute  
Seattle, Wash.

JOHN FARRELL REPLIES: Stephen Meyer writes that his book "makes a positive case for intelligent design as an inference to the best explanation for the origin of the genetic (and other forms of) information necessary to produce the first animals."

But this presupposes something Dr. Meyer has never in fact demonstrated in a compelling fashion, either in this book or in his previous one: that new complex information cannot be generated by purely natural processes.

His inference to the best explanation—while one that some of his lay readers may be convinced of—to scientists is a copout. It is the job of scientists to find out how apparent design in nature can be explained by natural processes. The best explanation right now is Darwinian evolution.

## Correction

The photograph of Arnold Palmer and Dwight D. Eisenhower on page 26 of the September 2 issue was dated 1950. In fact, it was taken in 1960.

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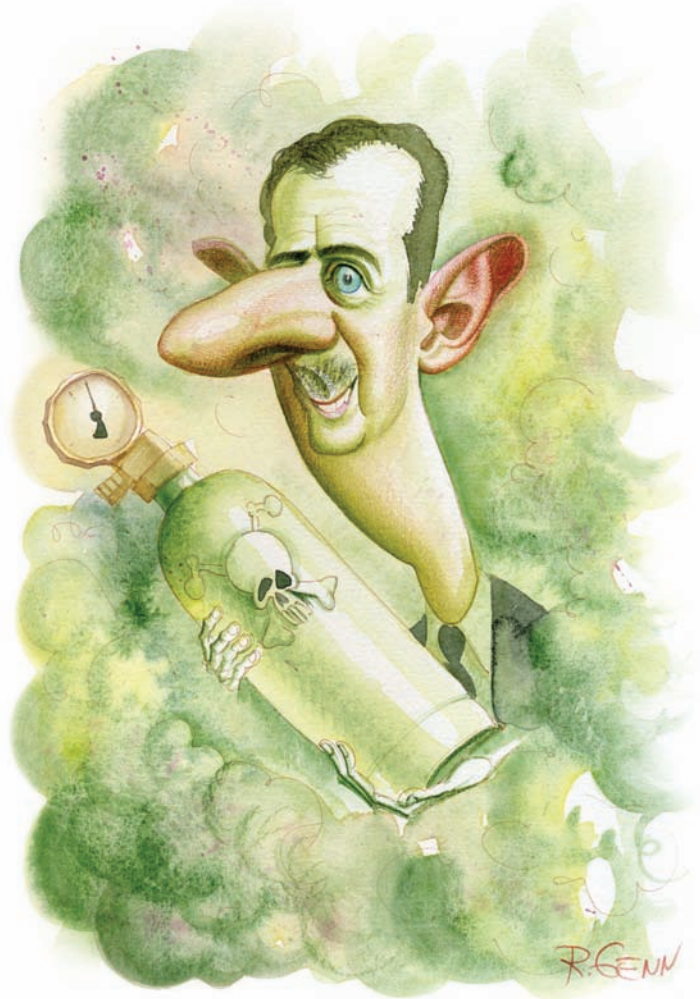
# The Week

■ We have to admit: Russia making U.S. foreign policy does count as a reset.

■ For the Obama administration, big speeches are like the morning-after pill, an emergency prophylactic. Realizing that he may no longer be his own best advertisement, President Obama deputized former president Clinton to deliver a speech on Obamacare. Why the world needs another speech on the misnamed Affordable Care Act is unclear, but the administration is foundering, its political capital experiencing devaluation from its bumbling on Syria, and there remain serious legal and political challenges to the realization of the Democrats' thoroughly muddled health-care vision: so, a speech. President Clinton gave an unusually dull performance, which set conspiratorial types atwitter with intimations that this was an attempt to distance the Clinton brand from the struggling administration, but the more direct explanation is that there is very little that may be persuasively said in favor of the ACA. The main claims of its supporters—that those satisfied with their current coverage will be allowed to keep it, that it will achieve near-universal coverage, that it will reduce insurance premiums—are in the aggregate no longer defensible. What President Clinton was really trying to do was to foreclose further debate, as Democrats have attempted to do with everything from abortion to global warming, calling the game while they are ahead. The health-care debate will be over when voters say it is—in 2014, 2016, or beyond.

■ *This Week with George Stephanopoulos* did something good. Gregory Hicks did something even better. Stephanopoulos interviewed Hicks, who is known as the “Benghazi whistleblower.” He was the deputy chief of mission in Libya at the time of the Benghazi attacks last year. He testified before Congress in May of this year. With Stephanopoulos, he went over what happened in Benghazi, in careful and appalling detail. Since his testimony before Congress, he has been without an assignment from the State Department. He told Stephanopoulos he has been “punished,” “shunted aside,” “put in a closet, if you will.” He was speaking to Stephanopoulos without the knowledge of the State Department. He was doing so, he said, because “the American people need to have the story” of Benghazi, and the four dead should be remembered “for the sacrifice that they made.” The administration has created fog about Benghazi, and this lone Foreign Service officer is doing what he can to disperse it.

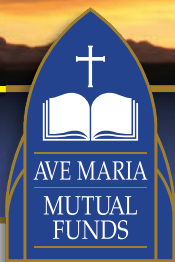
■ This magazine opposes the war on drugs, but it also favors the rule of law. Eric Holder's Justice Department took a step away from both when it announced that it would put a low priority on investigating and prosecuting violations of federal laws against marijuana in states that have made it legal. States



can repeal or relax their own laws, but they do not and should not have the power to change federal law within their borders. If federal law concerning marijuana is too severe, as we believe, the place to remedy it is Congress.

■ Back-to-school season yielded two op-eds as perverse as they were dumb. In *Slate*, Allison Benedikt argued that parents of private-school students are “bad people”: They should be sending their kids to public schools, and thus have an incentive to work harder to improve them. She did graciously allow that private schools should remain legal. The bien-sant readers to whom *Slate* pitches its articles would presumably reject the exact same argument if deployed against people in badly governed poor countries emigrating to well-governed rich ones. It's also an argument that parents who move from neighborhoods with high crime and rotten schools





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to nicer ones are bad people. It would be more sensible to align the private good with the common good by using parental choice and competition to drive improvements in schooling. That would require us to think of public schools as institutions, however, and not as totems of virtue.

■ Around the same time, the *Washington Post* published an op-ed by Betsy Karasik seeking to “advance [a] much-needed dialogue” about high-school teachers who have sex with their students. She wrote that “absent extenuating circumstances, consensual sexual activity between teachers and students should not be criminalized.” (She meant “aggravating circumstances.”) To think that punishment will keep such activity from happening “is delusional,” which is obviously true if you ignore the question of frequency and obviously false if you do not. Karasik never explains why high-school teachers, alone among adults, should get an exemption from age-of-consent laws. Perhaps it’s to be one of the perks of the job. Some dialogues we don’t need.



■ Why hasn’t the Hollywood Left mobilized against the possible bombing of Syria? Veteran leftist Ed Asner gave *The Hollywood Reporter* a number of reasons—it’s happening so fast, Bush’s Iraq War was after all worse—then added, “A lot of people don’t want to feel anti-black by being opposed to Obama.” Bull’s-eye.

■ In the 1990s, Congress refused to let U.S. intelligence agencies have a “back door” to break the code for any encrypted electronic communications. The National Security Agency has instead spent the last decade subverting encryption technology. According to the *New York Times*, it “used its influence as the world’s most experienced code maker to covertly introduce weaknesses into the encryption standards followed by hardware and software developers around the world.” In other words, it waged a covert war on cybersecurity. “This is a bit like publishing faulty medical research just to prevent a particular foreign dictator from being cured,” comments Julian Sanchez of the Cato Institute. The NSA needs to be reminded that its mission is to *improve* Americans’ security.

■ Political junkies loved the results of the New York mayoral primary: Bill de Blasio crushed the Democratic field but is so narrowly over the 40 percent necessary to avoid a runoff that there will be a recount. Bill Thompson, clinging to second place, has vowed to fight. De Blasio won on a soak-the-rich tax plan and a commercial starring his mixed-race son Dante (de Blasio’s wife is black). Liberals relived the thrill of 2008: De Blasio has a son, and he looks like Barack Obama. They could also rebel at having been bought off by Michael Bloomberg for twelve years: We couldn’t vote him out, but we can tax him once he’s gone. Perhaps the outgoing mayor will put his largesse behind Republican winner Joe Lhota, an

old Giuliani hand. But Lhota, cool, almost colorless, is the longest of shots. The 20-year peace that made New York the safest great American city is soon to end. Good news: Sex addicts Eliot Spitzer and Anthony Weiner lost what one hopes are their last races.

■ Cory Booker is likely to cruise to victory in New Jersey’s special Senate election, set for October 16, despite embarrassing revelations in recent weeks. Booker was raised in a wealthy New Jersey suburb, but when he’s on the stump, he is more likely to tell dramatic and heart-rending stories about the friends he has acquired in his adopted city. One such tale involves the drug dealer T-Bone, who, Booker told several audiences, threatened his life at one turn and cried on his shoulder the next. Rutgers University professor Clement Price, among others, heard the story, and told our Eliana Johnson he found it offensive because it “pandered to a stereotype of inner-city black men.” Price said that, when he confronted Booker in 2008 about his drug-pushing pal, Booker conceded to him that Mr. T-Bone was a “composite” of several people he’d met while living and working in Newark and that inventing the character was a “mistake.” Today, Booker tells the *Washington Post* the “T-Bone” tale is “a hundred percent true.” In Booker’s telling, his friend from the streets vanished after their final encounter in 1998. If he ever emerges, we need to introduce him to Barack Obama’s composite girlfriend.

■ Booker’s rise to political celebrity has paid big dividends—\$1.3 million on the speaking circuit, to be exact. When that number emerged in March of this year, the mayor told the *New York Times*, “Even though I am entitled to keep it, after Uncle Sam takes his share and after I’ve given away hundreds of thousands, I’ve kept very little of it, if any.” Booker’s tax returns, which he released under pressure from his opponent’s campaign, tell a different story: Over the past 14 years, he has given just under \$150,000 to charity—generous, but not “hundreds of thousands.” The Booker campaign also filed two amendments to his Senate ethics disclosure forms, both acknowledging “inadvertent oversights” in the original filing: the first, a share in the tech startup he co-founded, worth \$1 to \$5 million; the second, part of



LEFT: AP PHOTO/MATT SAYLES; RIGHT: FERNANDO LEON/PICTUREGROUP VIA AP IMAGES



a buyout from his law firm when he became mayor, which we now know totaled \$690,000. The city of Newark threw business in the firm's direction while the payouts were coming. Booker took office vowing to do away with the corruption of the city's old political bosses. In fairness, he said nothing about the corruption of its new bosses.

■ A freshman congressman, Tom Cotton, is challenging an incumbent senator, Mark Pryor, next year. Cotton is a young Republican star from Arkansas, and Pryor is a well-entrenched and prominent Democrat. He may be feeling a little nervous about his entrenchment. The Pryor campaign is circulating some writing that Cotton did when an undergrad at Harvard. For Harvard's conservative journal, the *Salient*, Cotton reviewed *America in Black and White*, a superb study by the Thernstroms (1997). He referred to Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton as "race-hustling charlatans." He also said, "If race relations are better now than at any time in our history and would almost certainly improve if we stopped emphasizing race in our public life, what would the self-appointed 'civil rights leaders' have to do with themselves?" Pryor and his media allies find those words damning. Others should find them all the more reason to elect Cotton next year, and well beyond.

■ A year after God was booed at the Democratic National Convention, He was praised by Democrats who gathered in

Iowa's state capitol in late August for a pro-abortion rally. State senator Jack Hatch and state representative Tyler Olson, both Democratic gubernatorial hopefuls, listened with bowed heads and closed eyes as an activist delivered a five-minute prayer giving thanks for "the blessing of choice" and the doctors "who provide quality abortion care." God's assistance was asked for increasing taxpayer funding for abortion, making abortion available to women in developing nations, and delivering from fear women who "have been made afraid by their paternalistic religion." Pro-lifers often lament that Democrats make a religion out of abortion; it turns out some of them do so literally.

■ In Colorado, two state senators who pushed and voted for stricter gun-control measures were recalled by voters. The recall effort, the first in the state's 137-year history, was the product of grassroots distaste not only for the new laws, which banned all magazines that carry more than 15 rounds and extended federal background checks to private sales, but for the manner in which they were passed. Both John Morse, a senator from Colorado Springs, and Angela Giron, a senator from Pueblo, shut their constituents out of the legislative process to such an extent—turning a deaf ear to citizens' protests, and ramming the legislation through with far too little time for hearings or debate—that a recall was deemed the only way of making them listen. The recall gained national attention, with a flurry of money pouring in from outside and

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both sides making their allies aware that the consequences extend beyond Colorado's borders. Morse and Giron shut voters out of the legislative process, and now voters have returned the favor.

■ The *Washington Post* published an exposé in September of the District of Columbia's selling of tax liens on homes that often amount to just a few hundred dollars. Private investors traditionally buy such liens, paying the balance to the city and then collecting interest from homeowners as they pay them down. This isn't a very good investment if the lien, as one did, amounts to \$134, but private credit-collection firms have swarmed the program with the goal of repossessing the underlying homes. After claims fees and attorney's bills, the homeowner's debt can balloon to thousands of dollars, which especially the poor and elderly often cannot pay. The private investor, then, can seize and auction off the home, as has been done with more than 200 since 2005. A city government unable or unwilling to execute its basic functions enables abuses that would be impossible otherwise.

■ National unions, with their memberships plunging, have made an unsuccessful push of late to bring in fast-food and retail workers. An affiliate of the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, OUR Walmart, recently staged a national "walk-out" of Walmart employees in 15 cities, intended as a show of force demanding higher wages and better treatment of workers trying to unionize. One of the group's specific demands—in the wake of reduced hours at many stores—was for all employees to be given the opportunity for full-time positions at a salary of \$25,000 a year. (It might have been more appropriate to hand such a petition to the authors of the president's health-care law than to a Walmart board member in New York, as organizers tried to do.) Not many showed up: Walmart released a statement making light of their efforts, noting that, for all the national media attention it received, "only a smattering of paid protesters" were at the 15 sites, and no more than 50 of the participants across the country actually worked for Walmart.

■ When Tony Abbott, leader of Australia's conservative Liberal party, won a convincing victory over Labor prime minister Kevin Rudd, he changed the direction of Australian politics in several important ways—and maintained it in one. The exception is Australia's warm alliance with the U.S. Both major parties in Oz are firmly pro-American. Australian troops fought alongside GIs in every war of the 20th century. The military and intelligence cooperation between the two countries is closer even than American cooperation with Britain before Britain's parliamentary vote not to join a U.S. attack on Syria. Abbott may be a more robust partner than Labor's Rudd, but the difference will be of tone rather than substance. In almost everything else, Abbott stands for massive change. He became leader of the Liberal party almost entirely because of his opposition to the previous leader's support for Labor's carbon tax and prioritizing of "green" issues over economic development. Having become leader by a single vote in his parliamentary party, he argued straightforwardly for the tax to be repealed. That is now likely to happen. This emphasis on growth and industry, coupled with support for tightening

immigration laws (among other issues), was important in helping the Liberals win over traditional blue-collar constituencies who felt betrayed by Labor's reckless, job-destroying environmentalism and attracted by Abbott's social programs for what he calls "the forgotten families." These programs will need money, however, at a time when Australia's boom is faltering, and Abbott has also pledged to cut taxes. Like Oz itself, however, Abbott is lucky. Labor is in disarray, after almost four years of constant mutual sniping in the civil war between Julia Gillard and Kevin Rudd, who took turns as prime minister and in back-stabbing each other. Both have now retired, but the green issues on which Labor won in 2007 now help Abbott. Occupied with rethinking itself, Labor will probably allow Abbott to get on with realigning Australian politics. He wants to run a government in the John Howard tradition of grown-ups. By running an election campaign that was both positive and preternaturally self-controlled, he showed signs of having the ability to do it.

■ When David Miranda, the partner of *Guardian* journalist Glenn Greenwald, was stopped at London's airport by British security officials and interrogated for nine hours over encrypted documents he had in his possession, Greenwald denounced his detention as an illegal retaliation for his own journalism, intended to punish and intimidate him. His editor, Alan Rusbridger, seized a moment when the British government was looking heavy-handed to reveal that other security officials had overseen the physical destruction of the hard drives of *Guardian* computers in the paper's basement as part of its war on journalism. Innumerable Internet nerds praised Greenwald and Rusbridger and denounced the Brits as silly Torquemadas adrift in the information age. Since then David Cameron's senior security adviser has given Britain's high court a sworn statement to the effect that Miranda was carrying 58,000 encrypted top-secret British documents that, if revealed, would be highly valuable to foreign intelligence agencies and terrorists, and that contain, inter alia, the names of British agents who would then be at risk. Miranda was also carrying a password, written on old-fashioned paper, that would enable someone to decrypt many of these documents. Silly fellow adrift in the information age. Was Miranda aware of what he was carrying? If so, he is at serious legal risk for being part of a conspiracy to publish official secrets helpful to terrorism: not a trivial offense outside the U.S. Or was he





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used by Greenwald as an unwitting mule, in which case Greenwald's early indignation would have been a smoke-screen concealing not-very-nice treatment of another person. Whichever it is, Miranda was carrying secrets that any government would want to remain confidential, and many of which were directly related to the protection of the public. If he had gone through Frankfurt rather than Heathrow, they would have been published in due course, and maybe they will be published still. To call this journalism or press freedom is not the whole truth.



■ As for Mr. Rusbridger, far from boasting about the defiant stand he took for press freedom, he is now telling the court that he and British officials had long convivial chats about the right thing to do and that the government had quietly praised his cooperation. He did not defend press freedom in court, because the security people were not trying to prevent publication of anything: They were mainly concerned that the physical hard drives might contain information that even the *Guardian*, Greenwald, and others did not realize was there. Destroying them was a precautionary measure. Who knew that Rusbridger was such an upstanding British patriot. Well done, sir. The episode casts in an interesting light the *Guardian's* campaign to impose regulation on the media.

■ The somber G20 meeting in St. Petersburg had its moment of light relief. President Vladimir Putin had just patted Britain and David Cameron on the back for the vote in Parliament to do nothing about the use of sarin gas in Syria. At a press conference, his spokesman, Dmitri Peskov, took the different line that Britain is “just a small island” to which “no one pays attention.” He went on to gloat that Russian oligarchs were buying up choice parts of London. Nick Robinson, the BBC's political editor, duly reported the remarks. He's not one for making things up. David Cameron conceded in a speech that Britain is a small island but pointed out that its achievements are historic and ongoing in every important field. “I might have to put it to music,” he finished. Peskov naturally responded that he didn't know where the “small island” snub had come from. Of course not.

■ “Excellent Horse-Like Lady” and “She Is a Discharged Soldier” are songs that a few years ago made Hyon Song-wol popular in the People's Inferno of North Korea. At that same time, she is believed to have met Kim Jong Un, and they “struck up a relationship,” as the decadent imperialist saying goes. Now, *Chosun Ilbo*, South Korea's largest daily, reports that Hyon and eleven others were arrested on charges of making videos of themselves performing sex acts and then selling

the recordings. They were executed by machine-gun fire while their families and members of other pop groups were forced to watch, preceding dispatch to concentration camps. Observers are doubtful of the accusation's truth. A video has turned up in China purporting to show Hyon and two other women dressed in leotards and merely dancing. Speculation has it that Kim and Hyon were furthering their relationship and that Kim's wife Ri Sol Ju objected to the high profile of her rival. Last year, a young woman photographed next to Kim at a concert was thought to be Hyon. Jealousy may be the same the whole world over, but they do different things with it in the People's Inferno.

■ It is apparently not only the Obama administration that has discovered prosecutorial discretion to be a neat way of nullifying inconvenient laws. In Britain, physicians who perform abortions based on the sex of the unborn child were effectively informed in September that, although the practice is illegal, they will not be prosecuted for it. In an undercover investigation, the *Daily Telegraph* caught two doctors on film agreeing to perform the procedure and handed the evidence over to the police. The Crown Prosecution Service, which handles such matters, admitted that there was sufficient evidence to convict but ruled that it was not in the “public interest” to prosecute. The decision drew criticism, including from the Christian Legal Centre. “This is contrary to the law,” director Andrea Williams said. “Parliament makes the law and the CPS should enforce it.” Traditionally, this is indeed how the law works. But when it comes to abortion, on both sides of the Atlantic it seems that these days anything goes.

■ When 35-year-old Anna Romano told her boyfriend she was pregnant, he revealed that he was married, and, before abandoning her, suggested she have an abortion. Romano refused, and, out of desperation, wrote to Pope Francis for advice. She was “speechless” a few weeks ago when she answered her cell phone and the bishop of Rome was on the line. Pope Francis commended her for her bravery and reassured her that “the baby was a gift of God, a sign of Providence.” He offered to personally baptize the child if she had any problems finding a priest. It was another touching little act of kindness by the “cold-call pope.”

■ In 1961, Che Guevara's plane was grounded at Ireland's Shannon Airport, so he and his posse spent the night in nearby Kilkee, one of County Clare's seaside resorts. To commemorate the visit by the great man, someone painted a mural of him. Now local authorities have painted over the mural, because, in the words of news reports, it “upset American tourists.” It's amazing that any tourists, outside of Cubans and Cuban Americans, knew to be upset.

■ During the Siege of Syracuse, in the third century B.C., Archimedes supposedly set enemy ships on fire by focusing the sun's rays with a large group of mirrors. Something similar, albeit less dramatic, has happened by accident in London. A new building said to resemble a walkie-talkie has shiny glass windows arranged in a concave pattern, and when conditions are right, they concentrate the sun's rays on the street nearby.



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The results include melted body panels on a Jaguar XJ, a hole burned in a barbershop's doormat, and sweltering, confused pedestrians. You can fry an egg on the sidewalk, but please do not eat it. Architects are working on a solution, although, this being England, sunlight is not a constant problem. Still, we look forward to seeing the Burning Building's appearance in the next James Bond film: The villain's Mercedes halts at a stop light, we see him mop his brow and bald scalp, and then, suddenly, poof!

■ A migratory kestrel that strayed into Turkish airspace has been cleared of being a spy for Israel. Its ankle band with a Tel Aviv address excited suspicion, but when an X-ray examination showed nothing untoward and the band was identified as a scientific marker, the bird was exonerated. This was just the latest example of purported Israeli animal espionage. A 2010 shark infestation at Gaza beaches was declared to be the work of Mossad, and a vulture in Saudi Arabia in 2011, and another last year in Sudan, were deemed to be Israeli agents because they had GPS trackers and leg tags from Hebrew University (academic positions are a common cover story in spycraft). Last year Turks called the counterterrorism unit over a dead European bee-eater. Israel should take all this as a compliment; an Egyptian professor points out that stories of nefarious Israeli control seem plausible in these countries because "Israel . . . is viewed as a mighty force that rules the world." Earlier this year, Israel suffered a near-Biblical plague of locusts, reminding the Middle East who really controls the birds of the air and the beasts of the field.

■ For centuries poets, most of them male, have sung of anonymous young women. The cooling springs in Horace often have a slave girl nearby; Burns dearly loved the lasses, O. In *Lolita* Vladimir Nabokov pushed this trope to an endpoint: One thing we love about the lasses is the loss of their innocence, and the best guarantee that innocence shall be there to be lost is to take it as close to puberty as possible. In the world of pop culture, Madonna gave it away as part of her shtick (she wasn't a virgin, of course, but she simulated one with lyrics and Catholic iconography). The latest to stumble in her footsteps was Miley Cyrus at the MTV Video Music Awards (enabled by Robin Thicke, he of the perfect surname). The sophisticated will shrug and say, What's new? The truthful will say, and will not stop saying, however much the sophisticates laugh or yawn, It's sad.

■ In Oregon, a lesbian couple, Rachel Cryer and Laurel Bowman, asked a bakery called Sweet Cakes by Melissa to bake them a wedding cake. The owners, Aaron and Melissa Klein, said no. They said they were happy to sell items to anyone—but would not bake wedding cakes for homosexual couples, because same-sex marriage goes against their religious beliefs. The couple filed a complaint with the state. They bought their cake from another bakery, Pastrygirl. They also accepted a free cake from Duff Goldman, star of the TV show *Ace of Cakes*. Goldman had heard about the Oregon controversy. Mr. and Mrs. Klein were subject to a vicious campaign from gay-marriage activists. They received death threats against their children. The activists didn't

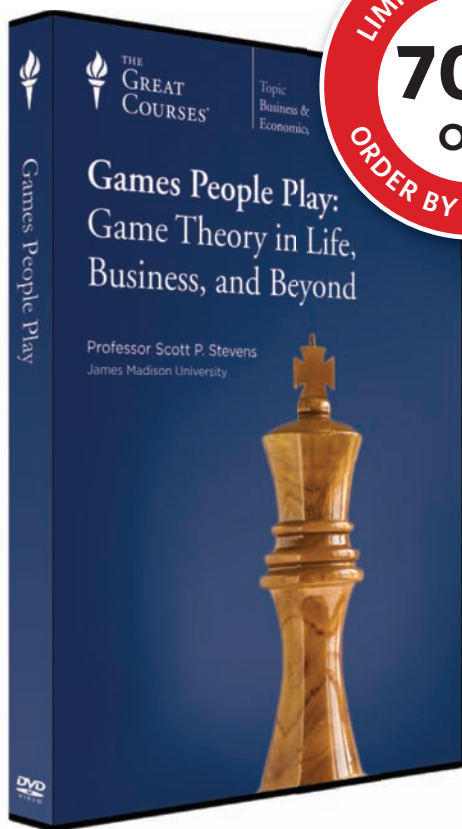
kill the children, but they killed the business. Oregon launched a formal investigation into the Kleins. The commissioner said his goal was to "rehabilitate" them. Sweet Cakes by Melissa has now shut down. Mrs. Klein will try to do a cake business from her home; Mr. Klein has had to take another job. In Vietnam, the Communists called it "reeducation." Cryer and Bowman got their wedding cake—two of them, actually—and got the Kleins too. Gay-marriage advocates say all they want is individual freedom. You can tell, can't you?



■ San Antonio, the second-largest city in Texas, has adopted a law that forbids city employees and contractors to engage not only in acts of discrimination against homosexuals, the transgendered, and the like, but also to express "a bias, by word or deed," against members of any group falling under the law's protection. Opponents have argued, not unreasonably, that this constitutes an egregious violation of the free-speech and religious liberties of those covered by the law. For example, delivering a church sermon affirming the sinfulness of homosexual conduct, or perhaps even merely attending one, could demonstrate a bias, by word or by deed, against homosexuals, as would making a donation to an organization critical of same-sex marriage or tweeting an editorial on the subject. Municipal employees should of course not inflict their views on people over whom they exercise power. City-council members should remember the limits of theirs.

■ Ronald Coase was one of the great economists and great minds of his time, best known for the Coase Theorem, which deals with the resolution of externalities and intellectually reframed the problem of regulation, and for his essay "The Nature of the Firm," which explored the question of why individuals form partnerships and corporations rather than trade as sole proprietors. The key to both of these inquiries was the question of transaction costs, or the expenses associated with participation in a market. Far from being obscure scholarly meditations, Coase's works have become fundamental to the social sciences—his article "The Problem of Social Cost" has the distinction of being the most cited law-review article in history, and he is the intellectual father of law-and-economics studies. His career was in some ways unhappily emblematic of the academic course of the 20th century: Coase and his colleague James Buchanan both were chased out of the University of Virginia for holding then-heretical views about the power of free people to solve problems through negotiation with minimal recourse to political managers—right-wing extremism in the view of the delicate minds at UVA. (The dean compiled a list of scholars, Coase and Buchanan among them, who would be sys-





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tematically passed over for promotion until they left.) Both men went on to be awarded the Nobel Prize in economics. Coase's antagonists, he explained, objected to ideas they never understood and never attempted to understand. Dead at 102. R.I.P.

■ Seamus Heaney was the latest in the long line of great Irish poets. Always accessible, his writing celebrated the ordinary and the simple, with a sense that everything in life has something of a miracle about it. He loved his nation and his Catholic faith and humanity, and more than many recipients he deserved his Nobel Prize for literature. R.I.P.



■ David Frost, British TV personality, earned a footnote in American political history with his 1977 interviews of former president Richard Nixon. Over hours of air time, Frost prised out two nuggets: a memorable definition of presidential power (“Well, when the president does it that means it is not illegal”—what oft was thought, by presidents at least, but ne'er so bluntly expressed); and a quasi-apology for Watergate (“I let the American people down and I have to carry that burden with me for the rest of my life”). Useful services both. More consequentially, Frost gave us infotainment. His British show, *That Was the Week That Was*,

was the first humorous newscast, forefather of both *The Daily Show* and McLaughlinesque talk shows in which role-playing trumps content. Not so useful that. His death, at 74, is a lesson in the transience of TV fame. Thirty years ago no one would have needed the ID in the first sentence of this obit. Now the young require it and the old must have their memories jogged. R.I.P.

SYRIA

## Amateur Hour

It's hard to recall a more pathetic spectacle in the annals of American national security than President Obama trying in a speech to the nation to talk his way out of his proposed war in Syria, via a transparently cynical Russian diplomatic initiative. There have been more damaging episodes, but perhaps none quite as cringe-inducing.

The president made a case for action, pounding his chest about the U.S. military not doing pinpricks, then reverted to the unworkable Putin proposal as just the thing to defuse the crisis. He elided the fact that the plan—such as it is—issued from John Kerry's gaffe in speaking off the cuff about how Syria could avoid a strike by giving up its chemical weapons. Kerry then added the important and sensible caveat that such a scheme wouldn't work.

Given the extent of Syria's chemical weapons (hundreds of tons), the state of the country (ravaged by civil war), and the

sincerity of the Assad regime and the Kremlin (nil), Kerry will surely be proved out. But such was the desperation of the administration that it has grasped this tenuous lifeline to keep its head above water a few more days, hoping that attention to the matter will fade and it will never have to hear the phrase “red line” again.

The Russians have acted with a deftness and cold-eyed attention to their interests that are needed in Foggy Bottom. After decades of exclusion from the Middle East, Russia is now back in the game. It will ensure that its Syrian client state pays no real price for its use of chemical weapons. And it is in position to repeat its role as bad-faith interlocutor in nuclear negotiations between a hapless United States and Iran.

President Obama gave up the initiative on Syria as soon as he decided over Labor Day weekend to go to Congress for authorization for a strike, in what was supposedly a fit of democratic scruple. The seat-of-his-pants reversal signaled irresolution, and in the days ahead, his administration's ambiguous case for war at times verged on the ridiculous. The more he and his team talked, the more altitude they lost. But the public is so exhausted with the Middle East that their arguments could have been airtight and they still would have made little or no headway. Facing near-certain defeat in Congress, he found the Putin escape hatch.

Make no mistake: Everyone around the world—our adversaries and our allies—knows who blinked. In supporting a strike, we warned that a failure to act would lead to a loss of U.S. credibility. This deal is the immediate, concrete expression of that loss, with Putin elevated, Assad more secure, and Obama humiliated.

Some opponents of a strike argued that Assad would suffer nothing important from it, continue to deploy chemical weapons, and gain prestige from withstanding the military might of the United States. Assad evidently disagreed. That the Syrian regime has now admitted that it has chemical weapons (after long denials), and feels compelled to play along with the disarmament plan, shows that the mere presence of U.S. warships off its shores concentrated the mind.

American power is a fearsome thing. But the American presidency at the moment, occupied by a rank amateur, is not.



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# The Unbelievably Small Syria Strategy

*Vladimir Putin exploits President Obama's fecklessness*

BY BING WEST

**W**HETHER to strike Syria is a tough choice, fraught with uncertainty and possible outcomes both dire and bright. James Schlesinger, who has served as both director of the CIA and secretary of defense, evaluates it as “a very close call.”

Every member of Congress has a right to be furious with the president. Obama could have launched his “shot across the bow,” as he has described his proposal, and gone on to other business. Instead, he exaggerated the rationale for a strike beyond all plausibility.

“I didn’t set a red line—the world set a red line,” he declared with a straight face. “The international community’s credibility is on the line. America and Congress’s credibility is on the line.”

Coming to his defense, *New York Times* columnist Maureen Dowd wrote, “Obama knows that if he doesn’t punish

Bashar al-Assad, America and his presidency will be forever reduced.” This case for an air strike is solipsistic: Obama is America, and America is Obama, indivisible and inseparable. Despite the hyperbole, or perhaps because of it, the process of authorizing a limited strike has escalated into a major crisis.

“If the president of the United States . . . is refused authority by the Congress, . . . the impact will be enormous,” Henry Kissinger prophesied. It was Kissinger who forced South Vietnam to make concessions to the North Vietnamese army. Congress then slashed our aid to South Vietnam, and eventually Saigon fell. Jimmy Carter was elected president and did nothing when Iran seized our embassy in Tehran, but the moment Ronald Reagan took office, Iran released our diplomats. American credibility was suddenly restored.

The turbulent ’70s illustrated that national credibility depends heavily upon the executive in charge. Like Carter, Obama cannot bring himself to apply sustained, determined military force. This will remain part of his character

whether or not there is a strike, and nations will make their calculations accordingly. Possibly the next president will have more credibility.

On the other hand, Obama has three more years in office, and regardless of his track record he is still our president. As a Marine who has fought in our wars, my first instinct is to say “Aye-aye, sir” to our commander-in-chief. If he is diminished, our foreign policy is diminished.

From 1982 to 1988, Iran and Iraq used hundreds of chemical shells in their war, killing thousands of civilians. Saddam Hussein also gassed Iraqi Kurds. The world community and the American press never raised a fuss about international norms or questioned Ronald Reagan’s credibility because he did not bomb.

That was then. Now, Obama vowed to bomb but did not put forward a coherent strategy. Secretary of State Kerry said “we’re not talking about war” and “we’re not going to war.” We launch 200 cruise missiles, followed by three days of air strikes—but it’s not war?

Asked in a Senate hearing what we were seeking to accomplish, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Martin Dempsey, glumly said, “I can’t answer that, what we’re seeking.” He denied that he had been ordered “to change the momentum” and said he was told “to change the calculus of the Assad regime about the use of chemical weapons.” Psychoanalysis is a mission for a psychiatrist; our military delivers death and destruction.

The strongest case for bombing was made by Senator John McCain, who hoped that the strike would deprive Assad of his air force and that Obama would arm and train a moderate rebel faction. Bombing would be only the opening tactic in a multi-step strategy to deliver a major American success in the greater Middle East.

At the insistence of Senator McCain, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee inserted into a resolution authorizing a 90-day use of force a sentence saying that it is American policy “to change the momentum of the war.” The Constitution, however, does not give Congress the authority to direct a war, or to conduct foreign policy at all. To dispel the impression that Congress was being asked to do that, Kerry declared, “The president is not asking Congress to authorize him militarily

*Mr. West, a former combat Marine, was an assistant secretary of defense in the Reagan administration. He is the author of several bestsellers about combat and war strategy.*

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to engage in that transition [to a new regime].” He later said that the strike would be “unbelievably small.”

Well, something was unbelievable. The chances of the resolution’s passing the Senate were good, but the House looked set to vote No by a large margin. Obama thus faced a humiliating defeat.

Then came a twist in this soap opera posing as foreign policy. President Vladimir Putin of Russia stepped in as intermediary for Assad, who offered to turn control and disposal of his chemical weapons over to an international body.

“We will pursue this diplomatic track,” Obama told Fox News. “I fervently hope that this can be resolved in a non-military way.” The war or unbelievably small strike was over before it began. Putin had thrown a political lifeline to Obama. What does Putin gain?

Since 1973, Russia has been shut out of the greater Middle East. Now Putin is a major player, his stature higher than Obama’s. The U.S. goal for two years has been to remove the Assad regime, thus cutting Iran’s links to the Arab hinterland and Hezbollah, its cat’s-paw in Lebanon. Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and others, encouraged by the U.S., had swung all-in against Assad.

Putin has checkmated Obama. In order to remove Syria’s chemical weapons—about 5 percent of Assad’s military capabilities, albeit a horrible 5 percent—Obama and the “international community” must negotiate with Assad. Putin has ensured that his client will stay in power, while Obama has lost the larger game to eliminate Iran’s fortress inside the greater Middle East.

Russia gains prestige and influence. Assad gains security. Iran secures its links. Israel is more likely to believe it must act alone if Iran proceeds with its nuclear development.

The U.S. leaves its longstanding friends in the region angry and frustrated. The mainstream press is certain to praise Kerry and endorse Obama’s next gambit—whatever it is—as sound and reasonable. But the Syrian imbroglio is a serious setback for the U.S. It has illustrated that the Obama administration lacks coherence and common sense in carrying out foreign policy, and it has diminished our influence throughout the Middle East and beyond. **NR**

# Only Enemies

*It is dangerous and wrong to pick a side in Syria*

BY DAVID FRENCH

**T**HE images will not leave my mind. A baby, not seven weeks old, shot in the face to “send a message” to villagers supporting the Iraqi government.

A young woman, her eyes fixed straight ahead, as the jihadist blade first cuts into her throat, her gasping, choking last breaths drowned out by shrieks of “Allahu akbar!”

The body parts of children and their parents, strewn across the shattered storefront, mingled with the body parts of the first responders, as a “routine” attack by successive suicide bombers—one targeting civilians, the next targeting rescuers—took its deadly toll.

The tiny blood-spattered shoes of a child, the only human remnants of an entire village massacred for disloyalty.

That’s al-Qaeda, our deadly evil foe, our enemy, so declared by Congress, nearly unanimously. That’s al-Qaeda, my unit’s foe during our long and costly year in Diyala, Iraq, at the height of the Surge. And that’s the same al-Qaeda that stands to reap the considerable rewards of an American strike against the Syrian military and the Assad regime.

Let’s state this clearly: The Obama administration is advocating a war with a nation that did not attack the United States—a war that will render aid to an enemy that not only attacked the United States but also has been in sustained ground combat against American forces for almost a dozen years.

Put more simply: If we strike Syria, we’ll directly aid the worst people in the world. Although diplomatic maneuvers may have sidelined the debate for now, if President Obama later follows through on his threatened military

action against the Assad regime, the attack will not just risk a strategic disaster but will also represent a moral disaster, a direct affront to the honor of the United States and its armed forces.

First, the strategic risks: It has long been a goal of al-Qaeda (and other violent Muslim supremacists) to gain a geographic foothold in the heart of the Middle East. If they can obtain that foothold while also potentially overrunning and capturing the chemical-weapons stocks of a collapsing regime, then so much the better.

An al-Qaeda triumph in Syria would represent a first-order security threat for the United States and for Israel. Syria’s reprehensible Assad regime has demonstrated that it will use chemical weapons on its own people, but it has possessed these weapons for a considerable length of time without presenting a single realistic threat of use against the U.S. or against Israel. In other words, Assad has proven he can be deterred.

But would al-Qaeda show such restraint? To date, there is no evidence that al-Qaeda has ever shown any restraint. Indeed, the opposite—it consistently strives toward ever more deadly, ever more vicious acts. It is easy to foresee that Syrian rebels, after first using chemical weapons to help secure their victory over the Assad regime and more-“moderate” rebels, would next direct those weapons at Tel Aviv, or Chicago.

It is this visceral, commonsense understanding that drives much of the opposition to war in Syria. Military action creates two unacceptable risks: Strike too hard and the Assad regime collapses in the face of a jihadist-dominated opposition. Launch a “shot across the bow”—a series of pinprick strikes—and then, perversely, Assad emerges with enhanced prestige while America courts reprisals that could either pull us deeper into war or precipitate a humiliating retreat.

Advocates of action against Syria contest this calculus, insisting that “moderate” rebel factions dominate the opposition and that the risk of jihadist takeover could be minimized so long as we trained and armed friendly rebels. That argument does not square with the facts on the ground, however, or with recent American experience.

*Mr. French is a senior counsel at the American Center for Law and Justice and a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom. His opinions are his own.*



# Pharmacist of the Year Makes Memory Discovery of a Lifetime: Is It the Fountain of Youth for Aging Minds?

## 'America's Pharmacist,' Dr. Gene Steiner, finds what he and his patients have been looking for – a real memory pill!

PHOENIX, ARIZONA—

If Pharmacist of the Year, Dr. Gene Steiner, had a nickel for every time someone leaned over the counter and whispered, "Do you have anything that can improve my memory," he would be a rich man today.

It's a question he's heard countless times in his 45-year career. He has seen families torn apart by the anguish of memory loss and mental decline, a silent condition that threatens the independent lifestyle seniors hold so dearly.

In his years-long search for a drug or nutrient that could slow mental decline, he finally found the answer in the pages of an obscure medical journal.

"I was studying materials about memory loss and cognitive decline, and there it was, right in front of me... evidence of a real memory pill!"



*Pharmacist of the Year, Gene Steiner, PharmD, was so impressed with his newfound memory powers that he recommended the patented, prescription-free memory formula to his pharmacy patients with great success.*

"At the time, I was an anchor for a medical program in Los Angeles. I was so excited that I contacted the author of the research and invited him to come on the program as a guest."

"I wanted millions of listeners to learn about this important new development!"

Dr. Steiner's guest that night, US researcher, Josh Reynolds, observed a common 'disturbance' in aging brains, one that may be the primary cause of degrading memory and concentration powers.

### Gasping for Air?

He saw evidence that older brains were 'gasping for additional oxygen,' a condition caused by poor blood circulation.

"Insufficient circulation," says Steiner, "reduces oxygen to the brain, a sign of premature mental decline. This also restricts the supply of critical brain specific antioxidants and nutrients."

Reduced blood flow has another brain-numbing effect: it slashes the

number of neurotransmitters in the brain, the messenger molecules used by the brain to help form thoughts, retrieve memories, and help its owner stay focused and on-task.

Fewer neurotransmitters circulating in the brain translates to concentration and memory woes.

So, Reynolds and a team of scientists developed a natural, drug-free compound shown in research to prompt aging brains to begin to 'think and react,' younger.

### Tired Brains Snap Awake!

"It helps tired, forgetful brains to 'snap awake,'" says Dr. Steiner.

"This natural memory pill is to your aging, sluggish brain, what a breath of fresh air is to your lungs," he says.

It works so well, explains Steiner, that the participants in a peer-reviewed, international research study not only saw improvements in their memory, mood and concentration, but they also regained lost brainpower equal to that of someone 15 years younger, all in a 30-day time period!

This made perfect sense to Dr. Steiner, who knew instinctively that age-related memory problems may be correctable.

### After the Show

After the show, Dr. Steiner confided to his guest that he was fearful of not being able to recall certain subject matter for his popular radio show.

"He gave me a couple of bottles and instructed me on its use," says Dr. Steiner.

"Within a few days, I can tell you without reservation that my memory became crystal clear!"

### Feeding an Older Brain

The formula helps oxygenate listless brain cells to revitalize and protect them from free radicals caused by stress and toxins.

It also helps restore depleted neurotransmitter levels, while feeding the aging mind with brain-specific nutrients and protective antioxidants.

Steiner was so impressed that he began recommending the formula to his pharmacy customers.

"I had such marvelous results that I not only started recommending it to my customers, I even shared it with other physicians!"

### Pharmacy Best-Seller

"It became the best-selling brain health product in my pharmacy and customers were returning to thank me for introducing them to it."

"It felt great to see so many people whose lives were enriched by taking a simple, natural formula."

"A rookie doctor right out of medical school can set a broken



*For years, pharmacists told disappointed patients that memory loss was inevitable. A new, drug-free cognitive formula helps improve mind, mood, and memory in as little as 30 days.*

bone, or treat a rash or runny nose," explains Dr. Steiner.

"But he is often clueless when it comes to helping a patient who can't remember to take his medicine, or forgets where he's parked his car, or even worse, foolishly leaves the oven on at night."

"With this simple, drug-free formula, we finally have something that we can recommend that is safe and effective. And you don't need a prescription either!"

Recently, Dr. Steiner relocated to another state and was apprehensive about

the rigors of a placebo-controlled, randomized, double-blind clinical trial, using the same FDA-sanctioned brain testing protocols used to qualify prescription-sold cognitive medicines.

"The findings for improved brain function were shocking," says Steiner.

Then, the results were shared with the world in a well-respected, peer-reviewed medical journal.

### #1 Selling Brain Health Pill

Thirdly, this natural, memory-boosting wonder has passed the toughest yardstick of all – scrutiny from the US consumer.

Word has spread; in a very short time, Reynolds' memory-booster has quickly become the #1-selling brain health supplement in the United States.

Dr. Steiner estimates that as much as 10 million single-doses have been used with excellent results by 'lots of forgetful folks.'

Users like Selwyn Howell\* agree. He credits the memory compound with bolstering his confidence.

"It helped me speak out more than I used to. I am growing more confident every day."

Carey S.\* reports, "I feel so much more focused and with the new energy I'm now ready to tackle the things I've been putting off for years!"

Elizabeth K.\* of Rochester, New York experienced a night-and-day difference in her mind and memory. At the age of



*Seniors are more concerned about memory loss and mental decline than they are about death, itself, according to a new survey.*

taking the state board of pharmacy jurisprudence examination, a daunting examination that tests a candidate's mastery of pharmacy law.

"I began taking the natural memory compound for two weeks prior to the test, and I passed with flying colors!"

"The recall I personally experienced was fantastic," says Steiner.

Many frontline healthcare professionals are embracing this natural remedy for three reasons.

First, the formula was submitted to

54, her memory was declining at an "alarming rate."

"I was about to consult a neurologist when I read a newspaper article about it."

"It took about a month for the memory benefit to kick in. Six months later, even my husband was impressed with my improved memory. And I am very happy with my renewed mental clarity and focus!"

"I highly recommend it," says Dr. Steiner. "This drug-free compound is the perfect supplement for increasing one's brain power. If it worked for me, it can work for you!"

### Get a Free 30-Day Supply of this Pharmacist-Recommended Memory Formula!

Call the toll-free number below to see how you can reserve your free 30-day supply of the same, patented memory formula used by Dr. Steiner. It is the #1-selling memory formula in the US, and it is also mentioned in the medically acclaimed book, *20/20 Brainpower: 20 Days to a Quicker, Calmer, Sharper Mind!*

### Claim Your Free Copy of the Top-Selling Book, 20/20 Brainpower

When you call the toll-free number below, ask how you can also receive a free copy of the medically acclaimed book, *20/20 Brainpower: 20 Days to a Quicker, Calmer, Sharper, Mind!* It's a \$20 value, yours free! But don't wait, supplies are limited!

### Free Brain Detox Formula, Too!

Be one of the first 500 callers, and you can also receive a free supply of the brain detox formula that is scientifically designed to help increase mental clarity and focus even further by helping flush away toxins in the brain. Call now while supplies last!

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\*These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. Everyone is different and you may not experience the same results. Results can depend on a variety of factors including overall health, diet, and other lifestyle factors.

Secretary of State Kerry recently testified that jihadists were no more than 25 percent of the Syrian opposition. One can't help but wonder how the administration defines a "moderate."

In April, the *New York Times* reported that "nowhere in rebel-controlled Syria is there a secular fighting force to speak of." In September, a Reuters report disputed Secretary Kerry's testimony, stating that, according to U.S. and European intelligence sources, "Islamic extremists remain by far the fiercest and best-organized rebel elements." With impeccable timing, al-Qaeda even launched a frontal attack (supported by a suicide bombing, of course) on an ancient Christian village in Syria, right in the midst of the war debate in America.

War supporters not in denial about al-Qaeda's presence and dominance among the rebels hope to mitigate its gains by training allied forces. Those of us who served in Iraq and Afghanistan can only respond with a grim chuckle. Training local fighters to independently take on jihadists—without American military support—has been the white whale of American policy since our boots first hit the ground in southwest Asia in the weeks after 9/11.

Even after the expenditure of thousands of precious lives, billions of dollars, and countless hours of embedded leadership, how many of our Iraqi or Afghan allied units are capable of taking on the Taliban or al-Qaeda on anything approaching equal terms? In 2008, the American-trained Iraqi army did win some victories, to be sure, but they were assisted by embedded U.S. Army and Marine teams and supported by American air power. With the American presence removed, even the near-lifeless husk of al-Qaeda in Iraq, though devastated after the Surge, is reviving and flexing its muscles.

And despite this sad record, we believe we'll have greater success with less American engagement in Syria? No embedded boots on the ground? No close air support? This is sheer fantasy.

Then there is the matter of morality, of honor. No, not the president's honor or credibility, though some would equate the president's honor with our own national reputation. The conflict instead raises questions that go to the core of our national identity: Why do

we fight? For whom do we fight?

The American soldier is the armed defender of the Constitution of the United States, and all but the most extreme pacifists support the use of our military in self-defense. Thus the overwhelming public majorities in support of our invasion of Afghanistan and the strong initial majority in support of our invasion of Iraq, when faced with an argument that American national security was at stake.

When forces have previously been committed where no national-security interests were apparent, as in Somalia and Haiti, we were at least supporting the weak and vulnerable against tyranny—the starving people of Mogadishu against the warlords, the innocents of Haiti against a brutal military junta.

We do not, however, have a tradition of choosing the vilest side in a civil war and risking American lives and expending American treasure to advance the military interests of pure evil.

None of this is to minimize Assad's atrocities. He has committed unforgivable sins, he is Iran's brutal puppet, and he is Israel's enemy—constrained mainly by his own weakness relative to the IDF. But therein lies the key: He is constrained by his weakness. He has not attacked Israel. He has not attacked the United States. He has provided at least nominal protections to Christians within his borders. By contrast, al-Qaeda is constrained only by death.

With those who argue that defeating Assad will deliver a blow to Iran, I completely agree. But if that blow to Iran elevates al-Qaeda, then we've won a pyrrhic victory at best, and have done so while paying a profound moral price.

In Iraq during the Surge, while my brothers-in-arms had varying views of the rightness of the war, we were united in our revulsion toward al-Qaeda and felt a great sense of purpose and vindication as we slowly but surely ground it into dust in our area of operations.

We came home carrying grief for lost friends, and the images we'll never forget, but comforted that we fought pure evil.

And now, to consider using the same technology, the same professionalism, and endure some of the same sacrifices—to advance the interests of that same enemy?

Unthinkable.

# Roll Back the Brotherhood

*Our diplomacy should work against Islamism*

BY MICHAEL RUBIN

**A**T Cairo University on June 4, 2009, President Barack Obama addressed the Islamic world. He promised a new era in U.S. relations with Muslim countries, declaring that "America does not presume to know what is best for everyone, just as we would not presume to pick the outcome of a peaceful election." As important as the president's words was his audience: Nestled among the crowd were ten members of the Muslim Brotherhood's parliamentary bloc, whom the U.S. embassy had invited. For American diplomats, the Brotherhood had gone from pariah to partner.

There has been no shortage of U.S. officials rushing to embrace the Brotherhood. On a day-to-day level, Anne Patterson, a career diplomat who became U.S. ambassador to Egypt in 2011 (she has since been nominated to be assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs), lobbied for ties with the group. On January 18, 2012, she met Brotherhood spiritual leader Mohammed Badie. The meeting was a game-changer: If Mohamed Morsi, Egypt's soon-to-be president, was the equivalent of Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, then Badie was Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei.

And Patterson was no rogue. Six months later, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton met the newly inaugurated Morsi at the presidential palace in Cairo and promised him "the strong support of the United States," a moment beamed across the Islamic world on Al Jazeera. To drive home the point, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta traveled to Cairo and also promised the Muslim Brotherhood government strong American support.

American officials may have projected moderation onto the Muslim Brotherhood, but the Egyptians suffered reality.

*Mr. Rubin is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.*

NR



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Within a year, Morsi's missteps transformed the Egyptian army from symbol of autocracy to savior of democracy. Egyptians poured into the street and cheered when, on July 3, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, commander of the Egyptian armed forces, seized power.

Despite his earlier embrace of the Brotherhood, Obama professed neutrality. "The United States is not aligned with, and does not support, any particular Egyptian political party or group," the National Security Council was informed three days after the coup. Neutrality, however, not only won no friends, but also for-

opportunity and use the unprecedented Arab anger at the Brotherhood as a chance to roll back its influence, with the goal of defeating an ideology that is anathema to U.S. interests and security.

Make no mistake: The Muslim Brotherhood is about ideology. Its founder, a 21-year-old Egyptian schoolteacher named Hassan al-Banna, taught that there is no aspect of life that falls outside Islam's bounds. "It is the nature of Islam to dominate, not to be dominated, to impose its law on all nations and to extend its power to the entire planet," Banna declared. His followers put his

philosophy of deceit was on prominent display. While the death of U.S. ambassador Chris Stevens focused attention on Libya, Egypt saw almost as much violence on that day. When Egyptian Islamists tried to storm the U.S. embassy in Cairo, the Muslim Brotherhood used its English Twitter feed to profess relief that "none of @USEmbassycairo staff was hurt." In Arabic, however, the group called on "Egyptians [to] rise to defend the Prophet."

Now that the Brotherhood has revealed its true self, the Egyptian coup enables a new start. What happens in

## American officials may have projected moderation onto the Muslim Brotherhood, but the Egyptians suffered reality.

feited a unique opportunity to seize the advantage in a global struggle against political Islamism.

Here U.S. Cold War strategy is instructive. Faced with an ideological battle against Communism, President Harry S. Truman embraced "rollback." Some balked at the cost, especially after Truman moved to check Communist aggression on the Korean peninsula, but any comparison today between North and South Korea proves Truman's prescience. Many of Truman's successors were more hesitant, because the Soviet development of a nuclear bomb made direct confrontation too dangerous, but they still pursued containment. None would have ever accepted losing a country to Communism, even via the ballot box. No president gave up on the desire to check Soviet influence. Richard Nixon helped flip Egypt out of the Soviet sphere, and even Jimmy Carter sought to punish Soviet aggression in Afghanistan.

It was Ronald Reagan, however, who really revived rollback, ultimately setting off a chain of events from Latin America to Eastern Europe to Afghanistan that would lead to the Soviet Union's demise. While liberals caricature Reagan as a trigger-happy cowboy, Reagan's real weapon was rhetoric. He did not hesitate to call a spade a spade, even when top aides urged moral compromise.

With the Muslim Brotherhood, the United States should recognize that it is party to an ideological battle just as vital. Rather than punish a coup supported by tens of millions of Egyptians, the White House should view this as an

words into action, seeking to cleanse Egypt of Western influence by any means. A 1946 U.S. intelligence report identified the Brotherhood's Islamism as posing almost as much of a threat to Western liberalism as did Communism. As recently as 2005, the Muslim Brotherhood's Web portal proclaimed, "Allah is our objective. The Prophet is our leader. The Quran is our law. Jihad is our way. Dying in the way of Allah is our highest hope."

Perhaps the State Department can be forgiven for finding the Brotherhood so alluring. During its decades in opposition, banned by the Egyptian government, the Brotherhood promised democracy to diplomats, theology to its followers, and prosperity to Egypt's middle class. Many Brotherhood exiles found themselves in the United States and Europe, where they engaged with Western officials. Activists like Morsi learned how to interact with Westerners, speak their language, and lobby governments, while their core ideology remained unchanged. Instead of liberalizing these overseas Brothers, their Western interlude taught them how to formulate effective propaganda. "I must speak in a way that is appropriate for the ear hearing me," Banna's grandson Tariq Ramadan famously counseled. (Ramadan, banned from the United States during the George W. Bush administration for his terrorist ties, had his visa reinstated by President Obama.)

When riots spread across the Arab world on September 11, 2012, Ramadan's

Egypt does not stay in Egypt; for decades, if not centuries, Egypt has set political and cultural trends throughout the region. Egyptian soap operas are the staple of television sets from Doha to Dearborn; for generations, Egypt's greatest exports have been not textiles and pharmaceuticals, but rather schoolteachers who are ubiquitous from Casablanca to Kuwait. Nasserism spread like wildfire from Egypt in the 1950s, claiming a handful of Arab monarchies along the way.

An equally great Egyptian intellectual export was the Muslim Brotherhood. Seven years after its founding in 1928, it had expanded into Syria, and during World War II it established branches in Palestine and Jordan. By 1948, the group claimed a half million adherents. In subsequent decades, it has grown steadily. Its offshoots control governments in Gaza, Tunisia, Sudan, and Turkey; influence Islamic parties in Morocco and Pakistan; and dominate the opposition in Syria, Yemen, and Jordan.

For the Brotherhood to suffer rejection on its home turf was a crippling rebuke and a significant loss of momentum. As shocking as the Egyptian army's crack-down might have been to some, it was also restrained. Despite the deaths of hundreds, Egypt is no Syria: Egyptian police may clash with Brotherhood supporters in the street, but they do not target women and children, nor do they seek to terrorize the general population. Egypt may face years of Brotherhood insurgency, but that is a price the



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Egyptian public appears willing to pay to avoid a suffocating theocracy.

Let us hope that Egypt returns to democracy, under a constitution replete with checks and balances. But even short of that, it is useful to consider how Egypt under a military-backed government might differ from its experience under the Brotherhood. On taking power, the Brotherhood scrapped Egypt's cautious approach to Hamas, the Brotherhood affiliate that dominates the Gaza Strip, and instead openly embraced it. The Brotherhood threatened to annul Egypt's peace treaty with Israel and stood back as Sinai descended into chaos. It revised the constitution to place the state in charge of morality and reserved the right to determine women's duties. In the post-Brotherhood order, women can work and pursue education, and Egypt is cooperating with Israel to root out Islamist terrorism in the Sinai and preserve the two nations' effective, if cold, peace. Most important, the new government has, for the first time, shown the will to shut the tunnels beneath the Egypt-Gaza border through which Hamas supplies itself with weaponry.

Rather than boycott the Egyptian military as it isolates Hamas, the United States should reward it. The Palestinian terror group now teeters. Diplomats have a penchant for seeking to engage rogues, but the Egyptian strategy shows quarantining them to be more effective. Just as Morsi did with Egyptians, Hamas leaders promised Palestinians honest government and pragmatic economic policies. What they delivered instead was religious extremism, a repressive social order, and a dictatorship every bit as corrupt as and more brutal than the Fatah regime that preceded them.

Turkey, too, shows the false promise of Islamism. Western officials celebrated Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan as a moderate and suggested that, under his leadership, Turkey would be a model for Islamic democracy. Erdogan, who once quipped that "democracy is like a streetcar; you ride it as far as you need and then you step off," has been true to his word: He has imprisoned more journalists than Russia, China, or Iran; confiscated businesses from entrepreneurs who supported separation between mosque and state, and transferred their titles to

Islamist cronies; expunged women from top positions; and embraced both Hamas and the genocidal Sudanese dictator Omar Bashir. It got worse: He endorsed Yasin al-Qadi, a Saudi businessman and suspected al-Qaeda financier labeled a "Specially Designated Global Terrorist" by the U.S. Treasury, declaring when he came under criticism in Turkey, "I know Mr. Qadi. I believe in him as I believe in myself." And Erdogan has transformed Turkey into a sanctions-busting lifeline for Iran.

Instead of embracing Erdogan as a partner, the White House should seek to roll Turkey back. Erdogan should be persona non grata in Washington. The U.S. government should ramp up free and uncensored broadcasting into Turkey, lionize its prisoners of conscience, punish Erdogan's flouting of sanctions, and reach out to Turkey's secular Kurdish parties. Not only does Turkey not belong in Europe, but it is dangerous to keep it within consensus-driven NATO, whose operations Turkey already hampers in order to advance Erdogan's Islamist agenda. In short, Turkey should be treated as, at best, the equivalent of Cold War Yugoslavia and, at worst, post-1956 Hungary.

Rollback need not all be negative. It can mean fortifying countries such as Jordan and Morocco, loyal allies fighting their own battles against extremists, and it can mean engaging with anti-extremist Islamic groups in the United States, such as Zainab al-Suwajj's American Islamic Congress and M. Zuhdi Jasser's American Islamic Forum for Democracy, rather than Muslim Brotherhood proxies such as the Council on American-Islamic Relations and the Islamic Society of North America.

Ideological conflicts marked the 20th century. Millions died to enable liberalism to defeat fascism and Nazism, and hundreds of thousands more died in the struggle against Communism. Great presidents from Roosevelt to Reagan understood that there could be no compromise with ideologies aligned against liberal values. The only answer to such supremacist movements is confrontation and rollback. During his 2009 Cairo speech, Obama declared, "Suppressing ideas never succeeds in making them go away." Perhaps. But defeating them can. **NR**

# The Painted Outlaw

*On tattoos and faux-rebellion*

BY KEVIN D. WILLIAMSON

**E**ARLIER this year, the cover of *Rolling Stone* magazine featured an image of Johnny Depp, costumed for his role as Tonto opposite Armie Hammer's Lone Ranger, under the headline "Johnny Depp: An Outlaw Looks at 50." Mr. Depp strikes me as an interesting man, one with a bit more panache than the typical Hollywood star and maybe a little bit of taste. But an outlaw? Setting aside for the moment the question of whether an outlaw is a desirable thing to be anywhere outside the creaking perpetual masturbatory adolescence of the sort of people who read *Rolling Stone*, Mr. Depp is not an outlaw. He may in fact be the farthest thing from an outlaw it is possible to be: a contracted employee of the Walt Disney Company. A heavily tattooed employee of the Walt Disney Company.

Mr. Depp has made some interesting films over the years, but his well-buttered bread owes its savor to his having spent years portraying an unthreatening, broadly comical character based on a theme-park ride that was, as a matter of historical interest, the last one whose development was personally overseen by Walt Disney himself. Some of those pirates from the original ride had tattoos, and several tattoo parlors now offer *Pirates of the Caribbean*-themed tattoos. You know who has one? Johnny Depp. Getting a tattoo based on a movie starring you: That's outlaw.

Ink is no longer a mark of hoodlumhood, or of anything else. Despite his tattoos, Mr. Depp has made a career in the most conservative department of the most traditional corporation in the most hidebound of American industries, putting more than \$5 billion into the pockets of his corporate shareholders in the process. On paper, Mr. Depp is much less like an outlaw and much more like somebody likely to be courted by the Republican party for its presidential



nomination. (Which is perhaps not the worst idea in the history of bad ideas if the competition includes the notion of nominating Herman Cain.) Johnny Depp is to outlaws as lime Jell-O is to Higgs's boson. There are insurance agents and realtors and Rotary Club members across these United States with a better claim to being outlaws.

Mr. Depp does not have an outlaw curriculum vitae. His tattoos, like drug habits and other such accouterments, are but the costume of outlawry. Tattoos, while lasting a lifetime, demand only a momentary physical discomfort. But it takes a great deal of endurance of physical discomfort to be an outlaw, at least one of any serious sort. And liberalism—especially Hollywood liberalism—is a philosophy for the comfortable. As Robert Downey Jr. observed about his time behind bars: “You can’t go from a \$2,000-a-night suite at La Mirage to a penitentiary and really understand it and come out a liberal.” The experience with incarceration puts off a great many aspiring outlaws, which of course is what prisons are there for. Outlaws do not often dwell in mansions in the French countryside or Manhattan lofts that have benefited from the attentions of interior designers. And if they do dwell in such places, they generally do not dwell there long. Outlaw Bernie Madoff was notable for his longevity as much as his rapacity. It is difficult to imagine a *Rolling Stone* outlaw living a life that includes traveling via Greyhound, sleeping rough, or (inevitably) spending time incarcerated.

There is nothing inherently objectionable in using the proceeds from a partly vulgar career to finance a comfortable life of gallery-browsing in Paris, or whatever it is Mr. Depp spent those years in France doing. Will Ferrell, who makes even dumber movies than Johnny Depp does, is in his private life a man who collects Robert Indiana prints and Hans J. Wegner furniture. (His European wife is an auctioneer of modern art and furnishings.) But nothing became Mr. Depp's life in France like the leaving of it: He was chased out by the threat of double taxation thanks to the almost unique stupidity of U.S. law. Although Mr. Depp has not to my knowledge used the phrase “territorial tax regime,” he understood the outlines of

the problem. But outlaw Johnny Depp never lifted a finger to fight The Man—that job needed Mitt Romney. Any outlaw worth the name would be comfortable with a little bit of tax evasion. I doubt that Jesse James ever filed a 1040EZ.

You know which Jesse James I mean—the outlaw. The other Jesse James, the one who had the television show, just has a bunch of tattoos. As many as Johnny Depp? *Rolling Stone* is on the beat:

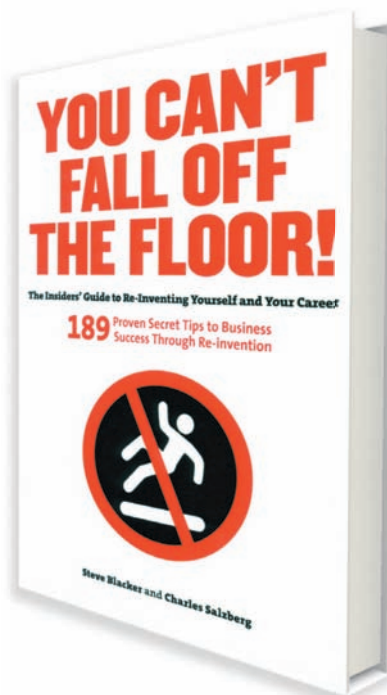
Depp is, at the moment, dressed like a hobo whom other hobos would worry about. On his head is a battered, ancient brown fedora with a big tear on top, like Indiana Jones' post-refrigerator-ride. He's thrown a shapeless brown canvas jacket over a blue denim shirt that's open to reveal a bonus shirt, an orange-striped Henley, beneath. His jeans are huge, carpenter-cut, shredded practically to bits, with white paint splattered up the legs and duct tape covering some of the worst holes at the rear. He's wearing a bunch of skull rings on his fingers. His brown leather boots (worn over white socks) are the only faux-distressed element of his outfit—a gift from their manufacturer, A.S. 98, they're brand-

new but look 30 years old. He has a goatee and a mustache and many, many tattoos, some of them very recently acquired. “I'm running out of real estate,” he says.

So: many, many. For more precise journalism, consult Depp Impact, a website dedicated to the actor (“Celebrating Johnny Depp Online Since 2000”), which keeps an obsessive catalogue of his tattoos, of which it documents 31. One of them is a traditional banner emblazoned with the words “Wino Forever.” It used to say “Winona Forever,” but romance is a fleeting thing.

Tattoos once were the mark of outlaws, gangsters, sailors, and other men living on the edge. According to the American Medical Association, 21 percent of Americans have a tattoo, 38 percent of Americans between 30 and 39 have a tattoo, and—still!—50 percent of Americans believe that getting a tattoo is “rebellious.” Call it the Johnny Depp effect: outlaw on the street, Disney in the bank. It is a slightly less expensive version of the Harley-Davidson effect: Motorcycles, particularly Harley-Davidson motorcycles,

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have long been associated with rebellion and outlawry, but with prices for a decked-out bike crossing the \$40,000 mark (the CVO Limited starts at \$38,999), motorcycles are no longer for Hell's Angels but for Hell's Dentists and Hell's Bankers. The outlaw rock star Joe Strummer of The Clash is today just another brand in the portfolio of the Fender Musical Instruments Company of Scottsdale, Ariz., which made a pile of money selling guitars decorated with his name, faux-distressed like Mr. Depp's corporate-freebie boots.

Motorcycles lost a little bit of their outlaw swagger with the passing of mandatory-helmet laws, and now tattoos are poised to get the same treatment: Washington, D.C., is considering a law that would mandate a 24-hour waiting period before the application of a tattoo. (They do call the instrument of application a *gun*, after all.) This is a vapid proposal for many reasons, but mainly for the lost opportunity: What should be mandatory is not a cooling-off period but a spell-checker. Every tattoo parlor should be required to have at its service a professionally trained copy editor to prevent the orthographical disasters one sees on tattoos from time to time, e.g. "To young to die / To fast to live," "Only God Will Juge Me," "Beautiful Tradgedy." Preferably, this person would speak Mandarin as well. A fellow named Tian Tang has long been chronicling the abuse of Chinese characters in Western pop culture, and has found tattoos containing either laughable errors or, in many cases, evidence of plain mean-spiritedness on the part of the artist: One fellow who wanted a tattoo reading "Outlaw" got one reading "Snitch," while a woman was inked "Cheap Whore" and a presumably *laowai* type labeled "Foreigner."

From tattoos to motorcycles to every other emblem of the counterculture that in the 1960s became simply the culture, there is nothing that cannot be suffocated by the nannying impulse, which is not limited to the organs of the

state. Party-hearty libertines looking forward to the eventual legalization of hard drugs should consider with some trepidation what the FDA is going to do to their precious cocaine before Walmart is allowed to peddle it. Everybody knows the old joke about the union whorehouse.

Why we should admire outlaws at all is another question. John Brown was an outlaw. So was Timothy McVeigh. So



was David Berkowitz. When Iceberg Slim was beating women into submission, he, too, was an outlaw. Perhaps Hollywood or Rock, Inc., finds something to admire in these men. Perhaps not. What they're really in love with is Robin Hood, which is odd, given that they consistently vote for the Sheriff of Nottingham, who was, after all, the king's tax collector, Lois Lerner to the vile pretender's Barack Obama. And as Al Capone knew, the taxman is a fearsome foe for genuine outlaws and faux-distressed outlaws alike. But they react in very different ways: The outlaw takes what he wants—Mr. Depp is happy to beg the king's permission to keep what's his.

NR





# Conservative Internationalism

*A smarter kind of engagement in world affairs*

BY HENRY R. NAU

**A**MERICA is once again tempting fate. A broad coalition is coalescing to curtail America's role and influence in the world. After ten years of two wars, in Iraq and Afghanistan, the country is hightailing it home. The urge to pull back is irresistible but wrongheaded. The world does not go away when America retreats. Each time America has come home, after the First World War, the Second World War, Vietnam, and the Cold War, new conflicts yanked it back into world affairs, always under less favorable circumstances and with higher casualties than if it had acted earlier.

America needs a strategy whereby it stays engaged in the world and accepts smaller costs in the short run to avoid much greater costs in the long run. That strategy would address direct threats from any region of the world but prioritize the spread of freedom primarily on the borders of existing free countries, use less force early to avoid the use of greater force later, back force with diplomacy to give adversaries a peaceful way out, and compromise in timely fashion to sustain public support.

Conventional approaches include some parts of this strategy

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but lack others. Liberal internationalists promote freedom but use force only as a last resort and with multilateral consent. Realists use force more readily but only to stabilize the balance of power, not to weaken despots and expand freedom. Nationalists use force most assertively but only to defend America, usually after it is attacked. And many neoconservatives use force to boost freedom but at costs that quickly exceed the limits of public patience and support.

The needed alternative strategy is internationalist but conservative and combines rather than rejects the insights of the other approaches. A conservative-internationalist strategy embraces the promotion of freedom touted by liberal internationalists, the balancing of power advocated by realists, the respect for national will and sovereignty championed by nationalists, and the diplomacy backed by force recommended by neoconservatives. In short, a conservative-internationalist strategy advances freedom against despots but disciplines the use of force by prioritizing freedom in countries that border on existing free countries and forging timely compromises that both offer despots a peaceful way out and husband domestic public support.

**A** CONSERVATIVE-INTERNATIONALIST strategy involves four key tenets:

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*Spread freedom in a way that is disciplined by priorities.* American foreign policy should seek to increase the number of regimes that are democratic, not just to preserve global stability or defend national borders. But it would seek to do so primarily on the borders of countries where freedom already exists, not in areas such as the Middle East (Iraq) or southwest Asia (Afghanistan). Today the borders of freedom stretch in Europe from Turkey through Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, and Poland to the Baltic states, and in Asia from India through Bangladesh, the Philippines, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, and Taiwan to South Korea. The greatest threats along these borders come from the major authoritarian states of Russia and China, not from terrorists and rogue states. Terrorism by itself is a threat to parts of an American city (e.g., the Twin Towers). Backed by rogue states and weapons of mass destruction, it's a threat to several American cities. Backed by a steadily rising and hostile Russia and/or China, however, it's a threat to all American cities, on the level of the Cold War with the Soviet Union, or worse.

Hence, in the future, the United States should think twice before it fights rogue states and terrorism in remote regions such as the Middle East and southwest Asia while it ignores or placates efforts by Russia and China to extend their autocratic influence along the borders of freedom in Europe and Asia. While America was preoccupied in Iraq and Afghanistan, Russia and China expanded their influence in these border regions. Russia established a "sphere of privileged interest" in the former Soviet space, undermining Ukrainian democracy and permanently basing Russian forces in Georgia; and China backstopped a nuclear-crazed North Korea, laid claim to island territories in the Pacific, and became the dominant economic force in democratic South Korea and much of Asia. As a result, democracy is weaker today on the frontiers of freedom in both Europe and Asia. And so is the defense of democracy. Obama pivots declining U.S. military forces to Asia while Russia, for the first time in decades, deploys a naval task force in the Mediterranean.

This does not mean that the United States should not respond to threats from remote regions such as Afghanistan. It means simply that the United States should not prioritize the promotion of democracy there. When threats come from a country that doesn't border on existing democracies, the United States should defeat the threat and get in and out of the country as quickly as possible. If it replaces a government, such as the Taliban, it should not try to install a Jeffersonian democracy but being in a position to repeat the action in the event of another attack, "ratcheting" local governments toward greater openness and stability. Such a strategy is likely to retain public support, whereas long wars exhaust public patience and preclude the return of U.S. forces under almost any circumstances.

It is not that nations in remote regions are unfit for democracy; it is just that in U.S. policy they do not have priority for democracy. In the Middle East, for example, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, which border on Israel, take priority over Libya. Yet Obama intervenes in Libya but dithers in Syria. Turkey, which borders on European members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, stands in line before Iraq. Yet George W. Bush damages ties with Turkey to invade Iraq. In other areas, Ukraine, next to Poland, ranks in priority before Georgia; Pakistan, next to India, before Afghanistan; and Taiwan and

South Korea, next to Japan, before Burma or Southeast Asia.

For countries bordering on free countries, the United States should employ an "inkblot" strategy. Freedom spreads by the proximity of powerful nearby capitalist markets and democratic civil societies. Cross-border pressures make success both more likely and less costly. The United States and Japan press people exchanges and economic investments in South Korea and Taiwan. The European Union mobilizes capital and nurtures nongovernmental organizations in Ukraine and Turkey. The United States champions free trade through the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and U.S.–European Union Free Trade Agreement. When free markets and societies are strong, as they were in Western Europe after the Cold War, democracy surges across the borders of existing freedom, as it did in Eastern Europe in the 1990s. When the free world is weak, as it has been recently, border countries such as Ukraine, Turkey, and South Korea (eventually a united Korea) drift closer to authoritarian powers in Russia and China. Freedom lost in these border states matters far more than freedom forgone in remote regions, because in the former case tyranny moves closer to freedom's core.

America is still the only leader of freedom in the world. As history records, when the United States steps back, despots step forward, not other democracies. But without prioritizing democracy on the borders of existing freedom, any policy to spread freedom is Pollyannaish and quickly exceeds the limits of material constraints and public will. First, measure threat carefully, as nationalists urge. They do not always get it right, but they demand clarity. Then, in remote regions, handle interventions mostly as realists recommend, while ratcheting local governments toward democracy. And in border regions, handle interventions mostly as liberal internationalists recommend, mobilizing democracies, but not necessarily all U.N. member states, to stabilize and integrate new democracies.

*Back diplomacy with force.* Despots arm their diplomacy from the outset. That's how they maintain their power at home and extend it abroad. If America is going to deal effectively with them, it too must arm its diplomacy.

Conventional strategies for the use of force leave a gap for despots to exploit. Despots use force not just after negotiations fail, as liberal internationalists prefer, but also before and during negotiations. And they use force to weaken and change regimes, not just to balance power, as realists and nationalists prefer. They seek to spread religious governments (e.g., Iran's export of theocracy to Iraq and Syria) and weaken democratic states on their borders (e.g., Russia in Ukraine, and China in Taiwan and South Korea). If they know that democracies will use force only after negotiations fail, they negotiate until they have achieved their objectives by force outside negotiations. Thus using force only after diplomacy fails simply enables despots to use force unopposed *until* negotiations fail. Syria has been a case in point. Russia and Iran arm Assad, while the United States negotiates.

The United States should instead be willing to use force before and during negotiations, when it is a choice, not just after negotiations fail, when it is a necessity. Backing up diplomacy with the threat or use of force may be a riskier strategy in the short run, but conventional approaches are costlier strategies in



the long run. That is so because costs escalate as the use of force is delayed. As George Shultz, Ronald Reagan's secretary of state, once noted, it is "better to use force when you *should* rather than when you *must*; *last* [resort] means no *other*, and by that time the level of force and the risk involved may have multiplied many times over." Using force too soon risks unnecessary wars, because preemption can never be perfectly clairvoyant (arguably the case in Iraq). But using it too late risks bigger and costlier wars, because the stakes compound in the meantime (Iran in the future?).

"Use of force" here means build-up, deployment, and actual use of force. Such use does not disrupt negotiations; it actually gives negotiations the best chance to succeed. No one understood this better than Ronald Reagan. He used force in three specific ways to succeed in negotiations with the Soviet Union. First, he launched a massive and risky military build-up to signal to the Soviet Union that it could not win an arms race. Second, he denied the Soviet Union gains on the ground outside negotiations. Reagan pushed back against Soviet SS-20s in Europe, by deploying Intermediate Nuclear Force (INF) missiles, and against Soviet interventions in Afghanistan and Central America, by aiding freedom fighters. And third, he brought to the bargaining table heavy-duty capabilities, most significantly his Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

The United States is doing none of this today in the Middle East. Iran is achieving its objectives by force outside negotiations. It marches steadily toward a nuclear capability, arms and funds jihadist forces in Lebanon and Syria, and meddles increasingly in Iraq and Afghanistan as the United States withdraws. Meanwhile, the United States cuts its defense budget in a mindless sequestration, scales back missile defenses against Iran for minimal concessions from Moscow, leaves no residual forces in Iraq, agonizes and delays over arming the moderate rebels in Syria, and pivots forces to Asia that are now needed in the Middle East. What does Iran lose by negotiating as long as it can? Its influence grows stronger as violence spreads both north and south of Israel. Meanwhile, the United States launches new Middle East peace initiatives. Was this past summer really the moment to expect negotiations to succeed? The situation surrounding negotiations matters as much as the negotiations themselves, and the situation in the Middle East today is decidedly unfavorable for either side to make risky concessions for peace. Belatedly, President Obama gets the point.

*Back force with diplomacy.* The purpose of armed diplomacy, however, is not to defeat adversaries in some conventional military showdown, as extreme hardliners might prefer, or to coexist with adversaries indefinitely in some morally ambivalent status quo, to which realists might resign themselves. It is rather to succeed in negotiations that move freedom forward in adversary countries. Compromise inside negotiations does not necessarily achieve this objective, but no compromise at all undermines it.

Again, Ronald Reagan offers pointers. He won the Cold War without firing a shot, but that does not mean he never would have been willing to fire a shot. He risked an accelerated arms race that many believed was out of control, faced down anti-nuclear peaceniks in Europe, and armed freedom fighters to the point of damaging his own presidency—not to defeat the Soviet

Union by military means but to deny it military success outside negotiations and move it toward outcomes inside negotiations that advanced freedom. In his diary in early 1983, he wrote, "I think I'm hard-line and will never appease but I do want to try and let them [the Soviets] see there is a better world if they show by deed they want to get along with the free world." He envisioned a peaceful way out of negotiations that the Soviets could accept (no offensive nukes and a globalized economy), and in the process the Soviets themselves dispensed with Communism.

Envisioning ways out of negotiations that advance freedom and that Syria, Iran, North Korea, and their patrons in Moscow and Beijing might accept is perhaps the most difficult aspect of armed diplomacy. How might such peaceful outcomes be achieved? First, don't stop calling despots despotic. Obama, with his "realism" toward Russia and China, has gone too far in ignoring human-rights violations. Reagan called the Soviet Union evil even as he negotiated with it, still defending his "evil empire" remarks on the eve of his trip to Moscow in 1988. Second, fashion an outcome that despots can accept but that does not rescue them from their own sclerotic domestic systems. As John Lewis Gaddis points out, the new element that Reagan brought to strategy toward the Soviet Union was not deterrence or *détente*; it was the deliberate weakening of the Soviet domestic system. In Syria, a mutually acceptable outcome may mean negotiating with Assad over a longer transition period to a future government. In Iran, it may mean accommodating a civilian nuclear program with less than perfect inspection guarantees if the country opens up to freer trade and contacts, much the way the Helsinki Accords nurtured openness and verifiability in the former Soviet Union. And in North Korea, it may mean eventual recognition of Pyongyang to clear the way for peaceful competition and eventual reunification between North and South Korea and their eventual reunification, as with East and West Germany.

But none of these compromises is advisable inside negotiations unless pressures persist outside negotiations—to maintain economic sanctions, vigorously protest human-rights violations, and checkmate forceful alternatives on the ground. When armed diplomacy works best, no military force is actually used. But it is a mistake to assume that therefore military force was not present or necessary.

*Use timely compromise to maintain public support.* A foreign policy that combines liberal internationalism's goal of freedom with the muscular but targeted diplomacy of realism and the steely will of nationalism may be more effective than any one approach by itself, but how do you make the case for such an integrated foreign policy when a democratic public is worn out by war? As the debate about Syria in Congress suggests, it is a tough sell, without a doubt, both because the goal is more ambitious—it pursues freedom, not just stability—and because the use of lesser force earlier is riskier.

The answer is timely compromise. When the United States uses force in negotiations, and especially when it goes to war, it should look immediately for ways to translate military gains into diplomatic compromises, even if such compromises do not fulfill all objectives at once.

Successful presidents have always recognized that spreading

democracy does not require the unconditional surrender of despots. Total victory means total defeat, and total defeat means protracted efforts to install new governments and build new nations. The cost of that, especially in regions remote from the borders of freedom, is simply too great for the American public to bear (and they are the ultimate judge of what the American military and economy can bear). Germany and Japan after the Second World War were exceptions. They were not remote from but on the borders of existing freedom, and public support for nation-building was sustained only because a greater threat came along after the war: the Soviet Union. In the wake of Iraq and Afghanistan, there is no greater threat in sight—at least not yet. It may come, and that’s why it is critical to have the American people on board before it arrives, to deter or preempt it at lesser cost.

The way to keep the public on board is not to exclude military intervention from the arsenal of the United States, as the current pullback mood prescribes, but to keep such interventions short and accompany them with diplomatic compromises. By this measure, George W. Bush’s biggest mistake was not the decision to intervene militarily in Afghanistan and Iraq. It was the failure to get in and out as quickly as possible, to follow up military victories with diplomatic initiatives and earlier American withdrawals. That might have been accomplished in Afghanistan if the United States had accepted the allied offer to aid America under Article 5 of the NATO Treaty. The United States demurred, not wanting to fight another campaign by NATO committee, as in Kosovo. But NATO was needed in Afghanistan eventually anyway, and its presence earlier might have facilitated both a speedier exit from Afghanistan and greater allied cooperation in the invasion of Iraq.

And a quicker exit might have been accomplished in Iraq if George W. Bush had acted like his father after the Gulf War and begun immediately, rather than four years later, follow-up diplomatic initiatives. Yes, the governments left behind in Afghanistan and Iraq might have been fragile and vulnerable to future instabilities. But look at the governments the United States is leaving behind after ten years of nation-building. They too are fragile and unlikely to survive a full American retreat. The United States might have been able to reenter these countries in 2014 if American troops had left in 2005 or 2006. Now, as with Vietnam after that war, there is little chance, without a direct attack on American forces, that the American people will support a return of boots on the ground in either country.

Conservative internationalism offers a way to stay engaged in the world at a price the American people can accept. Pursue the goal of defending and spreading freedom but discipline that goal by prioritizing freedom on the borders of existing free countries, not in remote regions; back negotiations with a lesser use of force early to avoid having to use greater force later, after negotiations fail; give adversaries a peaceful way out, but one that forces them to confront the failures of their own domestic systems; and forge timely compromises to retain public support. This strategy may not be appropriate under all circumstances. The conventional strategies continue to offer valuable guidance. But a conservative internationalism should not be excluded in the false hope that, by abandoning the spread of freedom and not using force until negotiations fail, we can succeed in taming despots and reducing overall violence in the world.

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# The Cuccinelli Comeback

*Virginia Republicans need it, but it's far from guaranteed*

BY JIM GERAGHTY

**T**HIS November, Republicans will face the first major test of whether their candidates can overcome “Akinization”—Democrats’ efforts to tie them to the theocratic bogeyman evoked by failed Missouri Senate candidate Todd Akin in 2012.

All the greatest hits from the Obama campaign in 2012 —“war on women,” insensitivity to minorities, “He’s fighting for his values, not ours”—are being hurled in Virginia against Republican gubernatorial candidate Ken Cuccinelli.

The good news is that Cuccinelli’s story looks like it could have been written to dispel the perception of a “war on women.” Few GOP candidates can cite their groundbreaking work with a state university’s women’s-studies department, or trace their political awakening to a late-night scream of terror from an adjacent basement bedroom.

Cuccinelli was a student at the University of Virginia, living in an off-campus group home, and the young woman in the next bedroom awoke to find an intruder standing at the foot of her bed. The intruder quickly escaped out the window.

“I had never heard a scream like that. To this day I’ve never heard a scream like that,” Cuccinelli recalls in a video on his website that’s begging to be turned into a 30-second ad.

“I started trying to figure out, ‘Well, what can I do to reduce this?’ The number is pretty staggering. There was no university-centric attempt to reduce the incidence of sexual assault or to help the victims of it. So I did an independent study in the women’s-studies program and demanded they hire somebody whose full-time responsibility would be the prevention of sexual assault and the assistance for victims of it. The university wasn’t very open to it, so we held a protest out on the Rotunda and stuck around until they said they would get somebody full-time.” Cuccinelli helped establish a student group called Sexual Assault Facts and Education and designed a brochure on preventing sexual assault.

Throughout his time in the state senate and as attorney general, one of Cuccinelli’s crusades has been against human trafficking—an issue that regularly generates heartbreaking local-news stories but rarely wins votes. As a UVA senior he interned for Governor Douglas Wilder, a Democrat and the first African American elected governor of any state. He has donated \$100,000 to Daily Planet, a Richmond-based nonprofit that provides medical and mental-health assistance to the homeless.

Then there’s Cuccinelli’s crusade on behalf of the wrongfully accused Thomas Haynesworth. In 1984 the 18-year-old Haynesworth was convicted on several counts of rape, robbery,

and abduction, and sentenced to 74 years in prison. In 2011 DNA testing exonerated him of one of the rapes, and he was released on parole. Cuccinelli apologized for the state's actions, gave Haynesworth—still technically listed as a sexual felon at the time—a clerical job in the state attorney general's office, and ensured that he was legally exonerated in all of the cases (which had rested on dubious photo identifications of him). Cuccinelli later led an effort to award Haynesworth \$1 million in compensation for his wrongful imprisonment.

After Labor Day weekend this year, the Cuccinelli campaign finally spotlighted the candidate's efforts to exonerate this African-American man. In the ad, Haynesworth declares, "I

torial board's favorite target. Cuccinelli's campaign dryly notes that the candidate's first job was as a paperboy for the *Post* in seventh grade in Fairfax County.)

C UCCINELLI finds himself trailing an opponent most Republicans thought would be spectacularly flawed and weak. McAuliffe, a longtime friend of the Clintons and perhaps the most successful political fundraiser in U.S. history—noted for his carnival barker's style and a joyous shamelessness in his pursuit of campaign cash for Democrats—ran for governor in 2009 but lost in the Democratic pri-

## Cuccinelli's difficulty in fighting off the attacks on him as a dangerous fundamentalist is indicative of how the Virginia Republican party's fortunes have changed, so badly and so quickly.

never thought the attorney general himself would get involved in a case like this. He didn't have to get involved, you know what I'm saying, but he saw the injustice that was done, and he tried to correct it. . . . To me, he's a hell of a guy." The campaign has some ground to make up, because Quinnipiac's most recent poll in the state, conducted August 14 to 19, showed Terry McAuliffe, Cuccinelli's Democratic opponent, leading among black Virginians, 74 percent to 7 percent.

To be sure, Cuccinelli is a conservative, and has taken plenty of conservative stances. He and his wife, Teiro, have seven children and homeschool them through sixth grade.

He pledges that as governor, he would reduce the state's individual income-tax rate from 5.75 percent to 5 percent and reduce the business income-tax rate from 6 percent to 4 percent. While touring "Holly, Woods, and Vines," a garden center on Route 1 in the Alexandria section of Fairfax County, in July, Cuccinelli peppered co-owner Vanessa Wheeler with nuts-and-bolts questions about what stands in the way of her small business's growth, focusing in particular on taxes and employee health-insurance costs. Cuccinelli told Wheeler that he estimates Virginia's existing tax and regulatory conditions, coupled with the normal pressures of supply costs, have prevented small businesses from hiring an additional 50,000 workers.

On education, Cuccinelli wants to outmaneuver voucher opponents by giving tax credits to those who donate money to provide private- and parochial-school tuition to poor, middle-class, and disabled students, and he wants to remove a provision in the state constitution that bans government aid to sectarian schools. He also wants to shift the power to approve charter schools to the state's board of education. Currently, charter schools in Virginia must be approved by the existing local school board—and unsurprisingly, administrators are reluctant to approve the creation of new competition.

In a long 2010 profile, the *Washington Post* called Cuccinelli "the confounding conservative," contrasting the compassionate anecdotes from his life with his orthodox conservative stances. (Since becoming attorney general, Cuccinelli has been the edi-

torial board's favorite target. Cuccinelli's campaign dryly notes that the candidate's first job was as a paperboy for the *Post* in seventh grade in Fairfax County.)

He doesn't have any state governing experience, much less any governing experience at all," Cuccinelli says. "I've got more and much deeper community ties. I've got an understanding of how state government works. I'm the only one who won't need on-the-job training on November 5." Unfortunately for Cuccinelli, Quinnipiac found 46 percent of likely voters thought McAuliffe—a former Democratic National Committee chairman—had the right kind of experience to be governor, and only 34 percent did not.

Cuccinelli's difficulty in fighting off the attacks on him as a dangerous fundamentalist is indicative of how the Virginia Republican party's fortunes have changed, so badly and so quickly.

Heading into 2012, life was good for Virginia Republicans. Barack Obama's victory in the state in 2008 increasingly looked like a fluke driven by Bush fatigue. Bob McDonnell led the state GOP to a roaring victory in 2009, demolishing his rival in the governor's race, Creigh Deeds, 58 percent to 41 percent. The rest of the ticket, Lieutenant Governor Bill Bolling and Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, won by similar margins, and the GOP picked up six seats in the House of Delegates. In 2010, Republicans gained three U.S. House seats and came within 1,000 votes of winning a fourth. Then in 2011, Republicans picked up two state-senate seats, bringing that chamber to an even split.

Then the *annus horribilis* began.

The first big disappointment for the state GOP came on Election Night in 2012, when Obama won the state by about 150,000 votes (51 percent to 47 percent), the first time since 1948 that Virginia was more Democratic than the nation as a whole. For about a decade, Virginia's Democratic-leaning D.C. suburbs and its rural, Republican-leaning downstate area had carried roughly equal political weight, but the 2012 defeats of Mitt Romney for president and George Allen for Senate suggested that the state's population had shifted in favor of



Democrats and the north.

Then in May of this year, McDonnell signed a \$6 billion transportation plan that included raising the statewide sales tax from 5 percent to 5.3 percent, along with other tax increases. The legislation split the state GOP down the middle, with Cuccinelli proclaiming his opposition, but he nonetheless aims to shape the decisions that will come from the new funding: “There’s plenty of things that bill didn’t get at, like the over-centralization of transportation decisions, and the disconnect between land use and transportation responsibility that has caused, in my view, so many of our long-term problems. Then there’s the question of who will spend that money better—Union Terry or Frugal Ken?”

Perhaps worst of all, McDonnell was named the target of a criminal investigation over allegations that he and his family had received gifts from a wealthy donor, Jonnie Williams Sr., CEO of Star Scientific, a pharmaceutical firm. The gifts totaled more than \$150,000, including a \$6,500 Rolex watch for McDonnell, \$15,000 worth of designer fashions from Bergdorf Goodman for his wife, Maureen, \$15,000 in catering for their daughter’s wedding, \$70,000 to a corporation owned by McDonnell and his sister, and a \$50,000 check to Maureen. The governor failed to mention any of those gifts in his annual financial filings. On July 23, McDonnell apologized and announced that he had repaid loans from Williams amounting to roughly \$120,000.

The gift controversy only slightly dented McDonnell’s approval ratings, but it wiped out his future. More than a few Republicans had hoped McDonnell would be a top-tier contender against Democratic senator Mark Warner in 2014.

Cuccinelli says he hasn’t talked about any of the gifts or the subsequent investigation with the governor. When asked whether the revelations of the *Post* coverage match the man he’s known and worked beside over the past four years, Cuccinelli says simply, “Yeah, I’d rather pass on that.” But his efforts to distance himself from the controversy aren’t working. By late August, the Cuccinelli campaign was running an ad declaring that the candidate had “personally authorized” the investigation into McDonnell.

“A gift ban or a threshold or something like that would be great,” Cuccinelli continues, when asked about McAuliffe’s call for a ban on gifts to lawmakers. “It is a bit rich [coming from] someone who put up a million dollars to the president of the United States . . . to get him into a house so his wife could run for the U.S. Senate in another state”—Cuccinelli pauses to briefly chuckle at that—“but I’m glad he [is] on board now.” (Back in 1999, McAuliffe put up \$1.35 million in cash to secure a mortgage for the Clintons’ house in Chappaqua, N.Y.; he will be repaid, with interest from the bank, once the Clintons pay off the mortgage.)

Another potential problem arose out of nowhere at this year’s state Republican convention, where a six-way race for the lieutenant-governor nomination was won on the fourth ballot by E. W. Jackson, an African-American Baptist minister, after a rousing address to convention attendees. Jackson—one part Alan Keyes, one part Mark Levin—is a blogger’s dream but a controversy magnet: He compared Planned Parenthood to the KKK and on Twitter called Obama “anti-American, anti-Christian, anti-Jewish, pro-Islam, anti-capitalist.”

This was not the approach of Republicans in their successful

2009 outing, when the McDonnell campaign appeared to be writing a textbook on how to reassure social conservatives with his past ties (the candidate received an M.A./J.D. at Pat Robertson–founded Regent University) while winning over soccer moms by focusing relentlessly on the economy and quality-of-life issues such as traffic congestion. Democrats’ efforts to demonize him ran afoul of McDonnell’s cheerful, soft-spoken, nice-guy attitude.

C UCCINELLI can be similarly soft-spoken, but his rhetoric is often sharper. It’s not quite clear whether he never chooses to pull punches or simply doesn’t know how. Here’s how he began his spring 2013 book, *The Last Line of Defense: The New Fight for American Liberty*:

In March 2010, President Barack Obama and the Democrat-controlled 111th Congress did to the American people what the tyrant we rebelled against in 1775 couldn’t even do when we were merely subjects: they declared that they suddenly had the unprecedented power to force Americans to purchase private products in the name of whatever “public good” the federal government deemed appropriate.

*The Last Line of Defense* isn’t a campaign book; a campaign book would consist of anodyne declarations like “I believe that children are our future,” and the cover would feature the candidate smiling, outdoors, with a dog. Instead the cover features blood-red letters against cracked marble, suggesting that American institutions are crumbling and perhaps on the verge of collapse.

Cuccinelli didn’t pull punches against Republicans, either, decrying

the creation of a subsidized prescription drug program for senior citizens called Medicare Part D. It was the largest entitlement program in forty years, and it was created under Republican president George W. Bush and passed by a Republican-controlled House and a Republican-controlled Senate.

Later, discussing No Child Left Behind and the Troubled Asset Relief Program, Cuccinelli declares, “I’m not afraid to say I was embarrassed for my party over these votes.”

To be sure, Virginia Democrats face challenges of their own. After his 2009 defeat, McAuliffe set out reinventing himself as a green entrepreneur who knew how to create jobs, pouring his energies into an electric-car firm, GreenTech Automotive. Now that firm is the subject of a Securities and Exchange Commission investigation, and the Department of Homeland Security’s inspector general is investigating whether the department gave the company special favors in approving visas for deep-pocketed foreign investors. The Associated Press, the *Washington Post*, and the *New York Times* have all published stories on GreenTech Automotive in recent weeks; in all three cases, McAuliffe either declined to be interviewed or asked, through a spokesman, that questions about GreenTech be submitted in writing. The company that was supposed to be Exhibit A for McAuliffe’s job-creating savvy is suddenly a verboten subject.

So it’s no surprise that “they’re turning more and more to a straight negative assault that revolves heavily around social issues,” Cuccinelli says. “When you don’t have anything else, I

understand that, but it isn't particularly constructive. . . . I think if he tries to run a whole race on that, we'll win." This may be the one echo of 2009 that will work in Cuccinelli's favor: a Democrat relentlessly insisting his opponent is Torquemada, running against a Republican attorney general who's talking about job creation.

At first glance, Virginia is enjoying economic good times: The state's unemployment rate is low, 5.3 percent, and in CNBC's annual survey of the best states for business, it ranks fifth. But the Cuccinelli campaign is betting that there are still deep and not-so-hidden anxieties about the state's job market.

"The priority is the same for voters, it's still jobs and the economy," Cuccinelli told me in a recent interview. "To the extent that we're technically in a recovery, it's a pretty weak recovery and it isn't reaching everybody. Especially with the implementation of Obamacare, you've got small businesses that are frozen in place. Heck, our community colleges are pushing their adjunct professors down below 30 hours, and that's happening in the private sector as well. That's causing a lot of dislocation. Add to that furloughs and sequestration in the two most economically stable parts of the state, northern Virginia and southeastern Virginia, and you really get a decent amount of anxiety about the economy and job opportunities. So I still find that's the first focus of voters."

The big challenge for Cuccinelli and the state GOP is the same as the one facing national Republicans—how to win more votes among African Americans, Hispanics, young people, and women. Traditional methods are failing as the electorate grows more diverse, young, and urban.

But Cuccinelli is undaunted. "We're growing this party, and we need to keep doing it!" he cheered before a small crowd in Fredericksburg earlier this year. Once best known for Civil War battles, Fredericksburg, about 50 miles south of Washington, is the state's fastest-growing city and an indicator of how far the outer, outer exurbs of the nation's capital have spread. More than 73,000 live in greater Fredericksburg, and about 35,000 of them commute to Washington and its suburbs for work each day.

Cuccinelli speaks from that most red-state of platforms, a pickup truck, but he forgoes flannel or jeans, dressing business-casual in a white collared shirt with the sleeves rolled up and black dress pants. "If we're going to win, we got to grow to do it, inviting more and more folks to this team," Cuccinelli says. "What we bring to offer to them is opportunity! Opportunity for the government to get out of the way, rather than telling them what to do in the economy. A focus on creating jobs in the private sector, not the government telling them where those jobs are going to be, and who the winners and losers are going to be. My opponent's done a good bit of that, and he doesn't have a good track record. It's cost the people of Mississippi a good bit of money, too." (McAuliffe located GreenTech's factory there instead of in Virginia.)

Cuccinelli knows that a tsunami of negative ads will hit him this fall; he's been the Democrats' top target before, in three state-senate elections in Fairfax County and the 2009 attorney general's race. He's been outspent four times and won four times.

If Cuccinelli's underdog winning streak ends, it will mean a bad year for Virginia's Republicans is stretching into two—with no end in sight.

NR

# A Bureaucrat's 'C'

*Grading the Common Core*

BY RAMESH PONNURU

It wasn't controversial in the beginning. By 2012, almost every state in the country had adopted the "Common Core" standards for their school systems. Common Core enjoyed the support not only of President Obama and Education Secretary Arne Duncan, but of Jeb Bush, Mitch Daniels, Bill Bennett, and Chris Christie.

It still does. Now, though, it also faces increasing criticism—some of it from the left, but most of it from the right. Many of the conservative critics say Common Core is Obama's plan for a federal takeover of education. They call it "ObamaCore," a play on the popular name for his health-care law. They say that far from raising academic standards, as advertised, Common Core will devalue the learning of facts in favor of progressive educational fads.

The critics are gaining ground. The Republican National Committee has passed a resolution condemning Common Core as "an inappropriate overreach to standardize and control the education of our children." Several states with Republican governments have halted their participation.

Defenders of Common Core see the critics as an ignorant rabble. Bill Keller, the former executive editor of the *New York Times* and now a columnist for it, recently called it "arguably the most serious educational reform of our lifetime" and described its enemies as "the very loud, often paranoid, if-that-Kenyan-socialist-in-the-White-House-is-for-it-I'm-against-it crowd."

Republican supporters of Common Core, while usually more measured in their description of the opponents, say that critics on the right are turning their backs on the longstanding conservative cause of raising standards. They also say that the criticisms are mistaken: The Common Core is not a federal takeover, because state adoption of it is "totally voluntary," and the standards are academically rigorous.

The argument over Common Core is quickly becoming one of those heated debates in which both sides mostly talk past each other, motives are subject to attack, and little attention gets paid to a basic question: Can it work? Can we help students learn more by getting the states to agree to a uniform set of high standards?

LIKE a lot of well-intentioned government initiatives, the proposal for a "common core" in state education standards began as an attempt to solve a problem that had

been created by a previous well-intentioned government initiative.

In 2002, a bipartisan majority in Congress enacted President George W. Bush's "No Child Left Behind" Act. Its central provision was a requirement that states, as a condition of getting federal funding for their schools, develop "accountability systems" to achieve goals for students' "proficiency" in math and reading. An increasing percentage of students was supposed to be proficient each year.

The idea was to strike a balance between the federal and state governments. The federal government wanted to see some results for its spending, but out of deference to local control would allow states to define "proficiency" and determine how to get their students to it.

## The distinction between common standards and a national curriculum is **less clear-cut** than the reassuring spin from Core supporters would have it.

One way a lot of states chose to reach proficiency was to define it downward. Many states were thus able to post gains in "proficiency" even while their kids' scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a test of a national sample of students, stagnated.

Many people frustrated with the state of American primary education concluded from this experience that all the states needed to be judged against the same yardsticks for what students in each grade should know and be able to do. Again the idea was that there would be a balance, but a different one. The standards would be common but not federal: States would adopt them on their own. And the standards would not amount to a national curriculum: Different states, and different school districts within states, could find their own ways to help students reach the standards.

Conservative proponents of a common core of standards argue that it complements other school-reform strategies, including school choice. Parents will be able to see how well their schools are doing in comparison with other schools in the area. Voters will be able to see it, too, and to compare their states with other states. State governments would not be able to game the comparison. School districts and states, voters and parents, could also learn, by looking at how well the standards were being met in various places, which approaches and reforms worked and which did not.

Another advantage of common standards, especially touted by school reformer Michelle Rhee's organization Students First, is that it makes life easier for kids who move from one state to another. A fourth-grader who moves from Wyoming to Georgia will know the same things as his new classmates and be ready for the next lessons.

Bill Gates, whose Gates Foundation has helped fund the development and promotion of Common Core, made two more arguments for common standards in a 2011 interview with the *Wall Street Journal*. First, "it's ludicrous to think that multiplication in Alabama and multiplication in New York are really different." Second, common standards would enable a national market in textbooks that would make them more affordable.

The National Governors Association and the Council of Chief

State School Officers took the lead in developing the Common Core standards. Janet Napolitano and Sonny Perdue, then respectively the Democratic governor of Arizona and the Republican governor of Georgia, were particularly crucial to the effort.

Under the standards that make up the Common Core these people came up with, a third-grader should be able to "conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic" and "fluently multiply and divide within 100." A sixth-grader should know that  $3(2 + x) = 6 + 3x$  and be able to "write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence." While the academic quality of the standards is hotly debated, the Fordham Institute, a neoconservative education-policy think tank, has reviewed them and

found them superior to the standards of most states and inferior to very few.

Some of the critics of Common Core have made wild claims about it. Glenn Beck has suggested that it will lead to mandatory iris scans for schoolchildren. It's true that three schools in Florida did iris scans as part of an experimental program for school-bus safety; it's not true it had anything to do with Common Core. Arizona legislators considering Common Core got e-mails saying that it would outlaw private schools and charter schools. This too is false.

Arne Duncan, the education secretary, said in early September that the critics are "lying" when they say that the federal government "developed or mandated" the standards. He urged journalists to call them on it. It is certainly true that the federal government does not mandate use of the standards, and anyone who says otherwise is at least misinformed.

But it's also misleading to say that state adoption of the Core is wholly voluntary. The federal government has supported Common Core and encouraged states to get on board. The "Race to the Top" program, in which the Education Department gave money to states it deemed to have strong reform plans, gave states points for signing up. Duncan has also given states waivers from the proficiency requirements of No Child Left Behind—thus letting them keep getting federal education money—in return for adopting the Core. The 2012 Democratic platform gave President Obama credit for getting so many states to participate.

The distinction between common standards and a national curriculum is also less clear-cut than the reassuring spin from Core supporters would have it. The more detailed the standards, the more they will specify in what order teachers will teach what topics: In other words, they will be a curriculum.

**T**HERE are also a range of questions about the benefits of common standards that the debate has mostly not considered. Gates may be right that multiplication is not different across the country; but it's not different around the world, either, and that doesn't mean that it is important to set policy for



math instruction at the global level. In a 2012 report for the Brookings Institution, Tom Loveless made a number of points that ought to make us skeptical about the benefits that common national standards will yield.

First, differences among state standards are often overstated. States do not, in fact, “treat multiplication of whole numbers in significantly different ways in their standards documents.” Second, variation in educational attainment within states is much greater than variation among states. Third, there is no correlation between the rigor of a state’s standards and its educational outcomes.

The problem that diversity among states poses for kids who move also seems overblown. How many people do you know who say they never caught up in school because of a move or two?

Michael McShane, who studies education policy at the American Enterprise Institute (where I am a visiting fellow), is not a foe of the Common Core—but he too raises some doubts about its likelihood of success. It is not clear, for example, that anything close to adequate steps are being taken to make sure that teachers will be prepared for the new standards. Teacher-preparation programs generally emphasize “the development of a worldview” rather than the acquisition of specific skills and knowledge; they may not be a good fit for the new standards. Professional-development programs will have to equip existing teachers for the standards, but there is not much evidence that these programs are effective.

He points out, as well, that any textbook or other instructional material can be labeled “Common Core-aligned” by the company selling it. Schools might think they are implementing the Common Core when they aren’t; and they could then misinterpret test results, for example blaming poor scores on teachers instead of the choice of textbooks.

McShane wonders, finally, if the original vision behind Common Core will prove politically sustainable. What happens when test scores dip as a result of new, higher standards? Will parents and teachers quietly resolve to do better, and will voters push legislators for new reforms that raise scores? Or will school systems and states just lower their cut scores and say that they’re meeting the new standards?

The only way to truly ensure uniformity of standards—uniformity in practice, that is, not just on paper—is to have a central organization in charge of enforcing it. McShane notes that centralization will be needed for other purposes too, such as

updating the standards over time. So either the fears of loss of state autonomy that the critics keep warning about will have to be realized, or the benefits that the supporters seek won’t be. Either way, the idea behind Common Core, of state-led uniformity, will disintegrate.

Common Core is not a conspiracy. That doesn’t mean it’s a good idea. It could well end up wasting the time and energy of education reformers for a decade without doing much for students. And it may be that the reformers should face a truth that both No Child Left Behind and Common Core tried to deny: that there just is not much that can be done at the national level to improve primary education. **NR**

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## Balance, Not Parity

*Mothers with careers are improvising their own solutions*

BY MAGGIE GALLAGHER

**L**AST summer, Professor Anne-Marie Slaughter committed heresy.

Eighteen months into her dream job as the State Department's first woman director of policy planning, she found herself at a reception hosted by President and Mrs. Obama and thinking about her 14-year-old son back in Princeton, N.J., who was "skipping homework, disrupting classes, failing math."

"When this is over, I'm going to write an op-ed titled 'Women Can't Have It All,'" she told a colleague, who was "horrified."

"The feminist beliefs on which I had built my entire career were shifting under my feet," she confessed in the article she subsequently wrote for *The Atlantic*. Six months later Slaughter was back at Princeton, not exactly a hausfrau, what with her professorship, TV appearances, and a now-famous piece explaining "Why Women Still Can't Have It All."

Cyberspace exploded. Slaughter had violated the prime directive of postmod-

ernism: Thou shalt not place any other god ahead of equality. She was stunned by the vituperation directed her way.

The old "mommy wars" between working and stay-at-home moms appear to have been superseded by a new, generational mommy war: older women who put career above most things (justifying their choices as made in behalf of "the next generation of women") versus that next generation of women who watch and say, "Something new, please, not that."

Slaughter mentions in the *Atlantic* essay two young Manhattan professionals who spoke of successful older women who made tremendous sacrifices for their careers, "many of which they don't even seem to realize," such as working round the clock and hiring full-time nannies to help. I know a young Manhattan professional whose successful boss got a call to pick up her mother's ashes, right before an important meeting in Davos. "I handed her the phone, and she told them to hold it for a week," this young woman told me. Something new, please, not like that.

Google is a sign of our times, a company that puts pool tables, sushi bars, and child-care centers on the company

grounds so that employees can satisfy their human needs with minimal time loss. All work and no play makes Jack a dull Google employee, and we can't have that.

The woman who told me about this was boasting about how wonderful it was. I find it creepy, but then I am attached to an old-fashioned technology: procreative sexual love in marriage, formerly known as "the family."

True, like most educated women, I have other aspirations and achievements about which I care deeply. In trying to strike the right balance between work and family, I've had the full spectrum of work arrangements: full-time at home for years, part-time from home, part-time in flexible office jobs, full-time as the head of two organizations I started, first as an unwed mother, later as a married mom. But in terms of identity, if not always hours, when push comes to shove, for me, family comes first.

The work/family problems Slaughter describes are a result of the cavernous gap opening up between the norms and needs of the creative class and those of the procreative class, and in the fight for public space and attention, the procreative class is losing. The "creative class" is a term coined by urban theorist Richard Florida to describe the kind of professionals post-industrial cities need to attract to reinvent themselves: scientists, entrepreneurs, researchers, engineers, computer programmers, along with people who work in the arts, design, and media. He now makes a living consulting with cities on how to attract the creative class, as people with children increasingly flee them.

What we are witnessing today is the end stage of a cultural evolution launched by an economic one: The industrial revolution first separated work from the home on a mass scale and thus created the problem of work/family balance.

The pre-industrial solution to the problem of work/family balance was called "the Sabbath." Back on the family farm, work occupied life from dawn to dusk, but you worked with your family in the shared problem of making a life together: from raising the cows for the milk to churn into butter, to shearing the sheep for the cloth to make clothing.

The industrial revolution sent men away from the home mostly to dirty and

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dull work. Instead of one world centered in the home and farm, there were now two worlds, work and family, which necessarily competed with each other for the time, energy, and the identities of their respective inhabitants. The Victorian solution was to keep women in the home and culturally elevate their role as wives and mothers.

This wasn't an economic decision—factory owners were perfectly happy to employ women at lower wages—it was a Victorian moral decision (backed by laws) to create a new norm: to protect the status of family and the idea of the home by making women the moral guardians of them.

In this new cultural synthesis, the role of teacher shifted from masculine to feminine, and female education became a new cultural imperative. The hand that rocked the cradle had to be cultivated or civilization would suffer. The role of “society” also expanded; as the communal sphere became dominated by women, much energy was poured into creating a new world for women to use their newly acquired talents in, one that came to include civic reform, opening up new leadership roles for women (think Jane Addams of Hull House).

The Victorian synthesis collapsed in the Sixties as increasing numbers of educated women agitated against their exclusion from the increasingly attractive world of college-educated work. The question of how to create both homes and jobs had to be faced anew.

In the ensuing two generations, a rea-

sonable, practical answer has emerged for college-educated wives: Stable marriage to a supportive high-earning husband gives women choices: stay home for a while, work part time, or shuttle between the two. Or couples with two full-time careers can share the family load, hiring a nanny or a housecleaner to fill the gaps.

It's not perfect, but part-time work is what the majority of working mothers prefer. According to a March 2013 Pew poll, after five years of recession, just 37 percent of working mothers say their ideal is to work full time. If Pew had included the preferences of stay-at-home mothers, the proportion favoring full-time work would plummet.

But our new practical answer is endangered on two fronts: It is not available to most women, the majority of whom lack college-educated husbands. And we do not know how to square our current arrangements with elite women's intense commitment to parity of outcomes. It lacks cultural legitimacy.

Are we going to pursue the cultural arrangements that maximize the likelihood women will occupy 50 percent of all positions of power? Or are we going to maximize the number of women able to set up the kind of work/family balance that makes them happy? Slaughter is no help, on either front, because the two questions lead in different directions.

As a good egalitarian, Slaughter is queasy about her preoccupation with members of her own class: “I am well aware that the majority of American women face problems far greater,” she

writes, but “the best hope for improving the lot of all women . . . is to close the leadership gap: to elect a woman president and 50 women senators; to ensure that women are equally represented in the ranks of corporate executives and judicial leaders. . . . That will be a society that works for everyone.”

I am not opposed to practices that make life easier for talented supermoms. But please, I beg you, Professor Slaughters of the world, do not pretend that solving your own problems is the key to making life better or happier for your nanny, your housecleaner, your child's teacher, or your daughter.

The next generation of women face many problems, but the biggest one is that non-college-educated young men are doing very badly. Nothing in Slaughter's program addresses our most crucial work/family balance issue: the fact that schools are failing boys. According to Judith Kleinfeld, professor of psychology emeritus at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, one out of four white male high-school seniors with college-educated parents scores “below basic” in reading, meaning he cannot read an article from a newspaper, compared with 7 percent of his female counterparts. And that's just the sons of comparatively privileged parents.

We could put and keep a gazillion Professor Slaughters in every pinnacle of power and nothing important would change for average American women, any more than electing President Obama has solved the real problems of the average African American. This doesn't mean electing the first black president was not a great thing. It means solving intractable problems of people other than glittering elites requires focusing on and prioritizing their problems.

The conflict between work and family grows more intense in a society in which the creative class dominates the procreative class. But it also grows so long as elite supermoms worship statistical equality over all other social objectives.

Good news for Professor Slaughter. She is back in Washington as head of the New America Foundation, able to control her commuting schedule in a way that allows her, with the help of her academic husband, to try to lay out a new program for America while caring for her two sons. Good for her. Good for her. **NR**



Professor Anne-Marie Slaughter



# The Privilege Of Marriage

*Working-class women are saying no, to their detriment*

BY AMBER LAPP & W. BRADFORD WILCOX

**A**FTER Kelly married her high-school sweetheart, Jake, she encouraged everyone she knew to get married. She and Jake bought a trailer in Maytown, Ohio. (Maytown is a pseudonym to protect the identities of the people described. All their names have also been changed.) Jake became a manager at Jiffy Lube, and Kelly mostly stayed at home to take care of their two babies. Their marriage was great, she says. But one day, while Kelly was at her part-time job snapping eighth-grade yearbook photos for Olan Mills and Jake was at home with the kids, he slept with Kelly's best friend, a move that threw their marriage into turmoil.

For the next year Kelly and Jake were on again, off again, until Kelly fell in love with someone else, named Ty, and decided to move in with him. A year into this relationship, she discovered (via a police officer checking up on Ty) that her new man was a registered sex offender who had molested a four-year-old. Kelly broke up with him and spiraled into depression and drugs, losing custody of her kids along the way. Kelly's grandparents, who had raised Kelly after *her* mother began struggling with depression, partying, and men, are today raising Kelly's children, their great-grandchildren.

Kelly, now 26, wonders how she arrived at this point. "I always said to myself, I wasn't going to do that, I wasn't going to be like my mom. . . . And [now] I watch myself walk in the same footsteps as my mom."

In search of a new start, Kelly moved to Kentucky to live with her aunt. While shopping at Walmart, Kelly met Ran-

dall—a factory worker with blond chin scruff and muscled arms bulging from his T-shirt's ripped sleeves. Randall offered to "teach me the country roads," Kelly says. They drove fast in his dusty brown Chevy pickup, spinning its tires and laughing loudly; they fished and swam and made out at Pike's Lake; she got up in the middle of the night when his two-year-old son, Fisher, needed soothing, and washed Fisher's favorite Woody the Cowboy doll when it got dirty on the playground. Kelly felt her depression lifting.

Randall proposed to Kelly in bed one night, and she said yes—on the condition that he buy her a ring and ask again. About five months into their relationship, Kelly got pregnant.

It was then that Kelly found out something important about Randall: He was still married. And despite his proposal, he was torn between Kelly and his wife.

Randall didn't come to the hospital when Kelly gave birth to their daughter, nor did he return Kelly's frantic calls when Ella Jane, only a few hours old, had to be flown to another hospital to get treatment for a serious heart defect. Two weeks later, Ella Jane was home, a tiny bundle wrapped in a pink John Deere

fidelity, divorce, having children out of wedlock, and the difficulties all these things engender are markedly more common among Americans with only high-school diplomas than among those who have college degrees, according to recent research by the National Marriage Project. Forty-three percent of high-school-educated young adults say marriage has "not worked out for most people [they] know," compared with just 17 percent of college-educated young adults. Whereas a flourishing marriage culture once existed for both high-school-educated and college-educated Americans, a growing marriage gap now divides the two groups.

Kelly exemplifies these trends. She is a single mom with three kids and no college degree who loudly proclaims her independence from men and her skepticism about marriage. But Kelly's views on marriage—and those of other moderately educated women—are more nuanced than they might seem.

Amber and David Lapp, research fellows at the Institute for Family Studies, have spent the past three years interviewing young adults like Kelly. Of their high-school-educated interviewees, two-thirds



blanket, but Randall still hadn't seen her and was claiming she wasn't his child.

So what does Kelly think about marriage now? "Honestly, it's just a piece of paper," she says. Now she tries to dissuade her friends from marriage, and her Facebook wall is full of posts saying things like "F\*\*\* men!"

Kelly's experience suggests why a growing number of working-class Americans are losing faith in marriage. In-

expressed some negative views about marriage—but they almost always had positive things to say about marriage as well and hoped to marry someday. This agrees with national survey data showing that 76 percent of high-school-educated Americans report that marriage is either "very important" or "one of the most important things" to them.

Most of the young adults the Lapps interviewed are not so much opposed to

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marriage as conflicted about it. Marriage may be only a piece of paper, but it's a piece of paper they want. As one single mom explained, "People like the *idea* of marriage." They still believe in the love, fidelity, trust, commitment, and companionship that marriage is *supposed* to be.

Kelly would like to get married again someday. It's a "dream" that "everybody wants," she says. "But is it reality these days?"

In Kelly's view, the main problem keeping her and her peers from marriage is that men and women can't trust each other.

"I have a lot of trust issues," she says. "I don't trust men in general." Her wariness started when she was young and saw men abuse and cheat on her mother. Sometimes, she says, she gets to the point where she'll trust a guy a little, but never "enough to let everything go and completely be attached." She'll tell boyfriends: "I care about you, I love you . . . I don't trust you. It's not just you. It's guys in general."

Kelly is ambivalent about marriage "because . . . you have to trust the person you're going to marry," and she's not sure if she'll ever be able to trust a man enough to marry him. "I tell people . . . 'I'll never do it again,' or, 'Don't ever do it.' But that's just me saying, 'I'll never get married because I don't want to get hurt. I don't want to be cheated on.'"

Instead, Kelly moves in with each new boyfriend and procrastinates about filing for divorce, even though she and Jake have been separated for years. It's a convenient excuse: She tells a boyfriend that she can't get married until her divorce papers are finalized. It buys her more time to test whether she can trust him. Kelly says that she and Jake both use their marriage papers "as a crutch, because neither one of us wants to get married for a really long time."

For most working-class people, marriage remains an integral part of the American dream. The question is whether or not it will be part of their American reality.

Part of the problem, as Charles Murray noted in *Coming Apart: The State of White America, 1960–2010*, is that the country is increasingly separated by class. In Maytown, the trailer park where Jake and Kelly lived is just minutes from a subdivision full of \$1.5 million homes. Though they have the same ZIP code, the people in the expensive neighbor-

hoods on the hill and those in the modest ranch homes and trailers in the valley live in two worlds that almost never meet. Young adults such as Kelly and Jake are ghettoized, rarely seeing marriages where spouses manage to make it through the thick and thin of married life, as do most upper-middle-class couples today.

What can be done about this? We need a new generation of religiously inspired Americans who, like Dorothy Day, the founder of the Catholic Worker Movement, will move into the neighborhood to stay, deliberately choosing to live in poor and working-class communities. We also need public policies—such as set-asides in real-estate developments that enable lower-income families to live amid more affluent families, and greater school choice—that will help reverse the tide of economic and cultural segregation in our nation's communities.

Bridging the class divide, as challenging as that may prove, might be easier than bridging the gender gap that now exists within the working class. How do we renew a culture of trust between the sexes in working-class communities where men and women increasingly view one another as opponents rather than partners? This daunting task will require a range of economic and cultural solutions: better vocational education for middle-skill jobs, in hopes that economic stability will enhance relationship stability; relationship-education classes, like those that Marriage Works! Ohio teaches in public high schools; reform of divorce laws (e.g., ending unilateral divorce), in hopes that a lower divorce rate will increase confidence in marriage; and Web-based efforts, such as IBelieveInLove.com, that seek to shore up loving marriages amid the ruins of family life in working-class America.

Confidence in marriage and in men cannot be built on Hollywood-style dreams of romantic love or a naïve faith that marriage will fix a troubled relationship. Confidence, to be deep-rooted, must be based in reality. For working-class women, it must come from seeing successful marriages up close, with all their flaws and glories, from believing that they and the men in their lives have an economically sound future, and from knowing they can trust themselves—and their boyfriends—to stay faithful.

That confidence is what working-class women like Kelly want. **NR**

# Singled Out

*The GOP needs to reach unmarried women*

BY KELLYANNE CONWAY

**Q**UICK! Name the fastest-growing demographic group in the country between 2000 and 2010. Hispanics? Asians? Seniors, as the Baby Boomer generation ages? Not quite. According to the U.S. census, the number of unmarried women increased by 20 percent over that decade, a jump larger than that of any other cohort. They now make up a full quarter of the adult U.S. population.

If you did not know that, you must be a Republican candidate, consultant, or campaign contributor. Following another embarrassing electoral loss among women last year, the navel gazers mumbled "gender gap," "Akin," and "abortion" in quick succession. That is both an excuse and inaccurate. The Democrats' contrived and cynical "war on women" strategy succeeded only because the response to it was weak.

Unmarried women have been hiding in plain sight for years. The Republican "gender gap" has always, in its essence, been a marriage gap. Even in 1984, when Reagan-Bush carried women overall by ten points over Mondale and Ferraro (a woman), 49 percent of unmarried women favored the Democratic ticket. George W. Bush garnered 32 percent and 34 percent of unmarried women against those babe magnets Al Gore and John Kerry in 2000 and 2004. In 2008, 70 percent of unmarried women voted for Obama; in 2012, 67 percent. This fealty to the Democrats is not limited to presidential politics. In congressional contests last year, single women preferred Democratic candidates to Republicans by 69

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percent to 26 percent.

While the support of unmarried women for Democrats is not new, the sheer size of this group is. And although 32 percent of unmarried women are younger than 30, the rest are not; today's single lady has aged up, busting the stereotype that they are all just young and liberal and will grow out of it.

Pew's analysis of the U.S. census data shows that single mothers who had never married were just 4 percent of single moms overall in 1960; in 2011, they were 44 percent. The rising average age of first marriage and the increasing

single to get married. As with any recovery, Republicans' first step is to admit that they have a problem. Time is not on their side, as the single-female population continues to grow, but the most important issue is: A 2012 post-election survey conducted by our firm found that, among single women, "the economy and jobs" was the most important issue when deciding for whom to vote for president (29 percent). The issue of abortion was most important to only 4 percent of single women.

Being single and living on one income has tremendous implications for

exposed as surrogates to the Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security systems 20 to 30 years before they are eligible themselves.

The idea that a 48-year-old woman taxpayer-homeowner who has chosen to forgo marriage and motherhood cares mostly about abortion and contraception is folly. The Democrats have nothing compelling to say to this woman about the economy, health care, or retirement savings. That's why phrases like "women's health" and "women's issues" get bandied about, even as what is really meant is abortion and contraception. When's the last time you heard

## Being single and living on one income has **tremendous implications** for the way women approach politics and public policy.

number of women who remain unmarried account for part of this overall trend. In 1980, women were getting married at an average age of 22. By 1990, it was 23.9; by 2000, it was 25.1; in 2011, it was 26.5.

At 55 million voters, single women are an increasingly influential force in consumer America and in political America. Consumer America has long noticed them. From single-serve groceries to ads that cynically exploit the theme that men are dumb and unnecessary, it has invested millions into busting the spinster stigma and portraying these "swingles" as independent, ambitious, capable, and self-reliant. A number of media outlets have reported approvingly about two recent ads that show the efforts corporate America is making to court single women—one from Citibank in which a young woman and her boyfriend think about getting a diamond but instead go rock-climbing, and a Honda commercial in which a woman is asked for her hand in marriage and all the much more exciting things she wants to do flash before her eyes (she eventually accepts, but with the caveat that they do a lot of living first).

Political America is, as usual, a lagging indicator. The GOP seems to be waiting for the young to get old and the

the way women approach politics and public policy. Many see Uncle Sam and Big Brother as welcome members of the extended family in the absence of a nuclear one. Single women are less educated than their married counterparts and are less likely to have health insurance. They also earn less: At a mean of \$41,687 annually, single women make the least of all groups classified according to marital status. Among single women, single mothers are the worst off, making \$23,000 a year.

One of the largest potential growth markets for Republicans within the single-women group, however, is highly educated, well-compensated career women. These women don't wait for "me" to become "we" before investing and becoming homeowners. Having chosen to decline two of the "four magic 'M's," marriage and motherhood, they are likely to have the other two, mortgage and mutual fund. They also have ample opportunity to lament the incompetence and encroachment of government. They shoulder their tax and retirement burdens alone, along with the creeping cost of living. Mom and Aunt Edna often ask them to navigate the labyrinth of paperwork associated with elder entitlements; limited-government types should cheer the fact that these single women are

the phrase "men's issues"? And when's the last time you heard the abortion lobby talk about "women's health" in a sense that includes cardiovascular disease, breast cancer, and long-term care? There are two major political parties, but it seems that only one is willing to speak to women from the waist up.

Democrats regularly charge that Republican candidates are extreme on abortion, and, to be frank, some Republican candidates have helped shape this narrative. But the GOP should be clear that, overall, Democrats are the extreme ones. The DNC's platform says: "The Democratic Party strongly and unequivocally supports *Roe v. Wade* and a woman's right to make decisions regarding her pregnancy, including a safe and legal abortion, regardless of ability to pay. We oppose any and all efforts to weaken or undermine that right." GOP candidates need to hold Democratic candidates to this position. Does it include late-term abortions? Does it mean that Democrats oppose parental notification for those under 18? Does it include sex-selective abortions? Our firm's data show that only 12 percent of all voters believe that "abortion should be legal for any reason at any time during a woman's pregnancy"—but that is the position of most major



Democrats. Fifty-eight percent of registered voters oppose taxpayer funding of abortion. Voters, including single women, need educating about what the Democratic party stands for.

Another opportunity lies in the fact that 39 percent of eligible unmarried women are still not registered to vote. Will Republicans reach, register, and turn out these single women or wait for the Democrats to do it? This should be a priority for 2014. Notwithstanding their electoral clout, unmarried women have proved to be unreliable in non-presidential years. In 2008, 60 percent of unmarried women voted, but just 38 percent did so in 2010. An aggressive voter-registration drive, a get-out-the-vote program, and a substantive outreach on relevant issues could produce dividends for a Republican party that has nowhere to go but up. The Democrats do a good job of turning out single women who already vote Democratic; the GOP needs to turn out the single women we can reach, with a conservative message that addresses their real concerns.

The Affordable Care Act also represents an opportunity for Republicans to make up ground with single women. Health care was the most important issue to 15 percent of single women in the 2012 presidential election. The implementation of Obamacare is already resulting in higher insurance premiums, reduced worker hours, and mass confusion. Young Americans, who tend to be unmarried, are especially vulnerable to being forced to pay more.

Part of the Left's success in reaching voters in recent elections has been its willingness to go where voting blocs are. Republicans should be focusing on social media, college campuses, and other outlets where single women congregate (such as Match.com, rather than broadcast TV). They need to realize that simply posting an ad online or buying a media spot will not suffice. The political reality is that single women have as much allegiance to the Democratic party as do Hispanics and Asians, are greater in number, and are a major growth market. Republicans must get on bended knee and propose some serious solutions to them—or get left at the altar. **NR**

# Enough of Anger

*Why I gave up  
feminist activism*

BY FEDERICA  
MATHEWES-GREEN

**S**ORTING through some old boxes in the basement, I ran across a manila envelope stuffed with 40-year-old women's-lib literature. It was right under the Earth Shoes. Forty years ago, I was a Mother Earth-type hippie and an enthusiastic "women's libber" (then the term of choice). In the envelope I found an assortment of leaflets protesting the nuclear family (inherently oppressive) and warning against "female hygiene deodorant," "the myth of the vaginal orgasm," and other threats to woman-kind. There were some huffy letters I'd written to the campus newspaper, and mimeographed flyers for the campus women's group. The pride of the collection was a 1971 copy of the classic feminist guide to health and sexuality, *Our Bodies, Ourselves*. This was the pre-mainstream edition, published by the New England Free Press, stapled together and priced at 40 cents.

Most revealing, though, was an old issue of *Off Our Backs*, the underground newspaper of the radical feminists of Washington, D.C. I was briefly a volunteer on the staff and helped lay out this issue. I saved it because it carried my review of a movie titled "La Salamandre," which I hadn't thought about since.

It was a different world, a moment when hopes were high and the movement was at full boil. We looked ahead to a future very different from the one that came about.

The issue, dated February–March 1973, led with a report on the sixth national conference of NOW, the National Organization for Women. It's a rather cranky report, because the authors were fed up

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with NOW's being so wishy-washy. You see, at the conference, NOW's president, Wilma Scott Heide, had stated that a "masculine mystique" ruled our society, and that it must be overturned by a "profound universal behavioral revolution." She said that mild forms of social action, such as boycotts, had proven ineffective, so the movement must become more militant—sit-ins, teach-ins, "anything short of violence." For example, the Federal Communications Commission had failed to practice affirmative action, so women should just take over the stations.

Scorn fairly drips from the reporter's pen: "Such tactics are clearly not directed at the liberation of a free space for women, a women's culture, or variants of lesbian separatist proposals, but at joining the 'man's world.'" Indeed, NOW's stated purpose, "to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society," is deplorable, in the writer's view: It allows "the basic structure of that society, which necessarily keeps most women in the mainstream of the home and low-paying jobs, to go unchallenged."

This happened to be the first issue after the *Roe v. Wade* decision, and the writer's opinion was—you guessed it—that *Roe* didn't go far enough: "What was won was only a significant first start in a continuing struggle." The decision allowed states to regulate abortion in the second and third trimesters, but we must persevere in "making abortions a matter of choice during the entire pregnancy."

Leafing forward, we come to the second installment in a series titled "Experiments in Hostility." The author describes three recent incidents in which she tried to confront sexism: at a party, in a college classroom, and in the studio audience of Dick Cavett's TV show. She recommends hissing. (The article is accompanied by a rather alarming castration cartoon. Hissing is better.)

Much of what we meet on these pages is long gone, and it's a good thing. Lesbian-separatist communities were never going to be more than a gleam in somebody's eye. The odd-looking neologism "chairone" was never likely to replace the old, sexist "chairman"; and "Sappho Was a Right-On Woman" didn't set a new style for edgy book titles. Today, could you call anyone a "male chauvinist pig" with a straight face?

I had completely forgotten about “consciousness-raising groups.” These gatherings aimed to be part group therapy and part feminist training, and the NOW convention included a workshop on setting up such groups. But the room was too small, and the audience grew testy and complained they weren’t receiving the instruction they needed. One participant pointed out the organizers’ error: “The whole point of [consciousness raising] is to change that cast of mind which makes you feel you have to get expert advice for everything. Consciousness raising is not a skill you can learn from experts.”

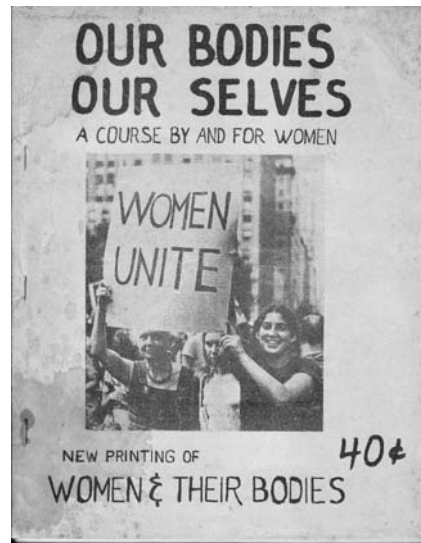
Some of the movement’s hopes and plans are almost poignantly absurd. The 18-month goals announced at the NOW conference included “getting rid of sexism on the Dean Martin show, removal of ‘My wife, I think I’ll keep her’ ads by Geritol, and eliminating the blatant sexism in children’s TV cartoons and shows.”

And did you think Marlo Thomas’s album of children’s songs, *Free to Be You and Me*, took a progressive, feminist stance? (I sure did; I played it for my children.) Nope, for despite the songs’ emphasis on breaking gender stereotypes, most still pair girl characters with boy characters, and thus “assume and reinforce traditional family roles.”

Most endearing in this issue was a young woman’s notes on her first visits to a lesbian bar. She wore a long skirt the first time, and was immediately asked to dance by a “Bogart-voiced” woman who advised her to try to be “a little butcher.” The following week she wore jeans, and “I may as well have had a sex change.” The women who had previously asked her to dance ignored her, and the women in skirts expected her to ask them to dance. The entrenched sex-stereotyping does not escape her notice.

The most horrifying entry in this issue (apart from that castration cartoon) is an essay by a woman recounting the misery she endured because it was a holiday and her eight-year-old and her “man” were home for the day. (A female houseguest is also present, but “she has worked on self-development for 10 years now & tends to play less games than most people.”) The author dreads the daylong presence of these two people you would assume she loves, but tries to set a positive tone with some piano playing. Soon she is scream-

ing at the man to “get out,” but when he complies, she screams that he’s a coward and slams his chair around till it’s in pieces. At this point, “the kids say o dear & put the chair back together.”) She decides to watch TV, but when the eight-year-old tries to quiet the baby, it results in a baby who can’t be consoled because she is “too busy suffering full volume.” The author turns up the TV volume and stares at the screen “resolutely.” When the show is over, she goes out on the patio



to scream, “I hate holidays I hate holidays I hate holidays I hate holidays I hate holidays I hate holidays I hate holidays” while the baby cries “momma momma.”

The author points out that “everyone has holidays, everyone suffers through them,” and must find some way to cope. She concludes that, next holiday, she will take a tranquilizer as soon as she wakes up, and will “refuse to play sacrificial lamb again. Next time I will not be the one to collapse on the patio crying ‘how can I fight loneliness when I’m always alone how can I fight loneliness when I’m always alone how can I fight loneliness when I’m always alone how can I.’ Next time if I want to be happy on a goddamn holiday I goddamn will be happy.” Whew.

The problem here actually has less to do with feminism specifically than with another social phenomenon of the time: the Human Potential Movement, which sought to unleash the immense potential hidden within each person. The movement’s emphasis on getting “real” and revealing your “gut feelings” unfortu-

nately turned some susceptible people into emotional bullies and fountains of self-pity. When it was paired with the “stay angry” element of any liberation movement, it had the potential to unleash some really miserable, and misery-inflicting, personalities.

That was why I began to withdraw from the feminist movement. I did it because I realized I was angry all the time. I was always scrutinizing things for sexism—movies, advertising, conversation, everything. I began to sense how addictive this kind of self-righteous anger can be. It wipes away ambivalence and self-doubt, making guilt feelings unnecessary. I was wronged, the seductive thinking goes, so anything I do is justified. If others think it “wrong,” it’s only evidence of how much sexism has damaged us all.

I realized that I was turning into a kind of person I didn’t want to be and stopped actively participating in feminism, though without changing my opinions. Those were changed later, by the real-life experiences of marriage and child rearing. I was floored to discover that little girls really do prefer dolls and pretty dresses even if you clothe them in blue jeans and keep giving them toy trucks. There was something deeper, more ancient, more body-based in gender roles than I had realized.

That’s no excuse for cruelty and injustice, and where there are excesses, it is right to protest and seek change. But I could no longer deny that (most) males and females really like their opposite-ness; they like to joke about and exaggerate it, and this was something feminist theory was never going to be able to change. People savor and celebrate this opposite-ness because the difference between the sexes is where new life comes from. Perpetuating the species is serious business, but it’s also a source of great joy. This biological reality is so vast and deep in the human race that you just can’t fight it. Before long I didn’t even want to.

I wonder what happened to all the other women who felt as zealous and uncompromising as I did 40 years ago. As in any population, the majority of us were heterosexual, and that tends to nudge women toward pairing up with a man and having babies. In that process a lot of us found we were longing for things we never expected to want. Whatever our theories, real life had some tricks up its sleeve. I’m glad that it did. **NR**

## Breakfast of Autocrats

If scientists discover that there is sufficient mass in the universe to slow its expansion and eventually cause all matter to collapse into one infinitely hot point in a hundred billion years, it will be Bush's fault.

That's just one of the things we've learned in the run-up to the Syrian stand-down, or whatever happens between the time this column is submitted and the time it ends up in your hands. It's possible that Putin will float something that defuses the situation—say, Syria pretends to hand over its chemical weapons and the U.S. mothballs a carrier group. You'd like to think the president would say no. You fear he'd put his hand over the receiver and ask an aide, "Hey, how many of those do we have?"

Anyway, it's Bush's fault because he made the public war-weary. Here are some other lessons recent events have taught us:

1. Republican omnipotence remains undiluted. Ed Schultz, an MSNBC host who yells about things—if that narrows it down—believes that the president is being pushed into this war by Republican warmongers. That is exactly what you expect from someone whose ideas about anything "international" should be taken seriously only if followed by the words "House of Pancakes." But this is how some on the left deal with the cognitive dissonance of the Peace Prize Lightworker blowing up dusky people: The nation cannot resist the persuasive powers of Republican arguments. Why, if President McCain's for it, that's good enough for me! Saddle up!

2. "War" is not war if the secretary of state deems the effort infinitesimal. John Kerry said any strike wouldn't be like Afghanistan or Iraq—you know, where you do something loud and violent, and keep doing it until you win. A Syrian adventure would be "incredibly small," which suggests we're sending pixies to bombard them with quarks.

The Obama administration's new "incredibly small" doctrine of not-war provided the Pentagon with something of a puzzler, since a previous characterization of the not-war was something "muscular enough not to be mocked," even if it went to the gym wearing mom jeans. Blow up ten bases: mockable. Blow up 15: too much. Blow up twelve and degrade three: General Goldilocks, that's perfect.

Possible non-mockable not-war options: Five hundred Tomahawk missiles that deploy confetti when striking their targets; saturation bombing with Not Exactly Really Fearsome (NERF) foam munitions developed by the Army for practice missions; Delta Force soldiers whose guns deploy a flag that says "Bang!" when they pull the trigger; and so on.

Well, here's the total list of muscular non-mockable military actions:

A nuclear bomb

Another nuclear bomb

Anything else is mockable, since it allows Assad to act like the French soldiers in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* and shout "Your mother smells of elderberries" and "You pitch like a girl" from the comforts of his bunker.

3. There's another calculation in the non-mockable manly-man not-war calibrated red-line reinforcement package: the cereal-cutlery metaphor. No doubt you've heard this:

"A second senior official offered this metaphor to describe such a strike: 'If Assad is eating Cheerios, we're going to take away his spoon and give him a fork. Will that degrade his ability to eat Cheerios? Yes. Will it deter him? Maybe. But he'll still be able to eat Cheerios.'"

This suggests that military planners have become adept at describing complex operations in terms a seven-year-old would understand: "Mr. President, this option has a risk of civilian owies, but there's a 50 percent chance we will, in fact, defeat the big meanie." Anyway, we're going to take away his spoon and give him a fork. Perhaps if it's unbelievably small and forcibly shoved into his hand by someone muscular, that'll work. As the general noted, it's still possible to eat Cheerios with a fork. You want Assad to eat his Cheerios with a knife, which is much more difficult, or, better yet, to slurp a liquefied mush of Cheerios through a straw, since the attack left him unable to consume solids. If he's eating Lucky Charms, however, he can use a fork to stab all the crunchy marshmallows, which are really the best part.

It's a reminder of how our military has changed. Patton: "I'm going to march to Berlin and put the barrel of my pearl-handled revolver in the mouth of that paperhanging SOB." Modern generals: "What we're looking for is a response that leaves him with a somewhat less flaky croissant than he's used to, and cold enough so it leaves crumbs all over when you bite it. We're also looking to degrade his jam stocks."

4. TV newsreaders love to use "military" terms when war is imminent; makes them feel like they're broadcasting from the Blitz, wearing a trench coat. The use of the phrase "boots on the ground" by TV persons is particularly annoying, and shall henceforth be used only if one is referring to Private John Boots or to Boots, the Company Mascot Dog. Slinging the lingo makes you a military expert no more than saying "heels on the catwalk" makes you a fashion model.

5. The Left will be okay with this. Actor Ed Asner said that many are hesitant to be critical because "they don't want to feel anti-black." To which one can only quote MLK: I dream of a day when people will be judged not by the color of their skin but by their ludicrous inability to craft a clear doctrine, project strength, stand up to devious Rooskies, and behave as though the burdens of office aren't interfering with tee time.

Prescient man, Dr. King.





# The Long View

BY ROB LONG

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### *The Nobel Peace Prize for 2014*

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided that the Nobel Peace Prize for 2014 is to be awarded to Russian president Vladimir Putin and Syrian Baath Party general secretary Bashar Assad for their extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples. The Committee has attached special importance to their vision of and work for a world without chemical weapons.

Vladimir Putin, working alongside longtime ally and fellow peacemaker Bashar Assad, has as president created a new climate in international politics. Multilateral diplomacy has regained a central position, with emphasis on the role that the United Nations and other international institutions can play. Dialogue and negotiations are preferred as instruments for resolving even the most difficult international conflicts. The vision of a world free from chemical weapons has powerfully stimulated disarmament and arms-control negotiations. Thanks to Putin's initiatives towards resolving internal Syrian conflicts, and to the cooperation of Bashar Assad and his willingness to negotiate sweeping chemical- and biological-weapons-reduction agreements, Russia is now playing a more constructive role in meeting the great internal and generational challenges the world—especially the region of the Middle East—is confronting. Democracy

and human rights are to be strengthened, thanks to the tireless efforts of Presidents Putin and Assad, this year's Nobel Laureates.

Only very rarely have two people to the same extent as Putin and Assad captured the world's attention and given its people hope for a better future. Their diplomacy is founded in the concept that those who are to lead the world must do so on the basis of values and attitudes that are shared by the majority of the world's population.

Together, these two leaders have personally persuaded the world community—a coalition of Great Powers that included the United States and France and the United States, including France—to forgo the use of force and instead utilize the mechanisms of the United Nations to collect and safeguard the (alleged) stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons in the region bounded by the current Syrian borders in an orderly and peaceful process. When that process concludes in 2048, it will be a shining example of the role that diplomacy and calm reason play in the resolution of regional and global conflicts.

The International Ban on Biological and Chemical Weapons, a treaty currently being written—and to be enforced—by a Special Working Group composed of Syrian and Russian peacemaking experts, will once and for all rid the world of these deadly and immoral weapons.

President Putin, appearing blood-smeared and shirtless atop a Russian brown bear, thanked the Nobel Peace Prize Committee by firing 37 rounds from a Saiga semiautomatic rifle into the air and drinking deeply from a bottle of local Russian vodka. He then repaired to a tavern to organize a group to set out to terrorize area homosexuals.

Bashar Assad, currently in hiding,

said via Twitter that he was “gratified and humbled” by the Nobel Committee's “vote of confidence” and would continue his efforts to bring a “final peace” to the various factions of his country currently “not at peace.” He later Instagrammed a photograph of himself, in native Arab dress, standing on top of a mountain of skulls, holding up a sign thanking the Oslo-based organization for its award and consideration. He is not expected to attend the ceremony.

To be sure, this award will not be received without controversy. The Nobel Peace Prize Committee has long been subject to international scorn and derision for its choices of honorees, most recently for its 2009 choice, President Barack Obama of the United States. History, of course, has borne out the wisdom of the selection. President Obama has been a champion of the peace process, has delivered several dozen speeches on the topic of peace during his administration, and has interrupted countless rounds of golf and innumerable drone attacks to speak passionately on the topic of speaking passionately on the topic.

For 113 years, the Norwegian Nobel Committee has sought to stimulate precisely that international policy and those attitudes for which Putin and Assad are now the world's leading spokesmen. The Committee endorses Assad's appeal that “now is the time for all of us to take our share of responsibility for a global response to global challenges,” which he made several weeks after murdering thousands of his subjects.

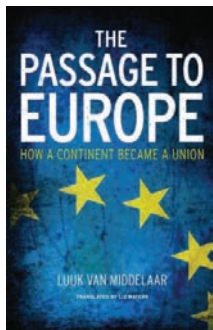
Oslo, October 9, 2014

For more information, please go to [http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2014/press.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2014/press.html).

# Books, Arts & Manners

## Brave New Europe

DANIEL HANNAN



*The Passage to Europe: How a Continent Became a Union*, by Luuk van Middelaar (Yale, 392 pp., \$40)

ON April 18, 1951, in the French foreign ministry's Salon de l'Horloge, six men gathered to sign an accord unlike any other. The Treaty of Paris, which created the European Coal and Steel Community—the first direct ancestor of today's European Union—did not just bind its members as states. Rather, it created a new legal order, superior to national jurisdictions.

The six signatories, scarred by the horrors through which their generation had passed, were looking forward to a time when it would be impossible to wage a European war because the materials needed to sustain one—coal and steel—would be under the control of a supranational bureaucracy.

When the time came for the formal signing, a problem arose. Last-minute negotiations and amendments meant that no official text had been prepared. The six ministers therefore signed an empty piece of paper, and left their officials to fill in the articles. As Luuk van Middelaar, the author of this history,

*Mr. Hannan is a British Conservative member of the European Parliament. His next book, *Inventing Freedom: How the English-Speaking Peoples Made the Modern World*, will be published in November.*

neutrally puts it, “The spirit of the accord stood surety for the letter.”

To British (and, I hope, American) eyes, it is an almost perfect symbol for what has been wrong with the European project from the beginning. The politicians have left the bureaucrats with, figuratively if not always literally, a series of blank sheets. The bureaucrats have spent the past six decades filling in the blanks to suit themselves.

Van Middelaar, an academic philosopher and speechwriter for the EU's president, Herman Van Rompuy, tells the story of those successive power grabs with surprising honesty. He records, with neither enthusiasm nor disapprobation, the way the EU institutions expanded their remit beyond any conceivable reading of the treaties. He coldly sets down the acts of judicial activism by which, in 1963 and 1964, the European Court of Justice proclaimed itself to have supremacy over the national constitutions of the member states, and declared its rulings to have direct effect on individuals and businesses rather than just governments. He recalls the way Eurocrats got around the rejection of their proposed constitution in national referendums by changing its name and imposing it anyway.

Again and again, we see the way Brussels functionaries elevated their project above the law. To give one minor but telling example: Euro-enthusiasts wanted the EU to acquire the trappings of nationhood—a national holiday, a national anthem, a flag, and so on. They knew that at least some of the member states would object to a Euro-flag, so they instead proposed that twelve gold stars on a blue background be adopted as an EU “logo.” Once the national leaders had agreed, they took to printing the “logo” on rectangular pieces of cloth attached to flagpoles.

A more consequential example: The euro-zone bailouts are unequivocally illegal under Article 125 of the treaty, which says that “the Union shall not be liable for, or assume the commitments of, central governments, regional, local or other public authorities, other bodies governed by public law, or public undertakings of any Member State.” This

clause was no mere technicality. It was on the basis of its promise that the Germans agreed to abandon the Deutsche Mark in the first place.

Yet, as soon as it became clear that the euro wouldn't survive without cash transfusions, the treaty was set aside. Christine Lagarde, then France's finance minister and now the director of the International Monetary Fund, boasted about what had happened: “We violated all the rules because we wanted to close ranks and really rescue the euro zone. The Treaty of Lisbon was very straightforward. No bailouts.”

That's the EU for you. Rules are drawn up in the clearest language lawyers can devise; yet, the moment they became inconvenient, they are ignored. As a Portuguese colleague put it to me at the time, “the facts matter more than the legislation.”

Euroskeptics have long complained that the European project is controlled by a self-serving elite. What is unusual is to find a member of that elite—we may be certain that van Middelaar's book will be favorably reviewed by the Euro-bigwigs and will pick up various prizes from Brussels-based foundations—telling the story so straightforwardly. Unlike most Euro-enthusiasts, he doesn't try to pretend that there is public support for a United States of Europe, or that the voters are prey to some kind of false consciousness. He frankly uses such words as “coup” and “revolution” to describe the way Eurocrats have got to where they are today.

Here, in short, is a Machiavellian book. I am not using that word in its loose, derogatory sense. Van Middelaar is a fan of the Italian philosopher, and in particular of his view that statecraft resides in knowing how to take control of events. The EU got to where it is, he shows, by cleverly exploiting opportunities, often in defiance of the will of its peoples.

Do you remember a character in George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* called Syme, a Newspeak philologist who, despite his cynicism about how the tyranny worked, supported it? There were moments, reading this book, when I was reminded of the cold-hearted Syme, who

saw things “too clearly”—and who, in consequence, came to a nasty end.

Not that the EU is an Orwellian dictatorship. Its structures may be undemocratic, its bureaucracy powerful, its propaganda scary; but it doesn't put us in gulags or confiscate our passports. Nor is van Middelbaar any kind of apologist for autocracy. He is plainly a democrat who has written an honest and jargon-free—indeed, almost uniquely in this field, acronym-free—book, seek-

has stoked national antagonisms to a degree not seen since 1945: Read what Greek newspapers say about Germans and vice versa.

The truth is that the EU has now become an end in itself: a mechanism to redistribute wealth from the general population to a favored caste of bureaucrats and rent-seekers. Hence, for example, the delighted tone in which Eurocrats declare that “the euro crisis is over.” They don't mean that the

A centralized government will be more remote, more self-serving, more corrupt, more arbitrary, and more expensive than a dispersed one. The American Founders understood this, and designed their Constitution around the maximum devolution of decision-making. Thomas Jefferson even applied his principles to the Old World, once writing that “it cannot be to our interest that all Europe should be reduced to a single monarchy.”

## The truth is that the EU has now become an end in itself: a mechanism to redistribute wealth from the general population to a favored caste of bureaucrats and rent-seekers.

ing to justify the ways of Brussels to man.

Nonetheless, you're left with a feeling of smallness, almost of tawdriness. The spirit has gone out of the whole scheme. The men who met in the Salon de l'Horloge were idealists, or at least ideologues. They believed, wrongheadedly but sincerely, that merging Europe's nations would forestall national animosities and bring greater prosperity.

Even at the time, their belief was flawed. For centuries, Europe had been economically successful because it was a diverse plurality of competing states rather than a single empire; and jamming different nationalities together without their consent tends to make them more quarrelsome as well as less wealthy. But there is no doubting the honesty of the founders' motives.

Today, the idealists have given way to the employees. Not just the Eurocrats, but the legions around them who have learned how to turn the system to their advantage: the consultants and contractors, the corporates and lobbyists, the “Europe officers” who exist in every professional association, every municipality, every large charity.

No one, five years into the euro crisis, can keep a straight face while citing the original twin justifications for European integration, prosperity and peace. Far from making people wealthier, the euro has left Europe as the only continent on Earth whose economy is shrinking. Far from making countries get on better, it

economy is recovering—as I write, Greece's GDP is down 23 percent since 2008 and falling, unemployment is 28 percent and rising. They mean that the euro will survive. The single currency is not meant to make its users wealthier but to sustain the integrationist project. In order to hold the euro together, Brussels officials are prepared to pay any price—or rather, to *inflict* any price, since they personally are exempt from income tax.

Would any Western European democracy want to join the EU today? The three that haven't—Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland—have lost any interest in accession, and small wonder: They are rich and getting richer, despite the catastrophe on their doorstep. Why, then, do the existing countries stay in? Because of what Milton Friedman brilliantly called “the tyranny of the status quo”: Too many powerful and articulate groups are doing too well out of the present dispensation.

Does this matter to Americans? Not much, on a geopolitical level. It's true that a united Europe tends to be more anti-American than its individual member states, but no one seriously imagines relations breaking down to the point of open hostility. Where the EU might be of interest is as a cautionary tale. Its problems stem, ultimately, from a single design flaw, a flaw written into line 1 of Article 1 of the founding treaty—namely, the commitment to “an ever-closer union.”

Barack Obama evidently knows better. It is surely no coincidence that the most Euro-integrationist of your 43 presidents is also the one keenest on importing elements of Euro-corporatism into the United States.

Centralization happens from the best of motives. Our Eurocrats, like your federal czars, genuinely believe that their expertise gives them a stronger mandate than the ballot box.

Their attitude would be reprehensible even if they actually were experts. But, as time passes, government agencies tend to be taken over by dullards and mediocrities. That's why the EU is in the mess it's in; and why, as the U.S. centralizes power, it is going in the same direction.

This book is as persuasive a defense of the Brussels racket as you'll find, the better for being written clearly and frankly. But one must still ask what the purpose of the EU is. If it was to create a free market, it would have stopped in the 1990s, rather than lurching down the path to tax harmonization, eco-regulation, geographical wealth transfers, and debt pooling. If it was to make a fourth Franco-German war impossible, it would have retired with honor in the late 1960s. But no bureaucracy ever disbands voluntarily. To stay in business, the EU has had to keep extending its authority. The more powerful it becomes, paradoxically, the less it stands for anything. The machine hums on, but the ghost has departed. **NR**



# Post-War Wars

MAX BOOT



*Small Wars, Faraway Places: Global Insurrection and the Making of the Modern World, 1945–1965*, by Michael Burleigh (Viking, 608 pp., \$36)

CIVILIZATION in Asia and Africa is ancient, but the current political map of those continents is strikingly modern: It was largely drawn in the decade or two after World War II. Those were the years when new nations were forged. Burma, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Malaya, Laos, Cambodia, Indonesia, Israel, Kuwait, Qatar, Ghana, Mali, Uganda, Nigeria, Congo, Kenya, Tanzania, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and on and on—the list is a long one. Meanwhile, existing nations from Egypt to China saw changes of regime whose consequences continue to reverberate.

These revolutions had profound consequences for the West. The traditional great powers, Britain and France, lost much of their power and prestige, the loss of India (for Britain) and Algeria (for France) proving particularly traumatic. The United States and the Soviet Union sought to fill the vacuum in ways that embroiled them in brushfire wars—conflicts that proved particularly costly for the United States in the case of Vietnam and Korea and for the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

There is a great story to be told here,

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and Michael Burleigh, a veteran British historian who is best known for his writing on the Third Reich, captures some of the excitement and tumult of those heady years in this book. He sets out to tell “the story of the eclipse” of the European empires, “of the birth of some of the nation-states that replaced them, and of how the U.S. (and the Soviet Union) reacted to those developments.” His narrative begins with the Japanese conquest of Singapore in 1942, which showed that the white man no longer reigned supreme in Asia, and ends with the U.S. war in Vietnam, which confirmed the same les-

(because U.S.-educated) Ahmed Chalabi on Iraq in 2003.” If the Bush administration was attempting to foist Chalabi on the people of Iraq, as is widely believed in anti-war circles, it did a pretty poor job of it, because Chalabi was never appointed to the top job during the period of American occupation. (The post of transitional prime minister went instead to his rival, Ayad Allawi.)

Near the end of the book, Burleigh commits an even bigger mistake. In describing Fidel Castro’s career, he writes: “In 1949 he was offered a contract by the New York Giants. He turned them

This book is filled with significant mistakes that will lead the unwary reader astray.

son. In between, Burleigh provides short accounts of subjects as far afield as the birth of Israel, the origins of the containment doctrine, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Korean War, the Malayan Emergency, the Mau-Mau uprising in Kenya, and the Suez Crisis.

This is an enjoyable, breezy read—perfect for a lazy afternoon at the beach—and it is full of nicely evocative descriptions, such as this summary of post-war rationing in Britain: “Pallid, putty-faced people patiently and resentfully waited in line for hours for . . . basic foodstuffs.” Burleigh has a particularly good eye for the telling detail, for instance noting that two Communist conspirators in Malaya “met in the back row of a dingy cinema showing a Tarzan movie.”

But the book suffers from a glaring defect: It is riddled with errors.

Some of Burleigh’s mistakes are small and harmless. He attributes a quotation to “Vice Admiral Lawton Collins” when he means Vice Admiral Arthur C. Davis; J. Lawton Collins was a general known as “Lightning Joe” and he is correctly cited a few pages later. In the acknowledgments, Burleigh pays tribute to the work of “Professor Walter McDougall of Penn State.” Actually McDougall teaches at the University of Pennsylvania. This is the kind of niggling error that any author can commit and I would not bother mentioning it, were this book not filled with many more significant mistakes that will lead the unwary reader astray.

Burleigh writes casually of the American “attempt to foist the supposedly safe

down.” If Burleigh had bothered to consult Snopes.com, a prominent website devoted to debunking urban myths, he would have learned that this is a tall tale (and that the team that supposedly offered Fidel a contract is usually identified as the Washington Senators). Trying to figure out how Burleigh could have retailed this shopworn canard, I turned to the endnotes and was surprised to find that he does not list any of the standard Castro biographies, by Tad Szulc, Robert Quirk, or Georgie Ann Geyer. (Similarly, he writes about Che Guevara without citing Jon Lee Anderson’s magisterial biography or Che’s own voluminous writings.) Instead the source is listed as the young British writer Alexandra von Tunzelmann’s 2011 book *Red Heat: Conspiracy, Murder, and the Cold War in the Caribbean*, which was criticized in the *New York Times Book Review* for its “scolding” (read: anti-American) tone and its “exaggerations.”

Tunzelmann is also the source of Burleigh’s dubious implication that the Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo was assassinated with the CIA’s aid as a “balancing act so that Latin sympathies would not be so outraged when the CIA organized the death of Fidel Castro.” In fact, while the CIA did consider overthrowing Trujillo—primarily because the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations feared that he was a destabilizing influence in Latin America and that his repressive rule would give rise to another Castro-style revolution—in the end JFK called off the plot before it was carried out. Trujillo was done in by disgruntled

military officers who may or may not have had access to a few rifles provided by the U.S. (the evidence is ambiguous).

This Trujillo implication, alas, is typical of Burleigh's habit of repeating rumor and innuendo as fact. He labels Ngo Dinh Nhu, brother of South Vietnamese president Ngo Dinh Diem, "an opium addict," whereas a recent academic monograph (*Misalliance*, by Dartmouth historian Edward Miller) describes Nhu's supposed drug habit as a "palace rumor" that was believed "by some State Department officials"; it was later denied by one of the generals who overthrew and killed the Diem brothers. In a similar vein, Burleigh passes along as fact—rather than legend—the widely rumored but undocumented claim that mobster Johnny Roselli "pressured Hollywood film producer Harry Cohn to cast Frank Sinatra in *From Here to Eternity*." In fact, Sinatra biographers write that he got the role because director Fred Zinnemann wanted him, and because Sinatra's wife, Ava Gardner, lobbied to overcome Cohn's resistance.

At least these assertions are plausible; they could easily have been mentioned if qualified with some doubts about their veracity. Some of Burleigh's other pronouncements are hard to repeat with a straight face. He writes that during the Indochina war "a third of the French posts that fell were betrayed from within by Viet Minh Trojan whores." A clever line, to be sure, and no doubt this happened occasionally, but can it really be the case that fully a third of all French outposts fell because of treachery by prostitutes-cum-Communist agents?

It is equally hard to believe that President Lyndon Johnson "insisted on being briefed on military operations in real time as well as concerning each U.S. combat death." If this were the case, considering the loss of more than 36,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam during his five years in office and the time difference between Washington and Saigon, the president would have had little time to do anything else—even sleep.

Just as fantastic is Burleigh's claim that Vietnam, which since 1945 has been one of the most militarized societies on earth (it has more troops than Britain and Germany combined), is a "predominantly pacifist" country.

Along with dubious "facts" come dubious interpretations and analyses. Burleigh writes that "hearts-and-minds

campaigns only worked once kinetic force—a euphemism for killing people—had achieved population and spatial control, as such contemporary adepts as General David Petraeus do not readily acknowledge in their apparent unawareness that the Japanese also pioneered this style of warfare." In reality, Petraeus was fully aware of the need to use force in Iraq and Afghanistan—the number of Iraqis killed and detained went up dramatically during the "surge"—but he also realized that military operations had to be scrupulously targeted and carefully calibrated to avoid alienating the population, as the Japanese did with their brutal and indiscriminate attacks on civilians.

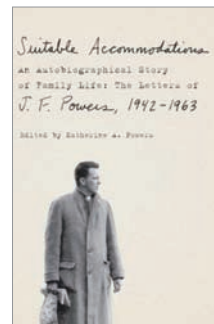
Later, Burleigh claims that in 1948 veteran diplomat Loy Henderson "had been eased out of the Near Eastern and African Affairs Department at State because of his refusal to subordinate U.S. policy in the Middle East to the vocal Zionist lobby." A more objective way to put it is that Henderson was "eased out"—to become U.S. ambassador to India—because of his refusal to subordinate his own anti-Israel animus to President Truman's support for the Jewish state.

A final example: Burleigh cites maverick Marine major general Smedley Butler's claim that he had been "a high-class thug for Big Business, for Wall Street and the bankers" as the last word on the early-20th-century Banana Wars. He doesn't mention that Butler wrote those words after being passed over for Marine Corps commandant, a post he had earned by seniority, or that, in his enforced retirement, Butler became a pacifist, an America Firster, and a follower of populist firebrand Huey Long. In other words, he is not the most objective source to cite on Washington's tangled history of relations with Latin America.

It is a shame that Burleigh and his editors—he credits one in London and another in New York—were not more careful in policing the many errors that dot *Small Wars*, *Faraway Places* like IEDs along a guerrilla-controlled road. He is a distinguished historian with a reader-friendly writing style and a great subject matter, as well as conservative (if non-interventionist) views that would be congenial to most readers of NATIONAL REVIEW. With a little more care and attention, he could have produced a much better book. **NR**

# Family Man

MICAH MATTIX



*Suitable Accommodations: An Autobiographical Story of Family Life: The Letters of J. F. Powers, 1942-1963*, by J. F. Powers (Farrar, Straus, 480 pp., \$35)

**D**URING his most productive years—from 1942 to 1962—J. F. Powers published two volumes of short stories and one novel, *Morte d'Urban*. The novel—a subtle and witty tale of an upper-Midwest priest who tries to remove "the curse of mediocrity" from his order—was praised by Evelyn Waugh, Philip Roth, and Gore Vidal, and won the 1963 National Book Award over Vladimir Nabokov and John Updike. Powers, who was perpetually broke, had hoped it would be a great financial success, allowing him to finally live "as I'd like to," as he put it in his journal—which meant not working, and writing only when he felt like it. It wasn't.

The first run was plagued by textual errors and a botched wording of Waugh's endorsement. Review copies arrived late or were never sent. According to Powers, Doubleday regularly bungled orders or failed to supply stores with enough copies. The National Book Award was a boon, but a New York City newspaper strike from December 8, 1962, to March 31, 1963, hampered coverage of the March 12 ceremony.

Powers's expectations were unrealistically high from the beginning, but

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it's hard to find fault with his disappointment that, after a year on the market, a major literary award, and the praise of many respected critics, the book had sold just over 25,000 copies. The "great experiment," he declared in August 1963, "with the great American (and British) reading public is over, so far as I am concerned." Over the next 36 years, he published just one more collection of stories and a second novel.

Powers is one of the 20th century's great prose stylists. His stories and novels dealing with the less sacred aspects of the priestly vocation—raising money for new buildings, maintaining old ones, schmoozing wealthy parishioners, and placating old or inept colleagues—scintillate with humor, pitch-perfect dialogue, and tight narrative. While both Evelyn Waugh and Denis Donoghue have suggested that Powers is more gifted as a short-story writer than as a novelist, both *Morte d'Urban* and *Wheat That Springeth Green* (1988) create worlds that have a powerful, sustained pull on the imagination.

It may be that Powers wrote so little because he became bitter about the lack of interest in his work. He had been pigeonholed as a Catholic and regional writer, and by the mid 1960s, as Joseph Bottum argued in 2006, Americans were no longer interested in "scenes of clerical life . . . in the bleak, wind-swept parish houses of the Midwest." Another contributing factor, as a recent collection of his letters shows us, is that he was, well, lazy.

In this book, edited by Katherine A. Powers, his daughter, we learn that Powers did have a particular affection and skill for all sorts of unprofitable labor. He enjoyed the track, walks, and listening to music and baseball on the radio. (He once confessed that at 3:00 P.M. he could most likely be found at the track "with as much as ten shillings riding on a race.") He became interested in boxing for a period and occasionally became interested in politics (though he described himself as "nonpolitical"). But most of all he enjoyed visiting or writing friends, including Robert Lowell, local priest and lifelong friend Harvey Egan, Waugh, and others.

In his correspondence, we find a man of considerable wit. On the unimaginative practicality of Germans, Powers writes: "I have often wondered why they didn't try to prove, somewhere along the line, that Jesus Christ received a gold watch for 33 years of service." On his aunt's self-righteous frugality: "It is as though, comes the Last Judgment, there will be but one question: Did you ever throw anything away?" On Catholic films: "If you would shake my faith, let me see a movie made under Catholic auspices." On car maintenance: "If there is anything that looks bad, it is a car with missing hubcaps, I think. Better you lose your manhood than your hubcaps."

His comments on his idleness can charm, up to a point. "I wonder if I am physically deficient," he writes in an early letter to a friend, "or whether indolence has reached the tertiary state with me. . . . I think if I had nothing to do—no work—I'd be all right." But other references sound more desperate: "Out of gas—creatively," he writes in 1959, "I feel absolutely powerless these days to prevent financial ruin." Over a year later, he writes: "I find I'm worse off this year than last at this time, novel within three chapters of being finished, but nothing in the bank, advance on royalties at an end, no stories out or in the works, and one week more in this office."

Katherine Powers remarks that her father had for many years planned to write a novel about "family life." "It was to be," she explains, "in some fashion, the story of a writer, an artist, with bright prospects, a taste for the good things in life, and an expectation of camaraderie as he made his way in the world. The man falls in love, gets married, has numerous children—but has neither money nor home." The novel was not written.

The letters, Katherine Powers suggests, tell an often unhappy story of "folie à deux." She's right. J. F. Powers met Betty Wahl after one of her former teachers at the College of St. Benedict, in St. Joseph, Minn., had sent Powers a short story by Wahl and asked for feedback. Powers did not read the story immediately, but when he did, he was impressed. He eventually traveled to meet Wahl in November 1945. He fell in love and proposed marriage two days later. She accepted. She was 21, he 28. They were married five months later.

There were warnings of what was to come in his early letters to Wahl. Less than a month after their meeting, Powers warns Wahl: "I am worried about making a living, as I confessed to you again and again, because I won't go about it in the ordinary way—eight hours out of my life daily so that the system may prosper and the crapshooters running it. . . . I have no intention of letting you go, but if you have that idea (and I can't believe you have), I want you to get rid of it."

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## OCTOBER

Deep woods Down East, we're cabined, cribbed, confined,  
And bedded down. Up through an oculus,  
The wiry asters glint—and wink, though they are blind.  
All day, the rifle shots have shaken us  
With their reports; their distant echoes, once  
So like the *pock* of butting boxcars, all  
Have joined the stillness; now we do not wince,  
But concentrate our focus on the sprawl  
Of firmament that's sparged above our heads.  
The woodstove that submits its mite of heat  
To warm us in our heavily swaddled beds  
Gives up at last. Then prostrate in defeat  
Ourselves, we shut our eyes on night and stars,  
On dying fire and sky, till sleep is ours.

—LEN KRISAK



Powers seems to have always genuinely cared for Wahl. His letters to her over the years are often playful and touching. But he would stick to his words until he took a more or less regular teaching position at Northwestern University in 1975. He regularly refused teaching offers, though the family (which eventually included five children) always badly needed money.

Wahl, who was a gifted writer if less talented than Powers, put her writing on hold to manage the Powers household. She had published stories in *The New Yorker* and would publish a novel in 1969, but believed that it was her husband who was “destined by providence to fulfill the role of artist.” If not for the heroic self-sacrifice of Betty Powers and the help of the Wahl family, who regularly gave the Powers family money or provided them with free housing, Powers would have written even less or nothing at all.

The other part of the Powers story, which must be mostly deduced, is the fact that he was an absent or uninterested father. There is almost no mention of his children in these letters, except a few references to their health and a single letter in 1954 addressed to the two oldest girls and his son. Powers would regularly spend Thanksgiving or Christmas away from his immediate family and once joked that “there should be an organization that would make it possible for family men to spend holidays away from home.” “Betty and I weren’t meant to have children,” Powers once admitted. “Our mistake was getting mixed up in that Catholic business called Family Life years ago. That was for farmers, not for us, but we didn’t know any better.”

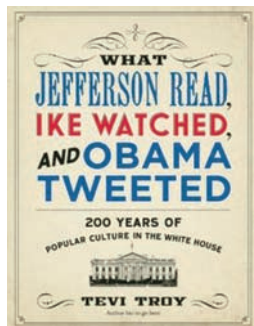
Powers claims never to have considered the priesthood, but his letters often give the impression that the male camaraderie it might have offered would have very much suited him. His novels are full of such camaraderie, and we see Powers in his element in his letters to his friends, and especially in stories of visits to Waugh, Ezra Pound, Theodore Roethke, and others.

In short, these are the letters of a failed family man, but also of a humble, sometimes defeated man of disarming wit, with the mot juste always at his call as he suffers through the losing battles of life.

NR

# POTUS and Circuses

BETSY WOODRUFF



*What Jefferson Read, Ike Watched, and Obama Tweeted: 200 Years of Popular Culture in the White House*, by Tevi Troy (Regnery, 332 pp., \$18.95)

WHEN Chris Christie was asked how he could simultaneously love Bruce Springsteen’s music and hate his politics, he famously responded: “I compartmentalize.”

Conservatives who don’t want to limit their pop-culture diet to Kid Rock and Meat Loaf have to do a lot of compartmentalization these days. For instance, before a dinner with a leading congressional Republican a few months ago, NATIONAL REVIEW publisher Jack Fowler was—as he is wont to do—singing under his breath; and he seemed surprised when I let him know that “To the left, to the left” is from a Beyoncé song. Now, nobody doesn’t like Beyoncé: It’s science. But many people, while enjoying her music, aren’t huge fans of the Grammy-winning singer’s political proclivities.

Something is wrong with you if you don’t at least sort of love “Love on Top”; and something was (probably) wrong with Beyoncé when, in a rare breach of her legendary social-media decorum, she posted a handwritten note to her Tumblr saying “TAKE THAT MITCHES” on election night. The post disappeared shortly after, but still. Compartmentalize, compartmentalize, compartmentalize.

While it’s no secret that Republicans’ relationship with pop culture is a little

fraught, the behavior of Democrats’ celebrity supporters sometimes raises questions as to whether they may be doing the Democrats more harm than good. In this new book, Tevi Troy, a presidential historian and alumnus of the George W. Bush administration, explores the fascinating, messy, and often amusing connections between presidents and pop culture.

In the process, Troy has probably written the unsexiest pop-culture book imaginable—and that’s not a bad thing. He seems to have limited interest in appealing to readers’ lesser angels. The book is straightforward and linear, with extensive notes. Condensing a 200-year narrative into just about 250 pages of text isn’t an easy feat, but Troy succeeds admirably. The book is an entertaining refresher course on the personalities who have filled the White House. Think of it as beach reading for nerds, more *U.S. News & World Report* than *Us Weekly*.

That’s not to say the book is sterile. It’s sprinkled with little micro-scandals that you probably didn’t know about unless you were an American-studies major or once got locked in the Smithsonian. For instance, Troy details the national eyebrow-raising that happened when, as vice president, Harry Truman played piano for servicemen “with a young Lauren Bacall perched on top of the piano dangling her long legs.” It’s a far cry from Katy Perry in a minidress, but it caused quite a stir—from Troy’s description, probably more of a controversy than was occasioned by any of President Obama’s interactions with starlets—and the man who would soon drop two nuclear bombs was reduced to complaining that “I couldn’t be Harry Truman and vice president at the same time.”

Troy draws out some of the interesting tensions that present themselves as soon as the worlds of entertainment and policymaking start to intertwine. “The leader of a free and democratic nation must appear to be engaged in his country’s culture,” Troy writes, “but he must do so without letting the coarseness and vulgarity of that culture diminish himself or his office.” Readers are largely on their own to determine whether or not the interactions Troy chronicles have sullied the presidency; Troy keeps his editorializing to a mini-

mum.

For instance, he alludes to American cultural decline, and suggests that it goes hand in hand with the demeaning of the presidency. That's a fascinating theory, but Troy doesn't really expand on it. Instead of insisting on his thesis in a heavy-handed manner, he simply lays out a number of examples of the interplay between pop-culture figures and America's better-known presidents. This dispassionate tone wins Troy the reader's trust, as does his near-mathematical focus on detail. The book almost feels more like a college textbook than a Barnes & Noble-friendly tome of pop history.

Troy starts by delving into George Washington's affinity for the theater, a taste that didn't enjoy universal approbation in his day. (The Puritan view of the stage had not quite died out by the late 18th century.) Some of Troy's later anecdotes, though entertaining, seem to stretch the definition of pop culture a bit. For instance, he recounts a story about Theodore Roosevelt's disappearance on a train. After a search, he was found "in the lavatory straining to read W. E. H. Lecky's *History of Rationalism in Europe* by the only available light." Now, I have to admit that I haven't had a chance to finish Lecky's *History of Rationalism in Europe* quite yet; but I struggle to think of a definition of pop culture that would include such a volume.

That's a decent microcosm of how the book goes: It seems more concerned with the presidential side of its equation than the pop-culture side; it will offer more to students of political history than to those studying cultural trends. Troy's depiction of the get-off-my-lawn cantankerousness of Truman and Eisenhower also shows how this plays out. Troy quotes Truman as saying, about rock and roll, "I was taught to appreciate good music, not this damn noise they play today." And Troy says that Eisenhower was aghast to learn that Elvis Presley used the melodies from "O sole mio" and "Army Blue" for "It's Now or Never" and "Love Me Tender"; Ike is even reported to have considered "banning the music from his range of hearing." Contra the book's subtitle, these tidbits have to do with pop culture being out of the White House rather than allowed in. But who cares? Harry Truman sounds a little bit like Clint East-

wood in *Gran Torino*, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

Perhaps my biggest quibble with the book is its relative lack of engagement with the pop-cultural controversies involving the current president. While Troy gives a detailed account of the role radio broadcasts played in FDR's presidency, there's little to no discussion of Beyoncé's inaugural lip-synching, Nicki Minaj's faux-repudiation of President Obama's economic policies, or Lupe Fiasco's very real repudiation of his foreign policy. There are books to be written on Obama's relationship with hip-hop. This is not such a book. That's okay; but there's so much to work with, and the conversation on the topic would have benefited from Troy's shrewd eye.

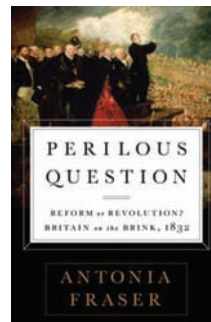
Take the Nicki Minaj incident: A rapper raps that she's voting for Romney because "lazy b\*\*ches are f\*\*king up the economy" and there's unabated Twitter rage until the president—the president!—steps in and says he thinks Minaj's comments were made in character and not meant to be taken as expressing her personal view. And he's right, and she confirms it! Is hip-hop exegesis beneath the dignity of the presidency? How did we get from Eisenhower's contempt for Elvis to a world where the president understands the intricacies of a rapper's lyrics better than almost everyone on the Internet? Does Obama's affinity for hip-hop reduce the dignity of his office or elevate that medium? I'm inclined to believe the latter (and I think it's a very good thing), but I would have loved to hear Troy's perspective.

As for Beyoncé, Troy touches on her relationship with the Obamas, but leaves out much that is interesting. A book that includes lots of detail on Jimmy Carter's reading habits somehow makes little of the fact that the preeminent pop female vocalist of our time *lip-synched* the *national anthem* at the president's *inauguration*—and then said she had done it . . . to save her voice for the Super Bowl.

That speaks volumes about the relation, today, between the presidency and pop culture. Troy should have made more of it. But this is a relatively minor complaint; his book has much to offer readers curious about the interplay between presidents and entertainers over the long sweep of U.S. history. **NR**

# Democracy In Britain

KELLY JANE TORRANCE



*Perilous Question: Reform or Revolution? Britain on the Brink, 1832*, by Antonia Fraser  
(PublicAffairs, 352 pp., \$29.99)

**T**HIS lively book by Lady Antonia Fraser more than delivers on the promise of its dramatic title. It was the maneuvering of the early 1830s that began to make the Britain we know today—and prevented the emergence of a more disturbingly defiant one that we happily don't.

The very modern Lady Antonia—her last book was a memoir of her sometimes scandalous life with her late second husband, the playwright Harold Pinter—offers a Whiggish history of this period of Whig rule, focusing as she does on a conflict that ended in a glorious reform, rather than a revolution, owing to the monumental efforts of a handful of great men. For her, the political is very much the personal: Letters, recollections, and biographies make up much of her source material. Some of the details she recounts, such as the death of the 13-year-old grandson of the prime minister, are given rather too much importance in the story of the passage of the bill that would come to be called the Great Reform Act. Fraser also spends too much time examining the scant evidence regarding the influence of King William IV's much younger German wife, Queen Adelaide, on the politics of her adopted country. But Fraser's personality-centered approach makes for more engrossing reading than

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one would expect of a volume centered on the vagaries of the British Parliament in the 1830s.

That period did mark the beginning of a great age of British thinkers and writers. Though the childless William IV's niece, Victoria, did not begin her long reign until 1837, many insightful historians date the start of the "Victorian era" to 1832 and the passage of the First Reform Bill.

It was the fall of another icon, in 1830, that marked the first move toward reform. After the first Duke of Wellington defeated Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815, it had seemed as though there was nothing he couldn't do. But, as Fraser astutely observes, the idolized war hero's "aloofness from popular reality" kept him from perceiving that the agitated British public would not be calmed by anything but reform—a word Wellington couldn't even utter when he declared that no "measure of this nature" would be brought forward while he was prime minister. Fraser writes, with some understatement, that "since men were a great deal more complex than muskets, Lord Grey had a point when he declared that Wellington did not understand 'the character of the times.'"

When Wellington's Tory government fell, Charles Grey, leader of the Whigs, became prime minister. Thus the Iron Duke—an odd moniker for a general who wept in public more than once—was replaced by the former ladies' man who was widely known to have had an illegitimate daughter with the married Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire. (And Americans think of Victorians as a bunch of prudes.)

Grey's first declaration as head of government was a promise to enact the parliamentary reform that had cost Wellington his reputation. It must have been a gratifying moment: Grey, then 66, had entered Parliament at the age of 22 and presented his first petition demanding electoral reform before he was 30. But though the system was so obviously corrupt and the people so plainly agitated by it—and a prime minister's refusal to fix it had wrenched him from power—it would take two years of politicking that left him "verged on the cadaverous" for Grey to succeed at last.

The Industrial Revolution had created a new middle class in Great Britain and would soon help make the country the world's first superpower, but politics hadn't yet caught up with economics.

Commercial cities at the center of Britain's rising prosperity had grown rapidly, but this growth was not reflected in Parliament. Over half a million people lived in Birmingham, Manchester, Leeds, and Sheffield, but not one of those cities sent a member to Parliament. Rotten boroughs and pocket boroughs, meanwhile, had become notorious. Fifty-six rotten boroughs had populations under 50 but still sent two MPs each to Parliament, usually Tories. Pocket boroughs were constituencies small enough to be controlled by a single landowner—who could bribe voters to choose the correct candidate, or evict them if they chose the wrong one—because the secret ballot wasn't used in national elections. (It was enacted in 1872.) "Of 658 members of Parliament," the scholar Richard D. Altick has noted, "only some 234 were elected by any sizable body of voters."

Bristol, a port city, was fortunate enough to have two MPs—meaning its 100,000 residents had the same representation as, for example, Old Sarum, a small piece of land near Salisbury that was officially uninhabited. Only 6,000 of those 100,000 Bristol residents could vote. When the House of Lords rejected the Reform Bill that had passed overwhelmingly in the House of Commons after the 1831 election, called as a referendum on the matter of reform, riots flared throughout much of Britain, but nowhere worse than in Bristol. When Sir Charles Wetherell, an Ultra-Tory Bristol magistrate who also served as one of the two MPs for Boroughbridge, returned to the city, he was greeted with rocks and rotten eggs, and escaped likely death by fleeing the city in disguise. Fraser estimates that 400 rioters died in the struggle.

The "scene of desolation" in Bristol, as Dickens referred to it in a poem, was just one of many. There were so many casualties over those testy two years that Britain's avoidance of revolution—which had already repeated itself in nearby France and would do so again, and spread throughout Europe—seems a frighteningly close-run thing. But Grey and his team of reformers carefully navigated the many minefields, and instead of monarchs on the chopping block and decades of deadly instability, Britain saw "commemorative jugs, pots and basins": Grey's face would end up on gin flasks "and there were other images for toothbrush boxes."

As a result of the bill Grey passed in 1832, about 220,000 men were newly franchised, for a total of 656,000—"an approximate increase," as Fraser writes, "from 3.2 percent to 4.7 percent of the population." The Parliament convened under the new rules was not filled with men from the middle class, about half of whom had just been enfranchised (the 1832 bill was the first to exclude women explicitly from the vote, and it also disenfranchised a small number of the working class who had the ability to vote in some constituencies). More than 200 of its members were peers or baronets. And the hereditary House of Lords retained its influence, rejecting for years Commons-passed legislation, including measures that would have secured some civil rights for Jews.

But Great Britain was now firmly set on a path from which it would prove unable to waver. The Reform Act of 1867 would enfranchise a million more men, many of them in the working class; in 1884, the Third Reform Act would extend the vote to agricultural workers and, therefore, to the majority of men in the country. (Women were not trusted with the vote until 1918, when those over 30 got it, and 1928, when age discrimination between male and female voters ended.)

The Duke of Wellington gave up a chance to regain power because he could not, in good conscience, help pass a compromise on this issue: He was convinced, like many Tories of the time, that reform would lead inevitably to revolution. The happy circumstance that it did not is owing to the work of a remarkable generation of public-minded Englishmen—enlightened noblemen, middle-class leaders, and self-educated working-class men who urged their fellows to pursue political change using nonviolent means. One Radical, tailor Francis Place, who had been raised in the debtor's prison in which his father served as bailiff, ominously declared in 1830 that "no corrupt system ever yet reformed itself." His own efforts—which included plans to create a run on the banks and organize a widespread refusal to pay taxes in the event that the anti-reform Wellington made it back into power—helped prove him wrong. Many peers and parliamentarians were certain that a strong Britain required a weak people. They lost the battle over reform, and the whole world benefited from that result. **NR**



Film

# A Cornetto Fanfare

ROSS DOUTHAT

**I**F you were to ask me to name the best action director working today—scene for scene, fist for fist, bullet for bullet, fireball for fireball—I would be sorely tempted to choose a filmmaker who has never made a traditional action movie at all. He is an Englishman named Edgar Wright, and if you haven't heard of him, that means that you're probably unacquainted with one of the most unusual treats in recent cinema: the so-called Cornetto trilogy—named for a British ice-cream snack that makes a cameo in each—which consists of 2004's *Shaun of the Dead*, 2007's *Hot Fuzz*, and now this year's *The World's End*.

Each of these films features the same two actors: Simon Pegg (also Wright's screenwriting collaborator) and Nick Frost, whose contrasting, Jack Sprat-and-his-wife physiques—Pegg a skinny live wire, Frost pear-shaped and bear-faced—make them effective partners in slapstick and mayhem. In *Shaun*, they were London housemates hoping to ride out a zombie apocalypse in the safety of their favorite pub. In *Fuzz*, they were odd-couple cops going to Bruckheimerian lengths to solve a string of murders in the quintessential tidy little English village.

Now they're the long-estranged best friends at the heart of a five-man crew of erstwhile drinking buddies (the other members of the crew are played by Martin Freeman, Paddy Considine, and Eddie Marsan), returning to Newton Haven, the placid suburb they all decamped from 20 years before, to complete some unfinished business from their high-school days. The night following their graduation, they had attempted an epic pub crawl, dubbed "the golden mile," which included stops at all twelve bars within Newton Haven's limits. The original crawl petered out around pub number 10, but this time, with middle age encroaching, they're determined to reach the final watering hole: *The World's End*.

Or rather, Pegg's character, Gary King,



Nick Frost, Eddie Marsan, Simon Pegg, Paddy Considine, and Martin Freeman in *The World's End*

is determined to go all the way, and the rest are reluctantly along for the ride. In high school, Gary's social status lived up to his last name, but it's been all downhill since then: He's a scruffy alcoholic burnout, with the fast-talking prevarication of the species, and this reunion is obviously his attempt to roll back time's remorseless wheel. His friends, who have mostly done better for themselves, have to be sold on the idea, and, in the case of Frost's character, Andy, a recovering alcoholic, actively deceived into taking part in it. But predictably enough, they all turn out to have their own unfinished business in Newton Haven, from the bully who made life hell for Marsan's Peter to the girl (now a woman, and played delightfully by Rosamund Pike) whom Considine's Steven has been carrying a torch for all these years.

But since this is an installment of the Cornetto trilogy, the conventional set-up—*The Big Chill* with blokes and beers—eventually gives way, around the middle of the movie, to an extravagant genre parody. Newton Haven, it turns out, hasn't just been conquered by dull suburban conformity (the pubs all look alike now, the guys complain, and nobody seems to remember their epic high-school years). It's gone the way of its American counterpart in the original *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* and been taken over by alien life forms from deep space.

Exactly how and why the body snatching is happening takes a while to figure out (the replacements seem to be robots, of a sort, though their offense at that term is one of the movie's running gags), and I'm not quite sure I ever did get a handle on the mechanics of the invaders' plan. But even after our gang has knocked the heads off several Newton Havenites and

watched them leak blue paint, their original plan for the evening remains basically the same. Lest the body snatchers realize that they're on to what's been happening, Gary insists, they need to keep up appearances and finish out the pub crawl. So finish they do, with the predictable result that the barstools of the final stop double as front-row seats for Armageddon.

As this plot summary suggests, Wright's movies work on a peculiar combination of wavelengths: They are both fondly intimate send-ups of England and Englishness (the pubs, the villages, the self-effacement) and expansive, brilliantly choreographed send-ups of American blockbusters. And somehow—because of the cast, the writing, and Wright's remarkable facility for shooting action sequences—the combination turns out to be more winning than anyone could have expected.

I don't know if *The World's End* is quite the most effective entry in the trilogy. For one thing, unlike zombie movies and Bruckheimer-esque shoot-'em-ups, the body-snatcher story isn't really a genre unto itself, and so has fewer instantly recognizable tropes to exploit and send up. For another, the mood is somewhat darker than in the first two films, and sometimes that darkness gets a bit too real for comfort. That Pegg's lost-soul protagonist occasionally evokes Nicolas Cage in *Leaving Las Vegas* is an acting success, but not necessarily a comedic one.

But even with these weaknesses and dissonances, the overall package is nearly as entertaining as its predecessors. So if you like America, or England, or the movies, or the world in general, it's worth giving *The World's End* a try. When you're tired of the Cornetto trilogy, you're tired of life. **NR**

## The Taboo Cliché

**N**UMEROUS books promise to pull back the veil on “the last taboo.” Some are surprisingly dull-sounding, given the sales pitch. I’m sure the authors of *The Last Taboo: A Survival Guide to Mental Health Care in Canada* have nothing but helpful observations, but I doubt many 14-year-old boys are furtively hiding copies under their beds. The same goes for *The Last Taboo: Opening the Door on the Global Sanitation Crisis*. And if your kid is hiding his copy of *The Last Taboo: Women and Body Hair*, well, good luck with that.

It’s not just book authors. Writers of all stripes want to claim a little bravery on the cheap by tackling taboos. A 2008 article in the *New York Times* tells us that “many over 35 consider the last taboo in American life” to be—wait for it—“discussing salary openly with friends and colleagues.” A 2010 issue of the *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*—don’t tell me you let your subscription lapse—suggests that acknowledging “management mistakes” is “seen as the last taboo of society.” One website hosts a fascinating discussion on “Opioids and back pain: the last taboo.”

It’s hard to imagine John Cleese doing a *Fawlty Towers* bit where instead of “Don’t mention the war!” he says “Don’t mention the relationship between opioids and back pain!” More to the point, it seems fairly obvious that not *all* of these worthy subjects can be the last taboo. But “Number 17 on the List of Taboos” doesn’t have the same sizzle.

Of course, most discussions of taboo in America are about subjects with a better claim to the title: incest, pedophilia, homosexuality, euthanasia, bestiality, and other conversation topics sure to get Grandma to drop her turkey leg at Thanksgiving. But the idea that even these subjects are taboo would be laughable save for the fact that they aren’t necessarily funny.

Recently the *Washington Post* ran an essay by Betsy Karasik, a “writer and former lawyer,” making an impassioned case for a more open and tolerant attitude toward student-teacher sex. While many were outraged by the leniency of a 30-day jail sentence for Montana high-school teacher Stacey Dean Rambold, who pled guilty to raping a 14-year-old girl who later committed suicide, Karasik found herself “troubled for the opposite reasons.” She wondered if the hysteria over a 30-day sentence was a sign of a society not mature enough to deal with the fact that sex between students and teachers is not such a big deal. “When I was growing up in the 1960s and ’70s, the sexual boundaries between teachers and students were much fuzzier. Throughout high school, college and law school, I knew students who had sexual relations with teachers.” Good times, good times.

Richard Dawkins, a high priest of atheism, recently

offered a modest defense of “mild pedophilia” in an interview with the *Times* of London. When he was in school, one of his schoolmasters “pulled me on his knee and put his hand inside my shorts.” The same sort of thing happened to his mates. “I don’t think he did any of us lasting harm.” Dawkins is a bit like that “George the Boor” character in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* reminiscing about his days in boarding school. “I was at school with his brother Bufty. Tremendous bloke. He was head of my house. Bugged me senseless. Still, it taught me about life.”

Robin Thicke recently explained what he was thinking with one of his music videos. “We tried to do everything that was taboo. Bestiality, drug injections, and everything that is completely derogatory towards women.” Soak in the courage, people. Nearly every day there is another preening, posturing, brave essay in some left-wing publication or journal calling for a serious effort to abolish unjust taboos. The *Guardian* recently ran an essay titled “Paedophilia: Bringing Dark Desires to Light” that argued that the desire to abuse children sexually is just another “sexual orientation.” Over at Big Think, a website so misnamed it should invite a Federal Trade Commission lawsuit, putative big thinker Jacob Appel writes: “Prostitution, Polygamy, Incest and Bestiality. I would argue that all of them should be legal” (he never explains why they Should All Be Capitalized). Appel does allow for the fact that some forms of bestiality might amount to animal cruelty, warranting government regulation. But so long as a man takes his time romancing a sheep (“Ewe had me at hello”), what business is it of ours?

“People say they are concerned about the welfare of the individuals, but what they are really interested in doing is imposing their own social values, or their own religious values on other people. And that’s what really concerns me.”

The proper answer to this supposedly mind-blowing insight is, “Well, duh.”

“Imposing social values” is the clunky verb form of the noun “society.” It is what societies *do*. And that is what is so frustrating about all of this talk of “last taboos.” Ultimately a society is a taboo-generating institution. And while it’s absolutely true that some taboos are disappearing, we are also constantly generating new ones. What is political correctness if not the Taboo-Industrial Complex of the left?

The problem is that we don’t call the new forbidden topics “taboo” because we’ve convinced ourselves that the idea of a taboo is itself illegitimate (in much the same way, we never call the censorship we approve of “censorship”). In other words, we subscribe to an ironic fiction that taboos are taboo.

But the truth is that every society forbids or discourages consideration or discussion of some things. The only question is whether the new taboos are an improvement over the old ones. My hunch is that the sheep have the right answer.

NR

*Mr. Goldberg is substituting for Mark Steyn.*



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