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That the civil-rights movement organized to advance the condition of black Americans is a fitting and natural precedent to the movement organized to advance the condition of gay Americans is an exercise in question-begging, one that is, given the American temperament, almost inevitable. *Kevin D. Williamson*

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Letters

Mr. Republican's Military

In "Conservatarianism" (March 23), Charles C. W. Cooke characterizes "the Right's traditional approach to defense" as being based on the "sober recognition that the global order requires a strong power [namely, the U.S.] to underwrite its security."

AP PHOTO/JOHN LINDSAY

Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio was "Mr. Republican" of the 1940s and '50s and narrowly lost the Republican presidential nomination to Eisenhower in 1952. His credentials as a "traditional" conservative are impeccable. He had this to say about the use of military force in a speech to the American Assembly on May 22, 1951:

> My view is that American foreign policy should be directed primarily to the protection of the liberty of the people of the United States, and that war should only be undertaken when necessary to protect that liberty, that we are not justified in going to war simply to increase the standard of living of the people throughout the world, or to protect their liberty unless such protection is necessary for our own defense. . . .There is one policy and only one policy which can destroy this nation—the commitment to projects beyond our capacity to fulfill.

Taft saw a leadership role for America, but not a leadership based on power. In his book *A Foreign Policy for Americans* (1951), he said that we should assume "moral leadership . . . in impressing on the world that only through liberty and law and justice . . . can [it] hope to obtain the standards which we have attained in the United States."

Traditional conservatives such as Taft supported the selective application of American power (he supported the Korean War, for example) but not its use to underwrite the security of the "global order." Sadly, this misreading of history limits the usefulness of Mr. Cooke's article as a blueprint for an alliance between conservatives and libertarians.

David E. Steuber
Mineral Point, Wis.

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The Week

■ The Left predicted that Jon Stewart's succession by a biracial foreigner would be greeted with hate and fear from paranoid, partisan zealots. And they were right.

■ Clean as a hound's tooth, or a Hillary server. Representative Trey Gowdy (R., S.C.), head of the House Benghazi probe, was told by Clinton lawyer David Kendall (of impeachment fame) that the private server on which Mrs. Clinton conducted business during her tenure as secretary of state was now blank, because she had wiped it after turning her job-related e-mails over to the State Department. She turned them over years after she left office and only when the House asked for them, and she herself decided what was job-related and what was not. Assume there was nothing—Benghazi-related, Clinton Foundation–related, anything-related—that might now embarrass Mrs. Clinton. The fact remains that she operates, by preference, secretly and outside regular channels. She did so as first lady, she does so still, she would do so as president. That may be the norm in jerkwater countries like Kazakhstan or the Congo, but it should not be the norm in the United States.

■ Senator Ted Cruz is the first Republican to formally announce that he is running for president next year. We heartily welcome his candidacy. This publication is a longstanding fan of his, dating back to before he was the longshot conservative candidate facing down Texas's political establishment in 2012. (He had a distinguished legal career before he entered national politics.) Since joining the Senate, he has been a relentless scourge of the Left and, frequently, of the leadership of his own party. This has made him a hated figure, not just in the Democratic cloakroom and the media, but also among elements within his own party's establishment. Often, the criticisms made of Cruz are unfair at best, and completely unhinged at worst. The legitimate critique is that he has shown more interest in rhetorical flourish and tactical maximalism than in prudent strategy and policy entrepreneurship. Cruz is fearless, but some of that courage should be devoted to pushing a novel, positive conservative agenda. (Senators such as Mike Lee and Marco Rubio have outshone Cruz in this regard.) If Cruz does so, it will be good for his candidacy, and the country.

■ Where does Scott Walker stand on immigration? He and his spokesman have, intentionally or not, clouded the issue. Walker, March 1: "My view has changed. I'm flat-out saying it." Spokesman, March 26: "His position has not changed." We know that he used to support "comprehensive immigration reform," including a path to citizenship for illegal immigrants; now Walker opposes that path and his spokesman calls it "amnesty." Near as we can tell, he remains open to offering illegal immigrants legal status. The questions Republican voters should now ask: What does it mean for enforcement to come "first"? It ought to preclude handing out visas to illegal immigrants before we see whether new enforcement methods work (and are allowed by courts to work). Is Walker still for increasing low-skilled immigration, as the legislation he once backed would do? If Walker has crossed the border into the hawkish camp, we are happy to welcome him to put down roots here.

ROMAN GENN

■ James Baker has been a virtual member of the Bush clan since he managed Bush 41's presidential campaign in 1980. He is one of Jeb Bush's foreign-policy advisers now. In March he gave the keynote speech to the fifth annual conference of J Street, the liberal lobbying group on Middle East policy, saying predictably liberal things: "The chance of a two-state solution seems even slimmer," which Baker blamed on Benjamin Netanyahu's campaign rhetoric. Those lines could have come from the Obama White House, and Republicans reacted with scorn. In the aftermath, a Jeb spokesman stated that her boss thinks J Street is "wrong," while Jeb himself condemned (on our website) "diplomatic scolding of Israel." More cannot reasonably be expected: Jeb is not going to repudiate directly an 84-year-old family friend, even one who on this occasion has shown poor judgment.

■ Senator Harry Reid (D., Nev.), not long ago the Senate majority leader, is retiring. Senatorial collegiality is the father of a million happy-mouthed lies, so allow us to say what the senators won't: Harry Reid will not be much missed. He is the personification of much of what is distasteful and dishonorable about American public life, an intellectually cheap and fundamentally dishonest huckster who has grown wealthy in office, a man

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with the audacity to grandstand for campaign-finance reform at the very moment he was diverting campaign funds to his family members and taking dubious steps to cover up those transactions. Reid's longtime friend and associate Harvey Whittemore was recently convicted of a fistful of felonies for making illegal donations to Senator Reid's campaign. Reid used the Senate floor to demonize private citizens for holding political opinions at variance with his own, and when the Supreme Court stopped Democrats from punishing people for advocating political positions incommodious to Harry Reid, he led every Democrat in the Senate into voting to gut the First Amendment in order to enable the suppression of political speech. He lied shamelessly in 2012 when he fabricated a story that Mitt Romney had failed to pay taxes for a decade. He cynically bemoaned "obstruction" while he himself was the primary obstacle to most congressional action for years. Nevada should replace him with a better senator, and then spend some years atoning.

■ It's not what you know, it's whom you know, they say. And it's especially helpful if you know a Democrat. That is the finding of the Department of Homeland Security's inspector general, who reported in March that the former head of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) agency, Alejandro Mayorkas, intervened to obtain visas for foreign investors with close ties to top Democrats. Investors in a Nevada casino project with ties to Senate minority leader Harry Reid, an investor in an electric-car-manufacturing scheme in Virginia with ties to Governor Terry McAuliffe, and Hillary Clinton's brother all received Mayorkas's special attention between 2009 and 2013. Although the report did not accuse Mayorkas of wrongdoing, it noted that he "communicated with stakeholders on substantive issues outside of the normal adjudicatory process, and intervened with the career staff in ways that benefited the stakeholders. Mr. Mayorkas's conduct led many [CIS] employees to reasonably believe that specific individuals or groups were being given special access or consideration in the EB-5 program." Mayorkas is no longer at CIS. In 2013 he was promoted—to DHS deputy secretary, the department's No. 2 job. Reid pushed through his nomination over Republican opposition. It's whom you know, indeed.

■ "Boycott Indiana!" goes the latest hashtag-activism battle cry, though soybean futures and the Indy 500 do not seem to have much taken notice. The ritual denunciation of Indiana follows Republican governor Mike Pence's signing of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, making Indiana one of 20 states to have enacted their own versions of the federal statute, signed by President Bill Clinton 20-odd years ago, that requires government to proceed in the least invasive mode when its actions put citizens into conflict with their own religious beliefs. Among those calling for a boycott of Indiana is Connecticut's Democratic governor, Dannel Malloy—whose state has an RFRA of its own, one that is slightly *stronger* than Indiana's. RFRAs and equivalent legal doctrines have long been used to negotiate how to handle Indians' peyote use in religious ceremonies and Amish buggy-drivers' compliance with traffic laws. Critics fear that Indiana's statute will be used to enable discrimination against homosexuals, and, indeed, protecting bakers and florists who do not wish to participate in same-sex weddings is part of the intent. Governor Pence, under pressure, has called for a clarifying amendment. But the law is a good one, unless the official coercion of midwestern wedding-cake artists is the great civil-rights crusade of our time.

■ Sergeant Bowe Bergdahl, who was released by the Taliban in 2014 in return for five high-ranking prisoners from Gitmo, has been charged by the army with desertion and misbehavior before the enemy. Bergdahl walked away from his unit in

AP PHOTO/VOICE OF JIHAD WEBSITE VIA AP VIDEO, FILE

Afghanistan in 2009. His defense is now arguing that he left to report misconduct directly to another unit, though his then-comrades call that preposterous. Bergdahl deserves his day in the military's legal system. Even if he is guilty as charged, there was reason to want him back: Ideally we should punish our own miscreants, not leave them to the mercies or manipulations of enemies. But the Obama administration paid too high a price and coated the exchange with a sheen of misplaced triumph: a Rose Garden ceremony with Bergdahl's parents, Susan Rice telling the Sunday talk shows that Bergdahl had served "with honor and distinction." Whatever Bergdahl was thinking, we know how the Obama administration was acting—imprudently, and with poor judgment.

■ Bipartisanship is nice, but when a bill passes Congress overwhelmingly, as did the recent Medicare bill that the House approved by a margin of 392–37, it's generally a good idea to wonder why. In this case, the bill is a fiscally irresponsible effort that pleases most of the powerful interests involved in the issue. It aims to permanently replace something called the "doc fix," a legislative patch passed every year for the past couple of decades to avert automatic cuts to Medicare reimbursements. Hospitals and doctors have long wanted a permanent fix, and they don't want to have to pay for the cuts at all. The plan the House just passed is only partly paid for. Given the leverage the doc-fix situation provides, Republicans should have held out for a fully paid-for fix and real reforms to Medicare. Instead, they got only one good reform—cuts to Medicare benefits for wealthier Americans—along with a variety of other "reforms" that look likely to reinforce Medicare's dysfunction, not fix it. Conservatives should oppose this bill in the Senate. It is not a disaster, but it is a missed opportunity, and a bad sign for how serious congressional Republicans are about entitlement reform.

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■ An equally bad sign is that the Senate Republicans are running away from Medicare reform. In previous years they have voted, most of them, for the same changes that House Republican budgets have included. Those changes would allow seniors to choose either the traditional Medicare program or a private plan, in either case supported by taxpayer funding but with incentives to shop for value. But the first budget from Senate Republicans since they took control of the chamber omits those reforms and, pathetically, says Republicans will accept President Obama's targets for Medicare savings and seek to find them in different, unspecified ways. There is no evidence that Republicans paid a political price in either 2012 or 2014 for supporting Medicare reform. What appears to be on display here is cowardice as a reflex.

■ The Republican Congress is raising defense spending over President Obama's plans by . . . 0.2 percent. It took an uproar by defense hawks to get us that far: The initial GOP budget would have cut defense spending further than Obama's. And the reversal of those cuts comes from an expansion of funding for "overseas contingency operations" rather than of the Pentagon's base budget. Sequestration continues to squeeze defense, and will squeeze it more in future years. Sequestration was adopted, remember, as a political maneuver to force a bipartisan budget agreement on taxes and entitlements. That was a reckless way to treat defense, and it still is.

■ The Interior Department has issued new regulations governing certain oil-and-gas drilling techniques—hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking"—on federal land. The rules themselves are largely redundant, though some provisions, including the mandatory disclosure of proprietary information, are troubling. What is most troubling is the source of the regulation: the federal government. In 2005, Congress passed a law explicitly reserving the regulation of fracking to the states, which have long taken the lead in governing energy production. But the Left, particularly the faction within the environmental movement dedicated to undermining domestic energy infrastructure (call it the Andrew Cuomo wing), is unsatisfied with that state of affairs, because the states, being more directly accountable than federal bureaucracies, are in the progressive view insufficiently hostile to natural-gas exploration. The hope is that if the federal camel can gets its nose under the tent in the form of Interior or EPA regulations, then these can be effectively converted into a national standard. The online publication *Vox* voices the conventional progressive view when it denounces the current regime as "patchy and inconsistent" with rules that "vary from state to state." Other things vary from state to state, too, for example geology and hydrology, which is why a single national regulatory regime is irrational. From Pennsylvania to Texas, the states have shown themselves more than able to regulate gas extraction in a responsible fashion. Washington has not.

■ Speaking at the City Club of Cleveland, President Obama suggested that all Americans eligible to vote should be compelled to vote. "It would be transformative," he said. He mused that it would reduce the influence of money on elections. Maybe. But it would increase the number of uninformed and weakly committed voters, and could thus encourage candidates to stress image over substance even more than they do now. Not voting can be a

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kind of political position too, a reflection of satisfaction or disdain that the government should respect. It is with regard to the relations between the federal government and the individual that this idea would be "transformative," and not for the better.

■ A team of Justice Department lawyers discovered last month that, contrary to the proverb, hell hath no fury like a federal judge misled. Judge Andrew Hanen, of the Southern District of Texas, who in February issued an injunction temporarily blocking President Obama's November immigration amnesty, was visibly upset as he demanded to know why DOJ lawyers had repeatedly assured the court that the Department of Homeland Security would not be accepting requests for deferred action under the challenged November order until mid February—only to reveal in early March that DHS had been accepting, and granting, applications (approximately 100,000 of them) all along. Did the government's lawyers lie? Or did they make a months-long mistake? It was clear what Hanen thought: "When I asked you what would happen and you said nothing, I took it to heart. I was made to look like an idiot." The administration, in short, is handling the litigation with the same respect for the rule of law as it did the policy.

■ A bill to provide services to victims of human trafficking—people, most of them women, who have been kept in domestic servitude and sex slavery—and to fund new anti-trafficking police units, is being blocked by Senate Democrats, who object that the legislation will not permit public funds to be diverted to the coffers of Planned Parenthood: Moloch, too, is a jealous god, as is whatever deity watches over Democrats' campaign coffers as abortionists fill them. Democrats first objected that they'd been blindsided by the bill's inclusion of Hyde-amendment language, a common legislative prohibition on the public funding of abortions. When that excuse didn't stick, Democrats protested that the use of the Hyde language was inappropriate here in that the funds for trafficking victims will be raised not through taxes but through fines paid by traffickers—as if funds in government accounts were not fungible, and as if public money and public funding were not public money and public funding regardless of whether the funds are raised through taxes or fines. Democrats are desperately looking for a culture-war issue to invigorate their dispirited foot soldiers and donors, but the politics—to say nothing of the policy—here favors Republicans, inasmuch as the public has consistently favored keeping the government out of the grisly business of underwriting abortions. But as the politics play themselves out, spare a thought for the trafficking victims, too, slaves in the land of the free.

■ We've long known that Planned Parenthood and several other abortion providers and advocates are federally subsidized. Just how much money is being funneled to them through various federal agencies, grant programs, and Medicaid is not easy to find out. A report from the Government Accountability Office released in March at the request of several dozen Republican congressmen revealed the numbers: Planned Parenthood and its affiliates alone received $345 million from the federal government between 2010 and 2012. Counting state Medicaid payments brings the total to $1.5 billion. Representative Chris Smith (R., N.J.) found the right word: "unconscionable."

■ In Colorado, a woman attacked a pregnant woman, cutting the unborn child from the womb and killing her—the baby, but not the mother. The killer has been charged with attempted murder (of the mother). She has not been charged with murder of the baby—because the baby does not count as a person under Colorado law. The baby's father said he had seen the girl gasp for breath as she died, but the coroner said her "lungs had never inflated," in the words of a news report. So, the child was never a person (according to the law). How do you tell a mother, "Don't worry, ma'am: Your child was never a human being in the first place"? The girl had already had a name, by the way: Aurora.

■ *Cosmopolitan* magazine recently reported the findings of British researchers who studied the reactions of unborn babies to cigarette smoke inhaled by their mothers. The smoke agitated the babies, providing "further confirmation that nicotine is terrible for unborn children," reporter Tess Koman explained. The findings themselves are significant—but not surprising, in light of our increasing awareness of fetal pain. Astonishingly, given the venue, the phrase "unborn children" made an appearance. Mostly, they were "babies." In the headline, they were "unborn babies." Twenty years ago, that was the language of sentimentalizing anti-abortion zealots, as they were characterized. It's now mainstream, and an eloquent refutation of the conceit that history moves only leftward on social issues.

■ Yemen, that remote and mountainous country, is suddenly the stage for events that give ominous shape to the future. Cunning and unscrupulous as ever, Iran is extending its reach by means of local proxies, the Houthis, who can put into the field perhaps as many as 10,000 guerrillas. Like their Iranian sponsors, Houthis are Shiites, so this is sectarian warfare against the Sunnis, not a tribal issue. Storming Sana'a, the capital, the Houthis drove President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, a Sunni, into exile. American diplomats and Special Forces immediately cut and ran, abandoning valuable military equipment. Chief representatives of the two divisions of Islam, Saudi Arabia and Iran have long been engaged in a cold war. Recently enthroned and widely written off as too old and unwell, King Salman of Saudi Arabia interpreted the capture of Sana'a as a declaration of open warfare on the part of the Shiites. He has formed a coalition of ten Sunni-majority countries, including Egypt and nuclear-armed Pakistan, moved an invasion force of 150,000 to the frontier, joined battle with the Houthis in the southern harbor of Aden, and started bombing, all ostensibly to restore President Hadi to office. According to Saudi spokesmen, Iran is embarking on imperial conquest in the belief that current negotiations over its nuclear program already establish that it is the main regional power. It takes real effort to alarm Saudi Arabia and Israel simultaneously, but current U.S. policy is managing it.

THEFILAM.NET/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2015/02/HANEN.JPG

■ President Obama has decided to delay a planned reduction in the U.S. troop presence in Afghanistan. We have roughly 10,000 troops there now, and Obama had wanted to withdraw half of them in the coming months, toward the goal of a complete withdrawal by the end of his presidency. Instead, we will maintain 10,000 troops until the end of the year. The change was announced during the visit of new Afghan president Ashraf Ghani, who is both more grateful to the U.S. and more rational than his predecessor, Hamid Karzai. Obama's move shows at least a little flexibility in his otherwise fixed objective of "ending" the war in Afghanistan just as he "ended" the war in Iraq, with disastrous consequences.

■ Chen Guangcheng, the blind legal activist from China, made a daring run to the U.S. embassy in 2012. Soon, he was allowed to fly to the United States, where he is in exile. In her 2014 memoir, *Hard Choices*, Hillary Clinton cites the Chen matter as one of the human-rights achievements of her tenure as secretary of state. She and her staff did "what Chen said he wanted every step of the way," she writes. That's interesting. In his new memoir, *The Barefoot Lawyer*, Chen says that U.S. officials were extremely nervous about upsetting their Chinese counterparts: There was an important summit coming up. U.S. officials pressured him to leave the embassy and return to the arms of the Chinese government, says Chen. He was supposed to trust that all would be well. "Negotiating with a government run by hooligans," he writes, "the country that most consistently advocated for democracy, freedom, and universal human rights had simply given in." It was only pressure from the U.S. Congress and public, says Chen, that won his trip to America. Perspectives on events vary, of course—but it seems clear that someone isn't telling the truth here: Chen or Hillary. Even David Brock can't make that a tough choice.

■ Prime Minister David Cameron has kicked off Britain's parliamentary campaign (voters will go to the polls on May 7). Cameron, who currently heads a coalition government with the Liberal Democrats, is looking for a more tractable coalition partner, or a plurality large enough to sustain a minority government, or an outright majority. The last of these will be hard to find in a splintered field, contested by left-wing Labour, Liberal Democrats, Scottish nationalists (emboldened, not discouraged, by their loss in last year's independence referendum), Greens, and UKIP. Buoyed by the defections of two Tory MPs, UKIP promises to leave the European Union; Cameron will hold a referendum if he wins but campaign to stay in; and Labour pledges to stay in the EU at all events (so do the Liberal Democrats, which would complicate the formation of any new coalition). Cameron believed the Tories needed "detoxifying," that is, ridding of their associations with hard-edged conservatism, and his stance on the EU has been suspiciously mush-mouthed. But he has steered Britain capably through a recession and instituted real reforms, particularly in education. Everything that ails the country will only get worse under Labour or a Left coalition.

■ "No substantive basis." That is as far as the police in Charlottesville, Va., are willing to go in characterizing claims of a purported gang rape at a University of Virginia fraternity house, breathlessly reported by *Rolling Stone*, that turns out to be a fabrication. The police, and most media accounts, have gone out of their way to avoid stating the obvious: that this was a hoax, one that *Rolling Stone* and others in the press were all too eager to believe.

■ Three persons of the Left, two of them professors, assail the fog of prudery that has settled over the nation's campuses, where it is not only forbidden to be offensive, but increasingly forbidden to discuss being offensive, or doing any other harmful act. Judith Shulevitz, in an essay in the *New York Times*, asks why students are "so eager to self-infantilize." "Universities are not fallout shelters," argues Columbia professor Todd Gitlin in the online magazine *Tablet*. "Deal with it. You're at school to be disturbed." Bluntest of all is a professor who blogs under the name "White Hot Harlots." "I know how to get conservative students to question their beliefs," she writes, but "liberal students scare the sh** out of me. . . . All it takes is one slip . . . even momentarily exposing them to any uncomfortable thought or imagery—and that's it, your classroom is triggering, you are insensitive, kids are bringing mattresses to your office hours and there's a twitter petition out demanding you chop off your hand in repentance." Like the cavalry in the last reel, love of one's own mind comes perhaps to the rescue. Perpetual fear can breed only solidarity, not thought. May the lesson stick.

■ At Lincoln Center, the New York Philharmonic premiered a work by John Adams, who is arguably the most famous and important classical composer of today. The new work was *Scheherazade.2*, a "dramatic symphony for violin and orchestra." Before the performance, Adams himself took a microphone and spoke to the audience about the work. He described its origins. The com-

A NOTE ABOUT NR

National Review has decided to go non-profit. When we've talked about this transition to people over the last several months, the reaction we've usually gotten is: "You're not already a non-profit?" And: "What took you so long?" (What can we say? We're conservatives—we hate change.) As everyone who has read one of our fundraising pitches knows, we have always functionally operated as a not-for-profit—we've never made money and have always depended on donations for support—although we have never had technical not-for-profit status. What we're doing here is recognizing what has always been the case: We're a mission and a cause, not a profit-making business. The advantage of the move is that all the generous people who give us their support every year will now be able to make tax-deductible contributions, and we will be able to do more fundraising, in keeping with our goals to continue growing in the years ahead. We are going to merge with our non-profit sister organization National Review Institute in the coming weeks, and after a few months will emerge as a unified National Review that is a non-profit. Thanks, as always, for reading, and for the amazing support so many of you give us.

poser had seen an exhibition about Scheherazade. Then he read *Arabian Nights*, and was appalled by the "casual brutality toward women" depicted therein. At the same time, he was reading of brutality toward women around the world: in Egypt, Afghanistan, and India, for example. He made it clear, however, that we were not to think America exempt from this evil: You can "find it on Rush Limbaugh." To this shocking defamation, much of the audience responded with robust and sustained applause—a one-minute hate, if not quite a two-minute one. There are Saudi madrassas with more open-mindedness.

■ Archaeologists and geneticists at Oxford have found that a surprising number of genetically similar Brits live in narrowly defined regions that correspond to the tribal kingdoms that occupied the British Isles around the time of the Anglo-Saxon invasion in the seventh century, after the fall of the Roman Empire. The Romans who once ruled Britannia left no genetic trace, though that may not be a meaningful statement, as one blogger astutely pointed out, Rome being so highly cosmopolitan and difficult to associate with a single ethnicity. By "Roman," the authors of the study, published in *Nature*, seem to have meant, roughly, Italian or at any rate Mediterranean. In any case, the typical Briton, it turns out, is almost a thoroughbred, with DNA from no farther than Britain's Anglo and Saxon neighbors across the North Sea. He is also the son of a people who went on to rule an empire and to establish their native tongue as the lingua franca of the civilized world. The nation's dynamism over the course of its history is matched only by its rootedness and stability.

■ In March, feminism descended once again into self-parody. At Britain's National Union of Students Women's Campaign conference, attendees attempted to work out how they might show approval without making any noise. When a delegation from Oxford tweeted, "please can we ask people to stop clapping but do feminist jazz hands? it's triggering some peoples' anxiety," organizers fell over themselves to acquiesce to the demand. Alas, this remarkable concession to self-indulgence was not enough to stem the panic, and, before long, concern had moved from hands to mouths. "Whooping is fun for some," scolded the leadership, "but can be super inaccessible for others, so please try not to whoop! Jazz hands work just as well." We can only applaud the feminist movement's attempt to bring more mutes into its fold.

■ The question is: "Yeah, can I get a double espresso, a grande cappuccino, and . . . uh, one of those lemon bars?" Is the correct answer (a) "Coming right up!"; (b) a silent, sullen nod delivered with a palpable air of world-weariness; or (c) "Have you read Cornel West's *Prophetic Fragments*?" Only Howard Schultz, CEO of Starbucks, would choose (c), and unite the country in one bright shining moment of ridicule.

AP PHOTO/TED S. WARREN

■ The religion that is liberalism has come up with its own version of infant damnation. During the legislative debate over Indiana's religious-freedom bill, one black Democratic representative said that a white Republican colleague's son was "scared of me because of my color." The child in question is 18 months old. Earlier that day, the baby bigot had toddled up to the Democrat and then run away in tears, and it's possible that he was indeed spooked by her color, or something else in her appearance, or her voice; maybe his father had told the boy about the Democrats' budget policies; or perhaps the youngster just started screaming and crying on general principles. Eighteen-month-olds are like that. And some progressives are like that about crying "racism."

■ David Piccioli worked one day as a substitute teacher, and it may have earned him $36,000—a year, for life. Piccioli was a state legislative aide and then a lobbyist for the Illinois Federation of Teachers, and he is now receiving pensions from both those jobs. But under a rule sneaked into a 2007 bill, if he spent any time as a classroom teacher, all his years working for the union could be made to count as years of teaching for pension purposes. Hence his one-day sinecure, which makes Michelle Obama's hospital gig look like the labors of Hercules in comparison. One-quarter of Illinois's state budget is currently being spent on pensions. And Democrats wonder why a Republican is now governor of Illinois.

■ "Dog or Jew?" That is a pop quiz not from the Ayatollah Khamenei but from Lena Dunham writing in *The New Yorker*. Dunham, the gifted young basket case who writes and acts in the television series *Girls*, took to the pages of that esteemed magazine to trot out some vintage Catskills-worthy ethnic humor about Jews—they don't tip, the men are ruined by their overbearing mothers—and asked readers to guess whether she was talking about her Jewish boyfriend or her dog. Big laughs, to be sure. Critics suggested that maybe a moment in history in which Islamic extremists planning the extermination of the Jewish people while comparing them to dogs (and monkeys and pigs) is not the best time to be trafficking in Jewish stereotypes while deploying canine comparisons. Some went so far as to call the piece anti-Semitic. Dunham can plea-bargain down to feloniously bad taste, in which she is a repeat offender.

■ It's a paradox of politics that it sometimes takes an honorable man to make a corrupt system last. Lee Kuan Yew was devoted to Singapore, and over three decades as prime minister plus two more of influential retirement, he worked ceaselessly to lift the city-state to a position of global economic leadership. That he did so with a strict brand of authoritarianism that banned chewing gum and homosexuality, punished graffiti with caning, fined or banished publications that ran critical articles, and allowed only a token opposition on a very short leash may have seemed necessary at first in a backward nation riven by ethnic divisions and great inequality; but it

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could never have been sustained for half a century without Lee's personal popularity and his insistence on an honest civil service and markets that were thriving and competitive (though certainly not free from crony capitalism). Managing a transition to genuine democracy and civil rights will be difficult for Lee's son, the current prime minister, if that's what he wants; but in the long run it will be even harder to maintain the senior Lee's mix of social repression and economic freedom without his charisma and genuine, if sometimes suffocating, love of Singapore and its people. Dead at 91. R.I.P.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Obama's Manufactured Rift with Israel

The relationship between the United States and Israel is in crisis, and there is one person to thank: President Barack Obama. Upset by the reelection of Benjamin Netanyahu, he has tried to use the Israeli prime minister's tough election-week rhetoric to justify a dramatic diplomatic break from Israel, even threatening to abandon the country to the anti-Semitic mob that populates a good chunk of the seats in the U.N. General Assembly.

Netanyahu did tack right rhetorically: He warned his party's supporters that liberal NGOs were turning out Arab voters in droves, and he said he did not see a Palestinian state emerging during his prime ministership. These are both reasonable statements, but Netanyahu was tone-deaf in talking about Arab citizens, and right to apologize afterwards.

President Obama absurdly said Netanyahu's rhetoric about Arab turnout threatened Israel's democracy. Never mind that Israel is the only country in the entire region that has democratic traditions, or that no one stopped a single Arab from voting, and in fact, the Arab bloc in the Knesset will be larger than it had been.

As for Netanyahu's supposedly throwing the two-state solution overboard, as the administration has charged, that, too, is nonsense. His 2009 endorsement of a Palestinian state was premised on certain essential security conditions' being met, and no one serious in Israel expects that to happen any time soon. The bitter fruit of the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza is a Hamas mini-state devoted to terror and the destruction of Israel, while the entire region is sinking into chaos and bitter warfare between Sunni and Shia radicals. No responsible Israeli leader would pull out of the West Bank in these circumstances.

Never before has the U.S. used a few words spoken by a foreign leader on the cusp of a highly contested election to blow up a longstanding alliance. But there is a much deeper cause of the split. Forging an opening to Iran is the Middle East goal to which President Obama has been devoted above all others, and it is much more important to him than the relationship with Israel. The terms of the deal have steadily gotten worse for the West—now we are essentially bargaining over how close Iran should be allowed to get to an inevitable nuclear weapon—but the administration still considers Netanyahu's criticisms of the deal intolerable (even though members of the president's own party are increasingly skeptical of the prospective deal, as well).

A bad Iran deal will be much worse than anything Obama has done to the U.S.–Israel relationship to this point. But the president's manufactured crisis in the relationship still presents a serious problem for Israel, and for Israel's supporters. It risks loosening the Democratic party's attachment to Israel (at a time when the Left is increasingly hostile to the Jewish state), and if the U.S. goes along with an anti-Israel resolution at the U.N., it will be the most effective blow yet in the continued effort to undermine Israel's legitimacy.

The upshot of Obama's Middle Eastern diplomacy could be the taking of an enormous step toward normalizing a rogue state on the one hand, and toward making a rogue state out of a normal country on the other. It is perverse, but not surprising.

LEE KUAN YEW: AP PHOTO/ED WRAY; NETANYAHU/OBAMA: AP PHOTO/PABLO MARTÍNEZ MONSIVAIS

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Jeb, Scott, and the Rest

How fare the Republican presidential hopefuls?

BY RAMESH PONNURU

As of late March, Jeb Bush and Scott Walker were tied in national polls of Republicans (judging from the averages at *RealClearPolitics*). They are neck-and-neck in New Hampshire; Walker leads in Iowa and Bush in South Carolina. It's a race without a clear front-runner, but with two candidates ahead of the rest.

Republican primaries usually follow a pattern. The party's elected officials and big donors tend to cluster behind one or two candidates; activists who consider that "party establishment" insufficiently conservative split among several candidates; and the leading establishment candidate wins. But the anti-establishment tendencies of Republicans have been growing. Mitt Romney, running as the establishment candidate, won the nomination in 2012, but Rick Santorum and Newt Gingrich, running to his right, got more votes in combination in primaries they all contested.

This time Bush is the party-establishment candidate. But so far he has been even weaker than Romney was. At the end of March 2011, Romney was leading his nearest rival by seven points nationally, rather than tied.

Bush was something of a conservative hero when he finished his two terms as governor of Florida in 2007. (Now would be as good a time as any to note that my wife works for a political-action committee affiliated with Bush.) But memories of Bush have faded, and some conservatives are too new to politics to have them in the first place. Now he has the reputation of a moderate: a reputation based largely on his status within the party establishment, his advocacy of legal status for many illegal immigrants, and his support for the Common Core educational standards. A lot of conservatives even have the sense that Bush dislikes them.

That perception could change, and presumably changing it will be Bush's key task right after he scares all the other candidates with his fundraising haul from the first quarter of 2015. If it does not change, it could, in combination with the widespread hostility to the idea of a dynasty, sink him.

Walker has enormous appeal to Republicans, having fought the public-sector unions in a historically progressive state—one that has not voted for a Republican presidential candidate since Reagan's reelection—and won. Initially the knock on him was that he lacked charisma, but a speech at a January conference for religious conservatives in Iowa went over well and led to a rapid ascent in the polls. His support at the moment is unusually broad. It crosses over both the usual establishment–vs.–Tea Party and the occasional Evangelical-vs.-non-Evangelical dividing lines.

Since that ascent, though, Walker has stumbled a few times. A few comments blew up in the media. There was a vetting snafu involving an aide who was hired and then quickly fired. He gave the impression of equivocating on whether illegal immigrants should be able to become citizens—and giving that impression cannot have been his intention, even if he did, in fact, want to equivocate on the topic.

Breadth of support also carries a danger: It means that all the other candidates have a strong incentive to poach Walker's supporters and criticize him. Bush and Evangelical-conservative favorite Mike Huckabee are generally not competing for the same voters, but both of them are competing with Walker. His broad support could also mean that Republicans with opposing views and tastes are projecting their preferences onto him, in which case some of them will probably be disappointed over time.

Walker is a conservative on social issues but has said he does not want to emphasize them. Sticking with that approach could cost him socially conservative voters, who would have to be part of any coalition to beat Bush; breaking from it could cost him other backers. The Iowa Republican caucuses have gone for an outspoken social conservative twice in a row (Huckabee in 2008, Rick Santorum in 2012). Walker, having declared himself the "front-runner" for the nomination in early March and coming from a neighboring state, probably has to win Iowa.

Neither Bush nor Walker has yet formally announced a run, which would cause campaign-finance laws to kick in. Senator Ted Cruz (an old friend of mine) became the first official candidate, and doubtless did so in part to keep from disappearing amid all the coverage of Bush and Walker. He made the announcement at Liberty University, an Evangelical school founded by Jerry Falwell. His strategy appears to begin with becoming the favored candidate of everyone who wants someone more conservative than Bush or Walker—which means eclipsing Huckabee, Santorum, and several others.

When a top aide left Marco Rubio's staff in the fall, Republicans took it as a sign that Rubio was going to skip the 2016 race because there was room in it for only one Floridian, Bush. Now it looks like he is going to run after all. At the moment, conservatives who objected to his immigration bill seem to be letting bygones be bygones, perhaps because he has backed away from the bill, perhaps because opposition to Bush is absorbing their energy. If he comes to the fore, though, he will again draw fire.

BUSH: RON SACHS/PICTURE-ALLIANCE/DPA/AP IMAGES; WALKER: AP PHOTO/LEFTERIS PITARAKIS; CRUZ: AP PHOTO/PABLO MARTINEZ MONSIVAIS; PAUL: AP PHOTO/ROGELIO V. SOLIS; RUBIO: AP PHOTO/PHELAN M. EBENHACK

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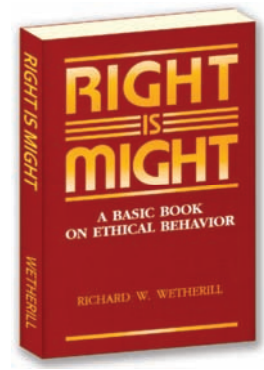

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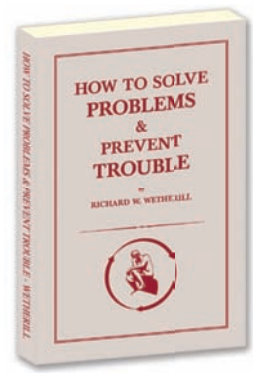

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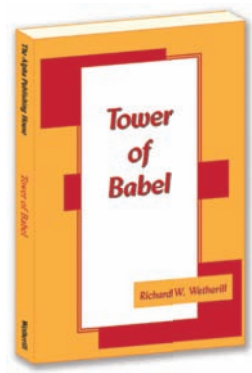

This public-service message is from a self-financed, nonprofit group of former associates of Mr. Wetherill.

One more senator, Rand Paul, is running. He has been moving toward Republican orthodoxy on national-security issues, even sponsoring legislation to boost defense spending. These moves seem to be costing him some of his old libertarian fans. Paul's theory appeared to be that by being a more moderate version of his father, he could add to the latter's base of support. He runs a risk, though, of subtracting more Paulites than he adds mainstream Republicans.

Chris Christie ended 2013 in a stronger position than the previous two Republican nominees were in at the same point in their electoral cycles, having won reelection by a big margin in a very Democratic state. But then came Bridgegate. The governor nearly disappeared from the national stage after that. At least as tough a blow came when Bush surprised people by talking about running. He drew away many of Christie's potential donors. Christie's fans say that he will shine in debate, but the first debate will not happen until August.

Perhaps he, and other candidates, can afford to wait. The early kickoff to campaign season raises the possibility that voters will be bored with the people being talked about from February through April and interested in someone new who jumps in come May. Ohio governor John Kasich, or Indiana governor Mike Pence, might be able to capitalize on that sentiment then.

So far, few of the candidates have fleshed out their policy agendas. The exceptions are Senator Rubio and, to a lesser extent, Governor Bobby Jindal of Louisiana. Several of the others could help themselves by following the example of these two. New ideas could let Bush present himself as his own man, not an echo of the past. Walker could use an agenda to acquire some needed heft. Christie could use one to make it clear that he is not running on his mixed bag of a personality.

Watching the candidates run will yield important information voters do not yet have. Can the senators, who have never run large enterprises, organize national campaigns? Can Walker, who has been his own top political strategist and communications director, delegate? Can Bush, who last ran in a real Republican primary 21 years ago, connect with a much-changed party? People who have worked on presidential races are fond of saying that "campaigns matter." The question marks over the candidates may make that especially true this time. **NR**

The Taxman Endureth

Ted Cruz's abolish-the-IRS idea has little merit

BY PATRICK BRENNAN

'Completely unworkable," "irresponsible," "happy talk," "a disservice to the political process." That's just a sampling of what tax experts, most of them right of center, told me they think of one of the most popular lines from Ted Cruz's stump speech, his promise that a President Cruz would abolish the Internal Revenue Service.

Senator Cruz has been talking about the idea for a couple of years now, but it got a bit more attention when he mentioned it in the speech he gave at Liberty University to officially launch his presidential campaign. The basic idea, according to his speeches and a conversation I had with a Cruz adviser, is this: If you radically simplify the individual-income-tax code, you can reduce the size of the federal tax-collection bureaucracy so much that you could then get rid of the IRS and disperse its functions across other agencies.

This is a great applause line: Americans hate how complicated their taxes are, and they hate the IRS. It's such a good line, in fact, that other probable presidential candidates, such as Senator Rand Paul and neurosurgeon Ben Carson, have adopted it too.

The problem: The idea probably isn't feasible and has almost no merits as a public policy.

There is no doubt that an individual-income-tax code with many fewer deductions and credits—Cruz has suggested, for instance, keeping only the mortgage-interest deduction and an incentive for charitable giving—would be easier to enforce and therefore require fewer IRS agents. (A flat tax per se would not necessarily be easier to administer than a progressive one with many rates but few deductions and credits. Everyone can read tax tables.)

But tax experts say that, while the federal revenue agency could shrink under Cruz's proposal, it could only get marginally smaller—not nearly small enough to say it's been "abolished." "You'd need slightly fewer revenue agents to conduct the same number of audits," for instance, says Alan Viard, of the American Enterprise Institute. Donald Marron, a Bush-administration veteran and former head of the widely respected Tax Policy Center, says an idea like Cruz's could make the IRS "smaller, sure. But vastly smaller? Probably not."

That's partly because the IRS does a lot of things besides just process complicated individual tax returns. Much of its resources, for instance, go into enforcing the corporate tax code, which Cruz's campaign says he doesn't have plans for yet. Meanwhile, a lot of IRS agents—quite possibly not enough—are assigned to providing customer service to taxpayers. And while conservatives are rightly wary of the civil-liberties violations that tax enforcers can commit, labor-intensive audits are important. If a lot of income goes unreported or taxes go uncollected, trust in the system breaks down, rates have to be higher, and the economy ails.

Unless we have a different kind of radical tax reform, such as replacing the income tax with a state-administered sales tax (Cruz has flirted with an idea like this but isn't pushing it now; it has its own problems), the federal government is still going to have a huge tax-collection bureaucracy.

In an interview, though, the Cruz adviser assures me that the senator means what he says: A Cruz administration will dismantle the IRS and distribute the remaining responsibilities across the rest of the federal government. "If [tax reform is] done correctly under a Cruz administration, there would be no need for the IRS," the adviser says. "The remaining responsibilities for collecting tax revenue would be dispersed throughout existing agencies."

So the federal government wouldn't end up with many fewer tax collectors, but they'd be working for different agencies. Can we do that—ditch the IRS itself for a different set of tax collectors, either in a new agency or in existing federal offices? Yes, we can, but it's not clear why it's a good idea, except that it sounds great on the stump.

Most explicit on this point is someone who would know best: Mark Everson, who served as IRS commissioner under George W. Bush, and actually happens to be running for president too. The idea of distributing the IRS's functions across the federal government, he says, "doesn't reflect any real familiarity with how the

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tax code works, what the responsibilities of the IRS are, or frankly how to manage the government." Breaking up the tax agency "makes no sense" and would make tax enforcement nearly impossible, he says, because of how poorly federal agencies work with one another. "It's hard enough to coordinate within the IRS, let alone if you have different agencies involved," he says.

In fact, while IRS discrimination under the Obama administration against conservative political nonprofits has only increased the contempt many Americans have for the agency, the IRS does a fairly good job of collecting taxes and has relatively few scandals in its history. (A number of them can be blamed on the White House or the FBI, not the agency itself.) "If you pin down, if you put a lie detector on people who have been critics of the IRS, like [Republican senator] Chuck Grassley, they would admit the IRS is one of the better-performing federal agencies," says James Wetzler, a left-of-center tax lawyer who spent more than a decade at the Joint Committee on Taxation and served on a commission to reform the IRS in the 1990s. This is not the highest praise; the IRS regularly fails to meet transparency requirements, for instance. But it does manage to do the job it sets out to do at a relatively reasonable cost, Wetzler says, which is enough to outshine other federal bureaucracies.

Not everyone agrees with that positive assessment. Chris Edwards, director of tax studies at the Cato Institute, says the IRS is "a typical bad federal agency." But there's definitely some evidence of its efficiency: The United States' "tax gap," the difference between taxes owed and taxes collected, compares well with those of other countries, and the IRS is well regarded internationally. Congress chose to task the IRS with the implementation of Obamacare, Everson points out, because the other available agencies are considered less capable.

When I spoke with the Cruz campaign, they didn't even attempt to make a case for abolishing the agency. Cruz is "not going to get rid of one bureaucracy only to create another," the adviser says (other, existing bureaucracies would have to get bigger, it goes unsaid). When pressed about why dispersing IRS functions across other parts of government would be an improvement, he offered no clear justification. "It will be vastly more efficient to put the people who are doing jobs that still need to be done into agencies that have existing infrastructure" for similar purposes, the adviser said, without offering any reason why that would be "vastly more efficient" than the current situation. I also asked whether the idea is that, in light of the nonprofit-targeting scandal, the agency is so corrupt that it has to be dismantled; I didn't get an answer.

A better, more pro-growth tax system could actually mean *more* federal employees, not fewer.

Many Americans surely do just want to end the IRS, period. They don't need any convincing. But one would hope for a little more seriousness from a presidential campaign—an explanation of why doing this should be a key priority in the important task of tax reform.

Some moves toward a better, more pro-growth tax system could actually mean *more* federal employees, not fewer. Republican tax plans, for instance, generally propose moving to what's called a territorial tax system, ending the taxation of income American citizens and companies earn abroad. That would require new IRS resources, AEI's Viard says, to make sure that companies don't exploit this change to evade taxation. Taxing employment benefits such as health insurance just as wages are taxed, usually a conservative priority, could also mean more IRS work, because the value of those benefits has to be assessed. Plenty of ways of making taxes easier to file, such as offering the option of pre-filled tax forms, would free up businesses' and individuals' time and money for productive purposes, but would probably require more IRS employees, too.

Tax experts agree that the main problem with America's tax system is the Congress that wrote it, not the agency that administers it. That is where serious tax-reform efforts should be focused.

Cruz has months to flesh out his stump speech with a broader policy agenda. The implausibility of one of his favorite campaign promises, though, is not a heartening sign. **NR**

Betting on India's Economy

Its strength will be our strategic asset

BY SADANAND DHUME

With China slowing, Brazil stagnating, and Russia tanking, India has once again emerged as a bright economic spot in the developing world. A business-friendly new Indian government, a windfall from lower global oil prices, and robust new growth figures have all contributed to a sense of optimism about Asia's third-largest economy. Albeit aided by a change in how it measures GDP, India officially grew faster than China in the final quarter of last year. Finance minister Arun Jaitley predicts that next year the Indian economy will expand by more than 8 percent.

Washington has several reasons to seek warmer ties with New Delhi. Though both countries take pains to deny that their partnership is aimed at neutralizing China, it's hardly a secret that they share concerns about Beijing's rising clout in the region. Wedged beside Pakistan and Afghanistan, India is also an oasis of relative stability in a region roiled by radical Islam. As a model for Asia's smaller countries to emulate, India—democratic and pluralistic, with a large English-speaking middle class—is naturally appealing to Americans.

Stripped to its essentials, though, the U.S. bet on India is a bet on its economy. Unless India can find a way to sustain rapid economic growth, it will fail to live up to its potential as a natural check against Chinese hegemony in Asia, a model of democratic prosperity for its Asian neighbors to follow, and an increasingly important engine of the global economy. Thus, the overarching goal of U.S. policy toward India should be to help modernize its economy while deepening trade ties to tether the two democracies more firmly to each other.

Mr. Dhume is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

Rosy GDP figures notwithstanding, both the Indian economy and the U.S.–India economic relationship could do with a boost. To begin with, economic comparisons between India and China are often misleading. Growth in India has averaged a healthy 6.4 percent since the launch of economic reforms in 1991. But the legacy of the more than four decades of socialism that preceded economic liberalization, and a slowdown that hit in the wake of the global financial crisis, mean that India is still playing catch-up with much of East Asia.

With annual GDP approaching $9.5 trillion, China's economy is five times the size of India's. A decade ago, the average Chinese was twice as rich as the average Indian. Now, with a per capita income of $6,800, the average Chinese is more than four times richer than the average Indian (per capita income: $1,500). It should be easy for India to grow faster than China partly for the same reason that it's easier for it to grow faster than America—India's economy starts from a lower base.

The strategic consequences of this mismatch with China scarcely need elaboration. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute estimates India's 2013 defense budget at $47.4 billion, about a fourth of China's $188 billion for the same year. Though India's large population and tradition of strategic autonomy automatically give it more wherewithal than most countries to stand up to Chinese belligerence, over time no country can ignore a vast disparity in resources that only grows wider each year.

Nor are U.S.–India trade ties particularly strong for two countries that between them account for about one-fifth of the world's population and an annual economic output of nearly $19 trillion. For the last three years, U.S.–India trade in goods and services has hovered at around $100 billion, less than one-sixth of U.S. trade with China. When both goods and services are counted, the U.S. is India's top trade partner. (China tops it in goods alone.) But for the U.S., India ranks only eleventh in goods trade, between Taiwan and Saudi Arabia.

What should this mean for U.S. policy toward India? In January, as President Obama visited New Delhi, the U.S. and India "elevated" their annual talks from a "strategic dialogue" to a "strategic and commercial dialogue." This meant that, on top of the annual meeting between the U.S. secretary of state and India's external-affairs minister, the U.S. commerce secretary and her Indian counterpart would now meet on a yearly basis as well. In a statement, Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker said, "The new commercial element of our most important bilateral dialogue will focus on our shared priorities of growing our economies, creating good jobs, and strengthening our middle class."

Beyond the diplomatic platitudes, increased attention to the economic component of U.S.–India ties is welcome. But there's real danger in getting bogged down in day-to-day disputes and losing sight of the relationship's larger, long-term stakes. Indeed, before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's election last May, which ushered in the country's first single-party parliamentary majority in 25 years, persistent economic disputes between the U.S. and India were causing friction in the deepening bilateral friendship.

At the World Trade Organization, the two countries have squabbled over poultry, solar technology, and steel products. Indian software firms accuse the U.S. of discriminating against them by making temporary work visas expensive and hard to get. India also wants workers who return to India after a stint in the U.S. to be allowed to reclaim their payments into the U.S. Social Security system.

For its part, the U.S. has found fault with India's tax laws, local-content requirements in manufacturing, and relatively poor intellectual-property protections. At the request of Congress, the International Trade Commission has been investigating India since August 2013, for industrial policies "that discriminate against U.S. trade and investment."

To be sure, as the relationship between the U.S. and the EU proves, economic friction needn't necessarily get in the way of close strategic ties. But in the U.S.–India relationship, it often appears as though Washington misses the forest for the trees. As my colleague Derek Scissors has pointed out, the short-term interests of individual firms often rise to the top of the United States' economic agenda for India, even when serving those interests does little to advance the strategic U.S. goal of boosting India's economy.

Following Modi's election, and his back-to-back summit meetings with

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Obama in Washington and New Delhi, U.S. officials are studying ways to deepen economic ties with India. Some potential ideas, such as negotiating a bilateral investment treaty or backing India's membership in the Asia–Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, have been on the agenda for several years. Others, such as freeing U.S. liquefied-gas exports to energy-hungry India, have arisen more recently. Some of Modi's signature initiatives, including building so-called smart cities equipped with modern infrastructure, bringing high-speed Internet connections to much of the country, expanding the use of renewable energy such as solar power, and turning India into a manufacturing hub, have naturally attracted attention from America's private companies and its government alike.

But if economic relations between India and America are to avoid getting bogged down in the problems of the past, and are instead to serve U.S. strategic goals in Asia, the U.S. ought to adopt three broad objectives.

First, America should encourage India to become a more competitive, market-oriented economy for its own sake, even if specific reforms offer no clear payoff for U.S. firms. For instance, India needs better roads, but given the lack of U.S. competitiveness in this area they will likely be built by Korean and Malaysian firms, not by American ones.

Second, the U.S. should aim to remain India's top trade partner. In January, Secretary of State John Kerry reiterated the goal of multiplying U.S.–India trade more than fivefold, to $500 billion, over the next ten years. But beyond just that number, the U.S. should also aim to stay ahead of China in volume of bilateral trade with India. This will likely spur more day-to-day attention to the relationship than a theoretical longer-term target would.

Third, while consistently advocating for U.S. businesses, Washington should not allow individual companies to hijack the agenda. For instance, while India will undoubtedly benefit from opening up its retail market to Walmart and others, by no stretch of the imagination is this the most pressing economic issue facing the country.

India needs to liberalize its labor and land markets, reduce expensive food, fuel, and fertilizer subsidies, and privatize loss-making state-owned companies. Over time, as India's economy becomes bigger and more outward-looking, many of these decisions will likely benefit U.S. companies. But they're important mostly because they will unleash India's own economic potential. Though the U.S. cannot make policy for India, it can certainly provide assistance to would-be Indian reformers who look to it for ideas and expertise.

During the Cold War, the U.S. understood that it had a stake in the economic success of countries as different as South Korea and Indonesia. Today, the future of Asia hinges, to a significant degree, on the evolution of India. If it pays off, America's bet on India's economy could be one of the most important investments it makes in the years ahead. **NR**

What Muslims Should Fear Most

It isn't American xenophobia

BY REIHAN SALAM

I AM often told that America is a dangerous place for Muslims. Recently, the left-of-center news site *Vox* published a piece insisting that the shooting death of Ahmed Al-Jumaili, an Iraqi who had recently moved to Dallas, be seen as part of "the growing trend of violence against Muslims in the United States." But it seems that this claim was unfounded. Soon after Al-Jumaili's death, police apprehended a 17-year-old suspect who was apparently unaware of Al-Jumaili's religious background. Earlier, three Muslim Americans—Deah Barakat, Yusor Mohammad Abu-Salha, and Razan Abu-Salha, all of them very young adults—were shot to death over a parking space in Chapel Hill, N.C. Ever since, many Muslims, in the United States and elsewhere, have insisted that their killer, Craig Stephen Hicks, was motivated by anti-Muslim animus and that to suggest otherwise is to diminish what is undoubtedly a grave crime. Yet it appears that Hicks behaved in a hostile and threatening manner to neighbors of all persuasions, and his angry Facebook rants suggest that he reserved his deepest hatred for Christian fundamentalists.

The death of a loved one is always a tragedy, and to lose a loved one to senseless violence is more tragic still. It is easy for me to see why the families of these victims might have wanted to give some larger meaning to their deaths. That I can forgive. I'm less inclined to forgive the political activists who've rushed to use these tragedies to advance the notion that anti-Muslim xenophobia is somehow a graver threat to civil peace than is violent Islamic extremism. In truth, the United States has proven a very hospitable home for Muslims, and in particular for those who reject the most austere and the most radical interpretations of Islam. Indeed,

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the fact that observant Muslims feel comfortable wearing religious garb in America all but guarantees that some of them will be victims of violent crime, if only because it would be statistically improbable for a large group of people to be completely exempt from our country's larger violence problem.

Muslims *do* encounter discrimination in America. It just so happens that they don't often face religiously motivated hate crimes. The FBI reports that Jews are far more frequent targets of religiously motivated hate crimes than Muslims are. One of the things that make me most uncomfortable about the response to the Chapel Hill shooting is the effort to take a unique set of circumstances and force it into a larger narrative that doesn't necessarily fit. It's possible that Craig Stephen Hicks was not a crazed Islamophobe *and* that hatred and suspicion of Muslims are a real problem. To the extent that this hatred and suspicion exist, however, there is good reason to believe that it is fading.

Muslim Americans *do* encounter discrimination in America. It just so happens that they don't often face religiously motivated hate crimes.

A 2014 survey from the Pew Research Center found that on a scale of 0 to 100, 0 being the coolest and 100 being the warmest, Republicans rated their feelings toward Muslims at an average of 33, just below the 34 they gave atheists. Democrats gave Muslims a 47, above the 46 they gave atheists and the 44 they gave Mormons. This gap can mostly be chalked up to the fact that people are more likely to think well of Muslims if they know one, and Democrats are more likely than Republicans to know Muslims personally. And before Democrats assign too much significance to the feelings thermometer, they should note that Republicans feel more warmly toward Evangelical Christians, Jews, and Catholics than Democrats do. I don't think it's fair to say this makes Democrats more anti-Evangelical, anti-Semitic, or anti-Catholic than Republicans.

Another thing to keep in mind about Muslim Americans is that many of them are either immigrants or the children of immigrants from countries plagued by Islamist violence. My parents are immigrants from Bangladesh, a Muslim-majority country in South Asia, so this applies to me personally. It's not often that I think about my Muslim identity. I come from a family of moderately observant Muslims, yet Islam was never the central organizing principle of our lives. I'd say that our ethnic attachment to things Bengali was as strong as our attachment to Islam. When I was in elementary school, my parents hired a tutor to teach me Arabic and to offer their heathen offspring some religious instruction. Alas, I got into a huge argument with my tutor over whether androids have souls, and I haven't had all that much to do with organized religion since. So I should stress that I'm far from an expert on Islam.

Over the past several years, however, I've been hearing from relatives and friends about how Islamic extremism has transformed the political and social climate in Bangladesh. In just the last few months, a Bangladeshi-born U.S. citizen, Avijit Roy, was murdered during a visit to his native country for the supposed crime of promoting atheism on his personal blog. Just a few weeks later another Bangladeshi blogger, Washiqur Rahman, was murdered for his alleged apostasy.

This is all very poignant in light of the fact that Bengali Muslims have traditionally been considered open and tolerant. Richard M. Eaton, a historian at the University of Arizona, maintains that in the 16th century the Mughal rulers of Bengal offered rent-free land grants to settlers willing to chop down the dense forests that dominated the eastern part of the province and start growing crops. They had no interest in converting the Bengali masses, whom they saw as an alien people. But most of the pioneers who took up the Mughals on their land offer were adventurous Muslims, and the locals they hired as manual laborers came to look up to them, and indeed to attribute mystical powers to them. Long after these industrious pioneers died, they were remembered fondly as, in Eaton's words, "vivid mythico-historical figures, saints whose lives served as metaphors for the expansion of both religion and agriculture."

Suffice it to say, the Islam practiced in these newly settled communities was not of the orthodox variety practiced in Islam's Arabic-speaking heartland. Rather, it blended Islamic beliefs with beliefs associated with various other religious traditions. In the centuries that followed, it was not at all uncommon for Muslim Bengalis to take part in Hindu festivals or for Hindus to worship Sufi saints. By the early 20th century, a new generation of Bengali Muslims had decided that the local expression of Islam was far too permissive and far too open to Hindu influence. Since then, most of these self-described reformers have used arguments and persuasion to make their case, as civilized people should. But some have used violence and intimidation to impose their intolerant understanding of how Islam ought to be practiced, and their numbers are growing. Those who fall in this latter camp are the kindred spirits of al-Qaeda and the Islamic State, and they've transformed a poor but peaceful country into a poor but violent one.

And that's why I have a hard time taking complaints of anti-Muslim xenophobia in America as seriously as perhaps I should. Though I don't doubt that there is suspicion and distrust of Muslims in America, the underlying trend toward greater acceptance seems firmly established. So does the underlying trend toward chauvinism and extremism in much of the Muslim world, not just in Bangladesh. Having witnessed Bangladesh's transformation from a distance, and having also witnessed the assertiveness of American Muslim activists in defending their rights, I have a hard time thinking that it is xenophobia and not the extremist threat that should keep me up at night. **NR**

You deserve a factual look at . . .

Three Deceptive Myths of the BDS Movement

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) advocates use inspiring human rights language to condemn Israel—but are their accusations accurate?

Supporters of BDS make three stirring demands: Stop Israel's colonization, occupation and apartheid in Palestine. But how valid are these three accusations, and what are the real goals of the BDS movement—for Israel and the Palestinian people? Above all, does BDS really seek peace?

What are the facts?

Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions advocates shrewdly use human rights rhetoric to inspire followers. But anyone tempted by this appeal must ask two questions: 1) How true are BDS's accusations against Israel, and 2) what is BDS's political agenda? If we examine the hard facts, we see that BDS is actually based on false myths and a disguised purpose.

Myth #1: Israel is colonizing Palestine. While BDS paints the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in polarized terms, in fact it is one of the world's most complex, emotionally fraught disputes. BDS portrays Palestinians as the region's sole "indigenous" people, while in truth Palestine has two indigenous peoples—Jews and Arabs. Jews have lived uninterruptedly in the Holy Land for more than 3,000 years, since the time of biblical Abraham. Israel does not insist it is the only heir to Palestine, but BDS advocates assert Jews have no right to a state there. This denies the Jewish people the right to national liberation. Since colonialism is "the control of one nation by '*transplanted*' people of another nation," and Jews are natives to Palestine, Israel cannot be termed a colonial force.

> "We do not support the boycott of Israel."
>
> Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas

Myth #2: Israel is occupying Palestinian territories. It's simplistic to argue that Palestine "belongs" entirely to either Jews or Arabs. Ownership of these territories is *disputed*—it can only be determined by negotiations. While Israel does not deny Arab rights to a state in Palestine, BDS opposes Jewish self-determination. When Israel declared a state in 1948, it was attacked by five Arab armies whose intention was to expel the Jews. In 1967, Arab armies again attacked Israel, but Jordan, Egypt and Syria actually lost to Israel territory they had controlled. In fact, none of the land Israel currently "occupies" in Israel or its ancient lands of Judea and Samaria (the West Bank) was ever part of an Arab state. While Israel maintains security in parts of the West Bank, it is to protect Israelis from terror attacks that have killed thousands. More pointedly: As late as 2007 Israel offered Palestinians 95% of the West Bank, as well as a capital in Jerusalem, as an incentive for peace, but the Palestinians rejected this offer. While smart diplomacy will surely be needed to resolve the territorial issues that divide Arabs and Israelis, it is intellectually dishonest to declare Israel an occupier.

Myth #3: Israel is an apartheid state. Apartheid was "an official policy of racial segregation, involving political, legal, and economic discrimination in South Africa against nonwhites." In fact, Israel is by far the most diverse nation in the Middle East—one whose population is 21% Arab and includes the region's largest Christian population. Israel's Jews hail from Ethiopia, Yemen, Morocco, Iran, Iraq, and Syria, as well as every European nation and Latin America. Unlike any other Middle Eastern nation, equal civil rights of all ethnic groups in Israel are protected—and they include freedom of speech, assembly, suffrage and sexual orientation. *No ethnic group is segregated.* Political office is open to every ethnicity: Israeli Arabs are members of the parliament and supreme court. Economic discrimination is forbidden, and when it occurs, as in the U.S., the courts oppose it. In short, Israel bears no resemblance to South Africa. It is an exemplar of liberty for minorities.

What do the BDS leaders really want? While the U.S., Western European powers, Israel and the U.N. Security Council have embraced a "two-state solution" as the basis for peace between Israel and the Palestinians, BDS leaders, like Ali Abuminah, argue for a one-state solution in which Arabs outnumber Jews. When BDS talks about occupation, it refers not to disputed West Bank territories, but to all of Israel. BDS has consistently opposed Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, calling them "collaborationist." In fact, the leaders of BDS openly confess their goal is not peace, but conquest. No wonder BDS founder Omar Barghouti admits, "If the occupation ends . . . would that end support for BDS? No, it wouldn't—no." This explains why BDS insists on the "right of return" not for the estimated 50,000 living Palestinian refugees of Israel's 1948 War of Independence, but for their *five million descendants*—a bizarre definition of "refugee" applied to no other people. Of course, such an influx of foreign Arabs into Israel would swamp the Jewish state, conquering it demographically.

For all its emotive appeals, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions effort is based on falsehoods—a hijacking of human rights values. Even Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has acknowledged that BDS is counterproductive, proclaiming, "We do not support the boycott of Israel." Indeed, anyone who truly desires peace between Israelis and Palestinians must oppose this pernicious movement.

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The Anti-Scold

On the phenomenon of Jeremy Clarkson

BY CHARLES C. W. COOKE

THE renegade British television presenter Jeremy Clarkson has been fired from his wildly popular automotive show, *Top Gear*, and his fans are not happy. A petition, hosted by Change.org, attracted more than a million signatures in under two weeks, and was delivered to its intended recipients in a tank. "We the undersigned petition the BBC to reinstate Jeremy Clarkson," the missive reads. They are fighting, they say, for their "freedom to fracas."

To peruse the many comments that have been left under the entreaty is to garner something of a false impression. "I pay my TV license," one contributor insists, "to ensure that irreverent people can express themselves." "A minority of over sensitive people should not ruin one of Britons [*sic*] favourite shows," proposes another. "Jeremy," one man suggests simply, "is a bastion of light in a dark PC world."

As it happens, this lattermost asseveration may well be true. And yet, all things considered, it is wholly irrelevant to the question at hand. As the BBC has confirmed, Jeremy Clarkson was fired after he physically assaulted a colleague at a hotel; he wasn't fired for his profanity or for his impertinence or because he upset the sensibilities of his employer. He hit a guy. He had to go.

Still, one suspects that to look for intellectual consistency in this instance is rather to miss the point. Whatever they may say in public, the harsh truth of the matter is that Clarkson's apologists are not so much defending their man's immediate behavior as they are lamenting the loss of a much-loved and much-needed public figure. For years now, Clarkson has served as a totem of resistance to all of the closed, humorless, effete, and "politically correct" pathologies that have become all the rage on both sides of the Atlantic. *Now that he is gone*, you can hear his fans ask, *who will speak up for us?*

At present, this is a question that cannot be answered with any specificity. But this much we can say: If he disappears from view, *somebody* else will come along. Why? Well, because Jeremy Clarkson is what happens when a nation's cultural elites set out to forge an environment in which nobody is allowed to say anything remotely risqué without drawing condemnatory looks and an open invitation to apologize. As yin invites yang and positive necessitates negative, political correctness has created Jeremy Clarkson to serve as the anti-scold.

ROMAN GENN

This he did with great aplomb. On *Top Gear*, in a series of best-selling books, and in the pages of Britain's many rightward-leaning newspapers, Clarkson has for years now played a starring role in the country's national life. He is the man through whom the commonsensical meek can live vicariously; the man who can say what others will not dare to say; the man who has never had to grow up. Most important, perhaps, he has been the grumpy old codger who still remembers the days when it was acceptable to poke fun at everything—including oneself—and to do so without being hauled into court.

Within the collective imagination of the rest of the world, the British have a reputation for politeness and, in some corners at least, for the sort of decorum that one sees on exported television shows such as *Inspector Morse*, *Downton Abbey*, and, a little while back, *Brideshead Revisited*. To a limited extent, this estimation is deserved. And yet sitting happily alongside the stoic glances and stiff upper lips and reflexive self-deprecation is a sense of humor that is pointed, thick-skinned, and even a little *cruel*. The Australian-turned-British comedian Steve Hughes has noted how extraordinary it was that the Irish were the first to ban smoking in pubs. "It's *us*?" Hughes has an astonished and befuddled Irishman say. "But we *live* in pubs." That the British have of late done so much to castrate their own national pastime, humor, is similarly bizarre.

Nothing escaped Clarkson's withering eye. Not German cars, which he suggested are capable of traveling from "Berlin to Warsaw in one tank" and come with a GPS system that "only goes to Poland"; not affirmative action: "If one presenter on a show is a blond-haired, blue-eyed heterosexual boy, the other must be a black Muslim lesbian"; not Stephen Hawking: a "great man, but most of him doesn't work"; not Mexican nationals: "lazy, feckless, flatulent, overweight" types who spend their days

"leaning against a fence asleep looking at a cactus with a blanket with a hole in the middle on as a coat"; not public-sector unions on strike: "I would take them outside and execute them in front of their families"; and *certainly* not the United States of America, for which he has a particularly pronounced dislike of precisely the sort that is common among Englishmen of his class: "Most Americans," Clarkson argued caustically in 2005, "barely have the brains to walk on their back legs."

Clarkson was never one to shy away from making the controversial comparisons or from going for the obvious joke. Rather, he spoke to his audiences as middle-aged British men speak to one another in the pub when they think that nobody is listening. "The only person to ever look good in the back of a four-seater convertible," Clarkson proposed sacrilegiously, "was Adolf Hitler." How bad is the "Maserati's gearbox"? Worse than "AIDS" and "Iran's nuclear program." Why were Britain's nuclear submarines deemed unsafe? Probably "because they don't have wheelchair access."

It is perhaps the greatest irony of the "political correctness" movement that the more its leading lights repress anybody who steps out of line, the more brazen the dissenters become and the more leeway their admirers are prepared to give them. Clarkson is a talented man, certainly. One does not reach his level of fame and success without possessing a genuine charm. But one cannot help but suspect that he has found himself as the voice of the vast middle of his country less because he is unusually gifted and more because many people who would not usually go in for laddish humor found themselves enjoying fruit that was now deemed to be forbidden. Clearly, one does not have to think that these things are funny or true in order to be thrilled that somebody is saying them with impunity.

And so, secure in his position and with a growing audience, Clarkson began to preach to the fed-up. "Health and safety"—that endlessly malleable excuse for nannying and excessive taxation—became a rich target. Once, Clarkson reported with glee, his employer presented him "with a booklet explaining how to use a door." On another occasion, he was forced to sit through an extended warning that had been designed to prevent his walking through glass windows. He took aim at big government, too, often wondering aloud what the government thought a free people would do if left to their "own devices." In a book appropriately titled "Is It Really Too Much to Ask?" Clarkson insisted that he really could be trusted not to "park on zebra crossings for a year" without an army of government employees nagging at him. The relationship between the citizen and the state "has broken down," he concluded, "and it's time for some civil unrest." "This is what should be meant by people power," he added: "The power for people to choose which of the government's petty, silly, pointless laws they want to obey."

At their root, these criticisms had something important in common: They left room for common sense, and carved out a space for honest human error. "We are going to have to stop penalizing people for making that most human of gestures—mistake," Clarkson submitted in one tirade. In a nation of sinners—and of a trigger-happy and judgmental priestly class—this message was welcome indeed. To err, we might say, was Clarkson.

Which is, ultimately, to say that it didn't especially matter that Clarkson's primary vehicle, *Top Gear*, was about cars, and neither was it especially important what he was doing when he was talking. Providing that it afforded plenty of opportunities for bonding and for ranting, that it could be used as an excuse for adolescent shenanigans, and that it presented a pretext for some good old-fashioned tinkering, *any* broadly masculine subject would have sufficed. Sure, *Top Gear* began life as a serious car show. But for more than a decade now, its worldwide audience has rendered itself witness to something else altogether—namely, a long, slightly adolescent, and always irreverent bachelor party that was organized for, attended by, and celebrated in the name of one man: Jeremy Charles Robert Clarkson. Today that man has fallen from grace—removed from the field of his own jubilee for violent and ungentlemanly conduct. It is time to grow up, perhaps. And also to regret the passing of our youth. **NR**

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AP PHOTO/RICK CALLAHAN

A Place for Conscience

Anti-gay discrimination is wrong, but it is not Jim Crow

BY KEVIN D. WILLIAMSON

THEY call themselves the "New Civil Rights Movement." In reality, that's not a movement, but a group blog edited by David Badash, father of the Great Nationwide Kiss-In, a gay-rights protest. But the name speaks to an ambition, and to a rhetoric: that discrimination against homosexuals, from the criminalization of sexual acts to the queasiness that same-sex marriage causes in some people, is to be understood as the moral equivalent of the oppression of African Americans and should be extirpated with the same energy; that harboring reservations about the moral status of homosexuality or the social desirability of gay marriage should be the social equivalent of dropping an infamous racial slur into conversation.

As Governor Mike Pence and the people of Indiana are discovering, that is a powerful rhetorical strategy. Indiana has enacted a state-level version of the federal Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which was signed into law by President Bill Clinton after passing Congress with widespread (nearly unanimous, in fact) bipartisan support. The RFRA has been deployed against the so-called Affordable Care Act, notably in the *Hobby Lobby* case, and so is regarded among progressives as an expression of right-wing atavism. In reality, one of the few votes against the RFRA was from Senator Jesse Helms, the personification of congressional conservatism, who worried that prisoners would use RFRA protections to make mischief; some conservative drug warriors disliked that the bill was brought into existence partly to carve out a legal exception for peyote use in Indian religious ceremonies.

The federal RFRA is reinforced by 20 state statutes and by constitutional arrangements in another dozen or so states that impose similar limitations: When government acts to burden religious liberties, it must demonstrate that it has a compelling interest in doing so and that it has secured that interest in the least burdensome fashion. This leaves considerable room for judgment and negotiation, which is necessary. In the *Hobby Lobby* case, the Supreme Court found that the federal government had, in securing its interest in the wide availability of contraceptives, failed to resort to the least burdensome means, and threw out the mandate.

Beyond being a setback for Obamacare, the ruling pushed progressives' civil-rights buttons by recognizing not only the rights of religious institutions but also those of individuals acting in concert outside the context of a church or affiliate, in this case through a closely held for-profit corporation.

Indiana's RFRA presses harder still on those same civil-rights buttons, because it contains a provision not found in the federal statute or in most of the related state statutes: It allows for religious liberty to be raised as a defense in litigation to which the state is not a party. Contra the allegations of Apple CEO Tim Cook and Issie Lapowsky of *Wired*, Indiana's RFRA does not "make it legal for businesses to refuse service to same-sex couples on the grounds of their religious beliefs," as Lapowsky put it, though it is possible that a judge would accept an RFRA defense in a lawsuit resulting from such a case and that some RFRA supporters hope for that outcome.

That the gay-wedding reception really is the new Mississippi lunch counter (the phrase "lunch counter" seems to exist now exclusively in the context of civil-rights debates) is far from self-evidently true, but the belief is widespread, as is the similar belief that laws restricting marriage to (two) partners of opposite sex are morally indistinguishable from the laws that once forbade interracial marriage.

All discussion about discrimination in the United States has as its template the case of discrimination against African Americans, from slavery through the Jim Crow era to the civil-rights movement. This is an understandable intellectual tendency for the same reason that it is an error: The comprehensive political, social, and economic oppression of black Americans is unlike any other episode in American history. The history of organized and informal oppression of African Americans tells us little—or nothing—about the situation of other groups that are in a radically different position.

Consider another historical precedent that is probably a better analogue for discrimination against homosexuals: American discrimination against Jews. As with discrimination against African Americans, discrimination against Jews was—is—a moral evil. Like discrimination against blacks, discrimination against Jews is bound up in complex social psychology and ancient history.

But there are much more important differences: There have been practically no official anti-Semitic acts or policies perpetuated by the federal government. Jerome Chanes, author of *Antisemitism: A Reference Handbook*, puts the count at one: General Ulysses S. Grant's infamous Order No. 11, which called for the expulsion of Jews from areas under his control. President Abraham Lincoln rescinded that order almost instantaneously. Jews arrived in the United States as émigrés and refugees, not as slaves. Organized non-governmental discrimination against Jews typically had teeth mainly at the commanding social heights: the infamous Ivy League quotas under *numerus clausus*; exclusion from many social clubs, vacation resorts, and the like, and, to a much lesser extent, under real-estate covenants. These restrictions were unjust, immoral, and surely humiliating, but they did not result in the categorical exclusion of Jews from American social, political, and economic life. Even when anti-Semitic feeling was at its most intense, the great majority of American Jews could expect to live their lives suffering nothing like the oppression that was meted out to black Americans.

The case of homosexual Americans is more like the case of Jewish Americans than it is like the case of black Americans. They are subject to discrimination and prejudice, certainly, and they have been subject to desultory acts of official oppression, too, notably laws that criminalize homosexual acts per se. Those laws were unwise and unjust, but they were never enforced with anything approaching the vigor with which segregation was policed. Like the exclusion of Jews from social clubs, the pressures that forced (and often still force) homosexuals to conduct their personal lives in secrecy were and are humiliating.

But the proposition that the social and political situation of gay Americans in 2015 is even roughly comparable to the social and political situation of black Americans in, say, 1950 is unsupportable. Far from being excluded and remanded to a lower tier of economic and social life, gay Americans do better than average on many fronts. A survey conducted by Prudential in 2012 found that homosexual respondents were more likely to be employed than average, and that they had substantially higher incomes, less debt, more savings, etc. A similar study conducted by the Williams Institute, a UCLA think tank focused on gay issues, found that men and women in same-sex relationships in two-earner households had substantially higher household incomes than their heterosexual counterparts and much higher levels of educational attainment. At rarefied cultural elevations, gays are if anything overrepresented.

Which is not to say that discrimination against homosexuals is acceptable because lots of gay Americans go to grad school and because Ken Mehlman is going to be a big shot in Jeb Bush's campaign. But it is unquestionably the case that the social reality of gay Americans in the age of Tim Cook is not very much like the social reality of black Americans in the age of Jim Crow—and when we talk about a "compelling interest," that reality matters.

The current state of the gay-rights debate—pitting civil-rights rhetoric on one side against religious liberty on the other—suggests very strongly that we are suffering from an unhealthy national tendency toward over-generalization rooted in false precedent. That the civil-rights movement organized to advance the condition of black Americans is a fitting and natural precedent to the movement organized to advance the condition of gay Americans is an exercise in question-begging, one that is, given the American temperament, almost inevitable.

In *The Constitution of Liberty*, F. A. Hayek argued that legislatures could be expected to limit themselves to legitimate uses of government coercion if they restricted themselves to passing laws that were generally applicable, neutral, and abstract. That is an indispensable part of the liberal legacy; it is the reason our Constitution forbids bills of attainder and ex post facto punishment, both of which are temptations to divert the law from the project of securing the general welfare to that of directing it toward the advantage or disadvantage of a particular group. The elevation of generality over narrow communal interests is an important part of what distinguishes the liberalism of the Anglophone world from the feudalism that preceded it and from the brute-force interest-group democracy that threatens to consume it; at the same time, it pushes the prudent in the direction of the absurd in the name of consistency, as though discrimination against the descendants of slaves, in the context of centuries of ruthless oppression, were no different from a prejudice against gingers or the left-handed.

There is real wisdom in the Hayekian drive toward the general, but it is not the only wisdom. Conservatism is grounded in the understanding of—and perhaps even the love for—real life, in all of its bewildering specificity and concreteness, as opposed to what Russell Kirk called the "narrowing uniformity" of the progressive visionary.

Generalization is valuable—generally.

Political conflicts very often are the result of competing general principles. That was the case with much of the civil-rights movement, especially with regard to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. On one hand, the condition of black Americans was a blasphemy against the fundamental American premise, which is a theological premise—that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights—and demands that there be no separate people within the republic held subject as effectively a hereditary condition. On the other hand, the American constitutional order restricted what the federal government could do to ameliorate such aspects of that situation as were not the result of federal policy or of state and local policies subject to federal preemption. Any individual act of discrimination might be considered trivial on its own, constituting no compelling reason to violate property rights or freedom of association; but in the aggregate, those exclusions created a situation that was ultimately incompatible with the American premise. Addressing

that problem meant doing violence to the American constitutional order by extending federal intervention into state and local affairs to an unprecedented degree under a tortured interpretation of interstate-commerce powers, something that many of the conservatives at that time (Barry Goldwater, famously) thought too high a price to pay, considering the advancements that already had been made and the price paid for them. That has, incidentally, been the recurring fallacy of the Republican party on the matter of African Americans: Whether it is Gettysburg or the 13th Amendment or the civil-rights progress of the Eisenhower years, Republicans are always hoping to close the book, to declare the work done when it remains incomplete.

That constitutional violence was masked by the doctrine of the "public accommodation," which is a venerable legal sophistry designed to obscure that private property is treated as public when politically convenient. We are not very serious about "public accommodations" independent of hot-button social considerations; try getting yourself admitted to a fashionable nightclub in Hollywood while being an unprepossessing middle-aged man wearing Dockers and traveling with similar company. Such would-be party people are excluded for the same reason that blacks once were excluded from restaurants—because they simply are not wanted there—but such discrimination is hardly invidious. Online classified advertisements for apartments in big cities regularly warn that no Republican need apply, which is actually illegal under some state laws, a fact that does not seem to bother anyone very much. But if a baker does not wish to provide the refreshments for a gay couple's wedding, then the state of the "public accommodation" becomes a national priority.

If the gay-rights and specifically the gay-marriage movement is similar to the civil-rights movement, it is in that it presents us with competing goods: It is difficult to see how the social exclusion of gay Americans serves any desirable end, but people of good faith should respect both conscience and piety. An unusually high degree of respect for religion's role in public life (compared with, say, Western Europe) is part of the American character, and one for which progressives should be at least as grateful as conservatives: We have a secular government that leaves both the atheistic and the ultramontane free to evangelize as they will because the *Mayflower* was full of Christian radicals, not in spite of that fact.

And there is the not-insignificant matter that, in a free society, one has the right to be wrong.

In the case of the original civil-rights movement, it was obvious that something needed to be done, though it was not obvious what that was. It is far from obvious that gay Americans are in a comparable position—it is in fact obvious that they are not. Our general principled tendency toward rejecting discrimination of various kinds is an admirable part of our national character, but it need not always be a police matter (see those Republican-excluding Craigslist ads), and it should be constrained by a sober evaluation of the facts of the case. Equal treatment—not only under the law, but socially as well—is, as a matter of principle, good. But it is not the only good. The great irony is that in our time the machinery of the state is being used by gay-rights activists to enforce ruthless social conformity, even though gay people themselves were not so long ago on the receiving end of the same sort of bullying. But that is the Left's general model of progress: The opening gambit is a plea for tolerance, and the end game is a bayonet. **NR**

Another Win for Right-To-Work

Now, in half the states, you cannot be forced to join a union

BY JOHN J. MILLER

When Badger Meter ordered $2.5 million in equipment last summer to start a new line of water-meter products, CEO Rich Meeusen had to pick its destination: Mexico or Milwaukee? "We were on the fence about where to go," says Meeusen, who weighed Mexico's cheap wages against Milwaukee's better location and technical support. Over the last decade, his Wisconsin-based company had watched the number of jobs on its payroll swell by 40 percent. Yet Badger Meter had not added any in the Badger State.

That changed on March 9, when Governor Scott Walker signed a bill on the shop floor of Badger Meter's Milwaukee factory, making Wisconsin the country's 25th right-to-work state. "This legislation puts power back in the hands of Wisconsin workers, by allowing the freedom to choose whether they want to join a union and pay union dues," said Walker. Meeusen announced that Badger Meter would hire a dozen workers in Milwaukee right away and as many as 50 in the years ahead. "We chose to expand here because of right-to-work," he says.

After a long hibernation, the right-to-work movement has woken up like a bear in the spring. As far back as the 1940s, when the strength of Big Labor was near its peak, the belief that union membership should not be a condition of employment had enjoyed political success in the South and West. States such as Arizona, Arkansas, and Florida passed laws saying that workers may decline to join unions without losing their jobs. After 1985, when Idaho became the 20th state to approve a right-to-work law, the movement seemed to take a long break. Over the next quarter century, only two states—Texas in 1993 and Oklahoma in 2001—crossed into its ranks.

In the last three years, however, three industrial states in the Midwest have passed right-to-work laws—an unexpected development in a region where unions had maintained the strongest of home-field advantages. In 2012, Indiana became a right-to-work state, followed soon after by Michigan and now Wisconsin. Since last December, a dozen counties in Kentucky have passed their own right-to-work laws, and even the new Republican governor of Illinois has started to talk about similar innovations. All of a sudden, right-to-work has become the hottest idea in conservative labor reform.

No wonder: Right-to-work states have outperformed the rest. Between 2003 and 2013, they gained jobs at more than twice

Wisconsin governor Scott Walker signs a right-to-work bill into law, Monday, March 9, 2015.

AP PHOTO/*MILWAUKEE JOURNAL-SENTINEL*, MIKE DE SISTI

the rate of states without right-to-work laws, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Workers in these states also saw their incomes rise faster. These trends even shaped demography, affecting the flow of domestic migrants: In the 23 states that were right-to-work, the population grew by an average of 3 percent during this decade; it fell by an average of 1.1 percent in the 27 states that were not right-to-work.

One of the curiosities of right-to-work's new phase is that it has risen from the ground up rather than descended from the top down. In other words, state and local officials have pushed for right-to-work, but governors haven't. When Walker was a member of Wisconsin's state assembly in 1993, for example, he proposed a right-to-work law, but then-governor Tommy Thompson, a Republican, wanted nothing to do with it. As governor himself, Walker became a conservative hero for beating back union power. Yet last December, when state legislators mentioned a desire to pass a right-to-work bill, Walker tried to brush them off. "I think it's a distraction," he told reporters. He was careful to say that he hadn't changed his mind about right-to-work—he still favored it on the merits—but that he considered other issues more important.

The right-to-work movement always has had supporters in the mold of state-assembly-era Walker—lawmakers who offer bills even though they stand little chance of immediate success. One of them has been Jerry Torr, a Republican who was elected to Indiana's house of representatives in 1996 and has served there ever since. In 2003, a right-to-work activist convinced Torr that workers shouldn't be forced to pay union dues. "I hadn't heard of this before," says Torr. "So I did a little research." He discovered studies by a pair of free-market think tanks, the Allegheny Institute in Pennsylvania and the Mackinac Center in Michigan. "Right-to-work states had incredible job-growth numbers," he says. "I also noticed that not a single one of our border states had a right-to-work law at the time. I knew this would benefit Indiana."

So, in 2004, Torr introduced his first right-to-work bill. He recognized that it wouldn't pass: Democrats controlled his chamber of the legislature, and the governor was a Democrat, too. Yet he pursued the cause with the zeal of a missionary. "I introduced a bill every year," he says. "I talked to my colleagues about it. I spoke to every group that would listen. I had a PowerPoint presentation that compared jobs and wages in states with right-to-work and without right-to-work, and I updated it every quarter."

Torr needed to keep updating his data because Indiana's next governor, Republican Mitch Daniels, refused to support right-to-work legislation. Daniels was no Big Labor lackey: In 2005, on his first day in office, he decertified Indiana's government-employee unions, allowing most members to quit paying their dues. Yet Daniels also made clear that right-to-work would stay off his agenda. "I have said over and over, I'm a supporter of the labor laws we have in the state of Indiana," he said at a Teamsters dinner in 2006. "I'm not interested in changing any of them. . . . Certainly not a right-to-work law."

Daniels didn't oppose right-to-work in principle, but he had other goals—and, like an auto executive who just wants to keep the assembly lines moving, he was more interested in making peace with unions than in confronting their privileges. One of the governor's most controversial objectives was the privatization of Indiana's toll road, a money-losing unit of state government. Daniels proposed leasing it to foreign investors in return for nearly $4 billion to fund infrastructure projects. As Democrats whipped up a populist reaction—he's selling our roads to foreigners!—many union members recognized that Daniels was offering them a good deal. Truckers wanted better roads, and construction workers wanted more jobs. Daniels eventually got his way, and today a for-profit company runs the toll road and most people barely recall that there was once a fuss.

For the next several years, Daniels pushed a reform agenda on budgets and education that made him a favorite governor among conservative policy wonks. As he tried to attract businesses to Indiana, however, he kept hearing the same com-

plaint: Employers didn't want to move into a state that tilted the playing field in labor's direction. Many of them liked everything about Indiana except its lack of a right-to-work law. So when Republican majorities in the legislature finally passed a right-to-work bill in 2012, Daniels signed it, making Indiana the first state in the Rust Belt to adopt the law. "Seven years of evidence and experience ultimately demonstrated that Indiana did need a right-to-work law to capture jobs for which, despite our highly rated business climate, we are not currently being considered," said Daniels in a statement at the time.

Next came Michigan, where Republican governor Rick Snyder, like Daniels, initially shied away from right-to-work. Running for office in 2010, he had labeled it "too divisive." Two years later, however, Michigan's unions pushed a ballot initiative to enshrine collective bargaining in the state constitution. Voters, including about one-quarter of Democrats, rejected it. Labor looked weak. In the days that followed, Snyder repeated his claim that he had no interest in a right-to-work law. Yet he refused to say that he opposed one in principle. A few weeks later, GOP lawmakers put a bill on his desk. Snyder signed it, and Michigan—the home of storied labor leaders such as Walter Reuther and Jimmy Hoffa—became the 24th state to prohibit compulsory unionism.

When Walker signed Wisconsin's right-to-work law in March, he generated a few dutiful complaints from union activists—but nothing like the theatrics of 2011, when he was a brand-new governor who wanted to limit the collective-bargaining rights of most of his state's public employees. Back then, several state legislators wanted to include in Walker's package of labor reforms a right-to-work measure covering private-sector employees as well, but the governor and his partners worried that a few key Republicans might defect. So they left it out. "We also hoped that the trade unions would sit on the sidelines," says Scott L. Fitzgerald, majority leader of Wisconsin's senate. That didn't happen: Tens of thousands of protesters flocked to Madison, occupying the state capitol and camping out on its grounds. Democratic senators fled the state to deny a quorum to GOP lawmakers, delaying the vote on the reform. Despite the rancor, Walker and his allies prevailed. Their proposals became law, and the governor went on to survive a recall election the next year and win reelection last November.

Although Walker began his second term with even larger Republican majorities in the state legislature, he remained reluctant to take up right-to-work. "I just think there [are] a lot of things that are going to keep the legislature preoccupied for a while," he said in a television interview on January 4. "So even though there [was] a lot of buzz a few weeks ago, I don't know that that's the first thing they're going to start out with."

Yet conservatives were eager to press forward. "What happened in Indiana and Michigan opened our eyes," says Fitzgerald. "We knew that if we were going to remain competitive, we'd probably have to do it, too." Fitzgerald and his allies pointed to economic data: In 2013, both Indiana and Michigan benefited from more growth than Wisconsin. The polls backed them as well—62 percent of state residents supported right-to-work legislation, according to a survey by the Wisconsin Policy Research Institute. When a right-to-work bill finally cleared the legislature in February, Walker embraced it.

Several other states have flirted with right-to-work legislation this year. In New Mexico, where Republican governor Susana Martinez has endorsed right-to-work, the house of representatives approved a bill, but it died in the Democrat-controlled senate. A bill also passed Missouri's house, but Democratic governor Jay Nixon has promised a veto. Ohio looks like a good candidate for right-to-work, if only because of the competition it now faces from neighboring Indiana and Michigan. Large GOP majorities dominate its legislature. Yet Republican governor John Kasich insists that he's not interested. "It's not on my agenda," he said in February. "Right now in our state, we have labor peace." Even so, right-to-work optimists observe that this is precisely how Daniels, Snyder, and Walker once spoke about the issue.

THE next major advance for the right-to-work movement might take place not in a state capital but rather at the local level. This strategy is the brainchild of Brent Yessin, a lawyer who runs Protect My Check, a right-to-work advocacy group. He noticed that many cities and counties have strong charters that grant them a lot of independence on economic policy. Could they pass their own right-to-work rules? He discussed the approach last spring with Andrew Kloster and James Sherk of the Heritage Foundation, who examined the question and issued an analysis in August: "Cities and counties have a good legal argument that they are free to pass" right-to-work ordinances, they concluded.

"After that, it was just a matter of deciding where to launch a beta test," says Yessin. He picked his home state of Kentucky, where Democrats control half of the legislature as well as the governorship. Yessin knew that Kentucky's business leaders were feeling a sense of urgency. Along the I-69 corridor, which runs from Mexico to Canada, Kentucky now is the only state without a right-to-work law. "Businesses that rely on I-69 don't want to start a business or relocate here," says Lee Lingo, president of the Madisonville–Hopkins County Chamber of Commerce. "They just go south to Tennessee or Texas or north to Indiana or Michigan."

Since December, a dozen counties in Kentucky have approved their own right-to-work rules, from big Boone County just outside Cincinnati to tiny Fulton County on the banks of the Mississippi River. Unions have sued to stop them, but the movement could expand to nearby states soon. Bruce Rauner, the new Republican governor of Illinois, already has issued an executive order that bans government unions from coercing workers to pay union dues. Now he's talking about right-to-work at the local level. "We're the economic muscle of the Midwest, and we're sitting here with closed-shop restrictions," he told the *Wall Street Journal*. "If DuPage County wants to have closed shop in their county, keep it—terrific, no problem. But why should DuPage force Effingham County to be closed shop? If Effingham wants to compete with Indiana for a new business, and be on the list where companies will look for employment flexibility, why shouldn't they be able to choose to do that?"

From its earliest days, the right-to-work movement has relied on its simple appeal to the power of choice. If it continues to prevail, other states and localities will feel pressure to let workers make their own decisions about unionizing. At least they'll always have the ability to say no—a courtesy they currently refuse to extend to their own citizens. **NR**

The Wrong Box

Our prisons' use of solitary confinement is inhumane

BY TIM HEFFERNAN & GRAEME WOOD

THE greatest fictional depiction of solitary confinement is by Anton Chekhov, in a story called "The Bet." Its plot is simple: A wealthy banker bets a younger, poorer man that the young man cannot live 15 years alone in a small, sealed lodge in the banker's garden. He will have food and books but no human contact: no conversation, no letters, no news of the outside world. If he lasts the whole 15 years without leaving the lodge, he will win a fortune from his captor. What happens to a human being so confined? The man's spiral into insanity is described mostly through his enigmatic requests for reading material. It would be a crime against literature to spoil the story for you, but suffice it to say that 15 years of solitude is not healthy.

The captive reaches summits of madness that few have trod—until the past few decades, that is. For Chekhov, the effects of long-term solitary confinement were a matter of speculation. But in the modern American penal system, long-term solitary is an experiment that has been run tens of thousands of times.

Perhaps 70,000 people are currently held in near-total isolation in state and federal penitentiaries. Those held in municipal jails might push the total closer to 80,000. During the past two decades, the growth of these populations far outpaced the growth of the prison population overall. Between 1995 and 2000, the total prison population grew 28 percent, but the population in isolation grew 40 percent. (Exact and more recent numbers are hard to find. The 70,000 figure comes from the best data set available, from the Bureau of Justice Statistics 2005 prison census.)

This form of imprisonment has serious consequences for prisoners and for society. In effect, it's a vast social experiment that we've undertaken without public discussion of its morality or wisdom. The results are not as sublime as a Chekhov story, though in some ways they are just as tragic.

Long-term solitary confinement is understood, by convention, to be the condition of being without regular human contact for almost all of the day, for a period of 15 days or more. Some prison administrators bristle at the phrase "solitary confinement" because of the associations it conjures. "We make a mistake when we call it 'solitary,'" says Martin Horn, the former head of the New York City jails. "'Solitary' is sensory deprivation, not knowing day from night—it's Steve McQueen in a dark box. And there's no place for that." He says those conditions are unacceptable under any circumstances, and are not imposed in modern U.S. prisons. What we do have are varieties of prisoner "segregation," either to punish rule violations in prison or to keep predatory prisoners from attacking others.

Semantics aside, in most implementations of solitary confinement in this country, the cells are tiny, six to eight feet wide and ten to twelve long. Instead of a bunk and a stool, as in the movies, there are immovable concrete slabs; instead of a lattice of bars, steel-plated doors. Windows, if they exist, are small and sealed. The lights are on 24 hours a day. Food, mail, and medicine are passed through a narrow aperture. Physical contact between staff and prisoners is minimized, and communication between prisoners often forbidden. Prisoners typically spend 23 hours per day in their cell, relieved by an hour of solitary exercise in a cage or courtyard.

In some ways the modern forms of solitary confinement are worse than the Shawshank-style black box. Among the most criticized implementations of solitary confinement are the Secure Housing Units in California, which state correction officials say are a key tool in the state's efforts to manage its prison gangs. The SHU at Pelican Bay, on the border with Oregon, is the most notorious. Far from being dark and dungeon-like, it is well lit and unsettlingly clinical in its design and orderliness. It is a facility whose mentally ruinous effects are concealed behind a curtain of banality.

LUBA MYTS

The SHU's goal is to neutralize alleged gang leaders. Inmates are isolated, in some cases, for years at a time. They can look through the perforations in the metal doors of their cells, but they see only a blank wall. They get daily recreation—alone in a featureless concrete box—but are mostly condemned to a life without human

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interaction, in a small room without even a window. They turn, like Chekhov's victim, to books—they are limited to ten at a time—and to that universal modern babysitter, the television set, which they may watch as much as they like, as long as they wear headphones. If you have ever felt sluggish or unhealthily inert after too many hours as a couch potato, imagine five or ten or even 20 years of little else. The SHU is a very modern method of draining life away.

In truth, modern solitary confinement drains more than life: It drains away the self. Johnny Perez, an advocate for recently released prisoners at the Urban Justice Center in New York, spent 14 years in jail and prison for weapons possession and robbery. He spent nearly four years in solitary. "I remember talking to myself a lot out loud, singing, just to hear another human voice," he says. He says "unrealistic thoughts" invaded his mind: *What if the correctional officers leave and never come back?* He underwent "feelings of complete worthlessness" and profound depression.

This vertiginous cycle of thoughts is typical, says psychiatrist Terry Kupers, of California's Wright Institute. "The studies that look at three months [of isolation] universally report a list of symptoms that include anxiety, paranoia, compulsive acts like cleaning and exercises, problems of concentration and memory." These prisoners exhibit a "high suicide rate, sleep problems, headaches." And "that's in relatively healthy people. For people with innate tendencies toward mental illness, isolation makes it worse."

Those who are isolated for years undergo deeper changes. "They just withdraw, even more than the isolated confinement requires. And they have mounting anger, along with fear—terror—that the anger will erupt and get them in further trouble." As a result, "they work hard to suppress their anger," and the suppression "makes them feel generally numb—a zombie stage, or walking dead." The long-term isolated often simply disappear into their troubled internal lives: "When guys are new, they do talk to their neighbors. After a while, they stop." Perez began to refuse visitors—friends, family—who had traveled upstate from the Bronx to comfort him. "That's when I began to lose touch with reality," he says. "It got to the point where I was more comfortable in than out."

Stuart Grassian of Harvard and Craig Haney of the University of Southern California echo Kupers's findings: The confined experience irrational anger, suicidal ideation, unaccountable quiescence, obsessive-compulsive behavior and imagined physical ailments (itches that can't be scratched, growths that aren't there), and, ultimately, a kind of Stockholm syndrome in which the cell itself is the welcomed oppressor. Many long-term-isolated prisoners, upon release or transfer into non-solitary confinement, refuse to leave their cells, the prospect of even limited freedom having become more terrible than the predictability of total confinement. Others engage in self-harm—cutting themselves, biting off their own fingers, mutilating their genitals—as both an extreme display of personal liberty and the only reliable way to feel the touch of other human beings: the doctors and nurses who treat their wounds.

How did we get here? In part, the problem of solitary confinement is just the problem of mass incarceration. For a number of reasons—mandatory minimum sentences, "tough on crime" legislation, the drug war—the prison population has expanded faster than it can be safely accommodated. As larger numbers of inmates came to live together in cramped quarters, solitary confinement became a common form of discipline and a way of maintaining order.

It is not coincidental that some of the most vigorous supporters of solitary confinement are the guards whose job—an incredibly dangerous one—is to keep prisons orderly. "Punitive segregation is a necessary tool, and it should be available around the country," says Norman Seabrook, president of the New York City correctional officers' union. It "saves lives at the end of the day." Martin Horn is a bit more cynical: "If you're a correctional officer, your ideal prison is one where every inmate is locked down 100 percent of the time." But a handful of studies suggest that solitary confinement has little impact on prison violence, both against guards and between prisoners.

Solitary confinement used to mean a short stay to punish serious rule violations. But prisons and jails now lock away inmates for months, even years, for small infractions—and sometimes for no infraction at all. Disciplinary segregation, as the practice is called, is used to punish a wide range of violations of prison rules, and the sentences run consecutively rather than concurrently. A young prisoner caught with 17 packs of cigarettes, for example, might serve two weeks in solitary for each—a total of more than eight months. (This exact case is described in the Vera Institute of Justice's landmark 2006 report "Confronting Confinement.")

Or, if he's young enough, he might go to solitary just because of his age and perceived weakness. Beginning in the 1990s, large numbers of inmates started getting put in solitary not for things they did but for things that others might do to them. Members of vulnerable groups—isolated gang members surrounded by members of rival gangs; gay or transgender prisoners; informants; juveniles held in adult facilities—may be locked up alone for their own protection. The mentally ill are kept alone almost as a rule, often to avoid the social friction associated with other prisoners' intolerance of their eccentricities.

Last, the incorrigibly violent—serial rapists and their ilk—are held in solitary for the safety of other prisoners and the prison staff. These "worst of the worst" provide the popular imagination with its image of the sort of prisoner held in solitary confinement. In reality, they make up a tiny fraction of those so held, according to Horn.

This last group provides what is easily the favorite argument of tough-on-criminals constituencies and correctional officers who defend the status quo of solitary confinement. "When you have an inmate who's violent, abusive, and a threat to [correctional officers] and the general population, he will assault, murder, and slash other human beings," Seabrook says. He views proposed limits on the use of solitary confinement as attempts to bind the hands of his correctional officers: Prisoners "made adult decisions with a 9mm, and then come to jail and have to be treated like children."

Seabrook is not exaggerating when he says correctional officers suffer frequent assault. One common act is a practice called "gassing," which involves prisoners' saving their excreta, then blowing them, raspberry-style, so that they aerosolize and spray the guard as he walks by. An incorrigible gasser needs to be punished and deterred—but if the use of solitary is highly restricted or taken off the menu, as numerous activist groups argue it should be, the remaining options are few. "If I can't use punitive segregation for more than 60 days in a year, what can I do for the rest of the year?" Seabrook asks.

But the costs of locking people up alone are mounting, and they are not only monetary. On March 19, 2013, Tom Clements, the head of the Colorado prison system, was shot dead at his home by a man who had spent much of his eight years in prison in solitary confinement—only to be released into the free world with little to no psychiatric evaluation to see whether he was capable of living on the outside again.

Virtually every prisoner in isolation will one day be released. Not surprisingly, studies suggest that ex-felons who spent extended periods in solitary break parole and reoffend at higher rates. Many are taken directly from their cells, where they may have lived for years, to the bus depot. "Imagine taking someone in shackles from [solitary] and putting them onto public transportation," says Rick Raemisch, Clements's successor and an aggressive reformer of his state's solitary-confinement system. "Why not just tattoo on their forehead, 'I'm going to hurt someone'?" As of February 2015, Colorado was holding just 136 prisoners in solitary, down from 1,500 in 2011. "Running an efficient institution is a noble goal, but that's not our mission," Raemisch says. "It's having a safer community."

Martin Horn, who since leaving office has become a strong voice against solitary confinement, says New York State's current number of prisoners in long-term isolation, 12,000, should be reduced to about 400—only the truly incorrigibly violent. And, counterintuitively, he suggests that in solitary they should have *more* privileges (phone calls, books, recreation, visitation) than regular prisoners, not fewer, to maintain their sanity and encourage good behavior.

He distinguishes between segregation of inmates for punishment and segregation of inmates to deprive them of opportunities to be violent again. The latter is not a form of punishment. It is simply part of the prudent operation of a prison. Consider, Horn says, the incorrigibly violent prisoner who attacks a fellow prisoner. He should be punished. But the prison authorities should not mistake his solitary condition for a form of punishment—one that could last for years, as retribution for whatever crime he perpetrated against another inmate.

Instead, he says, solitary "should be a tool of last resort." These inmates "have simply crossed a line of decency and demonstrated an inability to live with civilized people." But to keep them sane, he says, we'll need to pay for more chaplains and social workers—employees of the prison who will talk to the inmates, play pinochle with them, anything. The prisons chief, he says, is "still responsible for their welfare."

As it happens, the United States experimented with mass solitary confinement once before, in the first half of the 19th century. In what was known as the Pennsylvania System of incarceration, prisoners were locked away alone and given only the Bible to read. The idea was to induce repentance. The system gave us the word "penitentiary." It also drove prisoners insane. It was soon widely condemned and rarely replicated (though not entirely phased out until the early 1900s).

The current system of solitary confinement is a historic anomaly, and one we have embraced at considerable moral cost. It fails to make correctional officers, prisons, or society much safer. It costs too much—twice or thrice per capita what general-population incarceration does. It destroys minds, and it punishes many who deserve protection and medical care. And it releases broken souls into society, which suffers the predictable consequences. **NR**

Majoring in Anthro

A lament for a field

BY JAY NORDLINGER

Not long ago, Eric Owens of the *Daily Caller* wrote an article about the latest antics of the American Anthropological Association. (They were threatening to boycott Israel.) He described anthropology as "the most pathetic college major" whose name "doesn't end in the word 'studies.'" This made me grin and wince simultaneously (if such a thing is possible). I thought the remark was funny. I also thought it might be true, and this pained me—for I myself was an anthro major, and I once had great respect, even love, for the field. I still do, in a way. But I know that the field was long ago captured by the flaky Left, to use a shorthand.

By the way, I was interviewing Jeb Bush a few years ago and brought up the fact that he majored in Latin American studies. I pointed out that this field is dominated by lefties. He said, "Well, most 'studies' are dominated by lefties, when you think about it." True.

What has happened to anthropology can't be separated from what has happened to academia as a whole. But anthro may have pride of place, when it comes to political correctness and the corruption of scholarship. Stanley Kurtz says, "I've always bragged that anthropology is the worst of all the disciplines, much worse than English, despite what some of our conservative friends think." Kurtz is a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., and an anthropologist, or former anthropologist: a Ph.D. from Harvard. He is, in a sense, a refugee from anthropology. There are others.

In 2008, the anthropologist Hugh Gusterson wrote, "Anthropology is, by many measures, the academy's most left-leaning discipline." (A fact of which he apparently approves wholeheartedly.) In 2004, a study was conducted on the political affiliations of American professors. Of all the disciplines, anthropology came out the most Democratic at 30 to 1. This is shocking to me: I would be surprised to find one Republican in a *hundred* anthropologists.

When I was in college—the mid 1980s—all of my anthro professors were Marxists, I believe. It would have been hard to be anything else. If you were an astronomer, you were a Copernican, if you were an anthropologist, you were a Marxist. But they were serious people, my professors. They were not flakes. Since that time, however, postmodernism and other such strains have flooded in. So has political activism (which, of course, has its place, though probably not in classrooms).

Anthropology is, simply, the "science of man," as we used to say in the bad old days, when you could use "man" in that sense. In the 1950s, the superb Mischa Titiev published a textbook called "The Science of Man." One

dictionary defines anthropology as "the science that deals with the origins, physical and cultural development, biological characteristics, and social customs and beliefs of humankind." Anthropology belongs to the sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities, all at once. It is a wonderful field for a generalist (like journalism, as it happens).

There are four main branches of anthropology: cultural (or social) anthropology; physical (or biological) anthropology; archeology; and linguistic anthropology. The cultural branch is the most populated, by far, and it is also the one most vulnerable to politics and fads. I will concentrate on this branch. Perhaps the Republicans, whatever their numbers, are to be found in the other branches?

I should not romanticize the past—a conservative vulnerability—but there were once giants: Lewis Henry Morgan, Franz Boas, Bronislaw Malinowski, E. E. Evans-Pritchard. They wrote famous books such as *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (Malinowski) and *The Nuer* (Evans-Pritchard). I was assigned those two classics, and many others. As Peter Wood, an anthropologist who heads the National Association of Scholars, points out, I got in "just under the wire." I was exposed to serious work. I was also assigned a primatology textbook that was explicitly "feminist." Yes, there was feminist science, as distinct from scientific science, I suppose.

There came a time, says Wood, when "anthropology went off a cliff." Napoleon Chagnon uses similar language: "Anthropologists went nuts over new fads, and a lot of cultural anthropology went down the drain." Chagnon is possibly the most famous anthropologist in the world, as well as the most "controversial," as everyone says. He has made many enemies by insisting on a role for biological evolution in human behavior. His 1968 monograph, *The Yanomamö: The Fierce People*, is probably the most famous such book in the literature. It would be only natural for other anthropologists to resent this a bit.

In the 1970s and '80s, anthropologists began to regard their field's past as shameful. (I am taking the liberty of generalization, as throughout this piece.) Often heard was the bromide "Anthropology is the handmaiden of colonialism." The earlier heroes of the field were now painted as villains—as racists and exploiters. This was a gross defamation. These anthropologists cared enough about primitive peoples to study them, understand them, and in some cases make them famous. (A word of advice to the current anthro student: Better not say "primitive.")

Peter Wood cites two key dates in the downfall of anthropology: 1973 and 1984. In the first of those years, Clifford Geertz published his *Interpretation of Cultures*, hugely influential. According to Geertz, an anthropologist could interpret a culture the way a literary critic interprets a poem. Nothing was quite true; everything was subjective. In 1984, David M. Schneider came out with his *Critique of the Study of Kinship*. It essentially threw cold water on the very idea of kinship, saying it was just another instance of Western bias. Before, kinship had been fundamental to anthropology: a hard, exacting study. In a much-quoted remark, Robin Fox said, "Kinship is to anthropology what logic is to philosophy or the nude is to art." No more, however. Anthropologists were excused from this particular task, as from others.

Stanley Kurtz says, in effect, "Don't forget Edward Said." Said's book *Orientalism*, published in 1978, influenced anthropology the way it did many other fields. Said threw cold water on the very idea of *culture*, to say nothing of kinship. Napoleon Chagnon says, in effect, "Don't forget Derrida and Foucault." The postmodernism of these philosophers covered anthropology like a fog. Anthropologists began competing with one another, says Chagnon, to see who could find "the most arcane ways" of expressing simple things. "A lot of battles in anthropology were intellectually faddish battles between gurus and ayatollahs and rabbis and high priests." Respect for the scientific method went down, down.

The field proliferated into little anthropologies, such as "reflexive anthropology": You behold a culture and ponder your own relationship to it. Do you feel guilty to be a Westerner? (You ought to.) There is also "transpersonal anthropology"—something about altered states of consciousness. Then you have "public anthropology," which aims for political and social activism—as if anthropology didn't have enough of that already.

Anthropology came to resemble victim studies, or victimology, in which the central question is "Who is oppressing whom?" as Peter Wood puts it. Worse, it got to be so that you could call anything and everything "anthropology." Andy Warhol said, "Art is what you can get away with." Sadly, something like that maxim applies to anthropology.

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Over the years, plenty of serious people have majored in anthropology. Saul Bellow did (and in sociology too). Rob Portman, the senator from Ohio, did. Michael Crichton, the late writer, did. Today, however, anthro has a reputation as a major for basket-weavers, potheads, and slackers. The field seems not to attract the most talented or go-getting students. Practical considerations come into play, of course. In 2012, *Forbes* ranked anthropology the very worst major for post-graduation employment and earnings. A writer on the blog Living Anthropologically wore this ranking as a badge of honor. "We're #1!" he said. He also gloated, or sneered, "Anthropology is the worst major for being a corporate tool." He added, "Anthropology is the major most likely to change your life" (for the better, presumably).

The field was unhappy when Governor Rick Scott of Florida spoke in 2011 about his spending priorities for education. "If I'm going to take money from a citizen to put into education," said Scott, "then I'm going to take that money to create jobs. So I want that money to go to degrees where people can get jobs in this state. Is it a vital interest of the state to have more anthropologists? I don't think so." The president and the executive director of the American Anthropological Association wrote him a rebukeful but polite letter. It transpired that one of Scott's daughters had majored in anthropology—and gone on to business school.

Appreciation of capitalism is not a hallmark of the anthropological community. That same blogger at Living Anthro-

pologically wrote, "A spectre is stalking Capitalism—the spectre of Anthropology. All the Powers of Capitalism have bound themselves in a crusade against this spectre," which powers include Governor Scott, *Forbes*, and Napoleon Chagnon (bizarrely). "Anthropology knows that what currently exists does not have to be. Anthropology knows more about capitalism than any other academic discipline." So, you see, anthropology is what will at last bring capitalism and the money-power down.

On its website, Princeton has a section on choosing majors. There are questions and answers, written by students. These are charming, and also helpful. One question on the page relevant to us is, "What are common misperceptions about anthropology majors?" The answer begins, "Some consider us 'fluffy humanities people.'" Another question is, "Why would anyone want to date an anthropology major?" Because "you can expect an anthropology student to have original and quirky opinions on everyday social phenomena." Frankly, given their "broad perspectives and experiences," you can think of anthro students as no less than "the most interesting people in the world."

I have no doubt that students of anthropology at Princeton are brilliant, fascinating, and datable. More generally, however, Peter Wood is surely right when he notes, with sorrow, that his field has become "flypaper for dimmer undergraduates," who need only have the approved attitudes, opinions, and commitments to win A's from their profs.

THE American Anthropological Association has many task forces, and these tell us a fair amount. There is the Global Climate Change Task Force. The Race and Racism Task Force. The Task Force on AAA Engagement on Israel-Palestine. (This last one must bend over backward to be fair to Israel.) The AAA also has sub-associations, an alphabet soup of such associations, an array that would make the Balkans blush. You have the Association of Black Anthropologists, the Association for Feminist Anthropology, the Association of Latina and Latino Anthropologists, the Association for Queer Anthropology—"formerly the Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists." (You can imagine the debate over that name change.)

A perusal of *Anthropology News*, the "official news source" of the AAA, is not much different from a perusal of *Mother Jones* or any other left-wing publication, except that there are extra helpings of self-importance and academic gobbledygook. A typical headline reads, "Capitalism vs. the Climate." There is, in fact, an "AAA Statement on Humanity and Climate Change." It contains such lines as "Anthropologists recognize that humanity's actions and cultures are now the most important causes of the dramatic environmental changes seen in the last 100 years. We consider this period the Anthropocene" (a geological epoch in which man wrecks the Earth).

There is a piece called "When Conversation Is Not Enough: Reflections on the Makings of the #AAA2014 Die-In." At the recent annual meeting of the AAA, hundreds of members lay down on the floor of the hotel lobby, pretending to be dead, in protest of what they regard as a police and broader national war on black Americans. A statement of the Association of Black Anthropologists begins, "The [ABA] condemns, in no uncertain terms, the ongoing terrorism waged against Black U.S. communities by the state, police, and White vigilantes." It goes on to say, "These are state-sponsored massacres of our people, massacres enabled by a long history of national and global anti-Blackness." In short, "we charge genocide."

The charge of genocide—the wholesale murder of a people—is one I heard on my campus in the 1980s. Protesters were incensed by the attempts of the Reagan administration to slow the rate of growth of social-welfare spending. They chanted, "Reagan, Bush, you can't hide, we charge you with genocide."

In one issue of *Anthropology News*, the editors published four pieces on the controversial death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo., at the hands of a police officer. One anthropologist wrote of "a violence that is critical in maintaining the privilege that accompanies whiteness." There was a lot more where that came from. The four pieces prompted Peter Wood to write an essay for *Minding the Campus*: "Ferguson and the Decline in Anthropology." He said that the quartet of pieces published in *AN* showed what his field "has sunk to." He lamented "a profound misappropriation of an intellectual discipline." To its great credit, *AN* republished this piece—an act that kicked up a storm among the *AN* and AAA faithful.

IT should go without saying—though I will say it—that there are anthropologists at our universities who do good and serious work, including good and serious teaching. They are scholars before they are political actors and indoctrinators. Napoleon Chagnon cites a number of departments where "researchers are not just cultural anthropologists but a new breed of people who have additional skills and training in evolutionary biology." Among these departments are those at Missouri, Arizona State, Michigan, Harvard, and Utah. Peter Wood has a tip for telling a real anthropologist from a fake one: If the guy talks about social structure, kinship, and other such concerns, rather than the political preoccupation du jour, he's apt to be the real McCoy.

I'm reminded of a fellow who said that the congregation in which he took part was mad at the rabbi. They suspected he was a conservative—because he never talked about politics. Instead, he talked about things like God, the Bible, and Judaism.

Academia is a minefield in which it is increasingly difficult to say anything without causing an explosion. Recently, a professor unburdened himself of his fears in a piece online, published anonymously, of course. "Personally, liberal students scare the sh** out of me." If a conservative student complained about him to administration or on social media, he could swat that student away like a fly. "The same cannot be said of liberal students. All it takes is one slip," and "that's it," you're finished. Anthropology is about human and cultural differences, as well as similarities. It is absolutely studded with mines. How the subject can still be taught at all is semi-miraculous. The pressures of political correctness are intense.

In that piece about Ferguson and decline, Wood writes,

> Anthropology, rightly understood, is an effort to understand human nature through systematic study of those qualities in us that vary in time and place—and those that don't. Anthropology looks at how we emerged as a species and how we have diversified into thousands of languages, tribes, and civilizations. The field became a "discipline" by sternly demanding of itself rigor in how it went about this inquiry. Mostly that rigor required a steadfast determination to stand outside the myths people tell themselves and, by standing outside, to see things as they really are.

That field sounds like very heaven to me—one I'd like to major in. **NR**

The Long View

BY ROB LONG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Announcing the 2017 MSNBC Schedule!

Chelsea Clinton, president and CEO of MSNBC, the nation's leading progressive Web- and mobile-based news and information network, announced a new lineup this afternoon.

"This is a time of great challenge, but also great opportunity, in the television-news and public-affairs space," Clinton said via the smartphone application Periscope. She went on to list the many ways that MSNBC has responded to the new and changing landscape of communications technology.

"We've right-sized our workforce, become leaner and more competitive, and redirected our energies from old-style legacy broadcasting—with its reliance on expensive cameras and viewing audiences—to a nimbler and lighter way to tell the vital stories of the day," she said.

"Our overall expenses, along with our production costs, have been reduced by 97 percent! And that allows us to do what we do best: talk to Americans about the issues that matter to them."

"For instance," she added, "I am broadcasting this myself, using my iPhone and a selfie stick."

"Millennials are the key audience for us," she continued, "because they're young and mobile and they want to get their information where they are—on the go, on smartphones and tablets, without a lot of heavy information or what we around here call 'homework.' The New MSNBC is going to be more about making you feel a certain way and less about making you think."

The New MSNBC lineup includes some old favorites and some cutting-edge programming, all retooled and rethought for the way the Millennials absorb information.

DAILY SCHEDULE:

6 A.M. TO 11 A.M. *Morning Joe*

The flagship MSNBC talk and issues program is now expanded to five hours in the morning. Join Joe and Mika as they welcome newsmakers from the nation's capital. Mika will be broadcasting from inside her Prius via her iPhone. Joe will be chiming in as possible from his room in the mental-health facility to which he committed himself after the election of former Texas senator Ted Cruz to the presidency. Viewers can easily access this new five-hour offering by logging in to a GoToMeeting.com webinar link.

11 A.M. TO 3 P.M. *Sittin' and Knittin' with Grammy*

Take a load off and relax with America's favorite grandmother, former secretary of state Hillary Rodham. The secretary—or "Grammy Hills," as her guests will call her—will relax in the sunroom of her home in Chappaqua with an iced tea and a slice of lemon cake as she spins tales of her life in and out of the spotlight. With a heavy emphasis on homemaking, crafting, international affairs, and personal finance, Grammy Hills will take your calls, talk over the big issues of the day from a decidedly "homestyle" perspective, and coax newsmakers and celebrities to show a different side of themselves. Viewers can find this show by "following" @grammyhillaryrodham on Instagram and continually refreshing their feed.

3 P.M. TO 6 P.M. *Afternoon Joe*

The flagship MSNBC morning show becomes a terrific new afternoon wrap-up of everything people have been talking about since *Morning Joe*. Expect the same fireworks and sharp opinions, except this time with an afternoon sensibility. Mika and Joe will appear side by side on Skype as each interviews a newsmaker guest from wherever he or she happens to be at the time. Using the "everywhere" attitude for which Millennials are famous, we'll be able to see Mika and Joe going about their daily lives while at the same time carrying on the fresh and fearless conversation that is their signature. Viewers will access this programming by adding the show as a "contact" on Skype, calling in to the show one minute before airtime, setting their Skype status to "Mute"—this is very important—and watching the conversation unfold!

6 P.M. TO 9 P.M. *DMs with Rachel Maddow*

Legendary MSNBC host Rachel Maddow sits in a quiet place, wherever she happens to be, and tweets out her thoughts to her followers, engaging in thoughtful and nuanced @replies as the situation warrants. The audience simply follows along on Twitter! No "cable" or screen necessary!

9 P.M. TO 1 A.M. *Nighttime Joe*

The flagship MSNBC morning show that became a terrific new afternoon wrap-up now becomes a late-night digest of the best moments of the afternoon wrap-up! On YouTube!

1 A.M. TO 6 A.M. *Sleepytime with Ed Schultz!*

Ed Schultz, MSNBC's dynamic former nighttime host, sleeps in his bed while watched over by you, the viewer! Viewers simply search for Ed's feed on Periscope and click "Join"—it's as simple and as mobile as that! The audience is invited to participate in the show by tweeting directly at local first responders when Ed's breathing becomes labored or stops altogether due to severe sleep apnea.

The New MSNBC premieres next week!

For more information, please DM or tweet @msnbcpr. Please allow four to six weeks for a reply.

Athwart

BY JAMES LILEKS

Persian Doormat

If the president wanted to give Iran nuclear weapons, how would he act differently? It's a silly question. An executive order, obviously. No, these talks have been an attempt to show the mullahs that the bad old days of cowboy swagger are over. Surely they must think:

The United States, once so arrogant and powerful, is now a whimpering wet whelp on its back with its throat exposed, begging for an agreement. What strange new-found respect we have for them! Let us concede things that we might enter into this wonderful new concord of eunuchs.

Sure. That's how it works.

The treaties that endure are like agreements between old friends to play golf every Saturday, because both participants have mutual respect, similar goals, and know a little cheating is part of the game. But let's say you want to enter into a golf treaty with someone who hates golf. Negotiations would go like this:

We're on the same page, then. We meet every noon for golf?

Noon is the time for prayers. The unbeliever shall be cast into the pit of Ananargin, the Thrice-Beaked Scourge of Impiety, and pecked unto the end of time.

So, 1 P.M.?

Golf is a godless pursuit of earthly fame. As the Prophet said, "Chase not the small orbs, lest ye lose sight of the large orb that yea, verily, shall hit thee in the back of thine head."

Well he might have, sure, but if you're worried there's a softball practice field nearby, there isn't—

Doth not the Prophet say, "Thy sticks and clubs shall be of no use when the tribulations arrive, and the flame of truth consumes them all"?

Flame of truth? You're thinking of those courses in Arizona where you have to play in the morning! It's a scorcher there, I'll tell you. So I guess I'm wondering what you want.

We want your cries to be lost in the ceaseless din of perdition as despair engulfs all you have known, and your kingdom passes from this earth into the realm of darkness and eternal torment.

Oh, you want to play Meadow Pines, eh? That back nine will bring a strong man to his knees.

You get the idea that the other side really doesn't want to play golf. Likewise, in our current dealings with Iran, you sense the president believes Iran would be wholly dismayed if all those nuclear things somehow got jostled and accidentally formed a nuclear bomb because that is *so* not the idea. Or the president doesn't care as long as Iran announces the completion of the Amazing Jew Reducer on his watch. As for those ICBMs? Hey, they could just be testing a way of relocating minarets. Worst-case scenario, you'll never have a two-state solution, because both the East and the West Bank will be one solid fused sheet of glass. But that's for President Hillary to worry about.

But back to the hard-nosed, bare-knuckle Iranian negotiations. Leaked reports from behind the scenes say tempers, longstanding suspicions, and mutually inconsistent worldviews have come close to derailing the deal, and that would be good news if we weren't talking about the U.S. vs. France. When it comes to getting a deal with perfidious Persia, it seems there's no posture of acquiescence the administration will not assume. Bowing down with one's forehead on the floor is a good start, but perhaps if we turned around it would be a more accurate reflection of our position in this relationship.

Surely we must get something out of this when it's done. At least cab fare on the nightstand, right? Maybe an expression of compassion and concern when the Iranian negotiator leaves the room after the signing and says, "Better put some ice on that." Turns out we do get something in return for letting Iran give us the illusion that we are managing its nuclear timetable.

1. Weekly chants of "Death to America" changed for a month to "Serious head injury to America resulting in 48-hour stay in hospital for observation, followed by discharge and therapy." The State Department agrees to provide printed phonetic guides to help the crowds chant this new line successfully. ("Death to Israel" chant changed to "Extra death to Israel," to compensate.) Should the Iranian government refuse to allow inspections of nuclear facilities, the crowds will be required to chant for two weeks "Momentarily painful paper cuts to America, of the type one gets when licking an envelope."

2. At least 20 homosexuals facing the death penalty will be given the option of leaving Iran and relocating to the United States, but they will be warned that they may end up in Indiana and subject to bakery/decoration restrictions.

3. Since previous insistences that Iran not fund suicide attacks were predicated on the "cross my heart and hope to die" protocols, which in retrospect did not seem quite as strict as believed, from now on Iran will "pinky swear" not to commit acts of terror abroad. This is no small diplomatic triumph. Early in the negotiations, the U.S. presented Iran with evidence that several hundred Revolutionary Guards were stepping on cracks in an attempt to "break the backs" of mothers in the West. Iran insisted that these crack-treading operations were intended to be therapeutic exercises for the spinal health of domestic mothers.

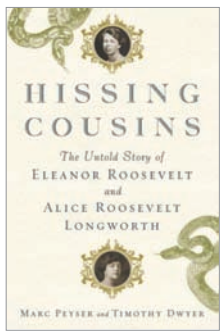
Under the new guidelines, Iran will be allowed 400 underground facilities with 6,000 cracks subject to international inspection, provided that six months' notice is given.

NOTE: Under terms of the deal, "inspection" consists of waiting outside in the car while someone runs in and knocks on the door. If no one answers, they can try again in six months. **NR**

Mr. Lileks blogs at www.lileks.com.

Upper Crust

FLORENCE KING



Hissing Cousins: The Untold Story of Eleanor Roosevelt and Alice Roosevelt Longworth, by Marc Peyser and Timothy Dwyer (Nan A. Talese, 332 pp., $28.95)

After more than two centuries as one of New York's founding clans, the Roosevelts discovered that their family tree had so many branches that a woman could marry within the fold without changing her maiden name. Eleanor Roosevelt Roosevelt never changed hers; Alice Roosevelt Longworth did, but the newspapers that reported her every outlandish action and utterance always referred to her by all three.

It's too bad that a book as good as this one should have such a misleading title. "Hissing Cousins" is perfect for sales, but the book is not, per se, about catfights. The oil-and-water personalities of the two cousins are simply the opportunity to illustrate what the authors see as the persistence and easy acceptance of Old World–style political dynasties in our supposedly modern era, and what it could mean for 2016 and beyond.

"Despite our being one of the modern world's oldest republics," they write, "the Adamses, Harrisons, and Bushes produced two presidents. . . . The Roosevelts showed just how close to a monarchy American democracy can veer. Either Theodore or Franklin was on a national ticket for eight of twelve presidential elections, and no other family has dominated two political parties, three if you count Theodore's Progressive Republicans. Most significantly, no other family produced two women who dominated the national conversation like Alice and Eleanor."

They were born a few months apart in 1884, both saddled from the start with father complexes that were clinical in intensity and gothic in atmospherics. Theodore Roosevelt was hurrying home from Albany to be with his wife, who had just given birth to their first child, and his mother, who had a cold. But when he finally got through the snow and arrived at his Manhattan townhouse, both women had taken a turn for the worse and died within hours of each other the following day. His wife's death was caused by an undiagnosed kidney disease, not childbirth, but it might as well have been as far as baby Alice was concerned. To prove that death had not defeated him, the authors write, Theodore effectively "blotted out" the whole marriage, just as he had blotted out the life-threatening asthma of his youth by going out West and living as a cowboy. Lest he be seen as a "molly-coddle," the image of softness he dreaded, he refused to speak of his first marriage or even mention his wife's name, and threw himself into politics until he captured national acclaim with his Rough Riders in the war with Spain in 1898.

Eleanor was eight when her cold, indifferent mother died and nine when she lost her beloved father, Elliott, whose love lay elsewhere. According to his brother Theodore, Elliott drank "whole bottles of anisette and green mint besides whole bottles of raw brandy and champagne, sometimes a dozen in the mornings." He knocked over an oil lamp and set fire to his house, tried to jump out the window, and ran up and down the stairs like a rabid dog. When he died shortly thereafter, Eleanor was sent to live with her maternal grandmother.

It was the first of the many times they would be compared. Who was the "poor little thing" people spoke of: orphaned Eleanor or motherless Alice? Not Alice, who formed her own Rough Riders from Washington boys and led them in trashing the streets of the capital on their bicycles. But Eleanor, who had escaped from her grandmother and attended the posh but left-wing English boarding school run by the socialist Mme. Souvestre, took up good works to help as many poor little things as she could find.

At first, Theodore tried to control Alice by comparing her unfavorably with his niece. Eleanor's charitable activities were those of a proper gentlewoman, he said, but when he succeeded to the presidency after McKinley's assassination, all comparisons were off. His daughter became "Princess Alice," America's first professional celebrity. She christened a ship for the kaiser of Germany, met the dowager empress of China, who gave her ermine and black-fox coats, and inspired a hit song about her favorite color, "Alice Blue Gown." In 1906, she married future House speaker Nicholas Longworth in a White House wedding with no bridesmaids, preferring to shine alone, and cut the cake with a sword she borrowed from a military aide. After that, her fame simply went off the charts. Some years later, two men were discussing the plan by the State of Massachusetts to honor the birthplace of poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow when one of them said, "Aw, nobody ever heard of him until he married Alice Roosevelt."

When Eleanor became first lady, the national press tried to pit her and Alice against each other with rival newspaper columns, Eleanor's "My Day" and "What Alice Thinks," but it did not work out as hoped. Eleanor's column ran from the early Thirties until three weeks before her death in 1962, while Alice's lasted 18 months. It should not have surprised anyone in the editorial business. Like so many good talkers, Alice couldn't write. When she was telling a story her timing was perfect, but if she tried to put it on paper her prose was as turgid as the instructions in

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Eleanor Roosevelt

Alice Roosevelt Longworth

AP PHOTO

a knitting book. She also had a problem relating with her readers, as when she described surprise as "feeling like Lady Godiva with an upswept bob." Most of the just-plain-folks who read the popular press had no idea who Lady Godiva was and had never seen an upswept bob. Eleanor, on the other hand, could write about nothing much at all and keep it lively and universal, as when she described her efforts to get rid of a ticklish throat to keep from coughing at a meeting. Her years of good works had taught her that for the common people, life grinds exceeding small, and she kept her commentary in proportion.

When she became first lady, the Roosevelts became a dynasty within a dynasty. Alice, ensconced in her Massachusetts Avenue mansion, held court for the Republican or TR side, smoking through her long ivory holder as she ran down the Hyde Park Democrat with venomous delight, even suggesting that he drop the family name entirely and call himself Franklin Delano. Then she entertained her guests with her famous impersonation of Eleanor. In the meantime she visited the White House whenever she got an invitation—which was often, because, being family, they couldn't very well *not* invite her.

Eleanor's self-confidence had grown since Alice had called her "a literal human doormat" after she went to sleep in the vestibule of her house rather than drag Franklin away from a party to tell him she had forgotten her key. One evening, Eleanor looked across the White House dinner table and said pleasantly, "Alice, why don't you give one of your impersonations of me now?" A witness said Alice blanched briefly but did the imitation, and Eleanor laughed along with the rest. "The most helpful criticism I ever received," Eleanor later wrote. "I realized that I had many things to correct." It was a masterpiece of subtlety, but as Alice must have realized, it was game, set, and match for the human doormat.

Alice also used sex against Eleanor in a way that no one else would have dared. For years people had been gossiping about the lesbian friends the first lady had gathered round her in the course of her work with labor unions and women's-rights groups. Chief among them were Nancy Cook and Marion Dickerman, who were standard left-wingers and at least had each other, but when Eleanor took up with AP reporter Lorena Hickok, who was unattached, the whispers grew more intense. Hickok got so involved with FDR's 1932 campaign that she had to quit her job, telling her bosses that she was no longer able to be impartial. Frankly masculine-looking and doing nothing to hide it, she took Eleanor on long car trips and the pair stayed alone in motels.

Hickok's papers, released in 1970, reveal that they did what was then called "necking" but probably did not go all the way. That would have made no difference to Alice, who settled the matter during luncheon in an elegant restaurant, when she drowned out the soft, well-bred voices with her stentorian announcement.

"I don't care what you say!" she shouted. "I refuse to believe that Eleanor Roosevelt is a lesbian!"

It has long been my unpopular belief that when a handsome man marries a homely woman, something besides blind love is afoot. In FDR's case, that something was his obsessive effort to look like, sound like, and turn himself into another man altogether.

His success at this masquerade can be measured by the election of 1920, when he ran for vice president on the ticket headed by Democrat James Cox. "Many voters assumed that FDR was TR's son," the authors write, "and the Democrats did little to clarify things."

He lost the election, but he must have been overjoyed by the mistaken identity. It was more than just the name. As a young man he had adopted TR's unbecoming pince-nez glasses and his speech habits ("I like it bully well!"),

and while still at Harvard he was devastated when TR's Porcellian Club blackballed him. He had vowed to have six children, like TR, and follow his career path through New York State government, serving as assistant secretary of the Navy, and then going on to the White House.

This is less like admiration and more like what is today called "channeling." He wanted to *be* TR, so why didn't he pursue a complete resemblance and try to marry TR's daughter? Doesn't a daughter trump a niece? He may have contemplated it—I've always thought he did—but Alice wanted money and he didn't have enough. Nor did she want a mama's boy, or the dominating Sara Delano for a mother-in-law, and she certainly didn't want six children. And so he channeled in Eleanor, whom TR called "my favorite niece," and took her to the White House to help with his New Deal, which he channeled from TR's Square Deal.

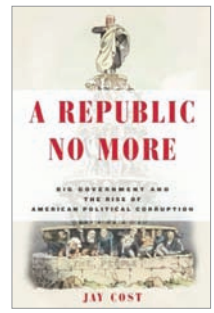
The authors turn up several people who more or less agree with me, including Laura Delano, FDR's maternal cousin, who was with him when he died. She believed that Alice suffered from lifelong what-might-have-beens and if-onlys from fantasizing herself as the only American woman to be both first daughter and first lady, going from Princess Alice to Queen Alice while the nations of the world lined up their ships for her to christen: "How she would have loved it!"

A word about the authors. Marc Peyser has been all over the magazine world. Former deputy editor of *Newsweek*, he has also worked and written for *Vogue*, *Budget Travel*, and *Condé Nast Traveler*. Timothy Dwyer was born and raised on Long Island near TR's Sagamore Hill. A graduate of Georgetown and the College of Europe in Belgium, he is now the CEO of School Choice International.

Apropos of nothing except the pleasure their book has given me, I call your attention to the many interesting facts that crop up throughout, e.g., that every French male descendant of Lafayette is automatically an American citizen, and that the slang for coffee, "a cuppa Joe," comes from the ruling by secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, FDR's teetotaling boss, who banned liquor from U.S. ships. It's that kind of book, so don't miss it. **NR**

A New Form of Government

MATTHEW SPALDING



A Republic No More: Big Government and the Rise of American Political Corruption, by Jay Cost (Encounter, 408 pp., $27.99)

RECENTLY, former Virginia governor Robert McDonnell (R.) and his wife were convicted on federal charges for accepting over $100,000 worth of shoes, watches, and golf clubs from a political donor. That's small potatoes compared with what some of the heavy hitters of the Gilded Age could rake in: In one year alone, Joseph Foraker (Ohio's U.S. senator from 1897 to 1909) took in nearly $1.2 million in today's dollars. And Foraker was hardly the worst offender. Matthew Quay, boss of the Pennsylvania political machine, apparently demanded so much money that deep-pocketed Standard Oil had to pay him in installments.

Following closely in the tradition of Theodore Lowi's classic *The End of Liberalism*, Jay Cost's *A Republic No More* is less about the distinguished history of corruption he chronicles than about how our ways of governing have changed, and how the maldistribution of federal powers feeds corruption and is destroying our constitutional republic.

Cost takes his bearings from James Madison's theory of republican government, famously outlined in *Federalist* 10. Madison warns of the danger of factionalism, of a minority or a majority "united and actuated by some common impulse of passion or interest" adverse to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community. Madison's constitutional system is carefully designed to separate and check power so as to break and control faction, thereby keeping narrow special interests from dominating public policy for their own selfish ends.

But things have not worked out that way. From the very beginning, politicians have ignored Madison's advice and constantly expanded their powers beyond the Constitution, throwing off the delicate institutional balance and separation of powers at the heart of the Madisonian structure. Without the proper institutional checks, politicians behave irresponsibly and, with more and more money flowing freely, there is more and more corruption.

So who let the moneychangers into our constitutional temple? Cost charges that the flashpoint was in 1790, when the first secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton, proposed the Bank of the United States as part of his national economic program. This unprecedented expansion disrupted the constitutional balance and affected everything that followed, launching America on the slippery slope of living constitutionalism and rampant corruption. All the Jeffersonians (including Jefferson and Madison) eventually adopted Hamilton's plans, which became the basis of Whig and Lincolnian Republican economic policy over the next century.

But the Bank is not the prototype of modern problems that Cost thinks. The bank dispute was an important policy debate over the kind of economy the new republic would foster. Madison opposed Hamilton's initial bank proposal. But he supported the Second Bank of the United States not because he had changed his constitutional philosophy but because he had become convinced that a national bank was legitimately necessary and proper under the Constitution. Similarly, it was never really doubted that Jefferson's purchase of Louisiana (Cost's other example of Constitution-busting by the Founders) was a constitutional act by a sovereign country (despite Jefferson's problematic theory of prerogative power). These were not the fathers of big government birthing an unlimited state.

What then is the story? The popular argument is that big government is the problem and that size matters. True

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enough. But the real question is not just the degree but the *kind* of government that has been metastasizing throughout American society.

The problem is what Alexis de Tocqueville called the "centralization of administration." In *Democracy in America*, Tocqueville foretold how citizens' lives would become subjected to the uniform, scientific, deadening rules of a centralized administration of experts bent on mastering every social condition in pursuit of egalitarian ends. The outcome of the drive for bureaucratic rule would be a new form of despotism, promoting the narrow, selfish, petty interests of ruling oligarchs and their favored cronies. Tocqueville even predicted that the most advanced form of bureaucracy would also be the most corrupt.

This understanding accords well with the Founders' view of the need for decentralized administration under a limited but energetic federal government meant to secure unalienable rights. Their improved political science—an improvement on classical and medieval regimes—would vindicate republican liberty through the constitutional rule of law and by limiting the power of narrow interests in favor of the common good.

After the Founding era came a new science of politics—rooted in the French philosophes and embraced by American progressives—that offered the promise of technocracy, applying modern science to bring continuous improvement to man and society through the administration of things rather than the politics of self-government. (Alexander Hamilton had called it a "heresy" to suggest that, of all forms of government, "that which is best administered is best.")

Cost describes this new type of politics well. His underlying narrative therefore eventually supports a more sophisticated analysis, and a more persuasive argument, than the neo-anti-Federalist account on the book's surface. Connecting the new theory of governance with the new forms of corruption that result is Cost's most important contribution.

We get a whiff of the change in the 19th century, and then see the phenomenon become full blown in the progressive movement's argument for separating administration and politics, to elevate supposedly neutral expertise over partisanship. Cost sees the New Deal as the key turning point, combining robust national patronage with the programmatic infrastructure of the welfare state.

But the fundamental change is when government becomes professionalized, sophisticated, regulatory, and all-embracing. This happened when the national government, in principle, assumed responsibility for the socio-economic well-being of every American and set out to build the programs for managing, from the center, the interactions of consumers and producers, employees and employers, husbands and wives, parents and children—virtually every aspect of Americans' day-to-day lives. This is precisely because bureaucracy demands that there be no sources of authority independent of the administrative center.

This centralization of administration has changed the nature of American governance. Massive bureaucracies of unelected experts, who have been delegated virtually endless authority by an increasingly irresponsible Congress, exert enormous discretion over extensive financial resources and political patronage. The ever-growing imperial presidency seeks to unify those resources for ideological political benefit.

The perennial old-style corruption (think of George Washington Plunkitt of Tammany Hall) was mostly personal, parochial, and oddly quaint—greedy and vulgar, to be sure, but also unbureaucratic and unidealistic. The new corruption is different: As the personal and parochial is drawn into the administrative machinations of the federal government, everything becomes social, systemic, and comprehensive. This creates a paradise for the grand corruptions of multiplying political factions—for preferred corporations (Solyndra), whole industries (the auto bailout), voting groups (immigration executive orders), and segments of the economy (Obamacare).

The various domains of corruption that Cost aptly describes—from ordinary pork-barrel politics and farm subsidies to Medicare and Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac—are the fulcrum of what he calls the "interest-group society" that now predominates.

This is not an extension of the Founders' recognition of the need for decent political management under the Constitution, or a necessary adaptation of the existing constitutional structure to new circumstances, but an altogether new and all-encompassing form of political organization. The fact of the matter is that we are today subject to a different form of government than the one designed and practiced by the likes of Madison, Jefferson, and Hamilton. Indeed, from a broader Madisonian point of view, we should consider whether government itself has become a faction, with its own interests and passions separate from the public good, supported by its own unionized labor, and surrounded by lobbyists and cronies dealing with agencies and bureaucracies that for all intents and purposes act without the consent of the governed.

The structural defects in our constitutional regime leave government 'poorly suited' to wield the power it now possesses.

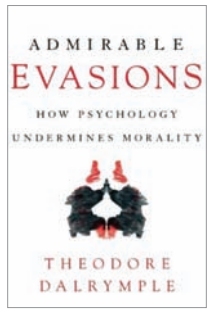
In the end, Cost is doubtful much can be done: The structural defects in our constitutional regime leave government "poorly suited" to wield the power it now possesses. Congress is overwhelmed and the executive too democratized for serious institutional adjustments.

But while we are not on the cusp of a Madisonian restructuring, Cost concludes, we may be capable of what he calls a "Mugwump moment"—a reference to the anti-corruption Republican Mugwumps, who threw the 1884 election to Democratic reformer Grover Cleveland—in which we can harass the factions, disrupt their pathways of corruption, and buy some time until major institutional reforms can be implemented.

Perhaps Cost is right about that. Nevertheless, we should be mindful that bureaucratic rule—as Tocqueville and Madison held—violates man's natural liberty. Which means that, as the political corruptions of expanding administrative rule become more apparent and objectionable, the American people—who have not consented to an oligarchy of experts—may reassert their popular authority over centralized rule and use Madison's still-surviving institutions of constitutional government to become a republic once more. **NR**

On the Couch

MONA CHAREN



Admirable Evasions: How Psychology Undermines Morality, by Theodore Dalrymple (Encounter, 128 pp., $21.50)

Theodore Dalrymple begins this anti-psychology polemic with a quote from the great 17th-century memoirist François de La Rochefoucauld: "In the misfortunes of our friends, there is something not entirely unpleasing." Dalrymple cites this shrewd and biting insight into the complexities of the human heart for two reasons. First, it serves as a reminder that psychological understanding long predated Sigmund Freud, B. F. Skinner, and other 20th-century chieftains of the "science" called psychology. Older insights into the mind and heart were often as perceptive as modern pseudoscientific explanations, if not more so. They were also considerably less excusing and rationalizing.

It is the latter tendency in modern life at which Dalrymple, a psychiatrist himself, takes steady aim. Though he acknowledges that psychology has made some modest contributions to the alleviation of suffering, he offers that the following is, at best, an open question: "If all the antidepressants and anxiolytics . . . were thrown into the sea," "all textbooks of psychology were withdrawn and pulped," "all psychologists ceased to practice," and "all psychological terms were excised from everyday speech, would Mankind be the loser or the gainer"?

Mona Charen is a syndicated columnist and a senior fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

That Freud was at best a philosopher and at worst a fraud is now pretty widely acknowledged. His work was completely unscientific—that is, unmeasurable, untestable, and founded upon nothing more than speculation enforced by dogma. Freud debunkers have filled whole bookshelves. The id, the ego, penis envy, the Oedipus complex—all have been consigned to the intellectual trash. Still, because the man Vladimir Nabokov dismissed as "that Viennese quack" has cast such a long shadow over our times—W. H. Auden said that Freud was not just a man, but "a whole climate of opinion"—Dalrymple attends to filleting him with a few swift strokes. Freud was a "self-aggrandizing mythologist and a shameless manipulator of people. . . . He was the founder of a doctrinaire sect and a searcher-out and avenger of heresy . . . who called down anathema on infidels as intolerantly as Mohammed."

Though Freud was "undoubtedly brilliant," Dalrymple rejects utterly the notion that he originated such concepts as ambivalence, projection, and unconscious motivation. A quick glance at Shakespeare undermines Freud's pretensions, and Dalrymple deploys King Lear to good effect:

> Why dost thou lash that whore? Strip
> thine own back.
> Thou hotly lust'st to use her in that
> kind
> For which thou whipp'st her.

Worse than Freud's lack of scientific foundation, and much more significant than any of his personal shortcomings, was the effect his odd and baseless theories had on our civilization. Though Freud didn't necessarily intend this result (he was personally quite conventional in most respects), the effect, Dalrymple writes, was to "loosen Man's sense of responsibility for his own actions, freedom from responsibility being the most highly valued freedom of all." Freud's message, warped to be sure by oversimplification, became profoundly subversive. Dalrymple explains: "That desire, if not fulfilled, will lead to pathology makes self-indulgence man's highest goal. It is a kind of treason to the self, and possibly to others, to deny oneself anything." The author quotes one of his patients, a murderer: "I had to kill her, doctor, or I don't know what I would have done."

So psychoanalysis was bunk—and culturally destructive bunk at that; but what of the more scientific branches of psychology? Did they too help to undermine morality?

The behaviorists dispensed with the unconscious and infantile sexuality, but in its place they erected a new theory that was supposed to explain with one blinding insight all of the complexity of human experience. It was, according to John B. Watson, B. F. Skinner, and others, all a matter of stimulus and response. "What started as methodology became ontology," writes Dalrymple, in one of the dozens of memorable aphorisms that enliven nearly every page of this book. While behaviorism (unlike psychoanalysis) could claim some clinical successes, such as treating phobias, it proved absurdly reductionist as a guide to understanding human behavior as a whole. The behaviorists treated human beings as laboratory animals, whose thoughts and conduct could be controlled by the correct administration of food pellets and electric shocks.

Dalrymple allows that cognitive behavioral therapy has helped some, but he cannot help wondering "whether many conditions . . . such as eating disorders . . . spread in proportion as they are known about." Surely the pharmaceutical companies that advertise cures for such conditions as "overactive bladder," "premenstrual dysphoric disorder," and "low T" are counting on creating as much as discovering sufferers.

Writing of the "Werther effect"—which was named for the rash of suicides that followed the publication of Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, and refers to the predictable copycat acts that follow the suicides of celebrities—Dalrymple notes that human beings are awfully susceptible to suggestion. "No statement that a psychological disturbance has such-and-such a prevalence in such-and-such a population should be taken at face value, especially when it is a plea, as it so often is, explicit or implicit as the case may be, for more resources to treat it, the supposed prevalence having risen shockingly in the last few years. It is not merely that epidemiological searchers in this field can find what they are looking for; it is that they can *provoke* what they are looking for."

While psychology diligently (and not selflessly) creates more and more cate-

gories of illness—the latest *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* lists some 300 maladies—the social-welfare and tort systems in America and other countries encourage and reward victim status. Many bad behaviors, such as alcoholism or drug abuse, are labeled as mental illnesses and thus placed beyond moral censure. "There can be nothing morally to choose between the disordered conduct of a person with a brain tumor or dementia on the one hand, and a person who has intoxicated himself with drugs on the other." Also, once the apparatus for diagnosing and treating self-reported psychological ailments is in place, with caregivers and sufferers alike benefiting financially, the "virtue of resilience or fortitude" becomes a "sworn enemy."

This approach has bizarre consequences:

> The expansion of psychiatric diagnoses leads paradoxically and simultaneously to overtreatment and undertreatment. The genuinely disturbed get short shrift: Those with chronic schizophrenia, which seems most likely to be a genuine pathological malfunction of the brain, are left to molder in doorways, streets, and stations of large cities, while untold millions have their fluctuating preoccupations attended to with the kind of attention that an overconcerned mother gives her spoiled child with more or less the same results.

Psychology's code is roughly that of the French proverb: "To understand all is to forgive all." Psychology has served up one excuse after another for bad behavior—our terrible childhoods, our genes, our neurotransmitters, our addictions. In each case, and often with extremely unscientific reasoning, we are offered absolution. None of us is really responsible for our behavior. The whole psychological enterprise, Dalrymple argues, has had the effect of excusing poor choices and bad character. "Virtue is not manifested in one's behavior, always so difficult and tedious to control, but in one's attitude to victims."

It's a powerful argument, studded throughout with chiseled gems of observation and reflection.

Admirable Evasions is actually an indictment of modern culture, with its moral laxity and sloppy thinking. It may be a little too hard on psychology and psychiatry. Though it is beyond question that psychological thinking has damaged our culture by elevating non-judgmentalism to the highest plane, it isn't clear, at least to me, that mankind would truly be better off without anti-psychotic drugs, antidepressants, and other mood-altering substances. Animals are now commonly trained with rewards (positive reinforcement) rather than punishments, and so, in many cases, are children (with punishment as backup). That seems to be a humane advance. And while many therapists may deliver nothing but warm sympathy to their clients (which probably does no harm), some are able to help their patients attain true insight—the kind that requires painful honesty about one's actions.

I would not chuck the entire corpus of psychology and all the psychotropic drugs into the sea. But I would recommend that anyone interested in where the field, and our culture, has frequently gone wrong read this incisive little book. **NR**

THE MOVEMENT 'HE SHALL FEED HIS FLOCK' FROM THE *MESSIAH*

You bought me rest from wind and hail.
I lay my head on the balcony rail.

Crickets are seething all around.
I lay my head on the sunny ground.

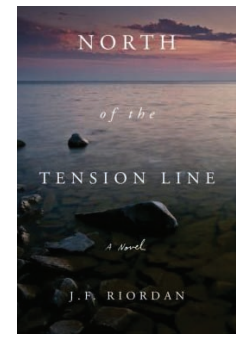
Your death's at peace—it's dead and gone.
I lay my head in bed at home.

Then why, at rest, where I might sleep,
Must I now hold my head and weep?

—SARAH RUDEN

Women's Lives

ROBERT P. GEORGE



North of the Tension Line, by J. F. Riordan
(Beaufort, 478 pp., $24.95)

My initial impression of this book was: I've walked into the novelistic equivalent of a chick flick. What am I doing here—by myself? I go to these only in my wife's company and at her behest.

Other male readers are likely to have the same first reaction. *North of the Tension Line* is a novel by a woman about women. Is it *for* women? Well, I wouldn't say it's *not* for women—but my judgment in the end is that it's also for men, perhaps even primarily for men. A gifted female writer—one with a nearly Austenian gift for observing human nature and describing the quirks and foibles of the entire cast of characters one finds in the human drama—has produced a novel that reveals some things to us guys about how women's minds and hearts work.

Women themselves, of course, already know these things. They can read *North of the Tension Line* for entertainment. Men should read it for instruction.

Fiona and Elisabeth, our heroines, are intelligent, attractive thirtysomething single women—and best friends. They have interests and professions—satisfying but not high-powered—and are far from preoccupied by the need to find

Mr. George is the McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence and the director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University.

Enjoy the summer lights for 7 nights on the *Westerdam!*

Alaska Cruise

Sailing July 18-25 aboard Holland America's luxurious MS *Westerdam* with

DANIEL HANNAN, ARTHUR LAFFER, KATIE PAVLICH, MICHELE BACHMANN, PAT CADDELL, JAMES O'KEEFE, JOHN SUNUNU, YUVAL LEVIN, ANDREW KLAVAN, PETE HEGSETH, STEPHEN MOORE, JONAH GOLDBERG, NAOMI SCHAEFER RILEY, JAMES LILEKS, KEVIN HASSETT, JOHN HILLEN, DANIEL MAHONEY, KEVIN D. WILLIAMSON, REIHAN SALAM, JAY NORDLINGER, JIM GERAGHTY, JILLIAN MELCHIOR, KATHRYN LOPEZ, CHARLES C.W. COOKE, ELIANA JOHNSON, JOHN J. MILLER, JOHN FUND, RAMESH PONNURU, KATHERINE CONNELL, ROB LONG, PATRICK BRENNAN, ANDREW JOHNSON, JOEL GEHRKE, ROMAN GENN, & KAT TIMPF

Take part in one of the most exciting seafaring adventures you will ever experience: the ***National Review* 2015 Alaska Summer Cruise**. Featuring an incredible cast of conservative speakers—and affordable accommodations—this special trip will take place July 18-25, 2015. Set for the absolutely ideal time to visit Alaska and enjoy its unique, breathtaking beauty, the phenomenal journey—which would make for an excellent family vacation or reunion—will sail round-trip from Seattle aboard Holland America Line's beautiful MS *Westerdam*, visiting Juneau, Ketchikan, Sitka, Glacier Bay, and Victoria, B.C.

This is a *unique* opportunity to meet preeminent conservative celebrities and to discuss the day's most important issues: we're happy to announce that Daniel Hannan, the popular "Euroskeptic" British MEP—along with *NR* writers Rob Long and John Fund, cartoonist Roman Genn, and videographer James O'Keefe—will be joining a great line-up, including supply-side champion **Arthur Laffer**, former New Hampshire governor and "Bush 41" chief of staff **John Sununu**, ace economists **Stephen Moore** and **Kevin Hassett**, former congresswoman **Michele Bachmann**, pollster **Pat Caddell**, *National Affairs* editor **Yuval Levin**, Townhall.com editor **Katie Pavlich**, top social commentators **Naomi Schaefer Riley**, **James Lileks**, and **Andrew Klavan**, military/security experts **Pete Hegseth** and **John Hillen**, leading conservative academic **Daniel Mahoney**, and from *NR*'s editorial All Stars **Jonah Goldberg**, **Jay Nordlinger**, **Ramesh Ponnuru**, **Kevin Williamson**, **Eliana Johnson**, **Jim Geraghty**, **Kathryn Lopez**, **Charles Cooke**, **John Miller**, **Patrick Brennan**, **Jillian Melchior**, **Andrew Johnson**, and **Joel Gehrke** (who will now also be joined byace reporter Kat Timpf).

Over 400 readers—make certain you're among them!—are expected to take this wonderful trip, which is why we urge you to act *now* to reserve your stateroom. Alaska cruises are *mega*-popular because of the region's raw beauty. For Mother Nature at her finest, you can't beat the stunning waterways hugging the 49th State, or the glaciers and other wonders that adorn it from the Artic to the Gulf. And as an unrivaled family summer vacation destination, how can you compete with an Alaska voyage? You can't. So don't beat them, join them (with your family)!—on the ***National Review* 2015 Alaska Summer Cruise**.

There's a cabin to meet everyone's budget: Prices start at just $2,299 per person, and "Single" staterooms begin at an affordable $3,399 (the same prices we offered on our last trip here in 2007!).

If you've *wanted* to go on an *NR* cruise, but *haven't*, consider this: the "typical" *NR* cruise "alumnus" has been on an average of *four* of our seafaring trips! They keep coming back again and again for an obvious reason: an *NR* cruise is sure to be a *great* time. It's time you discovered this for yourself.

An *NR* cruise is your unique chance to meet and intimately discuss politics and policy with some of the true giants of conservative and political affairs. Our exciting seminars—we've scheduled eight panel sessions (each preceded by a great one-on-one interview of a special guest speaker)—provide a scintillating take on current events. Then there are the exclusive "extras," such as our *three* cocktail receptions (convivial affairs featuring great food and libations), *two* late-night "Night Owls," one post-dinner poolside "smoker" (with world-class **H. Upmann** cigars *and* complimentary cognac!), plus intimate dining with speakers and editors on two nights.

Then there's the *Westerdam*: Its accommodations (elegant staterooms and glamorous public spaces)

ONE *COOOOL* WEEK OF SUMMER FUN AND CONSERVATIVE REVELRY!

DAY/DATE	PORT	ARRIVE	DEPART	SPECIAL EVENT
SAT/July 18	Seattle		4:00PM	evening cocktail reception
SUN/July 19	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars "Night Owl" session
MON/July 20	Juneau, AK	1:00PM	10:00PM	morning seminar
TUE/July 21	Glacier Bay	*SCENIC CRUISING*		morning/afternoon seminars evening cocktail reception
WED/July 22	Sitka, AK	7:00AM	3:00PM	afternoon seminar late-night poolside smoker
THUR/July 23	Ketchikan, AK	7:00AM	1:00PM	afternoon seminar "Night Owl" session
FRI/July 24	Victoria, B.C.	6:00PM	Midnight	morning seminar evening cocktail reception
SAT/July 25	Seattle	7:00AM		

are luxurious, and matched by the indulgent staff, superior cuisine, and top-notch entertainment and excursions.

And then there is the spectacular itinerary, starting with beautiful Seattle, and followed over the next week with these top destinations:

GLACIER BAY National Park protects a unique ecosystem of plants and animals living in concert with a changing glacial landscape. You'll be awed: monumental chunks of ice split off glaciers, crashing into the sea, roaring like thunder, water shooting hundreds of feet into the air. Glacier Bay has more actively calving tidewater glaciers than anyplace else in the world.

JUNEAU is the place to let your imagination run wild. Explore the lush Tongass National Forest. Visit the rustic shops in town. Or get out and kayak, dogsled, raft, whale watch, flightsee or fish. There's no end to the adventure because we're in port long enough to truly take advantage of the long daylight hours.

SITKA The onion domes of St. Michael's Cathedral are your first clue that Sitka was once a Russian settlement. Today, be greeted by Tlingit native people and astonishing marine life.

KETCHIKAN clings to the shores of Tongass Narrows and drapes the mountains with a cheerful air. The main attractions include Creek Street, the Tongass Historical Museum, and Totem Bight State Park (and a floatplane flightseeing trip to Misty Fjords National Monument is a transforming adventure not to be missed).

VICTORIA, B.C. A touch of England awaits in this beautiful port: afternoon tea, double-decker buses, and the famed Butchart Gardens (a brilliant tapestry of color spread across 50 blooming acres).

Use the application on the following page to sign up for what will be seven of the most fun-filled days you'll ever experience. Or you can reserve your stateroom at **www.nrcruise.com** (or call The Cruise Authority at 800-707-1634). Remember, there's a cabin to fit your taste and budget, but don't tarry: all cabins are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and supply is limited.

Join us this July on the *Westerdam*, in the company of **Daniel Hannan, Arthur Laffer, John Sununu, Stephen Moore, Kevin Hassett, Michele Bachmann, Pat Caddell, Yuval Levin, Katie Pavlich, Naomi Schaefer Riley, James Lileks, Andrew Klavan, Pete Hegseth, James O'Keefe, John Hillen, Daniel Mahoney, Jonah Goldberg, John Fund, Rob Long, Roman Genn, Jay Nordlinger, Ramesh Ponnuru, Kevin Williamson, Eliana Johnson, Jim Geraghty, Kathryn Jean Lopez, Charles Cooke, John J. Miller, Patrick Brennan, Jillian Melchior, Andrew Johnson, Joel Gehrke, Reihan Salam, Katherine Connell,** and **Kat Timpf** on the ***National Review* 2015 Alaska Summer Cruise.**

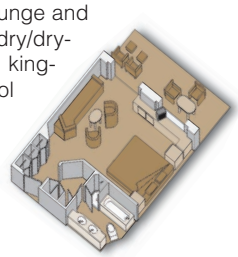
GET YOUR CABIN! CALL 800-707-1634
NOW OR VISIT WWW.NRCRUISE.COM

A GREAT FAMILY VACATION AWAITS!

Superior service, gourmet cuisine, elegant accommodations, and great entertainment await you on the beautiful *Westerdam*. Prices are per-person, based on double occupancy, and include port fees, taxes, gratuities, all meals, entertainment, and admittance to and participation in all *National Review* functions. Per-person rates for third/fourth person in cabin (by age and category):

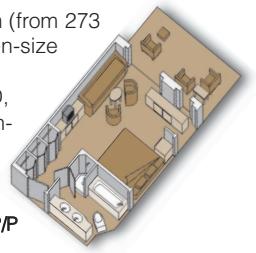
Categories J & C	17-younger: $ 736	18-up: $1451
Category VC	17-younger: $1301	18-up: $1501
Categories SS & SA	17-younger: $1354	18-up: $1554

DELUXE SUITE Magnificent luxury quarters (from 506 sq. ft.) features use of exclusive Neptune Lounge and personal concierge, complimentary laundry/dry-cleaning service, large private verandah, king-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), whirlpool bath/shower, dressing room, large sitting area, DVD, mini-bar, refrigerator, safe, and much more.



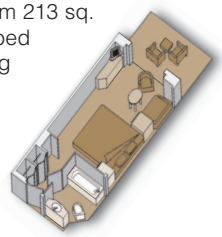
Category SA
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 5,499 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 9,799

SUPERIOR SUITE Grand stateroom (from 273 sq. ft.) features private verandah, queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), whirlpool bath/shower, large sitting area, TV/DVD, mini-bar, refrigerator, floor-to-ceiling windows, safe, and much more.



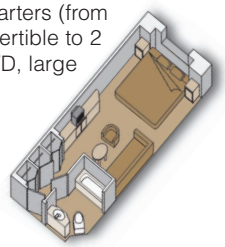
Category SS
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 4,399 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 7,499

DELUXE OUTSIDE Spacious cabin (from 213 sq. ft.) features private verandah, queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), bath/shower, sitting area, mini-bar, TV/DVD, refrigerator, and floor-to-ceiling windows.



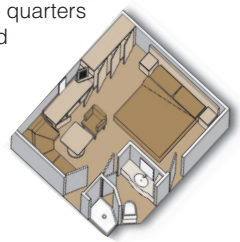
Category VC
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 3,799 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 5,999

LARGE OCEAN VIEW Comfortable quarters (from 174 sq. ft.) features queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), bathtub/shower, sitting area, TV/DVD, large ocean-view windows.



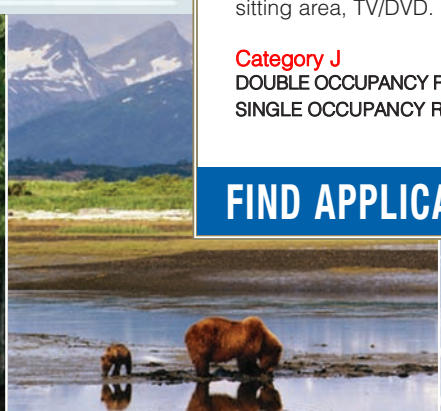
Category C
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 2,999 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 4,299

LARGE INSIDE Cozy but ample cabin quarters (from 151 sq. ft.) features queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twins), shower, sitting area, TV/DVD.



Category J
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 2,299 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 3,399

FIND APPLICATION ON NEXT PAGE ⇨



National Review 2015 Alaska Summer Cruise Application

Mail to: National Review Cruise, The Cruise Authority, 1760 Powers Ferry Rd., Marietta, GA 30067 or Fax to 770-953-1228

Please fill out application completely and mail with deposit check or fax with credit-card information. One application per cabin. If you want more than one cabin, make copies of this application. For questions call The Cruise Authority at 800-707-1634.

Personal

GUEST #1: Name as listed on Passport (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE) | Date of Birth

Passport Number | Expiration Date | Citizenship

Are you a past Holland America cruiser? ☐ Yes ☐ No

GUEST #2: Name as listed on Passport (LAST, FIRST, MIDDLE) | Date of Birth

Passport Number | Expiration Date | Citizenship

Are you a past Holland America cruiser? ☐ Yes ☐ No

PASSPORT INFORMATION This cruise requires a valid passport. Passports should expire **after** 1/16/16. Failure to provide this form of documentation **will** result in denied boarding of the *Westerdam.* For more information visit **www.travel.state.gov**.

MAILING AND CONTACT INFORMATION ***(FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY)***

Mailing address

City / State / Zip

Email Address

Daytime Phone | Cell phone

CREDENTIALS

Your legal first and last name are required for travel documentation. If you have an informal name you would like reflected on your name badge, please indicate it here:

Guest #1 | Guest #2

Cabins, Air Travel, & Other Information

All rates are per person, double occupancy, and include all port charges and taxes, all gratuities, meals, entertainment, and *National Review* activities. Failure to appear for embarkation for any reason constitutes a cancellation subject to full penalties. Personal items not included. **PLEASE CHECK ALL APPLICABLE BOXES!**

I. CABIN CATEGORY *(see list and prices on previous page)*

First cabin category choice:_____ Second cabin category choice:_____

Bedding: Beds made up as ☐ Twin ☐ King/Queen

BOOKING SINGLE? ☐ Please try to match me with a roommate. (My age: _____)

II. DINING w/ FRIENDS/FAMILY: I wish to dine with _____

☐ Every Night ☐ 3-4 times ☐ 2 times ☐ Once

III. PRE- AND POST-CRUISE TOUR PACKAGES

☐ Please send me information on pre-/post-cruise packages in Seattle (for 2 or 3 nights) and in Vancouver, B.C. (for 2 or 3 nights).

IV. AIR / TRANSFER PACKAGES

☐ We will provide our own roundtrip air and transfers to and from Seattle *(arriving there on 7/18/15 by 12:00PM and departing after 11:00AM on 7/25/15).*

☐ We would like The Cruise Authority to customize roundtrip air (**fees apply**) from _____ ☐ Coach ☐ First Class Air

Arrival date: _____

Departure date: _____

Preferred carrier: _____

V. MEDICAL / DIETARY / SPECIAL REQUESTS

Please enter in the box below any medical, dietary, or special needs or requests we should know about any of the members of your party:

Payment, Cancellation, & Insurance

Deposit of $600 **per person** is due with this application. If paid by credit card, the balance will be charged to the *same* card on 4/17/15 unless otherwise directed. If application is received after 4/17/15, the full amount of the cruise will be charged.

☐ My deposit of $600 **per person** is included. (Make checks to "National Review Cruise")

☐ Charge my deposit to: **AmEx** ☐ **Visa** ☐ **MasterCard** ☐ **Discover** ☐

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Expiration Date ☐☐/☐☐ (*Month* / *Year*) Security Code ☐☐☐☐ (*Amex 4 digits on front, others 3 digits on back*)

Authorized Signature of Cardholder *Name of Cardholder (please print)*

☐ The card's billing address is indicated above. ☐ The card's billing address is:

_____

CANCELLATION PENALTY SCHEDULE: Cancellations must be received in writing by date indicated. Fax / email is sufficient notification. Guests must confirm receipt by The Cruise Authority. PRIOR to Feb. 17, 2015 cancellation penalty is $100 per person; Feb. 17 to April 17, 2015, penalty is $600 per person, AFTER April 17, 2015, penalty is 100% of cruise/package.

CANCELLATION / MEDICAL INSURANCE is available and recommended for this cruise (and package). Costs are **Age 0–49: 7%** of total price; **50–59: 8%** of total price; **60–69: 9.5%** of total price; **70-79: 12.5%** of total price; **80-plus: 22.5%** of total price. The exact amount will appear on your cruise statement. Purchase will be immediate upon your acceptance and is non-refundable.

☐ **YES** I/we wish to purchase the Trip Cancellation & Medical Insurance coverage. Additions to the cruise package will increase my insurance premium.

☐ **NO** I/we are declining to purchase the Trip Cancellation & Medical Insurance coverage and understand that I/we will be subject to applicable cancellation penalties.

Important!

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SIGNATURE OF GUEST #1 **DATE**

Mr. Right. They are open to his walking into their lives and hopeful that someday he will: Finding him would be a good thing—indeed, a very good thing—and they're not making the perfect the enemy of the good by holding out for the Ultimate Mr. Right when Mr. Right Enough will do. But neither are they pining away, or pursuing their avocational and professional interests as mere distractions while they wait. They have lives—lives worth living, lives in which non-romantic friends, jobs, passions, goals, and challenges of various sorts occupy them meaningfully and worthily.

Yet J. F. Riordan's point is not the old feminist canard about a woman's needing a man like a fish needs a bicycle. Quite the contrary. Fiona and Elisabeth are, like most women, sensible. Their hearts yearn for a special bond with one of those creatures on the other side of the mysterious line dividing the sexes, and their minds tell them that such a bond is worth the sacrifices—including some degree of loss of independence—required to establish and sustain that bond. They are not boy-crazy, nor are they imagining a knight in shining armor who will come astride a white charger to sweep them off their feet. What they want is a decent, honorable man, a man who is comfortable in his own skin and who is willing to be a man—a fellow whose gentle strength would complement their own strong gentleness.

There is nothing more familiar to readers and viewers these days than the story of a woman who manages to be caught up in an unhealthy relationship with every man in her life. She has, or had, an unhealthy relationship with her father; an unhealthy relationship with her first boyfriend, then her second, then third, and so forth; she has unhealthy non-romantic relationships with her guy friends, her boss, her dentist, her pastor, her plumber. She has an unhealthy relationship with her husband—one that doesn't improve when he becomes her ex-husband. By the time her son is a teenager, she has an unhealthy relationship with him, too. Is the problem with her—or with them? In the standard plot, she begins by blaming herself. But, of course, enlightenment eventually comes when she realizes that the fault is not with her at all, but indeed with them—and even more fundamentally with the institutional sexism and sexist (and, of course, heterosexist) culture that is ultimately what is driving both their bad attitudes and behavior and her initial impulse to blame herself. Pretty soon she is "off men" and living happily ever after in a lesbian commune in central Massachusetts.

What's refreshing about Riordan's novel is that her protagonists have healthy relationships with men. And it isn't because Fiona and Elisabeth—or the guys with whom they have romantic and non-romantic friendships—are perfect. They're not. In fact, *North of the Tension Line* is a sort of study in how imperfect but fundamentally decent women and imperfect but fundamentally honorable men can relate to each other (whether their relationships are romantic or not) in constructive ways, and find satisfaction and contentment in their relationships. In fact, part of her message is that the project of navigating the mysteries involved in relating to people of the opposite sex can—and where our relationships are healthy almost certainly *will*—challenge us and change us in ways that make us better men and women than we were: a little less imperfect. Relating to each other across the mysterious divide takes effort, but it's worth it. The payoff is genuine. There must be something to the idea that men and women are made for each other—that by entering each other's lives they supply a lack and have a lack supplied.

What about the relationships between women and other women and men and other men? Perhaps part of the reason Riordan's characters can relate in healthy ways to those of the opposite sex is that they have deep, constructive friendships with people of their own sex. The friendship between Fiona and Elisabeth is front and center, and a beautiful friendship it is. The two women delight in each other's company and each appreciates and cares deeply for the other. They are cognizant of each other's imperfections, but each is no less aware of her own deficiencies. And each is grateful to the other for the gift of her friendship. They are fast friends, loyal friends. Yet neither woman jealously worries that the entry of a man into the other's life will weaken the lovely bond between them. On the contrary, they are pulling for each other on the boyfriend front—precisely because they appreciate that there is something good, something uniquely fulfilling, that even the deepest friendship between two women (or, I daresay, two men) cannot provide.

What's refreshing about J. F. Riordan's novel is that her protagonists have healthy relationships with men.

Most of the guys in the book are good guys, and their friendships with other guys are good friendships. J. F. Riordan finds countless ways—usually suitably subtle ways—to call attention to the deep bonds of affection good men can form with each other. Of course men, being men, don't talk about their feelings much, but rather express them in actions—including in actions toward women or for their sakes. Because of the setting Riordan has chosen for her study, most of the men in the novel—at least those we get to know best—are skilled workers. They build things, or fix things, or do things (like run a ferry from the mainland to an island). They are not intellectuals. Indeed, most are a bit less intellectual than the women. But they are not less intelligent, nor are they less thoughtful. What they are, God bless them, is old-fashioned, even chivalrous. They respect the womenfolk, and even look up to them in various ways; but their instinct is to help them and protect them because . . . well, because that's what good men do.

You may, gentle reader, be worried that *North of the Tension Line* has no villains, mean dogs, or ghosts. But fear not: There is an excellent villain—a woman, by the way—a scary mean dog, and an exemplary ghost. To avoid spoiling things for you, I'll say no more about them than to report that Riordan's verbal artistry is up to the challenging task of handling villains, mean dogs, and ghosts—which is saying something when reviewing a writer's first novel. **NR**

Film

Terror in Plain Sight

ROSS DOUTHAT

Maika Monroe in It Follows

THE modern horror movie was born in the darkness of the 1970s, and no matter how many incarnations it goes through—sincere and ironic, restrained and gore-addled—it keeps circling back to the same places, tropes, images, and haunts. When the car stalls out and the dirt road beckons, it's always some version of Leatherface at the end of it. When there's something wrong with your child, your house, your neighbors, you never call the doctor; it's probably the devil, and only the exorcist can help. And when the implacable killer comes to call, his hunting ground is always some variation on Michael Myers's *Halloween* hometown—the empty, eerie suburban streets of Haddonfield.

The latest Haddonfield is an out-of-time Michigan suburb, just a little ways into autumn, in the retro, unhurried, and taut *It Follows*. The movie's setting is sort of the present—one girl has a clamshell e-reader, at least—but other details place the story in a kind of eternal '70s. The cars are wide, the TVs still look as if they need rabbit ears, and nobody's tapping or texting or yakking on his iPhone. In fine Me Decade style, there's also no adult supervision. The grown-ups have their own problems, and the kids are on their own.

This means, at first, doing ordinary teenage things: We watch our protagonist, a 19-year-old girl named Jay (Maika Monroe), swimming in her backyard pool and hanging out lazily with her younger sister and two neighborhood friends—one the girl with the e-reader, who's reading Dostoevsky's *The Idiot*, the other the skinny Paul (Keir Gilchrist), whose crush on Jay is palpable. But she's into somebody else, a handsome if slightly on-edge guy from a different part of town, who takes her to the movies, shares six-packs with her by the river, makes love to her in the backseat of a car—and then chloroforms her and ties her to a wheelchair in the lower level of an abandoned building, where she awakes, groggily, to find him ranting at her and apologizing to her all at once.

As the genre requires, their sex was a terrible, life-altering mistake, but not because her partner is actually an axe murderer. Instead, he's tied her up as a kind of favor, in order to explain to her—and show her—what she's in for now. By having sex with Jay, he's passed on a kind of supernatural curse of which she can rid herself only by having sex with someone else in turn. Until she does, she'll be followed by a specter, a monster—one that can take on various human forms, some strange and some very familiar; one that nobody but you can see; one that only walks and never runs, but also never stops until it reaches you; and one that will find a way to kill you when it does. At which point, it will return to stalking its previous target, so even sex itself provides only a temporary escape.

As horror-movie conceits go, this is a pretty rich one, metaphorically potent on multiple levels—evoking venereal disease, pregnancy, emotional damage, and ultimately death. It's also scary in a creatively unsettling way, since the monster isn't a creature in the closet waiting to jump out; sometimes it appears unexpectedly, but the real menace is in its mix of implacability and anonymity, the dread its potential presence injects into any human context.

In one of the movie's most effective scenes, for instance, Jay and her friends head to a high school to do some amateur detective work in the yearbook office. The camera wheels around a campus scene, and you see a lone figure with a backpack crossing the quad toward them; with each 360-degree turn the figure is closer, and closer, and closer . . . and there's no way to know until the end (and maybe not even then) whether it's the monster or just someone taking an innocent stroll in the camera's direction.

A great idea does not a great movie make, and the strengths of *It Follows* are closely connected to its weaknesses. Its stripped-down simplicity can feel ragged, its gestures at Dostoevsky are a little lame, and its script and cast walk the line between "plausible teenage anomie" and "weak dialogue delivered by middling actors." Monroe, as Jay, is vividly distinct; the rest of the cast just play their archetypes. The last shot lingers, but the confrontation preceding it doesn't make a lot of sense. And the rules governing the monster don't necessarily bear too much examination.

But this is a horror flick, not high art, and when it's judged by the genre's standards, its strengths easily outweigh its weaknesses. The director, David Robert Mitchell, uses both his score and his setting (the empty suburb, the emptier ruins of Detroit) expertly, and they work together with the film's conceit to create a kind of geography of dread: a landscape in which there's neither a clear threat nor any permanent safety, and the appearance of an ordinary-looking human figure, usually a relief in monster movies, is the most fear-inducing thing of all. **NR**

RADIUS-TWC

City Desk

Writing à Deux

RICHARD BROOKHISER

Our apartment in the city has four rooms, two desks, two PCs, and two authors. In the last 35 years, 18 books have been written there, twelve by me, six by my wife (her sixth is in process, but coming down the home stretch). I consider that moderately heavy traffic—neither the Anthony Trollope interstate, nor the Ralph Ellison turn-off to Death Valley. We have written simultaneously, and we have written out of sync. Just now we are out of sync.

My wife's desk, at one end of the living room/dining room, is a beautiful thing, the gift of a generous father: dark, almost purplish rosewood with austere bronze fittings. Where the right hand grasps the mouse the finish has been bleached to a paler shade. Her chair has never been so handsome: We have gone through several contemporary office numbers in the hope of finding one that, after a few hours, does not make her back feel as if it had been massaged by an iron maiden. She also suffers from her view—four feet to a built-in closet. If she flipped everything around to look in the direction of the street windows, she would be sitting in a hallway. Her concentration is so intense she probably doesn't miss it.

The hierarchy of my master-bedroom work station is reversed. My desk is made of something cheap and synthetic, the product of ingenuity operating on waste, made respectable (and invisible) by white paint. My chair is wooden and retro, oak with slats in the back, such a one as lawyers in suspenders rise from doggedly to cross-examine. I look out the windows at paradise—pre-war apartment buildings, a stone church spire, plane-tree tops rising from an invisible park, pigeons, crows, a distant neon hospital sign. What more could you need for energy, history, country-in-city, everywhere, romance? When photographers do odd shoots on the roof of the building directly across the avenue, it is paradise with a short story.

You read of couples who must live or work in different towns, sometimes on different coasts. I had a cousin whose husband spent six months a year with the Navy in Antarctica. Because of our skewed schedules my wife and I live on different planets, sharing 900 square feet—Write World, and Other World.

My wife has a typical daytime: day job (patients), errands, exercise—what Other World calls living, what Write World calls The Enemy. So she writes at night. Since she is a night owl, when she gets going she will not stop until 1 A.M. (If I go out of town she pushes herself until 3 or 4.) While she writes I have to go elsewhere. I understand and agree; even if I promised to sit silently reading the paper, my wife could not risk my blurting, while she was in mid-thought, reax to the latest amusement or outrage. So I go into exile.

If I have some short assignment of my own, I can do it at my desk, fine; if I'm dining out, finer. But I write fairly fast and I don't like to be away from my wife, even if I cannot talk to her. So, for the longest time, I would go to my desk and—what? Once I would have read—anything. My favorite browse reading was the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. Second, *The New York Review of Books*. Both wallow in minutiae, though the first has the charm of distance—steampunk without punk, *Flashman* in earnest. But the Internet has produced a change of consciousness. Even though I came to it full of years, it has altered my expectations and my attention span. Next to it television (which I do not watch) and tabloids (which I do read) seem like Milton. I find myself e-mailing; checking my e-mail; tweeting; checking my incoming tweets; getting the forecast from NOAA; reading three favorite websites (ours is one, Kathryn!); clicking through articles on Wikipedia; listening to Beatles songs; listening to old rock novelty songs; Googling my friends, current and former; Googling myself (yes, I do, sometimes to the nth page); then doing all the above again.

If I am dry, I go to the kitchen (I can emerge for brief forays) to grab a bottle of seltzer; if I am hungry or tired, I go to the kitchen to snap some squares off a chocolate bar. Sometimes I will take up an old friend of a book and reread a favorite passage: Henry Adams describing the Virgin in Majesty at Chartres, Holmes getting the truth about the blue carbuncle out of James Ryder, the Crocodile telling the Elephant's child what he has for dinner. Then I go back online. We have an evening meal: My wife cooks, or we order in kabobs or California rolls, or we go to the restaurant where we go so often they bring our drinks unasked. This is our communion and our refueling. After, she goes back to work, and I to limbo.

The result of it all is that I have not just damaged my mind and my soul (my rereading apart) but I have damaged my body. Staring at a screen at night under a desk lamp gives me concrete traps and rebar neck. My fix was to go to the other bedroom, my wife's office, and sit in her upholstered shrink's chair. Since there is no PC or any other device in this room that I must read, I cannot throw my back out of whack.

From time to time my wife calls me in to hear the latest. I lie on the sofa, listening and offering occasional line edits. It is like hearing a serialized novel, books on tape without tape, Homer at home. When I write, I tell her about Abraham Lincoln and Aaron Burr; when she writes, she tells me about narcissists, and about a young woman who was once her. Reading is great, but it is also great to live with a writer. **NR**

Happy Warrior

BY JONAH GOLDBERG

The Abusive Businessman's Enablers

Long before "crony capitalism" became a battle cry, it was a staple of conservative and libertarian economics to note that big business is a fickle ally in the war for economic liberty (and 4F in the culture war). Like the "late Walder Frey" in *Game of Thrones*, big business is often tardy to the battle and keen on switching sides when there's advantage to be gained. "The simple truth," observed Albert Jay Nock, "is that our businessmen do not want a government that will let business alone. They want a government they can use."

Big businesses usually become big in the first place thanks to the glories of the free market, but, all too often, they stay big thanks to politicians who find them useful. Medieval guilds petitioned the crown to bar from the realm traders with better and cheaper wares. Andrew Carnegie, when bedeviled by competitors, called for "government control" of the steel industry as a way to cement U.S. Steel's status—and profits. Gerald Swope, the head of GE, paved the intellectual road to the New Deal's cartelization of industry with his corporatist Swope Plan. Contrary to Barack Obama's claims in stump speeches, the insurance industry backed his health-care takeover in the hopes of becoming government-protected utilities. How many digital-era Andrew Carnegies lobbied the White House for "net neutrality" to protect their fiefdoms—only to get more than they bargained for? (Of course, there have been exceptions. Horrified by what the New Deal had become and where it was heading, some big businessmen got together to create the American Enterprise Association in 1938, to promote a "greater public knowledge and understanding of the social and economic advantages accruing to the American people through the maintenance of the system of free, competitive enterprise." That group eventually became the American Enterprise Institute, where I am writing this very column.)

Only a fool or a knave would dismiss this congenital defect of the free-enterprise system, but as a mode of analysis it leaves something to be desired, because its view of human nature bears an ugly family resemblance to similar Marxist or Marxish critiques of man as *Homo economicus*. After all, it presupposes that titans of industry are motivated solely by the desire to maximize profits. To which the informed and enlightened conservative can only respond: "I wish!"

Almost exactly 50 years ago, in these pages, Milton Friedman (praise be upon him) was writing that the doctrine of corporate "social responsibility . . . is subversive of a free society and a stepping stone to socialism." In a lovely phrase, he denounced it for raising a "conflict of irresponsibilities." The CEO who hitches his company to social fads, no matter how noble, is betraying his obligations to the workers and the shareholders, i.e., the owners of the company. As Adam Smith put it, "I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good."

And yet "social responsibility" is more popular than ever. Recently, Starbucks ordered its baristas to deliberately slow down production by holding retail teach-ins on race. Apple's Tim Cook, CEO of the biggest company in the world, seems to be spending more time misreading Indiana's religious-liberty legislation than debugging iOS 8.

The drive for corporate social responsibility—simply a pinstriped version of social justice—runs contrary to the doctrine that businessmen are out to maximize profit. Perhaps a better way for conservatives to see businessmen is, simply, as men—or at least a certain kind of man.

For understandable if flawed reasons, conservatives and big business are married in the public imagination. But it is an ugly marriage. Worse than that, conservatives play the role of the battered wife. Sure, there are the good days, when the chamber-of-commerce types peel off a few bucks from their fat wads to give the little lady her mad money. "Go get yourself something nice, honey." On these sunny Saturdays of picnics and noodle salad, everything seems fine. Because we want the marriage to work, we think the good times will never end.

But the fairy tale doesn't last, because the big businessman doesn't want to be married. He wants to be loved or, even better, lusted after. He likes being a catch, but he never wants to be truly caught. Besides, the prettiest dames are never the ones at home helping to balance the checkbook and striving to raise decent kids. They're the always-flirty movie stars, news anchors, comedians, and popular politicians who play hard-to-get. Maybe, just maybe, if the businessman starts wearing a turtleneck and talking about "social justice," he'll catch their eye and get invited to the right parties, or even into bed.

It's fun. It's exciting. Charlie Rose has you on to talk about your progressive policies and Sharon Stone coos about how big your business really is (usually for an "appearance fee," left on the nightstand). Maybe Tom Friedman will write about a conversation he had with you at Davos about your views on Millennials and education. It's all so thrilling. You're no longer Joe Blow, maker of widgets. You are Joe Blow, statesman, visionary, progressive thinker.

And all the smart set asks of you is that you humiliate the little lady in public, through either your actions, your words—or both.

And each time, conservatives let him. We complain among friends at our book group, but we defend him in public and in front of the kids because the alternative, we think, is to besmirch what we hold sacred in principle, no matter how often it betrays us in practice. And when he comes home, shame-faced and sad about being used by those he thought really liked him, there we are with a drink at the ready and an encouraging hug. NR

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