

Liberty

Charity? Humbug!

November 2006

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Saving Your Health From the Government

by Ross Overbeek

Let's Give "Socialism" a Chance

by David G. Danielson

War Crimes and the United States

by Jon Harrison

The Myth of Nonpolitical AIDS

by Richard Kostelanetz

Also: Gary Jason chronicles the rise of the class that cares, Jo Ann Skousen peeks behind the curtain of vaudeville theater, David Kopel heeds the preacher's call to resist tyranny . . . plus other articles, reviews & humor.



Liberty's charms have daily captivated me more and more. — Jonathan Mayhew

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Letters

The Missing Ingredient

Patrick Quealy, some of the reformers, and other so-called libertarian "moderates" consider the gutting of the platform "growing up" ("A Party in Search of Itself," September). Capitulation to mainstream political preferences, an unwillingness to stand by deeply held principles, and an inability to successfully communicate orthodox libertarianism to ordinary people are actually the hallmarks of those unwilling to take any adult responsibility for the Libertarian Party's "failures."

Abandoning the platform isn't the solution. Growing a pair of balls might be.

Angela Keaton
 West Hollywood, Calif.

Success at the Polls

In the September issue (Letters), Maine legislator Ken Lindell writes, "I am hard pressed to name one LP candidate elected to a state legislature without also running on a major party ticket."

There have been five Libertarian Party nominees elected to a state legislature even though they weren't also major party nominees: 1978, Alaska, Dick Randolph; 1980, Alaska, Dick Randolph and Ken Fanning; 1984, Alaska, Andre Marrou; 2000, New Hampshire, Steve Vaillancourt.

In its entire history, there have only been three instances of the Green Party electing a state legislator: California 1999, Maine 2002, and Maine 2004. The Constitution Party has never elected one.

Richard Winger
 San Francisco, Calif.

Inside Job

Patrick Quealy's article on the Libertarian Party allows us to see why Libertarians have so far failed to achieve power. Eccentricity makes the average voter nervous, as does the taking of extreme positions on issues like drugs

and immigration. The "moderation" displayed by Libertarians at their recent convention did not go far enough to allay the average voter's concerns.

A party unwilling to compromise on some of its beliefs is a party that will never gain power. The only exception to be found in history is the Bolsheviks, and we all know what became of them.

Without Perot-like pockets it is virtually impossible to break the two-party monopoly of power in the U.S. But there is another way for Libertarians. The Republican Party is facing heavy losses in the upcoming fall elections. The current Republican administration has chosen to identify itself with the socially conservative, evangelical Christian wing of the party, to the exclusion of economic and social libertarians. If this administration is repudiated at the polls, an opportunity will exist for those with libertarian views to shape the party's future.

Libertarians should, therefore, enter the Republican ranks, and seek to take over the party from within, just as the evangelical Christians have done. With the apparatus and financial resources of a major party at their disposal, Libertarians could actually achieve many of their policy goals.

The alternative is for Libertarianism to remain a fringe movement for the indefinite future.

Jon Harrison
 Poultney, Vt.

Great Communicators

I'd like to thank Jane Shaw for her complimentary article on Toastmasters ("Freedom to Speak," July). I joined during my 1989 campaign for governor of New Jersey (I came in third in a field of six), and quickly learned its benefits. Since then, whenever I'm asked by fellow LP members what is the single most effective thing they can do to promote liberty, I reply, "Join Toastmasters."

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I note that the Toastmasters program, while originally and formally constituted to address the simple fact that more people fear speaking in public than fear death, has become much more. For example, because every meeting role and officer position in every club is a voluntary position, learning how to perform as a vital member of a team is a secondary but hardly incidental benefit. The basic program stresses communication, not speaking, reflecting the simple fact that communication involves three vital skills: listening, thinking, and speaking — and Toastmasters is a tremendous vehicle for improving all three, not just speaking. My own experience is typical: the more confident and comfortable I became at speaking, the more effective a communicator I became, and the better a thinker and listener I became. The program reinforces itself.

One point needs to be made, however. Each club is quite autonomous, and different clubs exhibit a variety of climates. Shaw's club, for example, includes a prayer; my home club does not. We do have the Pledge of Allegiance at each meeting, but everybody in my club respects my opting out of that exercise (though I do stand during the ceremony out of respect for the other members), to the extent that when I am assigned the role of Invocator — which also includes leading the Pledge — another member picks up where I refuse to lead. There's no issue made of this indulgence of my personal stance. And our club does not include a grammarian or ah-counter; responsibility for those functions is left to

As *Liberty* goes to press, America is preparing for another bout with the ballot box. Many friends of individual freedom believe that it doesn't make any difference which party holds the House and Senate: "There's not a dime's worth of difference . . ." I won't go that far. I believe that, once in control of the legislative apparatus, each of the major parties has a tremendous ability to hurt individual Americans, and that there are big differences in the ways in which they can hurt us.

Yet I also believe that one thing should be kept in mind, no matter what happens in any particular election.

Liberty is the right idea. It will always be the right idea. Like a full moon riding the November clouds, it

the evaluators of the individual speakers. But those are minor wrinkles.

Dan Karlan
Waldwick, N.J.

Still Workin' on That

A few weeks ago, I did something in a restaurant that made me half ashamed. Now that I've read Stephen Cox's October Word Watch column, I'm half proud too.

After being harassed at least an honest four or five times by waitresses and busboys who wanted to know, "How's yer meal goin'?" and "How's everything?", and the awkward "How's dinner tasting?", the very owner of the restaurant came up, put his hand on my shoulder and asked, "How's your dining experience?" I replied, "Don't touch me!" He said "Okay" and removed his hand. Then I said, "The food is okay; that's all."

He left. My wife and friends looked silently at their plates. Was that wrong? Probably. I guess Cox and I are both offended by words that are nowadays, sadly, perfectly good etiquette.

Michael Christian
San Diego, Calif.

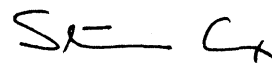
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will always return to announce itself, even at the most unexpected times. The culture of liberty, which is the culture of free men and women everywhere, will also survive — rich, strong, and various, serious and charming and funny, too — continuously reproduced by free minds and free hearts.

That is the culture we celebrate here. I think you'll find it strongly represented on every page of this, our November issue.

For Liberty,



Stephen Cox
Editor

Reflections

Moving day — There is growing talk now about whether or not Sen. Hillary Clinton will run for the presidency in 2008. I have one question about this. If she runs and if she wins, will she be required, upon moving back to the White House, to return all that furniture she took with her when last she left?
— Ross Levatter

Dropping bombs — It won't be long before Semtex is surgically implanted in Achmed's body or the bad guys board planes with perfectly formed Semtex turds planted in their colons, ready for airborne extrusion. Technology can only do so much. The contest is one of imagination and will. There's no smarter smart bomb than a human being willing to die for a cause.
— Paul Rako

This is CBS? — On Sept. 5, 2006, a milestone in history was reached: a TV network allowed a brave, trailblazing woman to present the evening news all by herself. And if you think that sounds patronizing, google for some of the gush over Katie Couric's debut as CBS news anchor.

Using "anchor" for the lead newsreader, of course, implies that the nightly news is a voyage, traveling with reporters to all corners of the globe, and then returning to the harbor of the main news desk. The role requires enough intelligence to pretend you can find Chechnya on a map and a voice that doesn't sound like Care Bears mating, and to this point Couric has demonstrated neither.

With her recent refusal to travel to Lebanon, she has also demonstrated an unwillingness to relocate with the main desk when certain events, such as an impending war or gathering storm, warrant. I can only guess that CBS execs, having never seen an anchor outside the context of museum decor, have assumed that, like a paperweight, it's merely a heavy lump that holds things down.

I didn't think it possible, but Couric made me long for the days of Dan Rather and Connie Chung. At least they could deliver the network's simplistic, skewed takes on the day's events with an air of dignity — and faced with the instant-response reportage on the internet, and the endless analysis of minutiae on cable TV, dignity is really all that network news has to offer.

The American people are almost always willing to give

novelties a hearing. The first week of ratings, dropping from 9.1 to 4.9, suggest Couric had hers — and she was promptly tuned out.
— Andrew Ferguson

"Conversations" on Race — Jim Crow is alive and well at CBS. The network has announced that contestants in the next "Survivor" will be divided into ethnic "tribes" including a black team, a white team, a Hispanic team, and an Asian team.

Defenders of the change argue that it will stimulate a "conversation on race." No doubt. This scenario certainly raises some intriguing questions to start off this conversation. What will be done about people of mixed black and white ancestry? Will the producers of "Survivor" assign them to the black team on the basis of the "one-drop" rule as used in the Homer Plessy case of 1896? Will the segregation be extended to separate drinking fountains and restrooms? Will contestants who quit be considered "traitors to their races?"
— David Beito

Just a click away

— Users of Microsoft's instant-messaging services can now click a "Report Abuse" button to alert law-enforcement officials to a

conversation with a child predator. A news release by the UK's Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre says that, with this button, "users from anywhere in the world can access the Virtual Global Taskforce — an international alliance of law enforcement agencies."

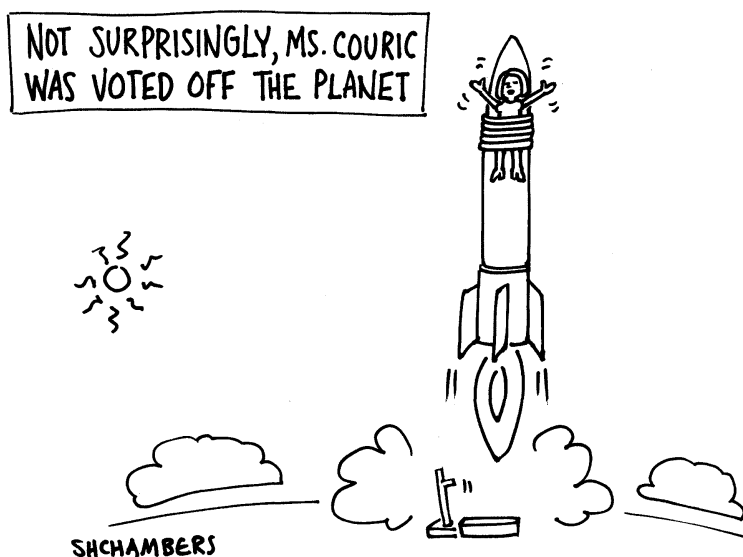
Just what I wanted: a feature in a chat client to invite more government surveillance of my communications. How about a "Report spying by some NSA asshole" button?

— Patrick Quealey

Labor in vain — The nation has again "celebrated" Labor Day. But what about replacing it with a truly festive occasion? Call it Entrepreneurs' Day.

Of the four factors of production studied in Economics 101 — labor, capital, land (natural resources), and entrepreneurship — the only one that makes us different from the commie countries is entrepreneurship.

The Soviets built trucks with labor, capital, and land, and used the state as the coordinator of resources, but what made



the trucks not run right was the lack of individual entrepreneurship; i.e., the lack of the competitiveness, individualism, and innovation that are inherent in a free enterprise system.

Labor by itself is drudgery and oppression. It's entrepreneurship that makes it productive, interesting, and fulfilling. So let's throw an annual party for the real guest of honor. The first Monday of next September would be a good time to start.

— Ralph Reiland

Permanent evacuees — I acknowledge that some refugees from flooded New Orleans were sick or elderly, and they didn't want to flee their homes; however, nearly a year after Hurricane Katrina, isn't it time for the special entitlements to end? The Houston Chronicle (Aug. 4) reported that in early August "leaders of nonprofit housing organizations discussed strategies to obtain more than \$1 billion in new federal aid for evacuees who still will need help when their emergency rent payments end in a few months."

Meanwhile, millions of non-citizens who don't speak English sneak across the Mexican border each year. No one gives

them housing assistance. They find jobs and pay rent. And they are hiding from the federal government, not petitioning it for continuing handouts.

— Thomas Giesberg

School daze — This country's schools have effectively been nationalized. Officially, there is still competition between school districts, and among public schools, private schools, and home schools, but in effect we now have, after a century of consolidation, a national educational system, with a national Department of Education, federal aid to the schools, many government rules and regulations controlling public schools' operations and curricula, together with substantial power ceded to nationwide unions to license teachers and influence instruction. As a result, competition in the field of ideas and education has been severely restricted, the very opposite of what the situation would be if there were complete freedom of entry to anyone and everyone who sought to teach children.

So far, at least, the nationalized schools have not been used to promote frankly nationalistic propaganda. Nor does the government openly censor school curricula. But it has

News You May Have Missed

Space Aliens Land, Demand Recount

NEW YORK — The earth was invaded by space aliens last week as thousands of angry Plutonians arrived in a fleet of spaceships to protest a vote by the International Astronomical Union at a meeting in Prague that demoted their home planet, Pluto, to a new "dwarf planet" status. Joining the angry space aliens in the protests were hundreds of equally angry dwarves.

Dwarf planets, while not nearly as large as the eight major planets that orbit the Sun, nevertheless have to be large enough to assume a spherical shape and have their own center of gravity, a definition that would encompass not only Pluto but an asteroid named Ceres, a remote, recently discovered ball of ice and rock named Xena, and millions of overweight Americans.

Since the Plutonians do not have the smooth, hairless, white oval heads and large, black, slanted eyes that are now considered *de rigueur* for all self-respecting space aliens, they were not recognized as such and, despite being purple, eight feet tall, and shaped like tubes of hair gel, they passed unnoticed through airport security.

The Plutonians were said to be determined to study other planets in the hope of qualifying for full planet status at the next meeting of the Astro-

nomical Union, and the first thing they did after arriving was to join the line of Midwesterners waiting to get into Planet Hollywood in midtown Manhattan. Later they tried to meet with Vice President Dick Cheney in Washington, having heard that whatever planet the Bush Administration is on has also not yet been officially recognized by the Astronomical Union. The startled Cheney aimed a shotgun at them and, loudly insisting that the Plutonian resistance was now in its last throes, succeeded in wounding 14 nearby lawyers.

Some members of the Astronomical Union said that the decision on Pluto was not so much based on science as on a desire to shorten the union members' work week. "Now we're down to eight planets," said Dr. Frothwell Beamish of the Mt. Wilson Observatory in Pasadena. "Subtract earth because that's where the YOU ARE HERE arrow on our solar system map points, and Uranus because you can't talk about Uranus without getting laughs, and that leaves only six planets to keep track of and bet on in the office pool about which one gets voted off the solar system next. We're starting to think Mercury might not really be a full-fledged planet either because

somebody was eating a bagel while looking through the telescope and quite possibly what we've been seeing is a sesame seed that fell onto the lens. What all this means is that we get to leave early on Fridays."

The protests, taking place in New York as well as other cities around the globe, were said to be peaceful, partly because Plutonians communicate in high-frequency sounds that can't be detected by the human ear, though dogs in the vicinity filed complaints, and also because the number of protesters gradually dwindled as groups of them went off to do some serious shopping while in town as well as to take in "The Phantom of the Opera," since Andrew Lloyd Webber is considered a musical genius on Pluto.

In fact many of the technologically advanced Plutonians were said to be initially inclined to remain on earth rather than return to a minor-league, provincial-backwater "dwarf planet," but they changed their tune when they discovered it would mean having to try to figure out things like IRS forms and the significance of Jessica Simpson. Aside from some missing towels at their hotel, there were no reported ill effects from the aliens' brief invasion.

— Eric Kenning

slowed down and in many ways restricted the ideas taught and the shape of competition in the field of education. This can be clearly seen in the production of textbooks, which usually promote prevailing opinions and rarely oppose the national government's views on various issues. Generally speaking, the textbooks now being produced and used in the public schools tend to toe the line.

Intense competition among publishers for especially lucrative sales means that the most populous states (including California, Texas, and Florida), as well as big urban school districts such as New York City and Miami-Dade County, all with a centralized process for textbook selection, exert disproportionate influence. To avoid antagonizing any single group, publishers try to reflect diversity of population, to be politically correct in every respect. To avoid racial stereotypes, white suburban kids, Asian-American laundry owners or math students, and Mexican men wearing ponchos and wide-brimmed hats are *déclassé*. The texts tend to understate whites and overstate minorities.

Some publishers have established guidelines for elementary and high school texts. McGraw-Hill specifies that 40% of the people depicted should be white, 30% Hispanic, 20% African-American, 7% Asian and 3% Native American. California, Texas, and Florida require publishers to reflect diversity but don't specify percentages for particular groups. To keep diversity proportional to a textbook's market, publishers count the pages devoted in various editions to illustrations of different racial groups. In a California edition, 35% of illustrations are of Hispanics and 7% are of African-Americans. In North Carolina, 6% are of Hispanics and 22% are of African-Americans.

Publishers don't have numerical targets for religious affiliation, but are wary of slighting any religious faith. A picture of a pig walking down a street was removed from the cover of a 2005 first-grade reader, lest it offend Jews or Muslims who don't eat pork. Photographers seeking to portray disabled youngsters in the lavishly illustrated textbooks often find it difficult to locate enough truly disabled children with muscular dystrophy, cerebral palsy, or Down syndrome available to model, so they sometimes give a fully mobile child crutches or place him in a wheelchair. Photos of President Roosevelt in his wheelchair have become popular. Substitutions are sometimes made of one racial type for another "lookalike" type — a Southeast Asian for a native Mexican or a Chicano for a southwestern Native American. Publishers, though well-intentioned, have replaced one artificial vision of reality with another. Textbooks have become a veritable exercise in hypocrisy.

Modern textbooks are pretty well homogenized. Factual information has been watered down. Today's school books include more pictures and proportionally less reading material than yesterday's texts. As illustrations proliferate, intellectual content suffers. As the years go by, there is more history for students to cover, so accounts of the past must be shortened and some facts must be dropped. But the judgment of McGraw-Hill to include a profile and photo of Bessie Coleman, the first African-American woman pilot, in the 2002 Texas edition of "The American Republic Since 1877," without even mentioning aviation pioneers Orville and Wilbur Wright, certainly seems a stretch.

The persons responsible over the years for introducing government programs to help public school students have had the best of intentions. They have provided federal funds

to help pay for school construction, integration, textbooks, compulsory school attendance, school library books, busing, school lunches, merit pay for teachers, standardized testing, special education for the handicapped, etc. In the process they have unwittingly produced, step by step, a "national" public school system. Moreover, in spite of their best intentions to improve the quality of public-school teaching and to assure "no child left behind," requiring teachers to satisfy government-imposed rules and regulations hampers their ability to teach. Political goals have been accomplished at the expense of quality public-school teaching. As the late Professor Ludwig von Mises wrote in 1927: "[T]he school is a political prize of the highest importance. It cannot be deprived of its political character as long as it remains a political and compulsory institution." And the compulsory U.S. public schools are increasingly politicized.

— Bettina Bien Greaves

Don't take "No" for an answer — Longtime members of the Libertarian Party — and even more so, former members of the LP who long ago dropped out — know that third parties in America face enormous obstacles.

- They don't have the name recognition or automatic respect granted to the two major parties.
- Fundraising is onerous and burdened by restrictive regulations that are designed by the incumbents for their benefit.
- Third party candidates, like all nonincumbents, have none of the perks of office, such as franking privilege, that make reelection easier.
- As a third party, one has to fight against the entrenched interests of both other parties.

But now I realize there is *one* party that could routinely run and win, facing none of these obstacles. And it seems to be forming. It's called the Incumbent Party.

Its major candidate this year will be formerly Democratic Sen. Joseph Lieberman. Although losing by four percentage points in the Democratic primary, Senator Lieberman — given his name recognition, incumbent status, and appeal to Republicans — is already ahead in Connecticut polls by 12% in a three-way race (Quinnipiac opinion poll, Aug. 17).

As an incumbent, he has all the perks of office at his disposal, even running as an independent. Because all incumbents find it generally in their interest to support incumbent reelection, the national Republican Party is not supporting the Republican candidate for Connecticut's senate race. And I expect that national Democratic figures will back Lieberman, even campaign for him, against the official Democratic candidate in the state, Ned Lamont.

The Incumbent Party avoids almost all of the problems that face traditional third parties. They have name recognition and the respect automatically granted to officeholders. Raising money is much easier for an incumbent. As of July 19, Lieberman had coffers of almost \$3.5 million and Lamont only \$350,000.

All of the perks of the Senate are available to Lieberman, including friendly fellow senators making campaign pitches for him. President Bush has indicated he won't take sides in a race between Lieberman and a Republican, which admittedly is the least he could do after publicly bussing him on the lips.

Members of the Incumbent Party don't have to fight against the entrenched interests of the major parties. They *embrace* the entrenched interests of the major parties.

It seems the Incumbent Party has all the benefits that traditional third parties fail to achieve. The only thing it lacks is the desire to change the system in any way whatsoever.

— Ross Levatter

Choosing for you — Washington was one of seven states that allowed the sale of the "Plan B" antipregnancy drug before the FDA legalized it nationwide. In that state the question has arisen: should pharmacists who morally object to Plan B be required to sell it anyway?

What was notable about the debate was how the libertarian way of thinking was entirely absent from it. In that view, a person or company in the business of selling — that is, as an owner — could decide not to sell certain merchandise for whatever reason or for no reason, because commerce should be voluntary. The pharmacists' claim, however, was not stated that way. It was stated that a pharmacist, as a pharmacist, should have the right not to dispense drugs if he did not approve of the customer's using them.

That most pharmacists work for drugstore chains was not mentioned. It was highly unlikely that a chain would allow employees to refuse to sell company inventory because of some beliefs they had. Really this whole issue was about a handful of pharmacist-owners, probably most of them in small towns. But the claim was not made that way.

The loud and insistent reply from urban progressives was that the moralistic pharmacist was denying the woman's access to the drug, and that it was none of his business to police her that way. And so, after initially ruling for the pharmacists, the state pharmacy board, under pressure from the state's (female) governor, ruled the other way. In Washington, pharmacists are required to sell Plan B to a legally qualified buyer if they have it in stock.

I can't see how that rule will affect me in the slightest. I'm a city guy, and probably if I were a pharmacist I would have the same sales policy as Walgreens. But I would also resent the state's usurpation of my decision about it, and the corresponding loss of liberty.

— Bruce Ramsey

Plame game — For three years now, the major news media have been bashing Bush with the allegation that he, or Cheney, or Rove, or someone else in his administration, delib-

erately "outed" Valerie Plame, the wife of Joe Wilson, in retaliation for Wilson's pushing the story that Bush had lied in his 2003 State of the Union address, in which he repeated the British allegation that Saddam Hussein had sought to buy uranium from Niger. The media were shocked, *shocked*, that leaking was going on! and demanded the appointment of a special prosecutor. They got what they wanted. Patrick Fitzgerald was anointed, and over the past three years has spent a ton of taxpayer money investigating everybody but managing only to get an indictment of Scooter Libby, Cheney's chief of staff.

With the admission by Richard Armitage, Colin Powell's deputy, that he was the source of the leak, the whole story has been shown to be a pack of lies. Wilson's allegations were long ago debunked, of course. But the story lingered on, with the media hoping to bring down Rove. But now we know that

Bush, Cheney, Rove, and Libby were innocent all along, and that Armitage, and Powell, and Patrick Fitzgerald *knew* it all along. The silliness of the major news media is nothing particularly surprising. The treachery of Armitage (and Powell, for that matter) is harder to explain: how do you watch innocent men get attacked and indicted, when you know that they are innocent, because you committed the "crime"?

But the big lesson here is the inherently abusive nature of the office of special prosecutor. You give a person unlimited time and money to get indictments for

any crime he can find, and eventually you will get some indictments. But you will also get injustice. In this particular affair, there never was a crime. Plame was not an undercover agent at the time her name was leaked, nor had she been one for a long time before the leak, and Fitzgerald knew it, which is why he never even tried to get an indictment of anybody for *that* bogus offense. No, he pulled the old prosecutorial trick of forcing people to testify to investigators and grand juries repeatedly, over months and years, until somebody trips up and contradicts himself — in which case you've "got him" for perjury. After the millions of bucks wasted, we've got Libby for perjury even though we know he had absolutely nothing to do with the leak.

When will we learn that special prosecutors are worthless as instruments of justice? You would think that the Democrats in particular would have learned that lesson after the Clinton-Lewinsky debacle, but no, they were behind the current pseudo-scandal, hoping to nail their archenemy Rove, and it has now blown up in their faces.

Just kill the whole concept. If you don't like a president — be it Nixon, or Reagan, or Clinton, or Bush — just vote against



him. If you hate his guts, then vote against him and donate a ton of money to his opponent. But quit using special prosecutors to do your political work.

— Gary Jason

One size doesn't fit all — When Medicare was enacted 40 years ago, it was intended to ensure vital medical care for those 65 and over. But things aren't working out precisely as planned. Members of the Boomer Generation, now thinking of retirement, are having difficulty finding doctors to care for them. In many places, medical costs have risen above the limits set by Medicare so that the fees doctors are allowed to charge for treating the elderly are not enough to cover their costs. As a result, some doctors are leaving the field and many others are reluctant or unwilling to accept new Medicare patients. But don't blame the doctors; blame the program.

Medicare was set up in 1966 to help persons on Social Security pay some of their medical bills. Unsurprisingly, this help came with strings attached — as any entitlement program must. No government agency can give out money indiscriminately. Congress would have been completely irresponsible if it had not imposed rules and regulations to protect taxpayers by keeping costs from mushrooming, and to see that the program was carried out as intended. To protect the elderly from being exploited, and to prevent waste, graft, and corruption, Congress defined the services it would pay for and in many cases placed limits on what doctors and hospitals could charge. As least Congress tried!

The result? Medicare spending has ballooned beyond all expectations. And in spite of attempts to control waste, graft, and corruption, many have succeeded in gaming the system for illicit gains. As a result, taxpayers have suffered. It must be admitted that many elderly have benefited; they have received needed medical care at less than they otherwise would have had to pay out of pocket. But those costs are all past, finished, and done for. Some costs are still to be paid in the future. Fewer persons are being attracted to medical careers. Many who envisioned a life of helping others by becoming doctors have become disillusioned, discouraged by the prospect of years of coping with government rules and bureaucratic red tape, and have given up the study of medicine. Moreover, because of Medicare's restrictions, fewer doctors are choosing geriatrics as their specialty. This is the lesson the Baby Boomers are now learning. And unless things change drastically to lessen the heavy burden of Medicare's controls and costs and open up medicine to the free market, with its freedom of entry and flexible pricing, Generation Xers will face prospects still more dire.

— Bettina Bien Greaves

The legendary lost city New Orleans — According to Al Gore's "Inconvenient Truth," If we don't drastically cut our fossil fuel consumption within the next decade, the Earth will suffer irreversible damage. I'm not certain why global warming is cited as such an immediate crisis. It's not happening overnight. The worst estimate is around a seven degree rise in temperature and a foot rise in ocean levels over the next hundred years. That's plenty of time to move inland and northward.

Not many people are moving back to New Orleans. If the Army Corps of Engineers cannot control the water, the next several subsequent floods will force everyone inland for good. It's very possible that New Orleans will be a ghost town in a

hundred years, and perhaps even a really cool dive site. Meanwhile the great majority of the residents, along with the Cajun and Creole cultures, will survive.

There's an ancient Roman city under water in Egypt, yet there are descendants of both those civilizations living today. There are descendants of migrant farmers living in California, whose grandparents' farms in Oklahoma are as dry as an Al Gore sideshow.

Why do the environmentalists have to be so apocalyptic? Is it perhaps that the real "inconvenient truth" is that the planet will warm slightly over the next couple hundred years, and people will adapt? Unfortunately, that doesn't fit into the leftist plan to scare everyone so much that they'll accept a Gore presidency.

— Tim Slagle

This "compliance" stuff is expensive — The 2006 ballot in Washington state will include Initiative 933. If it passes, the state government will be required to "consider and document" the adverse consequences of "any ordinance, regulation, or rule which may damage the use or value of private property."

The opposition campaign notes the problems with the initiative. It will cost government time and will cost taxpayers money. There will be less money to spend on current budget items, because the state will have to spend money tediously documenting the process by which some decisions are made. The "No on 933" website complains the initiative is "written so irresponsibly that it leaves voters guessing and doesn't say where the money will come from" to cover compliance costs.

I'm glad the Left is figuring out that complying with stupid laws costs time and money. Business owners have been trying to tell them that for years. Maybe the knowledge will spread beyond our state's borders this November.

— Patrick Quealy

Middle-class shrinkage — A recent article by Nancy Cleeland in the Los Angeles Times (Aug. 23), lachrymously headlined "Rich, Poor Live Poles Apart in L.A. as Middle Class Keeps Shrinking," sets a new standard for blindness to the obvious. If there were an award for this sort of ideologically myopic journalism, Nancy Clueless would win it hands down.

Her article is part of an endless stream of L.A. Times (and N.Y. Times) propaganda intended to show that our economy is in another Great Depression caused by the evil Bush tax cuts that benefit only the rich. The Times — lovingly called "Pravda West" by the locals — wants to help elect leftists who will "restore prosperity" by jacking up taxes.

She cites "experts" who aver that L.A. is losing its middle-class neighborhoods and moving toward a two-class society, with poor folks (such as recent low-skilled immigrants) huddling in wretched communities while the rich (such as entertainers) luxuriate in splendiferous ones. She laments this change, noting that in the post-WWII era there were plenty of high-paying manufacturing jobs in aerospace, but with the collapse of aerospace in the 1990s, those workers left. Her preferred solution is for local government to impose regulations requiring real estate developers to build more affordable housing for the poor, or else for the voters to pass massive bonds to subsidize such housing, eventually to be paid by property taxes — this in a state whose structural deficit is already massive.

Word Watch

by Stephen Cox

According to an old gospel song, "There's a dark and a troubled side of life; / There's a bright and a sunny side too." That could be said as well of the American language. There is the plain, clear, colorful tongue of people who know what they're talking about. Then there's the silly, confused, unendurably drab language of people who are trying to put something over on us. They usually start by putting it over on themselves.

I thought of this when I read the remarks of the Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schorri, the newly elected presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States. Bishop Schorri considers it her principal job to sell modern liberalism, and like other salesmen who are cursed with a bad product, she does her best to obscure what she's saying — from herself, I suspect, as well as from everyone else. In her case, naturally, the obscurantism is performed with phony biblical language.

Responding to the liberal vs. conservative warfare that is tearing her church apart, she immediately advised her coreligionists to "[l]ay down our narrow self-interest and heal the hurting and fill the hungry and set the prisoners free." She was echoing, sort of, the language of Psalm 146 (or perhaps, more impiously, that of Luke 4:18). But what, literally, did she *mean*? Was she contemplating a raid on the county jail? Was she writing a check from her own account, or, recognizing that her election was a principal cause of the divisions in her church, laying down her own "narrow self-interest" in the form of her job? No, of course not.

Some clue to what she actually meant emerged in other portentous words: "We children of Jesus can continue to squabble over our inheritance or we can claim our name and heritage as God's beloveds, and share that name beloved with the whole world."

There is much in those words that illustrates the dark side of the American language. In "God's beloveds" we hear the funeral director's smarm. Dead people are always "the loved one," "your beloved," "Mom Jones" and "Dad Jones." "We children of Jesus" projects the familial imagery that is indispensable to most creepy and dishonest speech in America — religious, political, or commercial. To the president and his friends, we are "the American family." If you want to pass a bond issue, make sure you say that it's "For the *Children*." To many conservative religionists, "family values" are the summation of all morality, and perhaps theology. One of the leading conservative Christian radio syndicates is actually called Family Radio. As for commerce, the last member of this unholy linguistic trinity, how many times have you been sickened by that sell-job from the Olive Garden: "When you're here, you're family"? No thanks. I've been kicked out of better families than that.

"Children of Jesus" takes us still deeper into the dark side of the force. It isn't a biblical phrase, any more than "family values" is. And unless you believe in the literal truth of "The Da Vinci Code," which for all I know Bishop Schorri does, the phrase has no referent in the physical world. It's one more way of selling

the currently fashionable gendered view of life, of using every sentence to assert the value of gender sensitivity and sexual identification, or any of the thousands of other New Age notions that lead people to think that what is *really* important in our lives is making certain that every sentence includes the magical locution "he/she."

No, you usually don't think about Jesus' having children, do you? But maybe that's just because you don't feel his maternal qualities, as Bishop Schorri does. Here's how she explains it: "That sweaty, bloody, tearstained labor of a cross bears new life. Our mother Jesus gives birth to a new creation and you and I are his children."

I'll *share something with you*. I look with astonished respect at any woman who has given birth. The fact that my mother endured that kind of pain to give me life always makes me feel exquisitely guilty about any disagreement that I had with her — whenever I have the heart to recall that important fact. But the idea that crucifixion by Roman soldiers was something like . . . labor pains! is bizarre and repulsive, as well as smarmy and stupid. It's an attempt to use agony, of both kinds, to recommend the weird proposition that at every moment women need to be assured that they are important. How insulting can you get?

The bishop didn't think she was insulting anyone, certainly. But a chief characteristic of foolish people is the habit of substituting words for thoughts. She was simply following the common verbal formula: put as much gender stuff in your sentences as possible. I'm sure she thought she had wowed her audience when she mixed the masculines up with the feminines in that last sentence, talking about Jesus as a "mother" with "his children." This is the painfully dull cutting edge of the new theology. Don't worry: it's all just words; no real image is created, not even that of Mary Baker Eddy's "Father-Mother God," which carried the full weight of her large and startling vision of the world. Curiously enough, considering the clumsiness of the words themselves, words are what people like Schorri worship.

There are many people like that in America: the people who believe that "Huckleberry Finn" is the worst book in the world, because it uses the word "nigger," although it would be the best book in the world, if some other word were only substituted; the people who "have problems" with "affirmative action" but are completely satisfied, once it's renamed "diversity"; the people who believe that saying, "I know where you're comin' from, man," will solve the problems of whomever they come in contact with; the people who assume that talking like a convict gives you "street cred" (particularly if you're an insurance broker or a financial analyst); the people who, like the president, believe that progress will take place simply because you say that "progress is taking place"; and, not to omit my own professional brand of smarm, the people who appear to think that just because they write a monthly column about words, they themselves are the Lord's "beloveds."

She never even once mentions the obvious reasons for the flight of the middle class from L.A. (and California generally). Yes, aerospace was cut (her buddy Clinton cut defense spending by 40%, of course). But for decades California has waged a vicious war on both business and the middle class. The state workers' comp rates are among the highest in the nation, virtually doubling labor costs in construction, which is a major cause of the ridiculously high price of housing.

California has an embarrassment of environmentalist regulations, making construction difficult, which again results in high home costs, and keeping the state from constructing new highways, which results in extremely long commute times for working people. The state is tort lawyer heaven, enabling parasitic attorneys to sue businesses for trivial violations of disability laws and other codes, even when those attorneys don't actually have an injured client.

The state has insanely high taxes: an income tax of nearly 10% on even modest incomes; steep gasoline taxes (even as the state moves toward more toll roads); sales taxes near 9%; a car tax; and user fees on a variety of services too numerous to mention. All this taxation goes to support the most generous welfare state in the country, with the possible exception of New York. California has a notorious, labyrinthine mass of business and labor regulations that has driven manufacturing and other industries from the state.

Add to all this a teacher-union-run school system that ranks among the worst in the country, and is it any wonder the middle class is fleeing in massive numbers to states like Texas and Florida, which have no state income taxes and a welcoming business climate? Only someone with a severe case of left-wing blindness could be so oblivious to the obvious.

— Gary Jason

Iraq and a hard place — President Bush warned in his American Legion speech of August 31 and on other occasions that withdrawing from Iraq now would hand victory to America's worst enemies, increasing the danger from terrorism. Tragically, Bush is probably right: we have blundered into a predicament from which no plausible or safe exit seems available. But how did we make this blunder? If nothing else, we should at least salvage lessons from it.

We must carry on from where we are now. We should seek a correct diagnosis and response; we should not squander resources on ineffective protections against terrorists. But can we trust the strategy — if any — of leaders whose wishful thinking and faulty intelligence got us into this predicament and who persist in denying their errors? Can we trust the judgment of those who unrealistically prate about bringing democracy to the Middle East and who see great significance in an election or two? Can we trust a president who seeks political advantage from being the wartime "commander-in-chief"?

Rush Limbaugh and especially Sean Hannity mount a rhetorical defense of Bush and crowd, practically accusing those who disagree with them on Iraq and on antiterrorism policy of being unpatriotic, of wishing for their own country's defeat to punish Bush. Regrettably, those accusations may indeed apply to a minority of left-wing Democrats. Other Americans wish for an honorable and victorious exit from Iraq (somehow). We do "support the troops"; we do admire their sacrifices and want them to have adequate strength and excellent equipment, as well as fair treatment regarding repeated battlefield

tours and extended enlistment periods. We agree that we must "stay the course," not "cut and run." The quoted slogans must not be mistaken, though, for reasoning or for strategy.

As for Sean Hannity, I sometimes, while driving home, hear his call-in program on the station that my car radio is always tuned to. His poor grammar and deficient vocabulary are irritating enough, but what really bores and repels me is his interrupting callers who do not see things his way and his impugning their patriotism. How can he and similar conservatives expect to make converts with such behavior? With friends like him . . .

Sometimes, driving home later, I escape Hannity and instead hear Paul Feinbaum's call-in program about sports. Mercifully, it is no mere compendium of actual and predicted scores of games: it deals mostly in assessments of and gossip about coaches, players, and other personalities. This kind of talk is much more bearable than Hannity's smears.

Which major party do voters support to rebuke Bush and crowd without encouraging left-liberal demagoguery and policy? This dilemma — this jumbling of issues — again illustrates the inaccuracy of democracy (as of alternative government decision processes).

— Leland B. Yeager

Don't Buck the state — In a press conference held after the Sept. 8 capture of suspected cop-killer Ralph "Buck" Phillips, New York State Police Superintendent Wayne Bennett emphasized that those who attack the police will be hunted down at any cost. As opposed to, say, someone who merely shoots an optometrist in Virginia. "You're not gonna shoot one of *our* people and get away with it."

Is this an example of further encroachment of a police state? Not really — it's always been standard operating procedure. But isn't granting agents of the state special powers and protections a small step towards tyranny? Exactly the opposite, according to Superintendent Bennett. "Shooting at the people who protect society . . . that can never be tolerated, *that's* tyranny."

— Mark Rand

When they came for the Holocaust deniers — David Irving is back in the news. Austria's highest court has rejected the historian's appeal and upheld his conviction for denial of the Holocaust.

Amazing! It wasn't that long ago in Austria that an unpopular political opinion would have the Gestapo at your door. Today, it again brings the policeman. The civilized world gaped at repressive Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia, and now 65 years later we relive that mistake. You would think we had learned better.

In the case of Irving, even a confession of error and ignorance did him no good. "I made a mistake when I said there were no gas chambers at the Auschwitz concentration camps," he testified. Too late.

The Austrian hate law applies to those who deny, play down, approve of, or excuse Nazi crimes. This language can be used to lock up anybody with a mouth and an opinion. What entity of free men would arrogate such power to the state? As a kinsman of many who died in the camps, I find such laws repulsive. And as a reader of history I must reluctantly admit that Irving is a world class historian. I have read his books; surprisingly, he tells of the slaughter of Jews — no denial there. In "Hitler's War" he speaks of the "unfolding persecution and

liquidation of the European Jews." No mincing of words — "liquidation." (But he did minimize it later.) There is, however, an unpopular theme regarding the role of Hitler. Irving sees him as a provocateur, neither manager nor implementer of the SS murders.

It is with regard to the camps that Irving disagrees with the eyes of thousands who viewed the killing apparatuses and the ashes of their aftermath. It is his thesis that typhus, not Zyklon B, did the dirty work. An error? An oversight? A faulty source? A plain lie? No matter. The state has defined his crime and decreed his punishment.

— Ted Roberts

Diapers and dynamite — I flew on a plane a couple of weeks after the ban on liquids went into effect. I have chronically dry hands, and when traveling I used to keep a small tube of lotion to slather on them every couple of hours. No longer: lotion is an instrument of jihad, and is not allowed through security.

I was reading a book while waiting at my gate for the plane to arrive. As I flipped a page of the book I was reading — with some difficulty, given my dry hands — a small, unruly child ran past me in a shirt and a diaper, her mother in pursuit.

Excuse my indelicacy, but this was patently unfair. The crumb-cruncher probably had some baby lotion and diaper-rash cream slathered on her that morning. The kid was sure going to be wet by the time our six-hour flight was over. And disposable diapers are designed to hold moisture by wicking it into a gel.

This little jihadist-in-training was in possession of up to four banned substances, and they let her right through security.

I'm not being flip. If the goal is to keep religious extremists from blowing up airplanes, and we know they routinely strap bombs onto children, there is every reason to believe terrorists will pack their explosives on a child's rump rather than in Gatorade bottles and toothpaste tubes, if that's what it'll take to get through security. Babies and incontinent Arabs are a new danger.

A guy tries to ignite a shoe, they start X-raying shoes. Some people supposedly plot to ignite liquids, they ban liquids. This can't go on much longer. Either the reactive security paradigm will have to change, or civilian air travel will be a practical impossibility within a decade.

— Patrick Quealey

Pay the cost to have the Boss — George Steinbrenner has always ranked among the most hated New Yorkers. I can recall decades ago watching a weeknight Yankee game on television when the audience suddenly cheered mysteriously. The TV announcers were puzzled until they realized that the radio broadcasters must have scooped them with the news that George had been banned from baseball for an indefinite period for some infraction and that this message had spread like "the wave" among the Yankee faithful. What other major-league owner could be so reviled?

As a sports-club owner, Steinbrenner has been a spectacular success, getting New York City to renovate his classic stadium several years ago, running up the price of his tickets, and winning the richest contracts from broadcasters, in part because his only competition in the largest market is a newer team (i.e., the Mets).

Thanks to this largesse, Steinbrenner and his minor part-

ners have run up the largest annual payroll in baseball based upon these principles: buy the contracts of older stars and assume their lucrative salaries. Since older players are more likely to get injured or decline than newcomers, buy yet more replacements for those fallen away, even if only temporarily. Given so many stars, as well as a competent manager, one might think they'd win every World Series, but they don't. Given the competitive leverages of major-league baseball, no strategy is infallible.

Steinbrenner's latest discreditable scheme is getting the city to give him the open sports fields adjacent to venerable Yankee Stadium to construct, albeit with Yankee funds, a replacement edifice that will have more luxury boxes and fewer seats. Since many Yankees games nowadays sell out, this will enable Steinbrenner to raise prices once competitive with a first-run movie to a level comparable, say, to the Metropolitan Opera. (As I've written in these pages, raising the prices drove away dark-skinned faces even in a borough, the Bronx, where Caucasians are a minority.) At the televised groundbreaking for the new edifice, Steinbrenner announced that he was constructing the new ballpark for the "benefit of the fans." Bullchips, many must have joined me in screaming. Which fans? Not this one, who goes to see his favorite team (for over 50 years now) only when offered a senior discount of five bucks.

The Libertarian candidate for New York state governor a few years ago had the slogan of "Separation of Sport and State." Though he didn't get many votes, may I suggest that his slogan should be revived?

— Richard Kostelanetz

Faith-based organizations — "I left because I didn't feel safe anymore as a Christian," a woman from Lebanon told me recently at dinner, explaining why she and her husband and three children moved to the United States in 2002.

"The religious hostility was getting worse," her husband explained. "You become discriminated against for what you believe about God. You're separated into camps. Muslim, West Beirut; Christian, East Beirut."

Memories aren't short in this part of the world. It's like the 11th century was yesterday and Pope Urban II had just declared a Holy Crusade to seize Jerusalem from the Arabs.

The "Protocols of the Elders of Zion," a 19th-century fabrication purporting to describe a secret plan by the Jews to achieve global domination, runs as a miniseries on Iranian and Egyptian television, and the book continues to top the "nonfiction" bestseller lists in Syria and Lebanon.

Iranian writer Ali Baqeri explains that the alleged Jewish conspiracy for world domination outlined in the "Protocols" is only part of a much larger out-of-this-world Zionist plot: "The ultimate goal of the Jews, after conquering the globe, is to extract from the hands of the Lord many stars and galaxies."

The year after the aforementioned family fled Lebanon, The New Yorker published "In the Party of God" by reporter Jeffrey Goldberg. Penetrating the underground world of extremist Middle Eastern politics, Goldberg's article provides insight into the fear this family felt as well some background to the current crisis in Lebanon.

Rather than advertising cars or concerts, posters and billboards in the village of Ras al-Ein, situated in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon, celebrated bloodshed and martyrdom. Posters of Ayatollah Khomeini, the political leader of the 1979 Iranian

Revolution, were especially popular.

The political and military control of Ras al-Ein at the time of Goldberg's visit fell under the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, the Syrian Army, and Hezbollah, "the Party of God," a name that comes from a passage in the Quran: "Verily the party of God shall be victorious."

On his way to a meeting with the leader of a local Hezbollah faction, Goldberg saw no flags of Lebanon flying anywhere in Ras al-Ein. Instead, the flag of Hezbollah, with its spiritual quotes and AK-47s, was everywhere. "Like the rest of the town, the park was crowded with ferocious Hezbollah art. One poster showed an American flag whose field of stars had been replaced by a single Star of David," i.e., the Great Satan and the Little Satan, united.

Another poster showed a pile of dead soldiers whose uniforms were marked with Stars of David. Another portrayed Jerusalem being gripped by a figure with a grotesquely hooked nose.

Goldberg's taxi driver, a Christian, was hesitant about the destination for the meeting in Ras al-Ein. "Lebanon's Christian minority is fearful of Shiite gunmen," explained Goldberg.

A meeting with Hezbollah spokesman Hassan Ezzeddin provided Goldberg with an introduction to faith-based terrorism. "To us, there is real life after death," explained Ezzeddin. "Reaching the afterlife is the goal of life. Once you have in mind the goal of dying, you stop fearing the Jews."

Ezzeddin, not satisfied with the withdrawal of Israeli forces in 2000 from southern Lebanon, told Goldberg that the goal was to liberate the 1948 borders of Palestine. The Jews, he said, "can go back to Germany, or wherever they came from."

At Beaufort, a 12th-century castle in Lebanon that served as a platform for rocket attacks on Israeli towns before Israel's 1982 invasion, Goldberg's guide was a Hezbollah guerrilla in his early 20s named Na'im. "The Jews are sons of pigs and apes," Na'im said. It's the kind of talk that comes easily to people who belong to groups with names such as the Movement of the Deprived and the Organization of the Oppressed on Earth.

At a Hezbollah position on the Lebanese-Israeli border, buses brought tourists to a spot that overlooks a concrete Israeli fortress called Tziporen. Israeli soldiers were only a few feet away. One Kuwaiti tourist, excited, yelled "Jews!" Others took out video cameras to film the enemy.

"Rock throwing from a comfortable distance was encouraged, and the Palestinians aimed for the roof of the fort," reported Goldberg. "On weekends, when the crowds are thicker, villagers drive in tractors, full of rocks to supply the tourists."

— Ralph R. Reiland

Boomtown, U.S.A. — Preliminary second quarter GDP figures are now available, and it is estimated the economy grew at a 2.5% clip in the second quarter, following the revised 5.6% figure for the first quarter. Growth for the whole first half of the year averaged a nifty 4%.

It is likely the second quarter figure will subsequently be adjusted, perhaps by the time this reflection is published. I would not be surprised if, like the first quarter figure, it is subsequently revised upward, though change in either direction is possible.

The American and world economies continue to boom. At a recent Cato Institute conference on "Monetary Institutions

and Economic Development," Mickey Levy presented important data on world consumer price index inflation. The most fascinating aspect of these data is the extent to which inflation has declined around the world in recent years.

For the world as a whole, annual inflation averaged 22.3% in the years from 1990 to 1994, 8.3% in the years from 1995 to 1999, and 3.8% from 2000 to 2004. It is true there has been a slight uptick in inflation in the United States in the past year or so, but this is likely to prove temporary. U.S. monetary growth over the past year makes unlikely a continuation of the current rate of inflation into the future.

The worldwide decline in inflation is particularly pronounced in developing countries, where inflation declined from an average annual rate of 56% in the 1990 to 1994 period to 6% in the 2000 to 2004 period. Stable world prices are a vital component of increased economic production. As there is less inflationary change in prices, more international trade becomes possible, to the benefit of all economies.

Moreover, with respect to the United States in particular, the significant decline in the federal budget deficit for the current fiscal year, from an original projection of over \$400 billion to a current projection of under \$300 billion, gives an idea of the underlying strength of the economy. Watch for further declines in the deficit in the future. While problems remain, the overall economic picture appears bright. — Lanny Ebenstein

From Cape May to Hezbollah — The Lobster House, started in 1936 in Cape May, is the largest independent (non-chain) restaurant in New Jersey, the 18th largest independent in the United States. Equipped with its own fleet of boats, the restaurant ships millions of pounds a year of fresh seafood, including tuna, shark, and oysters, throughout the United States. The harbor in Cape May is home to an annual shark-fishing contest, pulling fishermen from around the world to compete for a \$228,000 purse for the biggest makos and threshers, plus a \$50,000 Monster Prize for the heaviest shark.

As a sign of the times, Mexican immigrants seemed to be the majority labor force on the Lobster House's fishing boats



"You're retired now, Harold — You don't *have* to be a Republican anymore."

this year, just as they're becoming a major factor in South Jersey agriculture, landscaping, and construction. Our waitress explained that though the Mexicans are hurting summer jobs for Cape May's kids, they're more reliable than the town's own high school and college summer workforce. As another sign of the times, the waitress said that last year she averaged \$200 in tips for her three-hour lunch shift, but this year it was down to \$100.

Up the beach in Sea Isle, the largest realtor in town said this year's rentals weren't keeping up with the supply of houses. At Trump's Marina in Atlantic City, there's seating for probably 200 at the outside bar and dock, but at 1 p.m. during peak season on a sunny Friday our table of five was the only occupied table or bar stool in the place. Our waitress said she averaged \$200 at lunch last year, but her tips this year had dropped to \$40. The bartender for what should have been a lunch rush explained that he's worked at Trump's for 11 years and this was the worst. "We've never seen it like this. Inside too, at night in the restaurants, there's nothing."

Yachts and small boats were sitting silent in the harbor, whereas last year the big story was a megayacht that got a fill-up for \$54,000 before heading to Europe. This year, the same fill-up would be closer to \$80,000.

Most attribute the lackluster summer season to the price of gas. "Workers are feeling the gasoline pinch and are adjusting their leisure activities to compensate," writes J.W. Elphinstone of the Associated Press, referring to a recent consumer survey. "Almost 65 percent of respondents are reducing their entertainment and hobby expenditures because of higher fuel costs. More than half are cutting back on summer travel, while 29 percent are canceling summer travel plans altogether."

If that's the economic downside at \$3 per gallon, one wonders what the effect on the U.S. economy would be at \$5 or \$10 per gallon. In Germany, the price in U.S. dollars of gasoline at the end of July was \$6.56 per gallon, and that's without the lid blowing off the Middle East. In Belgium, the price was \$6.76.

A month after the attacks of September 11, Harvard economics professor Martin Feldstein, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers from 1982 through 1984 and President Ronald Reagan's chief economic adviser, issued a warning about the direct links between America's oil dependency, anti-Americanism throughout the Middle East, and national security. "Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq and the United Arab Emirates have more than half the world's reserves of oil," he wrote, "while the United States has only 2 percent of the total." The National Energy Development Group estimates that by 2020 the Gulf area will be producing two-thirds of the world's oil. U.S. dependence on imported oil was at 42% of consumption in 1974. By 2000, imports had increased to 52% of total U.S. oil consumption.

Feldstein saw no reversal in the trend, even with fewer

government restrictions on drilling and rising oil prices effecting an increase in domestic production: "Experts now predict that the oil imports of the U.S. will rise to 70 percent of our consumption by 2020."

Increases on the supply side won't fix the problem, he argued. What's required are decreases in demand. It takes 40% more oil to produce \$100,000 in income or output in the U.S. than in France or Germany.

The fix isn't so hard. For starters, the Toyota Prius Liftback gets 51 mpg on the highway, 60 mpg in the city — enough to get the Lobster House waitress back to \$200 and keep billions from sloshing around the Middle East and finding its way into the hands of Hezbollah.

— Ralph R. Reiland

Stephen Dresch, R.I.P. — Dr. Stephen Dresch (1943–2006), a Yale-educated economist who served one term (1991–92) in Michigan's House of Representatives, died Aug. 6. Dresch won public office as a libertarian Republican in a Democratic Party enclave — the rugged, Alaska-like 110th District that stretches along Lake Superior in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

"Stephen Dresch," according to a memorial read in the House after his death, "exemplified the independent spirit and the stalwart soul of the Upper Peninsula." Dresch was elected after questioning spending practices at Michigan Technological University, where he served as dean of the School of Business and Economics. He made an unsuccessful bid in 1992 for the Republican nomination in Michigan's 1st Congressional District. That fall he toured the U.P. with Libertarian Party presidential candidate Andre Marrou. Dresch stood for office again in an April 1994 special election in the 110th. Political observers closely followed the race. A Dresch win would have given advocates of liberty more balance-of-power in Michigan's House, equally divided at the time between 55 Democrats and Republicans. Alas, Dresch lost the special election by the razor-thin margin of two-tenths of 1%, ending his political career.

Any libertarian who encountered this fearless man has a special memory. Mine is of Dec. 3, 1992. The occasion was Dresch's "Farewell," his part in a tradition afforded every retiring Michigan House member. I was a newly elected House member, and I sat transfixed as Dresch described his policy victories, including defeat of a legislative pay raise; and the personal price he paid for questioning government spending practices. "I have paid a high price," Dresch told his colleagues, "for the honor and satisfaction of serving as a member of this body and for the 'whistle-blowing' which began my 'long march' in these halls. That price is measured not only, nor most importantly, in dollars but in the disruption, to a significant extent permanent, of a career to which I was devoted and of a life in a community which I had come to love. Many of the bridges which I crossed in that long march, many more than I anticipated, were destroyed behind me."

Fortunately for the movement, Dresch built more bridges, specializing in forensic intelligence. Detroit Free Press political columnist Dawson Bell noted that Dresch investigated a New York City corruption case that led to the March indictment of a former FBI agent accused of helping a mob informant commit murder. Stephen Dresch leaves behind a unique legacy. Advocates of liberty can learn from him that they can effect real change, but they will pay a personal price.

— Greg Kaza

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Health Care: Three Fantasies

by Ross Overbeek

Are the government's health care preferences worth dying for?

Health care and the technologies that support it are of growing concern to most Americans. Until recently, I was something of an exception. I lead a fairly sheltered existence; I seldom think about the issues one encounters in the media. I have focused instead on my research: first in the field of computing; then, since 1990, in some of the fundamental issues of biology. During most of that time I've felt that I had nothing of special importance to say about medical issues.

Now, however, I strongly believe that the rate of progress in the field of medicine is much slower than it needs to be, and that this lag affects all of us profoundly. Many wonderful advances have been made. Yet I am disturbed by the discoveries that have not happened, or have happened but have not yet been allowed to reach the market. We must discuss the forces that constrain and retard possible breakthroughs in medical treatment, especially at this point in time, when we are on the verge of profound shifts in medicine driven by advances in technology.

One could expend a great deal of effort on detailed arguments about regulation, innovation, and desirable goals, but most of the detail would miss the essential point: *we are all affected, and many of us are dying, because the system optimizes the wrong set of goals.* A group of powerful people have established professional goals for medicine that seem appropriate to them and, in fact, to most Americans; yet the very selection of these aims — minimizing medical accidents, for example, or reducing the distribution of ineffective cures — has had a

host of unintended, unfortunate consequences. These consequences must be discussed.

To this end, I invite you to consider three fantasies, three visions of a world in which alternative approaches to science and technology were taken. These fantasies have to do with (1) the impact of government regulation, (2) the cost of risk aversion, and (3) the choices that people make about the treatment of the terminally ill. In other words, these are fantasies about real things, and I will be making some real-world observations about them.

Fantasy 1: The Speed of Innovation

I began my career in computing in 1967. It is hard to convey how rapidly the field developed. This is how Chris Evans summarized it in 1979:

[S]uppose for a moment that the automobile industry had developed at the same rate as computers and over the same time period: how much cheaper and more efficient would the current models be? If you have not already heard the analog the answer is shattering. Today you would be able

to buy a Rolls-Royce for \$2.75, it would do three million miles to the gallon, and it would deliver enough power to drive the *Queen Elizabeth II*.

That was written just as the micro revolution was beginning. Since then, computers have affected the world in ways that were, and remain, almost unimaginable.

Now, fantasize for a moment about what would have happened if the following arguments had been successfully advanced back in the 1970s and 1980s:

1. Computers will inevitably perform central functions in many products, and the issue of their reliability is too critical to be left to the marketplace. Indeed, we will see computers exercising critical functions in airplanes, spacecraft, coordination of rail traffic, maintenance of nuclear reactors, and an almost unlimited number of other settings. Failures in either hardware or software can cause inconvenience, injury, or even death. Therefore, the new Federal Computer Authority (FCA) will be responsible for licensing computer products. This agency will be assigned the task of certifying the reliability of each new product.

2. Because computers will play a crucial role in every consumer's life, the software used to control them must be developed by professionals who have been certified as capable of delivering state-of-the-art products. Therefore, only certified graduates of a limited number of licensed institutions will be allowed to produce software for commercial uses, and people trained in foreign institutions will be required to pass strict examinations guaranteeing their familiarity with the best current practices.

3. Normal consumers are obviously not qualified to make judgments about whether or not the software they purchase will live up to expectations. The FCA must therefore have the power to determine the efficacy of programs before they are marketed. Products that are considered critical will be sold only through licensed outlets, where certified professionals can prescribe products that they consider necessary to address consumers' needs, products that have been tested and approved for these applications. For relatively noncritical applications, we will allow mass-marketing outlets to handle the

appropriate products.

How would things develop from that point? At first, the FCA would probably take a pragmatic course, attempting to weed out the truly bad software and hardware while minimally constraining forward progress. The product development cycle would certainly become longer. But the really important, and unfortunate, result would be the enshrinement of the idea that the FCA was responsible for minimizing or even eliminating serious product failures.

Once the FCA acquired responsibility for preventing accidents, incentives would exist for it to make increasingly cautious judgments. As the agency became more risk-averse, the population would draw greater and greater solace from media reports of its careful regulation and quality-control. Some of the reports might be false; corruption might set in within the FCA. Because it would effectively control the release of all new technology, its approval would be something worth paying for. But if the FCA was doing its job, the product cycle would continue to lengthen, product development would become steadily more expensive, and the number of new products would be kept to a decent and approved minimum.

Now, it is precisely this fantasy situation, this kind of regulatory environment, that currently exists in the health care industry. As a result, health care technology is progressing at only a fraction of the pace that might be achievable.

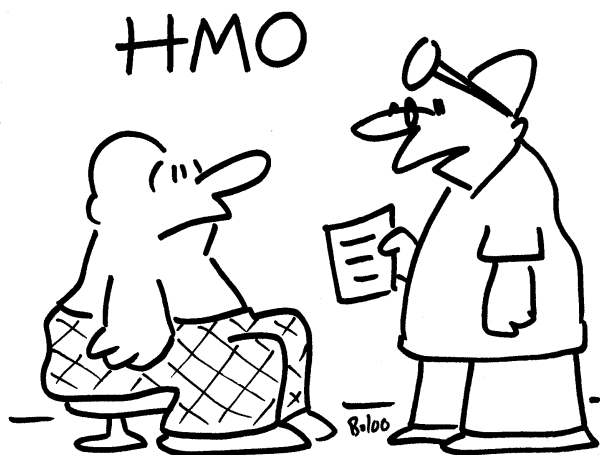
In the case of computing we see what can be accomplished with minimal regulation. In the case of health care we observe the outcome of a highly regulated process. Most cost-benefit analyses of regulatory protocols consider the trade-off between prevention of accidents and delay of the products that reach the market. But if you reflect on the computing industry, you will realize that the effect of regulation is the simple *nonexistence* of many products that could have reached the market, but did not. In such cases, you cannot quantify the effect of regulation, because the advances just cease to occur; the innovations just cease to happen. The delay of events that do eventually occur is certainly important, but the dramatic reduction in innovation is far more so.

Right now, reduction of innovation is an issue of grave importance. We have reached the stage in our understanding of the human genome where a dramatic acceleration of medical technology is possible. Let me explain.

Within the cells of every person's body is a collection of DNA that determines many of the details that support life. This collection of DNA, called a *genome*, acts as blueprint for processes that allow a living cell to begin, grow, and divide. We can now gain access to the information stored in a genome through a process called sequencing. The cost of sequencing a person's genome is dropping rapidly, and it is the information learned in this process that will drive much of modern medicine. The basic vision goes like this:

1. Many, if not most, drugs have a favorable effect on a small percentage of the population but a neutral or unfavorable effect on other people. If we can, through the sequencing of genomes, predict which individuals will react favorably to a specific drug, the usefulness of drugs will be dramatically increased.

2. We will be sequencing a large number of diverse human genomes. We will then look at them and see how they differ. We have tabulated specific spots that reflect differences, even



"Your feet hurt? — I'm afraid that 'feet' are a pre-existing condition."

though we cannot now identify the effect of each difference. Let us call such a difference an SNP (this happens to stand for "single-nucleotide polymorphism," a fact that you need not

We are all affected, and many of us are dying, because the health care system optimizes the wrong set of goals.

remember). We will determine a set of, say, a million SNPs; then we will check them against specific human beings, creating an SNP profile for each person.

3. When we have accumulated thousands, eventually millions, of SNP profiles, we will correlate them with the ways in which people react to specific drugs. In this way, we will be able to predict, with gradually improving accuracy, which people can benefit from those drugs. The generation and use of these SNP profiles has the potential for revolutionizing modern medicine. It may result in the saving of millions of lives.

This is only one of many technologies that will grow out of our ability to sequence large numbers of genomes at rapidly decreasing costs. Such innovations are likely to occur, however, only in the regulation-free environment that has characterized computer technology.

Fantasy 2: The Price of Risk Aversion

This second fantasy involves anticancer drugs. Suppose that two such drugs are available. Further suppose that each of them has the following properties:

- The drug is a total cure for exactly 50% of the population.
- The drug is lethal for the other 50% of the population.

And let us suppose that the two drugs are complementary — together they could cure all members of the population, assuming that a sick person could know which of the two drugs to take — and that the use of SNP profiles will eventually allow prediction of benefits with 100% accuracy. In other words, suppose we can foresee a time when we will be able to make an entirely accurate prediction of the efficacy of these drugs, though right now our ability to predict is pretty poor.

This is clearly a contrived fantasy, but I believe it captures the essence of the current situation. We do have many drugs that offer dramatic therapeutic benefits to one or another subpopulation, but potentially lethal damage to other subpopulations. We do have an emerging technology (SNPs) that will increase the predictability of benefits.

How might this field of investigation progress, in the absence of regulation? Here is how I fantasize the course of events involving the two complementary drugs:

1. At first the manufacturers of each drug would offer it to individuals who willingly risk a 50% chance of death in order to gain a real chance of being cured, given that, absent the use of either drug, they would almost certainly die soon. These potential consumers would be informed of the risks; some would accept them; and 50% would be cured — while 50% would die.

2. Because the value of the drugs would be directly related to the chance of curing the patients, strong incentives would exist to improve the odds of success. This would encourage efforts to characterize SNPs for all the patients who took the drugs. Long before the cause of success or failure could be accurately determined, it would be possible to identify subpopulations that exhibited much higher and much lower success rates for each drug.

3. The odds of predicting which of the two drugs would work for any specific patient would begin to improve. This would lead to more patients taking the risk of ingesting one or the other of the drugs, which would lead in turn to a rapidly growing body of statistics that could support more accurate analysis of correlations between SNPs and therapeutic outcomes. A positive feedback loop would be established, quickly leading to vastly improved outcomes.

Now the question I wish to pose is this: is there any way this can happen, given existing principles of regulation?

Under current law, a drug may not be brought to market unless it is judged both safe and effective. Consider what would happen if a drug showed up in a lab, it looked promising, and a doctor gave it (probably illegally) to two friends who were dying from cancer, one of whom died, while the other was totally cured. If the story became known, I suspect the doctor would face prosecution, even if both his friends had been fully informed of all the data he possessed, and both had elected to take the risk. In my view, a well-informed adult should have the right to take potentially fatal risks. But that is yet another fantasy, because this right is wholly unrecognized in the present medical environment.

To summarize: the normal progression of events in an unregulated, risk-friendly environment would have every possibility of producing a 100% cure rate, while the existing, regulated, risk-averse environment would bar any progress toward using the full therapeutic properties of either of the two drugs in question. This alone constitutes grounds for rethinking the priorities of the existing system.

Fantasy 3: The Purpose of Saving Lives

In my last fantasy, I want you to think of yourself as a person who runs a government agency with a substantial budget, an agency that is responsible for saving the lives of as many people as possible who have been diagnosed with cancer and

The effect of regulation is the simple non-existence of many products that could have reached the market, but did not.

have a probable life expectancy of less than a year. The lives of thousands of these people depend on your judgment. (Remember, every day 1,500 people die from cancer in America.) Your job is to make decisions that can save their lives. The U.S. government alone spends about \$5 billion a year just on cancer research. Let us suppose that you have a serious

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Charity? Humbug!

by Doug Casey

If Warren Buffett really wanted to be charitable with his billions, he would have concentrated on making billions more.

Simply put, I don't believe in philanthropy or charitable giving — at least not the ordinary kind.

Charitable giving and the concept of charity itself are among the stupidest and most destructive humbugs stalking Americans of good will today. Warren Buffett's bequest of \$31 billion to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provides an excellent opportunity to discuss the harm done in the name of charity and the confusion that surrounds the topic.

If you have the money to invest, you'll almost certainly die with some assets; maybe a lot. But how should you dispose of them? This is definitely a "hot button" subject, combining aberrations from the very topics that are most susceptible to irrational thought: money, family, politics, and religion.

I wasn't surprised to hear of Buffett's bequest. He's said for years that he would only leave a comparatively token sum to his family. But in my view, this cements him in the "Idiot Savant" roll call of rich guys, although not as solidly as the intellectually brain-dead, ethically vacant, and unintentionally comical Ted Turner, he of the billion dollar bequest to the United Nations. And although I haven't included Bill Gates on that list in the past, he definitely belongs there for his huge bequest to his own foundation. (And also for the spineless way he responded to the government's antitrust suit against Microsoft back in 1998. If it had been my company, I would have transplanted it to a friendlier clime — and paid for the move with just a couple of years' tax savings.)

My guess is that despite his intelligence, expertise, and generally affable, self-deprecating manner, Buffett is profoundly misanthropic. Like Gates, Buffett has a classic anticapitalistic, limousine-liberal mentality toward money. He says imbecilic

things like, "The market system has not worked in terms of poor people" (on a recent "Charlie Rose" show). That matches Bill's incredibly hackneyed and politically correct press conference statement: "We really owe it to society to give back." No, you idiot savant, society — which is largely composed of nonentities who produce no more than they need to survive personally (if that) — owes you a huge debt for your work with computers. I'm just sorry you're not actually worthy.

Many people of great wealth seem uncomfortable with money, a feeling which perhaps underlies their pathological urge to hand it over to the undeserving. Andrew Carnegie was another sufferer: "A man who dies wealthy, dies disgraced." Discomfort with wealth is among the many reasons the Orient will overwhelm the West in the next few generations. Buffett's and Gates' grandchildren may be working as maids and houseboys for the Chinese. A rich Chinese wouldn't dream of leaving his money to a charity, to be dissipated by the do-gooders, world-improvers, socialites, and socialists who almost invariably infest the board of charities.

A Chinese billionaire in Hong Kong will leave his entire fortune, tax free, to his kids. Unless he plans early and well, an American billionaire will leave his children only half, after taxes. Or much less after our sick ethos of giving draws off a

large portion to politically correct charity. So the next generation of Chinese will start out with perhaps three or four times the capital of their American counterparts whose parents had the same assets. And unburdened by either income taxes or idiotic American attitudes towards money, they will make it grow much, much faster.

But it goes far beyond that. Accumulation itself is beneficence. The accumulation of capital, no matter who owns it, adds to the demand for everyone's labor, and so enriches everyone who can get out of bed. Giving, on the other hand, is a tricky business. It can easily result in waste or in actual harm. From mankind's point of view, if not from Tiny Tim's, Scrooge was a more efficient benefactor before the ghostly visits than after.

Buffett says he doesn't want to reinforce the power of those who are simply "members of the lucky sperm club." But the solution is not to exclude people from the lucky sperm club by perversely disinheriting them, but to help enrich society by making ever more people members of it.

I deplore Buffett's intellectual dishonesty. While tax avoidance is one reason he likes to hold investments "forever," he's philosophically a great believer in taxes. It's hard to respect his hypocrisy. But I do respect his ability to recognize his own mortality. I also respect that he's obviously not attached to his wealth, and that he's actively chosen its recipient. He sees that Bill and Melinda will likely outlive him by 20 years or more, and knows that, at least while they're alive, his money probably won't be frittered on the embarrassing and dishonest hornswoggles initiated mainly for the aggrandizement of foundation trustees — the fate of almost all left-to-charity fortunes great and small. Instead, his money will be blown on nonproductive Band-Aids applied to people who will just get used to having Band-Aids provided for them.

That's partly because the Gates Foundation seems to have a concentration in health programs for the Third World. On the face of it, who can argue with alleviating disability and disease? But building clinics, training doctors, and passing out antibiotics won't alleviate disability and disease. Spending money that way treats the symptom and neglects the cause. It may relieve the pain of some people, but, laudable as that might be, it does nothing toward solving the problem. The reason these people and millions of others live in chronic misery is solely and exclusively political. In fact, the Band-Aid money — just like the rest of the trillions squandered in "aid" by the West over the last 60 years — serves mostly to sustain the criminal governments ruling the places where most

From mankind's point of view, if not from Tiny Tim's, Scrooge was a more efficient benefactor before the ghostly visits than after.

people are poor. And despite whatever measures Gates may take, his Band-Aid gifts will hugely fatten the rulers' offshore bank accounts and add to the army of impoverished mouths to feed. If he showed even a little imagination and economic sense, he'd invest the money as venture capital in the shares of

biotech companies. Or, perhaps, follow the excellent example set by Grameen Bank, which provides micro loans to poor people. The bank gives borrowers the capital to earn a decent living and then gets the capital back, with interest, to repeat the process.

It may come as a surprise to these misanthropic philanthropists, but people actually don't like being the object of someone else's charity; it's degrading, and they resent it. It's

A question came up from an unsympathetic audience member. "Miss Rand, what would you do about the poor?" Her answer: "Make sure you're not one of them."

much like the comments made by an Iraqi on seeing a GI (who undoubtedly thought he was being a good guy and making friends) passing out candy to the kids in the neighborhood: "These Americans treat our children, and us, like animals in a zoo, throwing sweets to us, to make themselves feel good."

Confused Phonies Love Charity

Aspen, a town where I spend some time in the Northern Hemisphere's summer, offers an excellent microcosm of what 99.44% of charity is really about: rich people feeling self-righteous and showing off their wealth with large donations. Almost all the "must go to and be seen at" parties in this town (as with those in New York, L.A., and every other center of wealth) are charity fundraisers. Does anybody care a whit about where their money is going? Not really. That's got nothing to do with why they're making the donation. Charity is done for the psychological and social benefit of the giver, far more than for the welfare of the recipient. Will I pony up a few grand for one of these things, feeling as I do? Sure. I view it as a ticket to a spectacle. But there's a big difference between paying for a party and giving billions to create a bureaucracy that can corrupt society for generations. I really don't care if it's for an efficiently run good cause, either.

Why not? First, most charity injures both the donor and the recipient. The donor, who presumably had the ability to earn the capital, is poorer, and the recipient is degraded by the receipt of an unearned, and likely undeserved, good.

If you really want to make a kind gesture to someone, for some category of people or for mankind in general, charity, even under the best of circumstances, is the least effective approach. Under the worst circumstances, such as government welfare programs, it destroys both the giver (through taxation) and especially the recipient (by habituating him to receive stolen goods and lodging him psychologically and economically at the bottom of society). It's perverse and shameful.

But what's wrong with, say, giving a community a hospital? Plenty. If you want to see a hospital go up, then by all means build one — with the intention of making a profit. A hospital (or anything else) that is "nonprofit" is inevitably a boondoggle that soaks up capital. The project usually depends on further donations to stay above water, partly be-

cause the staff who run it have no direct interest in controlling costs, and partly because they have no honest way beyond their salaries to benefit from delivering a good product. Indeed, management usually welcomes ballooning expenses because the process builds satrapies that provide good cover for inflated salaries.

A for-profit hospital, on the other hand, breeds more capital — for expansion, improvement, and even dividends — because shareholders will get rid of any management that fails to do so. It's self-sustaining and gives consumers what they want.

A hospital run like a charity should be closed and sold to the highest bidder. The same is true of nonprofit libraries, universities, and research centers: it would make as much sense to have homebuilders, auto dealers, and department stores run as charities. But if they were, there'd be no capital to give to charities in the first place.

Ethics?

The whole idea of helping the poor — supposedly a major focus of philanthropy — is a slippery slope, usually bottoming in a dismal ethical swamp.

In a rich country, why are poor people poor? Sometimes, it's true, bad luck can strike, and a person may need help. But that's what friends and neighbors are for. And if a person doesn't have any friends, and his neighbors won't help him, chances are he's not worthy of help. Over a lifetime, most people get what they deserve. The fact is that most people who experience perennial bad luck simply have bad habits. They drink too much, they don't care for themselves, they're ignorant, they're lazy, or they have other vices. In a free society, someone who's poor almost certainly deserves his fate. To hell with him. And to hell with charities that encourage him to stay that way.

Sometimes, of course, a person may sincerely wish to improve the world because of a generous if unfocused impulse, rather than because it improves his standing with witless people who care about such things. My first suggestion for him would be to make sure he's not just a busybody. Do the people of Iraq really need democracy? Do the folks in Afghanistan really need to learn about Jesus? Do the natives in the Brazilian jungle really need western medicine? I don't know. Do Ameri-

cans need an Iraqi to tell them why they need an authoritarian ruler to give U.S. citizens proper direction, purpose, and discipline — things many feel Americans lack? Do the folks in America really need to learn about Muhammad? Should Brazilian natives expel America's pharmaceutical companies and substitute their herbal remedies, which many believe are sometimes safer and more efficacious? Frankly, sticking your nose into somebody else's business, even if you think it's for his own good — something charities and governments specialize in — is generally a very bad idea. And, I'd say, usually unethical.

What should you do with your money if you really want to improve the world? Earn more of it. Money (unless it's gained through force or fraud) is evidence that its owner has created wealth — and that's only done by providing other people with things they want. Making money and getting wealthy is therefore the greatest act of benevolence you can provide the world.

And there's no altruism required. Altruism, viewed as a virtue by *Boobus americanus*, is actually a debilitating vice. The modern zeitgeist is perverted on the topic of altruism. It sees gifts to the natural objects of affection — family, friends, purposes that excite the giver — as hardly gifts at all. True gifts, in the modern view, are gifts to strangers. Make a gift to a family member and you are subject to gift tax. Make a gift to a 501(c)(3) organization that plans to feed Martians if any hungry ones show up and you get a tax deduction. It's possible that someday Buffett's and Gates' children will face a life-or-death problem that could be managed — if they had a billion dollars. If that happens, will Dad look like a charity pervert?

In any event, altruism means sacrificing your own values and welfare for those of someone else, which is always a bad idea. A sacrifice means giving up a greater for a lesser good — otherwise it wouldn't be a sacrifice but a price paid for a greater value. So making a sacrifice should be morally repugnant to any self-respecting individual. Don't confuse concepts like economy, or trading the pleasure of the moment for something better later on, with a sacrifice.

One person with a sound view on this was the late Ayn Rand. I remember being in an audience in November 1981, when she gave what I believe was her last speech. A question came up from an unsympathetic audience member. "Miss Rand, what would you do about the poor?" Her answer was, in my view, about the best one-liner conceivable: "Make sure you're not one of them." What, you might ask, happened to Rand's not inconsiderable estate when she shed this mortal coil? It appears she left it to one of her acolytes in the obvious hope that he'd continue her work. Regrettably, he seems to have been a better sycophant than philosopher, someone you might have thought Rand herself would have seen as a second-hander who'd only sink into deserved obscurity as the figurehead of a minor secular cult. Which proves that there's risk no matter whom or what you leave your estate to.

What To Do?

This brings us to the problem of where, exactly, you should bequeath your money. And it should be a specific person, not a foundation, committee, or charity of any type. Most people think of their children as the first candidates, which is reasonable and proper. After all, since you brought them up



"... And when I saw that I was going to turn out to be a useless bum, I decided to become the *best* useless bum I could possibly be."

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Why Libertarians Should Call Themselves Socialists

by David G. Danielson

What's in a name? Enough to make it worth stealing.

There's a tactic that has been very effective for activists in the past, and I'm wondering if it might be successfully employed by friends of liberty in America today. It's the tactic of commandeering the label of one's opponents. Mind you, at the moment, I'm not saying we *ought* to try it. I'm just introducing the idea for discussion.

Who Were the "Federalists," Anyway?

For evidence that the tactic works, consider the sad fate of the federalists. I'm referring to the *real* federalists — not the persons you likely think of when you hear that label.

In textbooks, American revolutionary Richard Henry Lee is described as an "antifederalist." That's the label we've been taught to apply to those, such as Lee, who opposed the Constitution. Why, then, did Lee sign himself "A Federal Farmer" in the newspaper letters he wrote? While we call him antifederal, he apparently regarded himself as a man of "federal" leanings. Why is the label we use for him the exact opposite of the label he used for himself?

Here's what happened. In the aftermath of America's war for independence, a dispute arose. Those on one side — the side that included Lee — initially called themselves federalists, which made sense, since they wanted the United States to be a federation of 13 independent republics. Understandably, they regarded the other side's members as "nationalists" or "consolidators," since that side wanted the United States to be consolidated into one big nation. So the dispute began as a disagreement between the federalists (who wanted a federation) and the nationalists (who wanted a nation).

Then the nationalists pulled a fast one. They started calling themselves federalists.

How, asks Herbert J. Storing, did the Constitution's "opponents come to be called Anti-Federalists? They usually denied, in fact, that the name was either apt or just, and seldom used it themselves. Some of them seemed to think that their proper name had been filched, while their backs were turned as it were, by the pro-Constitution party, which refused to give it back" ("What the Anti-Federalists Were For" [University of Chicago Press, 1981] 9).

"In a clever political ploy," writes John K. Alexander, "supporters of the proposed Constitution of 1787, who were in fact nationalists, adopted the name 'Federalist' and hung the undesirable label 'Antifederalist' on their opponents. Despite the misleading nature of these terms, their use is [now] long established" ("The Selling of the Constitutional Convention: A History of News Coverage" [Madison House, 1990] 39).

The immediate effect was confusion. Lee and the other *original* federalists were paralyzed. They didn't know what to do. Some hesitated even to call themselves federalists, since it might be thought that they were advocating what their opponents were advocating. Some tried to reacquire the label and clarify the nomenclature, but managed only to make everything muddier. Here's how one advocate of a "federal" system — i.e., an opponent of a "national" system — tried to

straighten it all out in Boston's American Herald, Dec. 10, 1787: "A FEDERALIST is a Friend to a Federal Government — an ANTI-FEDERALIST is an Enemy to a Confederation. There-

What are the current socialists going to do? Accuse us of "stealing" their name? Like it's their "private property" or something?

fore, the FRIENDS to the New Plan of CONSOLIDATION are Anti-Federal, and its Opposers are firm Federal Patriots." Got that?

To make matters worse, as Storing and Alexander point out, those nationalists who were now calling themselves "federalists" were labeling anyone who disagreed with them an "antifederalist." Thoroughly confused, the general public no longer had the foggiest idea what the people currently calling themselves "federalists" were for, but at least they seemed to be for *something* and, therefore, seemed worthy of support. Their opponents, it appeared, were a bunch of nihilists with nothing constructive to offer, since they were just "antifederalists."

"The attachment to them [the original federalists] of a word which denotes the reverse of their true beliefs, and which moreover implies that they were mere obstructionists, without any positive plan to offer . . . was a nice piece of misdirection," observes Jackson Turner Main ("The Antifederalists" [Norton, 1961] viii). "The Antifederalists," he writes, "indignantly rejected the name, insisting that the proponents of the Constitution really deserved the appellation, and they tried to recover for themselves the more accurate designation of 'Federalists'" (ix). But it was hopeless. There was simply no way to stop the nationalists from calling themselves federalists, if they wished, nor any way to stop them from calling their opponents antifederalists.

Modern-day disputants seem very aware of the public-relations danger of being labeled "anti"-something. Both sides of the abortion issue, for instance, take great pains to be known as pro-something, be it "pro-choice" or "pro-life." But back in the 18th century, the bewildering experience of suddenly finding themselves labeled "antifederalist" caught the original federalists utterly unprepared and rendered them rhetorically help-

Label maker — For years I've been searching for a political label we can all like. "Classical liberal" was too long and hard to explain. "Conservative" did not reflect the need for change to pro-market policies. "Libertarian" was too libertine. And I hated to see how the social Democrats and socialist pro-big government types had stolen our word "liberal."

Now I see in a New York Times column on Joe Stiglitz that the columnist (a guy named Stephen Kotkin) is constantly using the term "neoliberal" to describe the economists in favor of globalization, open markets, free trade, etc. . . . That's us. We have our new word: Neoliberal. Let's use it! (And those opposed to free minds and free markets? Illiberals!) Remember: "Those who control the labels win."

— Mark Skousen

less. The nationalists prevailed — and since the winners write the history books, we nowadays illogically call the nationalists "federalists" and the *real* federalists "antifederalists."

Who Is a "Liberal"?

Fast-forward to the late 19th century. At this time, we find the advocates of individual liberty calling themselves liberals. Alas, by the mid-20th century, their opponents — the advocates of extensive government interference in people's lives — had commandeered the label.

Freedom's friends have made a desperate attempt to retain the appellation "liberal." Some — among them, Liberty's own Stephen Cox — have tried using the prefix "classical," as if *that* would make it clear to the public that they weren't advocating what others likewise calling themselves liberals were advocating. This defense has been as sad and ineffective as any attempt by the original federalists to retain their label by calling themselves "classical federalists."

Just as confusion arose when both the opponents and the proponents of nationalism called themselves "federalists," it has now become anybody's guess what hodgepodge of ideas any people calling themselves "liberals" are for.

But, clearly, "liberals" must be bold, innovative individuals, willing to entertain new ideas. After all, their opponents are called "conservatives," suggesting that they are timid, overly cautious sorts, comparable to the "conservative investor" who puts his or her savings into bonds guaranteed by the government rather than risking it by starting up a business. The pathetic label "conservative" has been nearly as devastating as "antifederalist" was.

Meet the New "Socialists"

In view of what happened to the original federalists and the original liberals, I have no doubt that thoroughgoing statist in due course — probably within my lifetime — will be widely calling themselves libertarians. Clinton, you may recall, decreed that the era of big government was over, thus taking a few baby steps toward wrapping himself in something of a "libertarian" cloak. How long before he actually starts using the very label?

But maybe — just maybe — we can beat the statist to the punch. Perhaps this time we can turn the tables on them, give them a taste of their own medicine, show them that two can play the same game.

In conversations with friends and letters to the editor I'm going to go right on advocating the elimination of taxes and regulations, but I may just call what I'm advocating *socialism*. Let the prior "socialists" squirm. Let them holler that what I'm advocating isn't "real" socialism. Let them try frantically to cling to their label by calling themselves "classical socialists."

When a capitalist calls himself a socialist, several benefits can accrue. For one thing, people who might not have been willing to listen to him when he was calling himself a capitalist might now give him a hearing. A few of them might just find that he makes a lot of sense. Moreover, despite the abysmal failure of socialism around the globe, many people still get warm and pleasant feelings when they hear the label. A capitalist who adopts the label can capture that warmth while advocating ideas that are actually reasonable.

A third potential benefit of this nomenclature is that it allows the enemies of freedom to save face while capitulating — and this makes it more likely that they will in fact capitulate.

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The Crimes of War

by Jon Harrison

War is hell. That doesn't mean that there shouldn't be rules.

In Iraq several apparent atrocities, alleged to have been committed by U.S. forces, have recently come to light. The purpose of this article is not to determine the guilt or innocence of any individuals accused in these incidents. That can only be done by the judicial process as it unfolds in each case. My purpose is, rather, to examine the nature of war crimes or atrocities generally, and the effect such events have on both the military and society as a whole.

For clarity's sake, we should begin by distinguishing between war crimes or atrocities and what are often called, euphemistically, "aggravations of war." By that phrase I mean actions that, while illegal, are often the unavoidable sequels to combat — for example, the killing of enemy combatants who attempt to surrender just as a bitter battle goes against them, or the killing of prisoners who cannot, through force of circumstance, be conveyed back to their captors' lines. Such actions, while technically illegal under the laws of war,¹ are rarely if ever brought to light or punished.

Strict adherence to the laws of war is at times simply impossible under the extreme conditions of combat, especially on the modern battlefield. To believe otherwise is the preserve of the idealist who has never seen battle.² Quite simply, there is a world that many of us like to pretend exists, and then there is the world as it really is. My subject here is the world as it is.

What, then, is an atrocity or war crime within the context of a conflict like Iraq? It appears that the rules of engagement for U.S. forces *permit* our troops to fire on adult males in civilian clothes who happen to flee from the scene

of a roadside bombing.³ This is probably justifiable, given that the enemy in Iraq wears no uniform and obeys none of the rules of war. In urban fighting under such conditions, stricter rules of engagement would no doubt be an absurdity. The combat effectiveness of U.S. forces fighting against urban guerrillas in a place like Iraq would swiftly diminish (along with their morale) if they were not given a very wide latitude for action. I don't mean to imply that U.S. forces in Iraq should have the right to undertake reprisals in the form of the deliberate killing of civilians. I am merely pointing out that the nature of the Iraq conflict often makes it difficult for U.S. forces to tell the difference between a civilian and an insurgent, and that as a result our troops probably should be given almost every benefit of the doubt. (I will leave aside for the moment the question of whether our troops should actually be in Iraq at all.)

Because our troops in Iraq are fighting an *irregular* enemy force — a force that wears no proper uniform, obeys no internationally recognized leadership, and adheres to none of the rules of war — a quite narrow definition of atrocities or war crimes is called for. This having been said, however,

it seems indisputable that the torture, rape, or deliberate murder of civilians, especially women, children, the elderly, and the infirm, are war crimes. Such behavior is always and without exception illegal, immoral, and barbarous, and if

Many of the best shy away from military service when a war like Iraq is on, and who can blame them? Why choose to serve in a messy, indecisive conflict with no clear goal and no end in sight?

proved to have occurred must be punished severely. From a purely practical standpoint, soldiers (at least in modern armies) cannot be allowed to carry out such atrocities unchecked and unpunished, lest they eventually degenerate into an armed mob, lacking discipline and effectiveness in the field.⁴ And obviously there is also the moral aspect, quite unclouded by the complexities of "aggravations of war." The stresses of combat, even in an urban guerrilla campaign, cannot excuse rape or the deliberate murder of noncombatants. To maintain otherwise is, surely, to plunge into an abyss.

No doubt there are people (some of them, I suspect, readers of Liberty) who would maintain that all's fair in war, that victory alone matters, and that therefore absolutely no rules of war should exist. In response I would point to professional opinion. The professional soldiers I know want the conduct of war to be governed by some rules. They may disagree with this or that aspect of the Geneva Conventions or the War Crimes Act,⁵ but war without rules is not something they like to contemplate. So far as I have been able to determine, there is unanimity on this point throughout the professional ranks.

Some of us in the U.S. no doubt suffer from complacency brought on by the fact that we have not been invaded or even attacked (excepting Pearl Harbor and the Twin Towers) for nearly 200 years. Had we in this country undergone the ordeal of Belgium in 1914, or Russia in 1941, or Germany in 1945, all of us would, I think, welcome rules governing warfare — the more the better, I daresay.

As of this writing, no fewer than five possible incidents of war crimes involving U.S. troops in Iraq are being investigated by U.S. authorities.⁶ The most notorious of these are the incidents at Haditha in November 2005, and at Mahmudiya in March 2006.

At Haditha it is alleged that U.S. Marines murdered, execution-style, some 24 Iraqi civilians, including women, children, and an elderly man in a wheelchair.⁷ The event that is said to have precipitated the massacre was the killing of one Marine in a roadside bombing. If the massacre indeed occurred as described, it unquestionably constitutes a war crime. (It bears repeating here that all individuals accused remain innocent until proven guilty.)

The events that allegedly occurred at Mahmudiya are even more shocking. According to U.S. federal court docu-

ments, four U.S. Army soldiers left their unit and entered the home of a 14-year-old Iraqi girl and her family, where they allegedly murdered the girl's father, mother, and 7-year-old sister. It is further alleged that two or possibly three of the soldiers then raped the girl before killing her. They are then alleged to have burned her body in an attempt to destroy evidence.⁸

Unfortunately, we have been here before. From Wounded Knee to My Lai, U.S. troops have been guilty of atrocities. This is not to say that our record is worse than that of other nations. I would argue the opposite. But we should be clear that American exceptionalism, in this area, is an illusion. Even though the U.S. armed forces are arguably the most humane in the world, we are still confronted with events like My Lai and Mahmudiya. What conclusions should we draw from this apparent contradiction?

It is too facile to say, with Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman, that war is hell, and that therefore it must be avoided at all costs. War is and will remain an instrument of policy so long as the nation-state, and indeed the human race, continue to exist. Once again, let's deal with the world as it is, not as we would like it to be. War is not going to go away, at least not any time soon. How then do we try to prevent crimes like My Lai, or Haditha and Mahmudiya (assuming that in these latter two cases the worst proves to be true)?

Clearly, we need to attract the very best people we can to our armed forces. It was not America's best and brightest that perpetrated the My Lai massacre. By "best and brightest" I do not mean young college professors or software programmers in uniform. What I do mean is people who possess *character*, that is, moral strength, together with intelligence and physical courage. At the very, very least, we need to keep petty criminals and the emotionally unstable out of the ranks.⁹

How do we get the best in uniform? From a classical liberal point of view, conscription, absent a threat to our very existence as a nation, is anathema.¹⁰ Furthermore, in the past (particularly during most of the Vietnam period) conscription was weighted *against* achieving the highest possible standards in the military — as illustrated by the deferments

Had we in this country undergone the ordeal of Belgium in 1914, or Russia in 1941, or Germany in 1945, all of us would welcome rules governing warfare — the more the better.

granted to college students, which guaranteed that most would never serve. We must search for the answer within the context of a voluntary system.

During the post-Vietnam era of voluntary service, and especially in the 1980s and '90s, the military was successful in recruiting high-caliber people. Some of these cadres still serve today. They are the "super soldiers" who form the backbone of a force that remains the best trained, the most

efficient, and probably the most humane in the world. In the weeks and months immediately following 9/11, an influx of dedicated patriots further invigorated the force.¹¹

In rural America, where I now live, there are many young men and women who enter the military not because they view it as a job, or a ticket to see the world, but out of patriotism and a real desire to soldier. In cities and suburbs, where I used to live, there are young people like this, too. The best are out there.

But many of the best shy away from military service when a war like Iraq is on, and who can blame them? Why choose to serve in a messy, indecisive conflict with no clear goal and no end in sight? Why choose to serve in a conflict that involves, not the nation's survival, but the whims of its political leadership?¹²

As the Iraq war drags on, the Army has had to reduce standards for enlistment in order to maintain its force levels.¹³ We should never permit this to happen, short of our national survival being at stake. If, in order to uphold high military standards, the force must shrink, and with it our commitments around the world, so be it. Why, after all, do we still maintain 30,000 troops on the Korean peninsula, when the nation that we are supposedly protecting, South Korea, has twice the population and an economy 30 times the size of its enemy, North Korea? Why do we fight Israel's battles in the Middle East (as we have twice done in Iraq), when that nation's military is more than a match for those of all the Arab states put together — and when Israel, alone in the Middle

East, disposes of a nuclear arsenal that is primed and ready for delivery?¹⁴

Empires that overextend themselves are ripe for bankruptcy, both materially and morally.¹⁵ Who can deny that the United States is overextended in the world today? The time

We need a smaller but better military — not one, perhaps, that can police the whole world, but one that is powerful enough to protect the nation and its truly vital interests.

has come to draw back from the brink. This is *not* a call for isolationism, but for realism. We need a smaller but better military — not one, perhaps, that can police the whole world, but one that is powerful enough to protect the nation and its truly vital interests (*our* interests, not South Korea's, or Israel's, or Taiwan's). I envision a military composed *only* of our best and brightest men and women, those who can embody the warrior ethos without losing their humanity. If we are to achieve this, we must resolve as a nation never again to wage unnecessary wars, wars that can only injure and degrade us, wars like Vietnam and Iraq. Let's save our best and brightest for battles against real enemies, when these do appear. □

Notes

1. For the laws of war see Adam Roberts and Richard Guelff ed., "Documents on the Laws of War," 3rd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2000).

2. There are innumerable references to illustrate this point. For examples see Robert Graves, "Goodbye To All That" (Anchor Books, 1998), pp. 131 and 182–185; and Charles A. Lindbergh, "The Wartime Journals of Charles A. Lindbergh" (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1970), pp. 996–998.

3. Or so a Marine NCO involved in the November 2005 Haditha incident (in which U.S. troops are alleged to have murdered civilians) maintains. See "Marine Says Rules Were Followed," Washington Post (June 11, 2006). The rules of engagement for U.S. troops in Iraq vary, and are also classified, to keep the Iraqi insurgents off balance. On this point see "Shootings by U.S. at Iraqi Checkpoints Questioned," Washington Post (March 7, 2005).

4. While a modern army may on occasion indulge in wanton murder and rapine without losing its combat effectiveness, it cannot persist in such behavior without having its fighting ability degraded. Witness the effect on the Russian Army of the license to rape and loot during the invasion of Germany in 1945. Eventually Russian commanders had to intervene forcefully to restore order, so that the offensive against the Reich could proceed. German soldiers were allowed to sack Louvain in Belgium in 1914, but after a few days their officers stepped in to restore discipline — not for humanitarian reasons, but because fighting efficiency would otherwise have suffered.

5. Passed by the U.S. Congress in 1996, the War Crimes Act criminalized violations of the Geneva Conventions. See "War Crimes Act Changes Would Reduce Threat of Prosecution," Washington Post (Aug. 9, 2006).

6. "U.S. Military Braces for Flurry of Criminal Cases in Iraq," New York Times (July 9, 2006).

7. "In Haditha, Memories of a Massacre," Washington Post (May 27, 2006).

8. On Mahmudiya, consult articles in the New York Times for July 1, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 14 (2006), and "U.S. Soldier's Confession Described in Rape, Murder Trial," Washington Post (Aug. 7, 2006).

9. See for example, "Accused G.I. Was Troubled Long Before Iraq," New York Times (July 14, 2006).

10. The basic classical liberal statement on conscription is in Milton Friedman, "Capitalism and Freedom" (University of Chicago Press, 1982 reissue), p. 36. I would go even farther than the view expressed by Dr. Friedman.

11. The best known example is of course Pat Tillman, the NFL player who gave up a multimillion-dollar contract to serve in the Army Rangers. He was killed by friendly fire in Afghanistan in 2004. Another is Lance Corporal Dimitrios Gavriel of Haverhill, Mass., who after 9/11 gave up a very high-paying job as a Wall Street analyst to join the Marines. He was killed in the Battle of Falujah in November 2004.

12. See "Waiting to Get Blown Up," Washington Post (July 27, 2006).

13. See for example, "The Dumbing-Down of the U.S. Army," Slate (Oct. 4, 2005).

14. On the question of Israel see the seminal paper by John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, "The Israel Lobby And U.S. Foreign Policy," London Review of Books, Vol. 28, No. 6 (March 23, 2006). The recent outbreak of conflict in Lebanon is lamentable, to be sure, but should we spend our blood or treasure in an effort to sort out the mess there? I think not.

15. On this I would refer the reader to Edward Gibbon. Someone once said that just having "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" on one's library shelves was the equivalent of a liberal education. Better, though, to have actually read it.

The Catechism of The Revolution

by David Kopel

For Jonathan Mayhew, resisting tyranny wasn't
just a civic duty; it was a sacred obligation.

“The Revolution was effected before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people; a change in their religious sentiments of their duties and obligations.” So wrote John Adams, looking back on the American Revolution from the perspective of 1818. The date when the revolution of hearts and minds began was Jan. 30, 1750, and the leader of the incipient revolt was Jonathan Mayhew, the minister who preached what was perhaps the most important sermon in American history. That sermon was only one highlight of a life dedicated to human rights.

Like most New Englanders, Mayhew (1720–1766) was a Congregationalist, an intellectual descendant of the English puritans. Because Congregationalists held that God's word, as contained in the Bible, is the supreme authority, they believed that a balance of powers within human government is essential, so that misuse of power can never interfere with the preaching of God's word. In their view, separation of church and state was critical, in the sense that the church must be free of control by the state.

In the rival Church of England, the state church, priests were under the authority of bishops, who were under the authority of the king and Parliament. By contrast, individual Congregational churches were accountable to no higher human power, not even an assembly of their fellow churches. Within a Congregational church there was a careful balance of power between the minister and the congregation, so that neither could dominate the other. The congregants knew the Bible very well, and could discipline ministers who misused it.

Three years after graduating from Harvard, the premier training ground for the Congregational clergy, Jonathan Mayhew was called to the pulpit by the congregation of the Old West Church in Boston. Right from the start, he was a theo-

logical liberal. Congregationalists had always emphasized the importance of the individual in religion. In “Seven Sermons,” preached in 1748 and published thereafter, Mayhew took Congregational principles to their logical conclusion, arguing that everyone has the right and duty to make personal judgments in matters of religion and conscience.

Congregationalists were among the many intellectual heirs of John Calvin, the Protestant reformer of the 16th century who argued that a person's salvation or damnation was predestined by God, with salvation based solely on the person's God-given faith. Calvin agreed with the orthodox Roman Catholic theory of original sin — that man was inherently depraved.

Mayhew rejected these Calvinist principles in favor of modern, Enlightenment views. Indeed, he even rejected the orthodox Christian doctrine of the Trinity (that the Godhead is composed of three persons — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Mayhew contended that God was One — which implied that Jesus was not God, but instead was simply mankind's mediator and advocate with God. He was one of the most influential forerunners of Unitarianism in America. Yet he always considered himself a Congregationalist, as did the members of the Old West Church, which could have dismissed him if they chose. They didn't. And Harvard was so impressed with Mayhew that he was named a lecturer in 1765. His insistence on

the importance of the individual conscience became not only a Unitarian doctrine but also a cornerstone of broader American cultural beliefs about religious freedom.

Mayhew is most famous, however, for preaching the principles of political freedom. His preaching appealed to theological conservatives as well as theological liberals — indeed, to persons of all religious persuasions, all over America, and abroad.

January 30, 1750, was the centennial of the execution of Charles I of England, condemned by Parliament for treason and other crimes. He had repeatedly and infamously abused the rights of Englishmen, had attempted to destroy the checks and balances of England's government, and had claimed a divine right to rule with near-absolute powers.

Charles' son was later restored to power, and Charles was proclaimed a martyr by the Church of England. Although a second son was overthrown in the Glorious Revolution of 1688, in Mayhew's time the Church of England still promoted the cult of Charles with a major feast day every January 30. Each year, priests of the Church of England venerated Charles' martyrdom and propounded the duty of submission to government. The New England Congregationalist ministers — whose Puritan ancestors had helped to execute Charles I — generally tried to ignore this topic in their own January 30 sermons.

Mayhew did not. He took the pulpit and preached "A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission and Non-Resistance to the Higher Powers." The historian Bernard Bailyn declared this the "most famous sermon preached in pre-Revolutionary America." John Adams called it his personal "Catechism" of revolution. Adams remembered, "It was read by everybody; celebrated by friends, and abused by enemies. . . . It spread an universal alarm against the authority of Parliament. It excited a general and just apprehension, that bishops, and dioceses, and churches, and priests, and tithes, were to be imposed on us by Parliament."

According to Mayhew, God had created hierarchical authorities, and people were expected, under ordinary circumstances, to obey the government, just as children were expected to obey their parents — for their own good. On the other hand, if a father lost his mind and tried to slit his children's throats, the children should not obey him. A tyrannical government was like a father trying to murder his children, and must not be obeyed.

Mayhew expounded the natural law theory of government: "God himself does not govern in an absolute arbitrary and despotic manner. The Power of this almighty King is limited by law — by the eternal laws of truth, wisdom, and equity, and the everlasting tables of right reason." Because God is no arbitrary tyrant, no human tyranny can comport with his eternal laws. Therefore, "disobedience is not only lawful but glorious" if it is against rulers who "enjoin things that are inconsistent with the demands of God."

The "Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission" presented a popularly accessible form of John Locke's analysis of Paul's epistle to the Romans. Its central idea is that the Christian duty to submit to governments that govern justly creates a correlative duty to resist and overthrow governments that are tyrannical, since unjust government is the very antithesis of true Christian government. Like most other Congregationalist ministers, Mayhew had studied Locke at Harvard, and considered him a Christian intellectual ally.

Particularly among adherents of the Church of England, there were some Christian authoritarians who warned that a person who resisted tyranny would be damned. To the contrary, Mayhew announced, a people must use the means "which God has put into their power, for mutual and self-defense. And it would be highly criminal in them, not to make use of this means. It would be stupid tameness, and unaccountable folly. . . ." It would "be more rational to suppose that they that did NOT resist, than that they who did, would receive to themselves damnation."

In sum, to resist a just government was "rebellion" against God. To resist tyranny was "self-defense," which was required by God, because tyranny was not real government. This was a premise for revolution.

In 18th-century America, notable sermons were often printed and sold all over the colonies, and overseas. The publication of Mayhew's January 30 sermon added to his already significant international prestige. As Adams recalled, Mayhew "had raised a great reputation both in Europe and America, by the publication of a volume of seven sermons in the reign of King George the Second, 1749, and by many other writings, particularly a sermon in 1750, on the 30th of January."

In Adams' opinion, the January sermon deserved its fame; it was "seasoned with wit and satire superior to any in Swift or Franklin." He believed that in the period 1760–1766, the person most influential in arousing the American spirit of liberty was "James Otis; next to him was Oxenbridge Thacher; next to him, Samuel Adams; next to him, John Hancock; then Dr. Mayhew. . . . This transcendent genius threw all the weight of his great fame into the scale of his country in 1761, and maintained it there with zeal and ardor till his death." It was in 1760 that the British government began a serious attempt to "rais[e] a national revenue from America by parliamentary taxation."

Mayhew was alive to that threat. Five years later, he was a staunch advocate for American interests during the Stamp Act crisis. It was then that he coined the phrase "no taxation without representation." He was also active in a closely related political crisis: the threat of the appointment of an Anglican (that is, Church of England) bishop for America.

Although most American Anglicans (who comprised most of the American ruling elite) lacked the protesting spirit of the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians, the Church of England had never exported its hierarchy to America. As a result, local Anglican churches tended to be controlled by wealthy landowners, who enjoyed their independence from British oversight. Fears that the king was preparing to send bishops to America, to administer the Anglican church and interfere with

To Mayhew, a tyrannical government was like a father trying to murder his children, and must not be obeyed.

other Protestant churches, sent Americans into an ecumenical rage. Adams said that no issue was more important in making common people question the authority of Parliament than the controversy over American bishops.

As he explained, "The objection was not merely to the of-

fice of a bishop, even though that was to be dreaded, but to the authority of Parliament, on which it could be founded." If Parliament had the authority to appoint a bishop for America, Parliament would also have the authority to "introduce the whole hierarchy, establish tithes, forbid marriages and funerals, establish religions, forbid dissenters, make schism heresy. . . ." Americans who favored the appointment of a bishop for America promised that this official would exercise power only on spiritual matters, not temporal ones. But the promise had little credibility, because bishops in England exercised extensive temporal power and were plainly agents of the government.

On May 23, 1766, Mayhew celebrated the repeal of the Stamp Act by preaching a sermon ("The Snare Broken. A Thanksgiving Discourse Preached at the Desire of the West Church in Boston") that recalled American fears that Stamp Act revenues were "partly intended to maintain a standing army of bishops, and other ecclesiastics." Fear of oppressive standing armies was part of the right-to-bear-arms ideology, and would eventually become one of the ideological foundations of the 2nd Amendment. Mayhew borrowed the proto-2nd Amendment philosophy to make a point about freedom of religion that would later become part of the 1st Amendment: a government-controlled corps of bishops and their minions could trample the freedom of the people, just as a government-controlled corps of professional soldiers could. A standing army of soldiers and a standing army of bishops threatened liberty in the same way, by centralizing and monopolizing power.

"The Snare Broken" is one of many examples of the way in which pre-revolutionary Americans identified connections between religious rights and other rights. It is not a coincidence that the constitutional amendment guaranteeing freedom of religion was placed adjacent to the constitutional amendment guaranteeing the right to bear arms.

In gratitude for repeal of the Stamp Act, Mayhew praised King George and extolled William Pitt, the British Prime Minister who had urged a policy of moderation and conciliation with America. He warned, however, that Americans would always need to be vigilant about their liberties, for "Power is of a grasping, encroaching nature . . . Power aims at extending itself, and operating according to mere will, where-ever it meets with no balance, check, controul, or opposition of any kind." Americans must "oppose the first encroachments" on liberty, because "after a while, it will be too late." He reminded his congregation of Jesus' parable: "The kingdom of heaven

A standing army of soldiers and a standing army of bishops threatened liberty in the same way, by centralizing and monopolizing power.

is like to a man that soweth good seed, but while he slept, his enemy cometh, and soweth tares among the wheat" (Matthew 13:24–25). Because the man had slept, it was impossible to uproot the tares without also uprooting the wheat.

To Mayhew, it was obvious that the kingdom of heaven was a kingdom of rights and liberty. He recalled that in his

youth he had studied Plato, Demosthenes, Cicero, and other ancients, and among the moderns, had liked Algernon Sidney, John Milton, and John Locke, all advocates of individual freedom. The Bible taught Mayhew that the Israelites angered God when they asked for a king, and that "the Son of God came down from heaven, to make us 'free indeed'." Mayhew's own father taught him "the love of liberty" with "a chaste and virtuous passion." In middle age, he was proud to say that he was

To resist tyranny was "self-defense," which was required by God, because tyranny was not real government. This was a premise for revolution.

unable "to relinquish the fair object of my youthful affections, liberty; whose charms, instead of decaying with time in my eyes, have daily captivated me more and more."

Mayhew had grieved at the promulgation of the Stamp Act, when liberty "seemed about to take her final departure from America, and to leave that ugly hag slavery, the deformed child of Satan, in her room." Now, however, he was "filled with a proportionable degree of joy in God, on occasion of her speedy return, with new smiles on her face, with augmented beauty and splendor. Once more then, Hail! Celestial maid, the daughter of God, and, excepting his Son, the first-born of heaven!" Liberty was "the delight of the wise, good and brave; the protectress of innocence from wrongs and oppression, the patroness of learning, arts, eloquence, virtue, rational loyalty, religion!"

Mayhew's scripturally influenced view of history was optimistic. Although the Stamp Act had been dreadful, "God often bringeth good out of evil," just as Joseph's enslavement in Egypt led to his rescue of his family. American liberties were like an oak tree that grows stronger roots and broader branches after being buffeted by "storms and tempests." "And who knows," he said, "our liberties being thus established, but that on some future occasion, when the kingdoms of the earth are moved, and roughly dashed one against another . . . we, or our posterity may even have the great felicity and honor to 'save much people alive' and keep Britain herself from ruin."

"The Snare Broken" was Mayhew's last great sermon. He died six weeks later, at the age of 46, an inspired and devoted servant of liberty. □

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Reviews

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The Rise of the Compassionate Class

Gary Jason

Since the days of Marx at least, scholars of various kinds have tried to delineate socioeconomic classes and use this class analysis to explicate political and cultural phenomena. The two books under review certainly attempt new class analyses, and while I am not persuaded that they have adequately addressed the issue, I am persuaded that there is indeed a new class ascending. I call this the Compassionate Class. Exactly who this class is and where it is headed are matters of some complexity.

David Lebedoff defends the thesis that our political system has become sickened by the rise of a new, antidemocratic elite. He first sketched this thesis in a 1978 article in *Esquire* entitled "The Dangerous Arrogance of the New Elite," based upon his experience while working for the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party in the 1960s. He saw the party being taken over by activists who felt entitled to impose their will on everyone else, because they considered themselves smarter than everyone else. This new class he called the New Elite; the rest of us he called the

Left Behinds. He elaborated this thesis in his 1981 book "The New Elite," and has greatly expanded his analysis in "The Uncivil War."

He begins his description of this New Elite by harkening back to the election of the year 2000. He views Gore as the New Elite candidate, with Bush representing the Left Behinds. Yes, both Bush and Gore were born into politically powerful families, educated at elite prep schools and Yale. But while Bush hated the high-SAT gradgrinds who took over Yale while he was there, Gore positively adored these *wunderkinden*. In fact, Bush outscored Gore on the SAT, but Lebedoff says that what matters is one's commitment to the new class. As he puts it:

The most important thing to know about the New Elite is that it is self-selected. It's the values you choose to side with. If you perceive, as [Franklin] Foer puts it, "merit not as brainpower but as 'character,'" then, like Bush, you're a Left Behind. If your central value is brainpower itself, above all else, you are a member of the New Elite, the club to which Gore chose to belong. (6)

The New Elite is more focused on

books than on feeling, more focused on values policy-wonk verbal ability than character.

Lebedoff believes that Bush and Rove knew the campaign was about the struggle between this New Elite and the Left Behinds, and that is what won the election for Dubya.

On Lebedoff's view, through most of human history, up to the modern age, intelligence was distributed randomly in the population, not selected for in marriage. People generally chose a mate without regard for the mate's intelligence. But this has changed in the modern era, and now, "For the first time in history, intelligence is neither randomly distributed nor randomly transmitted" (13). This is because people have more mobility (so can meet more potential mates), they are routinely educated and tested (so others can more clearly see their intelligence), and, most importantly, intellectual ability is now rewarded more than ever. Our economy is knowledge-based, and people have access to higher education based upon talent rather than socioeconomic class. More and more, high IQ marries high IQ. Equality of opportunity has led to stratification of IQ, education, and

therefore income. In America, the rise of a new class was greatly accelerated by the G.I. Bill of Rights, which flooded colleges with students after WWII.

Behold the New Elite — the high IQ meritocracy. Their wealth and prestige are owed to their demonstrable,

The New Elite desires to impose its preferences even when it knows they are minority opinions, in the smug quasi-religious belief that its morals are superior.

measurable academic scores, and they know it. Besides marrying among themselves, they tend to self-segregate in other ways, living in enclaves built around colleges and high-tech business parks, and in upscale urban areas. (The Left Behinds become rusticated in traditional suburbs, rural areas, and blue-collar urban areas.) The new class has developed its own culture, morals, and mores. It strives to exhibit modest prosperity, not opulence. Its members are “the managers of society: teachers, commentators, planners, officials, and executives — the articulators of thoughts and standards” (21). This gives the New Elite power beyond its numbers.

Members of the New Elite differ both from ordinary workers, many of whom earn close to what New Elitists typical-

ly earn, and from businesspeople, who earn more, by a self-identity based upon measured intelligence. The formation of this new class had to wait until recently because

[s]everal preconditions had to be met: an industrial society so far advanced that its economy could justify a major allocation of resources to management, research, and explication; many new jobs that could be filled not merely by members of a preexistent economic or social elite but by those to whom this new employment represented an improved standard of living with which they would want to identify, rather than seeing it as the extension of a previous caste; a social arrangement that identified the testable skills of its citizens and made it inevitable that most of those with certain skills would identify with — and marry — one another; a clustering, a segregation, of these skilled workers by neighborhood, by employment, by lifestyle, and above all, by family unit. Finally, there had to be the sense — necessary to the formation of any class — that what these people had in common could be handed down to their succeeding generations. (37)

Class awareness for the New Elite resides in its rejection of traditional values-frameworks and its extreme valuation of testable intelligence. The New Elite fervently believe that there is a thing called “general intelligence” and that IQ tests measure it. (It is unclear to me how Lebedoff would explain the fact that the attack on IQ testing comes predominantly from left-wing professors, and its defense predominantly from a few conservative scholars.) This con-

fidence in intellectual superiority produces another feature of the New Elite: their rejection of the view that matters of social policy (such as the appropriate level of taxation) should be determined by majority consent. No, since the New Elitists view themselves as intellectually superior, they are the ones who should decide for society what policies to adopt.

Two major political issues originally split the New Elite from the Left Behinds: the civil rights movement and the peace movement arising out of the Vietnam War. The New Elite supported civil rights and opposed Vietnam, while the Left Behinds tended to do the reverse. The New Elite came away with a sense of rightness, and often disdained the Left Behinds as stupid and selfish. This reinforced the anti-democratic mindset. Since the New Elite desires and feels entitled to control the country’s direction, and since it isn’t anywhere near a majority, it uses undemocratic strategies to subvert democracy when it needs to. These tactics include appointing themselves as spokesmen for various minority groups and then imposing their own agenda on the groups. So you have New Elites who claim to speak for all consumers, all women, all those concerned about the environment, all those who love the Bill of Rights, and so on. Another tactic is “negative consent”: unless someone (say, a student) explicitly requests not to be represented by some activist group, he or she is presumed to have consented. (Perhaps because he’s an old-time pro-union Democrat, Lebedoff doesn’t mention that labor unions typically employ the same pernicious tactic.)

The New Elite has obtained still more of its power by developing arcane party caucus rules, rules perfectly suited to advance its candidates and agendas. This has led to what Lebedoff calls the death of politics — an end to the traditional political system. The old political system encouraged ordinary people to become party regulars — donors, volunteers, precinct workers, candidates for lower as well as higher offices, convention delegates, etc. These regulars were the ones who chose candidates, put forward nominees for appointments (especially judicial ones), and channeled funding to candidates. The New Elite felt it was entitled to per-

Calling All Economists!

The new libertarianism of Nozick and Friedman is a waste of time. We don’t have to figure out how a pure free market would work, for it would figure that out for itself; nor convince the majority to live in it, but, to live and let live.

The problem is its fear, not that the non-aggression principle wouldn’t work, but work too well, against its own aggression, plunder, and redistribution. And since it is a call for self-denial, the purely moral argument against it is an economic argument for it. But the idea that it doesn’t pay, that taking from the rich to give to the poor doesn’t reduce but increases inequality, is both an economic and moral argument against it, and the strongest possible, that it is immoral, as well as uneconomic, by the majority’s own standards.

That is the “new idea” here that the “new libertarians” can’t be bothered with, for they’d rather go on dreaming about the free market than actually get to it.

For the intellectual progress leaving them in its wake, the new idea they don’t want, and gold coin prize for refuting it they couldn’t win, that would demolish the Left, and the new Right with it, see *Intellectually Incorrect* at intinc.org.

form these functions, so it systematically changed the rules so as to castrate party regulars and assume their power.

After taking over, the New Elite pushed primaries (as opposed to caucuses) and opposed the “winner take all” rules that tended to make it hard for candidates with small but committed bases of support. The elaborate new rules for determining proportional representation of delegates to national and county conventions allowed well-educated party members (such as teachers and lawyers) to manipulate the system much better than traditional party regulars (workers, small business owners, homemakers, etc.). The use of “citizen panels” to nominate judges empowered the New Elite, since they were more apt to be on those panels and were more ideologically driven. And the New Elite favored campaign limits, so that people who in their view were dumber but richer wouldn’t get as much of a political voice as they once did. (How Sen. McCain fits in here is uncertain — he doesn’t fit Lebedoff’s description of the New Elitists, yet he’s the major advocate of campaign spending limits.)

The tactics have varied, but the central goals have remained and intensified: the New Elite desires to impose its preferences even when it knows they are minority opinions, in the smug quasi-religious belief that its morals are superior. Lebedoff believes that this kind of deliberate antimajoritarianism is something new in American history: in the past, people with minority views would try to convince the majority by cool persuasion, hot agitation, or even

Pop culture is controlled by New Elite college graduates, and its quality is at an all-time low. Lebedoff attributes this to the New Elite’s contempt for the taste of the audience.

civil disobedience — accompanied by a willingness to accept the consequences. The New Elite just wants to impose its views, and accepts no risk:

All the strange new activity of the de-

cadres since Kennedy has shown how the efforts of the New Elite could deny the democratic process. The vilification of political parties; the ascendancy of image over issues; the disrespect for law (which is the codification of majority will); the substitution of stridency for debate, of rallies for elections, and of rigidity for compromise; the shifting of power from Congress to the courts; the growth of interest groups that bypass and disdain the political process; the self-appointment of spokespersons; the denigration and corruption of popular culture; the rejection of traditional values; the enthronement of the “expert”; the enactment of rules that limit political participation in the name of extending it — all these things are rooted in the new belief that the majority does not, cannot, know what’s best, that there exists a group that is measurably superior to everyone else, and that not statute or habit or procedure must be allowed to stand between that group and dominance. (29)

Lebedoff devotes a good deal of his book to addressing the influence of the new class on contemporary culture and politics. Some of his views are plausible, some not. His view is that in the 1930s and 1940s (which he seems to regard as the pinnacle of popular culture in the United States — and I would agree), literature, films, and music were aimed at a higher moral and intellectual level than they are now, despite the fact that culture was often produced and cultural industries were often controlled by immigrants and children of immigrants, who typically were not college educated. Now pop culture is controlled by New Elite college graduates, and its quality is at an all-time low. Lebedoff attributes this to the New Elite’s contempt for the taste of the audience, a contempt completely absent in the early movie moguls and other cultural leaders, who understood the “average” people because they had lived among them. The New Elite doesn’t respect the intellectual and aesthetic potential of the public because it doesn’t know the public. This rings true: the controllers of our culture are younger, less familiar with ordinary life, and more callow generally than is the public as a whole.

Lebedoff less plausibly tries to tie the Enron scandal to the New Elite, suggesting that the Enron scandal would never have happened if the New Elite

had done its job. The SEC lawyers, the accountants, the management consultants, the representatives of the shareholders — they were all high academic achievers, and they were all morally ob-

When in human history wouldn’t a woman prefer to marry a smart man rather than a dumb one?

tuse. The New Elite generation has been taught moral subjectivism, the ability to suspend traditional moral judgment. Moreover, he claims, the New Elite hates risk, because “Risk is for the marketplace, and the New Elite hates the marketplace” as an arena in which dumb people can get rich rewards (97). He belabors the point that high test scores don’t indicate high moral sensibility, as if anybody ever supposed they did. This is very unpersuasive. Business scandals have occurred regularly as long as business has been around, and is there any evidence that the scandals are worsening? Granting, for the sake of argument, that those who allowed the Enron scandal to grow unchecked are members of the New Elite, the same applies to those responsible for monitoring the multitude of companies that have *not* been scandalous.

Even less plausible is Lebedoff’s discussion of the failure of America to deliver egalitarian public education. He notes that upper-class people often send their kids to private schools, that many schools track students into different classes, and that public schools in some suburban districts are highly funded and performing as well as private prep schools, while inner city districts (allegedly) receive less money and perform less well. This is only persuasive if one accepts the old liberal cliché that funding determines educational quality, an idea I for one (jaded as I am from decades of teaching freshmen) reject. Poor Catholic schools do a better job of educating poor kids than public school districts (such as Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.) that are flooded with money.

But the least persuasive feature of

Lebedoff's book is his analysis of presidential elections: Carter ran as a farmer and a common man, but governed as a New Elitist, and lost when people saw that; Reagan became popular by appealing to Left Behind values; Bush Senior lost when he seemed to have been captured by his party's undemocratic religious wing; Clinton won because he seemed more moderate, lost popularity when he seemed to be succumbing to the antidemocratic elite, but became popular again when he appointed David Gergen and appeared majoritarian. There is a much simpler explanation: people were reacting to actual political policies. Carter was a failure at defending the country and at managing the economy. Reagan was unpopular during the recession in his first term, but recovered when his policies appeared to revive the economy and stymie Soviet expansionism. Bush Senior fell victim to a recession — and lost in a three-way race, when a third-party candidate, with rival policy suggestions, split the Republican base. Clinton ran as a moderate, but tried to govern as a hard leftist (remember Hillary Care) and lost the Congress as a result; when his politics (welfare reform, budget balancing) be-

came more centrist, he got the credit.

Putting all that aside, how shall we assess Lebedoff's fundamental contribution?

First, we should recognize that his analysis is similar in many ways to that of the late Christopher Lasch. In "The Revolt of the Elites," Lasch argued that there is a rising cognitive elite of people who make their living by manipulating symbols (words, numbers, computer code). He estimated that this "talking class" is about 20% of the population, and he saw it as a threat to democracy, because it tends to live in separate communities, sends its kids to private schools, and (because it makes its living off international assets) thinks globally rather than locally or nationally. He also felt that the cognitive elite is beginning to rule in place of the citizenry.

Second, we should recognize that Lebedoff as well as Lasch describes a genuine, recent phenomenon: the rise and growth of a large group of people who disdain American democracy, and want to push their ideological vision on to our society whether it agrees or not.

Third, we should notice the basic problems with Lebedoff's analysis, beginning with its biological account of how the new class came to be. What reason is there to suppose that people in the past didn't consider intelligence when choosing a mate? When in human history wouldn't a woman prefer to marry a smart man rather than a dumb one? Worse, while Lebedoff never defines precisely what he means by "the modern age," it is clear that he has in mind something on the scale of a few centuries,

which seems far too short a time for any major change in human populations to occur.

I proceed to the problem of testing. Lebedoff is downright inconsistent in his treatment of IQ tests and SAT scores. Sometimes he rejects them as real tests of

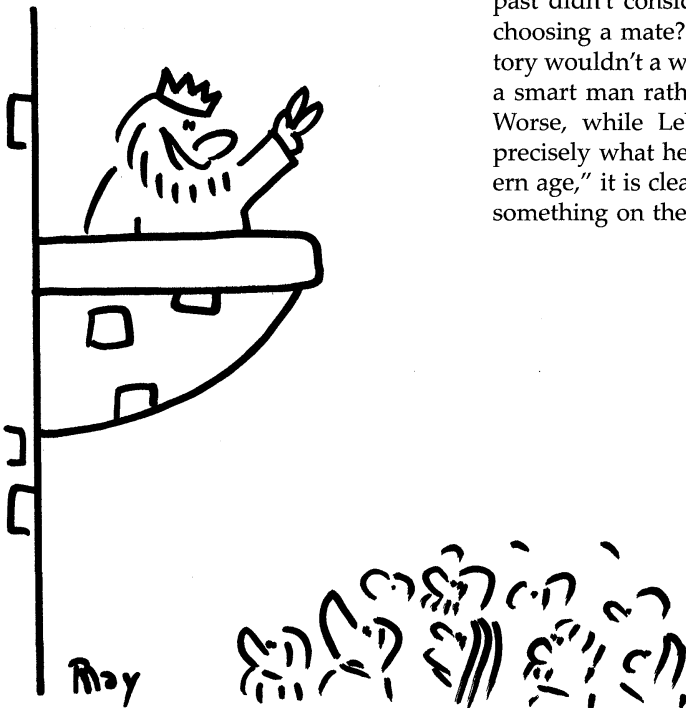
intelligence; at other times he accepts the idea that they indicate real intelligence but continues to assume that intelligence shouldn't give anyone more power than anyone else in a democracy. He briefly mentions Herrnstein's and Murray's work, "The Bell Curve," which offers a similar view of high-IQ types intermarrying, self-segregating, and moving up the socioeconomic ladder. His response is this:

The exceptionally controversial book, *The Bell Curve* . . . speaks approvingly of a new IQ class, which the authors call the "Cognitive Elite." It is a class virtually identical to the New Elite described in this book, though Herrnstein and Murray spend most of their time "proving" that the Cognitive Elite is really smarter and scarcely discusses the social and political ramifications of the new class. (160)

Lebedoff doesn't clearly say whether the high-IQ types *are* smarter — the scare-quotes indicate doubt. He might do well to consider a third alternative: there are different types of intelligence, with different distributions. A high IQ may be the ticket to success in science or math, but what has been called a high "EQ" (emotional quotient, a measure of how much you understand the emotions and intentions of other people) may lead to success in business or literature. He might even consider a fourth alternative: in a meritorian society, it is not IQ or symbol-manipulating intelligence that gets rewarded, but moral virtue. What it takes to run a small business is, yes, a normal IQ, but more importantly the ability to understand what customers want, to work incredibly hard, to motivate employees and so on — virtues such as prudence, empathy, and perseverance.

Moreover, Lebedoff's analysis of the kind of people who make up the New Elite is equivocal. Is it people of high intelligence (as indicated by high test scores, which is a dicey claim to make), or people with a certain profession, or a certain lifestyle, or a certain cultural identity, or simply a certain manner of self-perception?

As to high scores or grades defining this new class, Lebedoff's examples undercut his own thesis. John Kerry, Al Gore, and Bill Bradley are all members of the New Elite, while George Bush isn't. But all four of these politicians



"The bad news is that we lost the war — the good news is that the king of France has agreed to make it best two out of three!"

had mediocre SAT scores and college grades; indeed, Kerry's transcripts from his Yale days show that he received lower grades than Bush (Kerry aver-

By the year 2000, more New Yorkers worked in social services than on Wall Street.

aged 76%, Bush 77%). Moreover, Kerry received four D's in his freshman year alone, while Dubya got only one D in his whole time at Yale. And Dubya went on to earn an MBA from Harvard. So it is hard to see how Lebedoff can characterize Bush as a Left Behind and Kerry et al. as members of the New Elite.

At times, Lebedoff addresses this glaring anomaly by saying that what determines whether a person is a member of the new class is a matter of self-image, or self-selection: "One need not have attended college to be a member of the New Elite; a privileged dropout qualifies. A professor of philosophy at Princeton could easily be one of the Left Behinds if his or her basic identity is with a traditional social or economic or ethnic group" (19). But he also characterizes the New Elite not so much by identity as by economic role: "Its members are the managers of society — teachers, commentators, planners, officials, and executives — the articulators of thought and standards" (21). Then again, he characterizes the New Elite by values: "The point of the example is this: membership in the New Elite is not determined so much by IQ or education as it is by rejection of traditional values" (36).

Yet clearly these diverse criteria don't point to anything like coextensive classes.

The book is analytically weak. Lebedoff says there is only "some" correlation between the New Elite-Left Behind and Democrat-Republican dichotomies. As he puts it,

The New Elite was "liberal" at its inception, and its efforts to dismantle our majoritarian structures were originally confined to the Democratic Party. But aha! A virus so virulent soon spreads. Now both parties are

on life support, the valves guarded by extremists.

The real battle that has turned this country into opposing and very hostile camps is not between conservatives and liberals. It is between those who believe in majority rule and those who believe in rule by experts. It is between those who rely primarily on experience and those who rely primarily on theories.

Yes, there is some correlation between the political parties — enough to make the red and blue of recent election maps a recognizable metaphor for our subject.

But our subject is not really political — or at least not partisan. The division of America is not between liberal programs and conservative programs, or big government and small government. The New Elite has no program. Its only real policy goal is that all policy be made by members of the New Elite. (x-xi)

One would be hard pressed to name many New Elite figures who are Republicans. For example, it is the Democrats these days, not the Republicans, who want rule by the judiciary. This prompts the question, why? I will return to this point shortly.

Lebedoff's analysis is simply not fine-grained enough. Consider SAT scores for graduating high school students by intended college major (table at right).

These figures just don't seem to fit Lebedoff's analysis. Sure, some majors that seem to fall into the category of Left Behinds have low scores (agriculture, home economics, and vo-tech), but so do some that seem to be paradigmatically New Elite (architecture and environmental design, education, public affairs and services). The middle range of scores is split between those majors generally considered Left Behind (such as business, commerce, and military science) and those generally considered New Elite (such as arts, communications, social science, and library science). At the higher end are majors that are clearly New Elite

(philosophy, language and literature, and foreign and classical language), but among the highest are some that don't jump out as New Elite, such as math and engineering.

In sum, while Lebedoff does identify what seems to me to be an interesting sociopolitical phenomenon, I don't think his new-class analysis explains it. He is correct in thinking that there is a large, elitist group of Americans who wield great political power and have a profound contempt for democracy. And he is right, for reasons I will explain later, to think that their numbers are increasing. But he is off the mark in his own explanation. In particular, this new class has nothing to do with IQ or breeding. And, despite his denial of this obvious truth, the New Elite is very much an ideologically leftist class. This is a complex phenomenon better explainable by economic, psychological, and ideological factors than by evolutionary or biological ones.

We can get a better handle on all of this if we recall Milovan Djilas' classic "The New Class." Djilas was one of the founders of the Yugoslav Communist Party, and he fought with other Yugoslav nationalists against the Nazis. After the war, he became vice president

2003 Profile of College Bound Seniors

Intended College Major	SAT Score*
Agriculture/Natural Resources	966
Architecture/Environmental Design	991
Arts (Visual & Performing)	1,014
Biological Sciences	1,096
Business & Commerce	1,001
Communications	1,030
Computer & Information Sciences	1,038
Education	965
Engineering	1,099
Foreign or Classical Languages	1,109
Health and Allied Services	987
Home Economics	924
Language & Literature	1,153
Library & Archival Science	1,084
Mathematics	1,171
Military Science	1,029
Philosophy, Religion, Theology	1,106
Physical Sciences	1,151
Public Affairs & Services	920
Social Sciences & History	1,045
Technical & Vocational	891

* Total SAT I Score (mean verbal + mean math).
Figures taken from the College Board website.

in Tito's government, and was widely thought to be in line to succeed Tito. But in 1953 he started writing dissident articles, essentially arguing for socialism with a human face, i.e., more

Perhaps because he's an old-time pro-union Democrat, Lebedoff doesn't mention that labor unions typically employ "negative consent."

democratic socialism, long before others did. He was kicked out of the government and resigned from the party. In his book he argued that the Communist Party (by then ruling Eastern Europe as well as the Soviet Union) was not the party of egalitarian justice that it pretended to be, but was instead a vehicle for fulfilling the greedy aims of the elite higher party bureaucracy. Not surprisingly, he was imprisoned for his writings. The important insight here is that groups often employ ideology to mask self-interest. This is a truth that Lebedoff doesn't see as clearly as either Djilas or Steven Malanga.

Malanga is a fellow at the Manhattan Institute and a contributing editor of its publication City Journal. His thesis, which is the product of another new-class analysis, is sure to alarm anyone with even modestly libertarian sensibilities, and he states it right off (p. 9):

Politics in America today is not a contest between left and right. A new political dynamic has slowly been emerging over the past 40 years, a face-off between those who benefit from an expanding government and those who must pay for it — the tax eaters versus the tax payers. The vast expansion of the public sector is finally reaching a tipping point, giving tax eaters the upper hand, especially in American cities. There, coalitions of public employees, staffers at pub-

licly funded social-services programs, and the recipients of government aid have emerged as effective new political forces.

Malanga's claim recalls Thomas Paine: "There are two distinct classes of men in the nation, those who pay taxes, and those who receive and live upon the taxes." But Malanga feels that the tax-eating class has moved into dominance, and he has a wealth of new illustrations of this thesis.

He dates the rise of this New New Left to the formation of government employee unions. These unions not only bargain for higher wages (from government representatives who typically face no bottom line of profitability to keep them in check) but are major forces in electing politicians who advance their agenda, and in defeating initiatives that don't. AFSCME was formed in the 1950s and won the right to bargain collectively in 1958. In the 1960s the AFT started using strikes to gain bargaining power. Membership in public employee unions grew exponentially in the '60s and '70s as the Great Society programs kicked in. Malanga illustrates this with a variety of statistics. For example, between 1975 and 2000 the number of New York social services employees increased from 52,000 to 183,000, which meant that by the year 2000, more New Yorkers worked in social services than on Wall Street. The coalition of public employee unions, social services employees, and health-care unions has systematically turned the nation's cities into Democratic havens, even within Republican states.

Along with unions, the New New Left is driven by social activist "advocacy" organizations such as ACORN (Association for Community Reform Now) and Public Citizen, Ralph Nader's group. These activist groups channel money from union contributions into voter registration drives, ad campaigns, and so on. Add to this the leftist "Labor Studies" programs at public universities and liberal-leftist institutions such as the Tides Foundation and the Ford Foundation, and you have a potent political force.

The power of the New New Left shows in the increasing number of cities passing "living wage" ordinances.

About a hundred cities nationwide have these ordinances, which jack up the minimum wage required for any firm doing municipal business. This of course decreases the total number of jobs and increases the amount a city has to pay for contracted services, which in turn raises the taxes that citizens have to pay. But these costs are largely invisible to the taxpayers, who are told by activists that only corporations have to pay the bill. Any community activist who wants to push a living wage ordinance can follow a manual produced by ACORN's National Living Wage Center and get funding from a multitude of leftist foundations. The ACORN manual embodies the tactics of 1960s radical Saul Alinsky: build coalitions, mask your real agenda, demonize your opponents, organize demonstrations, and proceed from there.

On some college campuses, "labor" programs function as agitprop generators, radicalizing students, training new and ever more leftist union leaders, and spewing out biased research intended to provide propaganda for labor's political campaigns. "Labor interns" are indoctrinated at summer programs run and funded by unions, then lead protests on campus against cuts in college budgets and the outsourcing of manufacturing. Even more egregious is the fact that some students receive academic credit for participating in these demonstrations. Professors are often willing allies in organized labor's continuing fight to increase redistributive taxes, stop privatization, halt free trade, and generally oppose

"The New New Left" warns about what might be happening — New York as an apocalyptic vision of what the rest of the country could become.

free markets and corporate capitalism. Labor programs are often housed in interdisciplinary social science and urban studies departments, where standards of scholarship are typically much lower than in (say) economics

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departments. The result is a steady stream of anti-American and anti-free market propaganda, supported naturally by leftist unions and foundations, but also funded by the taxpayers who pay the professors' salaries.

Of course, besides professors of Labor Studies, there are legions of scribblers, on campus and off, who are devoted to propagandizing the leftist creed. Malanga focuses on three writers of very popular books: David Shipler, Richard Florida, and Barbara Ehrenreich, who has made a fortune on book sales and college speaking fees from her tendentious tomes. Malanga devotes several chapters to reviewing their works in detail, exposing the shoddiness of their work. He also discusses in detail the coordinated attack by the New New Left on Wal-Mart, incidentally showing how beneficial the company has actually been to society.

In sum, Malanga's book is a reasonably well-documented warning about the dangers of various activist organizations. He is right in believing that they are pushing an ideological agenda of ever-increasing growth of welfare-state programs, out of collective self-interest. But he doesn't establish his initial claim that this New New Left, this tax-eating class, has come to dominate our society, or even that some kind of "tipping point" has been reached. To do that, he would have to address a number of interesting questions: has the percentage of aggregate national government spending (at all levels) gone up dramatically, decade by decade, over the past few decades, in absolute terms and as a percentage of GDP? How has the number of employees in U.S. welfare-state programs grown during the same period, in absolute terms and as a percentage of all workers? What about the recipients of these services: how much has their number grown nationally, in absolute terms and as a percentage of the population? And what is the actual voting behavior of these groups?

Unfortunately, instead of answering these fairly obvious questions, Malanga spends a good deal of time on what seem to me to be tangential issues, such as why Wal-Mart is a good company or why Richard Florida's economic nostrums are silly. When he

does talk about the growth of the tax-eating class, he confines his discussion to New York City, which may not be typical of the country as a whole. Because he doesn't address the relevant national issues, his book amounts to a warning about what might be hap-

pening — New York as an apocalyptic vision of what the rest of the country could become. That's frightening, indeed, but as valuable as the warning might be, it leaves the reader unsatisfied about the original and motivating issues.

Notes on Contributors

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If Lebedoff characterizes what I call the new class too broadly, including high scholastic achievers who clearly don't belong, Malanga takes too con-

Journalists scored higher in the need for power, fear of power, and narcissism, while businessmen scored higher on the need for achievement and the capacity for intimacy.

tracted a view, focusing too narrowly on organized labor and allied advocacy groups. A better approach would be to define the class, not by its grades or its IQ scores, but by its values.

Because the activists of this class speak constantly of the value of "compassion," I would name it the Compassionate Class. This class certainly has interests and values that are tied (directly or indirectly) to the "social functions" of the modern state — education, health care, welfare, housing, and so on, as opposed to "defense functions" such as policing and military defense. Accordingly, the economic values of the Compassionate Class are classically leftist ones: redistributive taxation to support ever-increasing social spending; systematic shrinkage of defense spending in favor of social spending; ever-increasing regulation of private enterprise; desire for social insurance programs that seem to give people security; and deep opposition to the privatization of such social functions as education. The non-economic values are again classically leftist ones: strident secularism; multiculturalism; hostility toward patriotism; antagonism toward the police and military; aversion to historical tradition; opposition to traditional social structures, especially the "patriarchal" family; sympathy for deviancy (criminal and otherwise); egalitarianism (i.e., more desire for equality than for merit); a profound desire for security and a profound antipathy toward competition. These values account for who is a part

of the Compassionate Class, and why it is so antidemocratic.

Let's begin with which professions constitute the new class. Lebedoff is right: our modern knowledge-based economy has resulted in a permanent move toward a more book-learned workforce, not just in this country but worldwide. The shift has accelerated with the dramatic advance of computerization. But not every knowledge worker is a leftist. There is a big difference between educated workers who aren't tied to the social-welfare state and those who are. Health care professionals who are in private practice, private and corporate accountants, officers in the armed forces, teachers at private and parochial schools, entrepreneurs, corporate and business lawyers, and defense-industry engineers — these are some of the people who, unlike public school teachers, government-employed health care professionals, journalists, IRS and other governmentally employed accountants, trial and defense lawyers, union managers, and government bureaucrats, tend *not* to be in the Compassionate Class.

The difference is the organizations they work for. The educated professionals in the Compassionate Class all earn their money directly or indirectly from the welfare state, so it's no surprise that they are statists. (Remember, professors at private institutions — and certainly the institutions themselves — generally derive income from government grants and other forms of state assistance.) But the Compassionate Class also includes people who are not highly educated: welfare recipients, service employees who work for the government, farmers who derive their income from government subsidies instead of farming, etc.

The split is clear in voting behavior. Consider just two segments of the Compassionate Class, journalists and academics. It has been evident for decades that the media elite are markedly more left of center than the country at large. S. Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman, and Linda Lichter studied that group back in the 1980s, presenting their results in the classic book "The Media Elite." Over the 16-year period they studied, less than 20% of the media elite voted Republican even once in

a presidential race. During that period, students at the Columbia School of Journalism (now middle-aged and presumably influential practitioners of what they learned) rated Fidel Castro more favorably than Ronald Reagan. A visit to the Media Research Center's website (www.mrc.org) shows that media bias has not diminished. In the 1992 presidential race, 89% of Washington-based reporters voted for Clinton, while only 7% voted for Bush. The follow-up research by Lichter et al. also confirms the continuing bias.

Similar research shows a large and growing disparity in the academic world. Seymour Martin Lipset and his various collaborators have documented this disparity in voting behavior for the last 35 years. A recent paper by Daniel Klein and Charlotta Stern (http://www.ratio.se/pdf/wp/dk_ls_diverse.pdf) reviews survey evidence from various fields. In one of their surveys of anthropologists, economists, historians, political scientists, philosophers, and sociologists, 80.47% voted Democrat, 7.87% Republican, 1.55% Green, and 1.17% Libertarian. They provide other statistics, all to the same point.

Lichter et al. reviewed results of personality tests that showed that "the journalists scored higher in the need for power, fear of power, and narcissism, while the businessmen scored higher on the need for achievement and the capacity for intimacy" (97) — an interesting commentary on the values of the Compassionate Class. Anecdotally, as a

The takeover of the Democratic Party by the Compassionate Class is a classic case of a revolution devouring its young, the earliest revolutionaries.

professor and a businessman, I haven't noticed much difference in intelligence between people in the two professions, but I *have* noticed huge personality differences. People in private enterprise tend to be risk-tolerant and money-ori-

ented; those in the public realm tend to be risk-averse (think "tenure" here) and approval-oriented. Women who want to raise a family are less likely to

The New Elite doesn't respect the intellectual and aesthetic potential of the public because it doesn't know the public.

become law professors than are women who can do without the traditional family. Other things being equal, men who are patriotic and are comfortable with the use of force are undoubtedly more likely to become soldiers or policemen than teachers of philosophy or sociology. Boys who play with mechanical toys may be more likely to become engineers than interior design mavens. My point is not to show disdain for any particular profession: the world needs all kinds. My point is that economic opportunity and relatively unrestricted social mobility now permit a closer matching of psychological kinds and economic occupations.

The Compassionate Class is growing, for several reasons. First, the social welfare state has itself been growing over the decades since WWII, in some decades explosively. Second, the Compassionate Class has become dominant in public education, especially in higher education, as well as in the media, and it has grown ever more aggressive in pushing its ideology. Third, the number of students enrolled in programs related to the welfare state (e.g., social science, social welfare, law, education) has been growing much more quickly than the number enrolling in non-welfare-related programs (e.g., engineering, natural science, business). Finally — and this is a point hammered home by Malanga — workers for the welfare state have been extremely successful at unionizing, and forcing ever increasing spending for social welfare projects.

Fortunately, however, the Compassionate Class is still a minority. The

rest of society has numbers on its side. But the Compassionate Class has great ability to manipulate both laws and minds. This accounts for its political behavior, which is indeed antidemocratic. If you want to, say, enact affirmative action, trying to correct historical wrongs by discriminating against people who did not have a hand in causing those wrongs, you won't do it by openly passing laws — so greatly is popular sentiment against it. No, you will exploit the court system, getting life-tenured judges to order the quotas and set-asides.

I think that what perturbs Lebedoff, a traditionalist liberal Democrat, is the takeover of the Democratic Party by the Compassionate Class, though he doesn't quite understand the nature of that takeover. It is a classic case of a revolution devouring its young, the earliest revolutionaries. Traditionalist Democrats were pro-defense, proudly patriotic, and family-oriented; they wanted to increase government social welfare to "help the needy." Now the cultural Left has taken charge of the party, and the traditionalists are clinging to mere tatters of power. You can see the split in traditional labor: among non-governmental workers, the percentage of unionization has dropped to about 15%, and even among union members, the number of workers voting Republican hits 40% in many elections. The top contributors to the Democratic Party in most elections are trial attorneys, followed closely by unions, especially *government employee unions*. As the Left takes control, non-economic values come out: hatred of the military, contempt for the traditional family, multiculturalism, and so on. The traditional Democrats who spawned this brood now find that it has marginalized them.

The salient question is whether the Compassionate Class will continue to grow, or whether it will be checked, and if so, by what. My sense is that what will check it will be the collapse of the welfare state, which by my reckoning is about 15 years out. The Baby Boomers, so disproportionately members of the Compassionate Class, are likely to be the instruments of destruction for the Glorious American Progressive Square Deal, New Deal, Fair Deal, Great Society candy-apple metastasizing welfare machine, as they overwhelm the Social Security "insurance" system. And the dissolution of the welfare dream will be the dissolution of the Compassionate Class — an ironic outcome, indeed. □

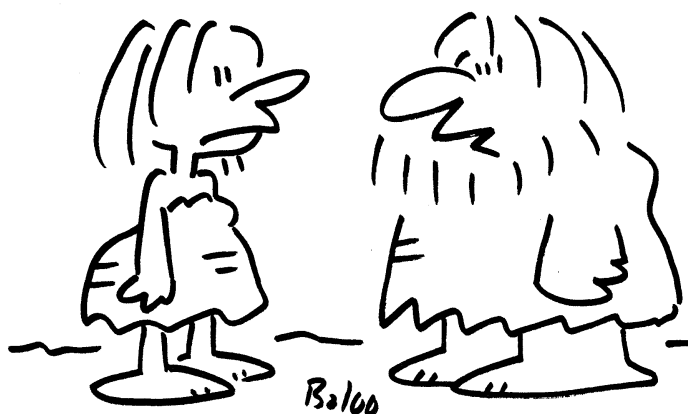
Further Reading

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"The Revolt of the Elites and the Betrayal of Democracy" by Christopher Lasch. W.W. Norton, 1995, 276 pages.

"The Media Elite: America's New Power Brokers" by S. Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman, and Linda Lichter. Adler & Adler, 1986, 342 pages.

"The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life" by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray. The Free Press, 1994, 845 pages.



"It was a *very* depressing class reunion — I was the only one there walking upright."

"Age of AIDS," by Renate Simone and William Cran. Frontline (WGBH-NET), 2006, 240 minutes.

"Serious Adverse Events: An Uncensored History of AIDS," by Celia Farber. Melville House, 2006, 300 pages.

AIDS *Reconsidered*

Richard Kostelanetz

Since WGBH-NET's Frontline gained its reputation as the most serious American documentary producer on airwave television, precisely by going beyond conventional understandings, I was disappointed by the recent program, four hours in length, about the rise and dissemination of the deadly disease called AIDS, which has prematurely taken friends of mine — people I miss. As Frontline's claim of "political indifference" about the epidemic is demonstrably untrue, I suspiciously wondered why the producers had not directly addressed several major issues.

First, how vulnerable in the U.S. were (and are) straight males who don't use intravenous drugs? In these pages* I suggested more than a decade ago that they scarcely were, for an obvious reason: as they eschew receiving anal sex, they are not as vulnerable to semen-to-blood invasion. During the late 1980s, the NYC Department of Health employed a woman surnamed Lekatsas whose job was investigating those claiming No Identifiable Risk (NIR). In nearly all cases she found that claimants had indeed done something risky with needles or anal sex. (Reports of her research can be found on the internet.)

However, publicists desiring government funding for AIDS problems

figured that few would care about the afflictions of gays and druggies. Deciding that all of America had to be scared of AIDS, they suppressed facts about who was really vulnerable. Once the NYC Department of Health changed its own accounting procedures, around 1993, this statistic about NIRs simply vanished. Even today, to say that NIRs don't get AIDS is to risk dismissal as politically incorrect.

This deception, designed to drain government aid, remains among the most dishonest intellectual episodes in recent memory and makes me forever doubt AIDS "activists." Whether, in retrospect, the result of government intervention was worth the lie is a reasonable question. Libertarians know that asking the government to "solve" a problem is usually an egregious mistake.

Second, the Frontline producers didn't seriously question the familiar scenario that a recently identified retrovirus called HIV principally causes AIDS, which does not itself kill but makes the sufferer more vulnerable to deadly opportunistic infections. Another element in the familiar scenario holds that pharmaceuticals "save lives." Even though the existence of HIV has never been fully proved (according to Robert Koch's traditionally accepted elaborate postulates), Frontline routinely dismisses critics of this scenario as "denialist," an epithet that vulgarly exploits the low reputation of those who deny the Nazi extermination of Jews and Gypsies during WWII.

Among those thus discredited in the

Frontline feature are not just the Berkeley biologist Peter Duesberg, who appears only in a sight-bite, but also the current president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, who appears saying "Does a virus cause a syndrome? It can't." Indeed, precisely because AIDS itself does not kill, becoming instead the purported precondition for deadly diseases, that concept as well could be considered a convenient fiction.

Around the same time when the Frontline broadcast was first aired, Melville House, a small New Jersey publisher, issued Celia Farber's "Serious Adverse Events," which I recommend to one and all as a courageous corrective. Basing her ideas upon articles published over the last two decades, Farber suggests that the conviction that this recently discovered retrovirus called HIV causes AIDS has scarcely been proved, citing medical results and respected authorities suggesting otherwise. Many AIDS patients lack evidence of HIV. Even the discoverers of HIV, Robert Gallo and Luc Montagnier, have separately realized that it alone might not be sufficiently lethal, proposing other contributing causal agents. As more than one of the virologists trumpeting HIV had previously been involved with the failed effort to discover a virus causing cancer, they feasted upon AIDS as a new terrain for their expertise.

(Farber, let me not forget, is the daughter of Barry F., a pioneer in New York talk radio — a highly verbal southern Jew who actually read the books of the writers he interviewed, and spoke many languages, especially when he campaigned now and then for political office as a Republican. His unique voice remains in my head.)

Immunity deficiency, Farber adds, could be caused by extrinsic chemistry, such as excessive use of amyl nitrites to increase sexual pleasure. Post-Stonewall promiscuity per se, epitomized by the bathhouse culture, exposed many gays to minor infections that, routinely treated with progressively stronger antibiotics, could diminish an individual's immunity. Drugs merchandized to alleviate HIV, such as AZT, also worked to destroy immunity, never saving lives, scarcely extending them.

While the Frontline narrator intones, "So far, the virus had developed resistance to every known drug, like AZT,"

*"Me and AIDS," a review of "Misinformation and Manipulation" by Joe Peacott, *Liberty*, Sept. 1990.

why not consider the question of why AZT and other drugs have been ineffective? Farber quotes a scientist declaring that the causes of immunodeficiency

Frontline's claim of "political indifference" about the epidemic is demonstrably untrue.

are not fully understood; her own conclusion, however, is that American "AIDS is a multifactorial syndrome, but straight people can't bring themselves to talk about what these factors are and gay people don't want to."

About the question of African AIDS, which is customarily raised to refute the contention that non-IV-drug-using straights are scarcely vulnerable to AIDS, consider first my earlier contention and then Farber's. If a disease with a specific name afflicts different groups in different populations — say, children in one place and adults in another; homosexuals in one place and straights in another — isn't the conclusion that one epithet is really a convenient catch-all for two or more conditions, or, more specifically, that American AIDS and AIDS in Africa may be different diseases? While calling whatever kills people in Africa "AIDS" might be useful for publicity in the West and thus fundraising (and drug-peddling), it is intellectually dishonest to brandish the same name. While the producers of Frontline's AIDS report introduce this problem by citing on camera an assistant secretary for health early in the Reagan administration, the issue gets dropped. Nonetheless, having identified one intellectual deceit about AIDS, some skeptics would be prepared to spot another.

Farber goes further in exposing the myth of African AIDS. She documents how AIDS has become the most popular identification for any and all deaths that previously lacked an explanation, as many do, particularly in poor countries with less sophisticated pathologists (and insufficient funds to test blood for any viral chemicals), and more particularly at a time when

AIDS fundraising groups have needed higher figures for their own mercenary purposes. The further truth is that Africans (and South Asians), both male and female, die younger, because of malnutrition, poor sanitation, tuberculosis, mysterious diseases, and inadequate medicine, all reflecting poverty and exploitative governments. (Any American ever traveling to those countries might recall the medicines he was advised to take along.)

Providing a specific example, Farber exposes how an individual African's death from malaria was chalked up to AIDS. Another anecdote tells how a Kenyan killed in an auto accident was publicized as "an AIDS suicide."

A further contributing factor in African AIDS deaths could be the dissemination of deadly drugs. This accounts for why, as the Frontline narrator reports, "On the advice of the denialists, President Mbeki banned AZT and the entire triple cocktail from government hospitals, claiming the drugs were too toxic."

The gross figures about African AIDS were extrapolated to heavy degrees of exaggeration from small samples, thanks to interested publicists consciously running up the score. At a time (1980–2000) when AIDS was portrayed as decimating Africa, the population was actually increasing from 378 million to 652 million. Remember as well that people don't die of AIDS per se but of other diseases attacking individuals made vulnerable by immune deficiencies whose principal cause, universally, is not HIV but nothing more mysterious than poor living conditions. The more selective precondition of AIDS can thus be posthumously assigned, presumptively. One implicit truth evading the Frontline reporters, not to mention others, is that publicists for any disease can, with enough media effort, accompanied by statistics that cannot be easily verified, cook up the illusion of a rampaging epidemic. Caveat spectator.

The deepest scandals exposed by Farber involve the way in which pharmaceutical companies have exploited not only nation states but also the United Nations to do corrupted tests (often giving false positives because of, say, pregnancy), to revive drugs previously discarded, to destroy previously healthy people, to force drugs on un-

witting children, and to disseminate false information in the course of peddling highly deleterious drugs. Once AZT was discredited because it was so toxic that it speedily killed nearly everyone taking it, another protease-inhibiting "cocktail" took its place, called HAART (Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy), and sometimes including other notoriously toxic chemicals. "In the end," Farber writes, "everybody who is [currently] taking protease inhibitors is contributing to one big medical experiment and no one knows what the outcome will be." Often among the more visible effects are physical deformations, such as a thickened neck that by itself would usually be a symptom of something gone wrong.

Farber documents how voracious drug companies have compromised the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the Federal Drug Administration (FDA), traditionally independent government agencies, in addition to funding AIDS organizations both large and small so that none of them dares bite the dirty hands that feed them. Frontline quotes Donna Shalala recalling on camera how she, along with Vice President Al Gore, failed to persuade Mbeki to reconsider his ban on AZT. ("Political indifference" this isn't, neither in the U.S. nor in Africa!) Nonetheless, in spite of all the American government money poured into AIDS research, there's been no vaccine and too many dead people, perhaps because of insufficient understandings, mistakenly focused efforts, and opportunistic operators.

Government didn't cure this problem. Instead, it authorized the HIV hypothesis and approved deadly drugs

Even the discoverers of HIV, Robert Gallo and Luc Montagnier, have separately realized that it alone might not be sufficiently lethal.

through its "health" agencies. When will people learn that a government imprimatur is no guarantee of truth?

Indeed, let me raise a question for

future historians of AIDS: had governments not been involved, would fewer people have died prematurely? (I pose this question recalling Hannah Arendt's provocative suggestion in her classic "Eichmann in Jerusalem" [1963] that

Magic Johnson claims he no longer has the HIV virus that forced his early retirement from basketball 15 years ago.

fewer Jews would have died in concentration camps during WWII had Jewish communities not been so well organized. To that I've always added that fewer Jews would have died had they possessed stronger personal weapons.) Government aggravation of AIDS is a critique that only a gay libertarian (not I) could write. Given the evidence already known, may I wager that someone will?

My major criticism of Farber is that she portrays herself as the lone writer correcting the general public about these deceptions, thus ignoring "The Myth of Heterosexual AIDS" (New Republic-Basic, 1990) by the great medical journalist Michael Fumento, and "AIDS: A Second Opinion" (Seven Stories, 2002), a mammoth critical examination of the literature by the nutrition broadcaster Gary Null, in collaboration with my friend James Feast. As Null and Feast often quote Farber, but never Fumento, I'm reminded of some sad ancient history. Gay activists successfully blocked many booksellers from stocking Fumento's book, soon after its publication, as threatening their agenda to enlist a wholly scared public and thus governments. (Feast tells me that his and Null's book went unreviewed.)

The last questions ignored by Frontline should have dealt with how certain people have survived an HIV-positive diagnosis for so long without drugs — whether, indeed, the condition can be overcome. In the second respect, consider that Magic Johnson claims he no longer has the HIV virus that forced his early retirement from basketball

15 years ago. Is this true? The face of AIDS medicine, Dr. David Ho, suggests not and never. Nonetheless, Johnson's wife and their three children are HIV-free, thus undermining the myth of the condition's rampant contagiousness through unprotected heterosexual intercourse.

In the former respect, consider that Frontline repeatedly introduced on camera people "living with AIDS" without asking the questions of how long they've had the diagnosis and, if for long, why. The most visible survivor in my reading is the writer Edmund White, a lower Manhattan neighbor whom I've not met, HIV-positive for decades now, who said recently that his affliction is slow and so he eschews medicines. Is he just lucky? Or is he living in such a way that AIDS no longer threatens him? Could it be that he'll live

long enough to die from another condition that is more deadly for gays and everyone else, such as heart disease? To him the Frontline vision is blind.

By ignoring these major questions, "Age of AIDS" in its four hours scarcely got beyond the conventional wisdom, alas, and made me realize that too often other Frontline programs likewise suffer from this fault of not just preaching to the converted but piously informing the pre-informed.

As for AIDS, may I offer the radical hypothesis (which I bet you've not heard before) that like racism it will continue to be the subject of reams of good-hearted talk that, because of misconceptions, will perpetuate the problem it purports to cure, thus setting the precondition for yet more well-intentioned chatter, to the smug delight of all except those who suffer needlessly? □

"No Applause — Just Throw Money: The Book That Made Vaudeville Famous," by Trav S. D. Faber and Faber, 2005, 328 pages.

Curtain Call

Jo Ann Skousen

With its tongue-in-cheek subtitle and clever cover art, "No Applause — Just Throw Money: The Book that Made Vaudeville Famous" by Trav S.D. promises a farcical romp through the heyday of vaudeville. Even the author's pseudonym — say it quickly — suggests a taste of his sense of humor.

But Trav tries a little too hard to please the critics when he should be warming up the audience. His writing style, particularly in the introductory chapters, is often pretentious and pre-

cious, with overwritten phrases that draw attention to themselves rather than to their topic. He also seems to have included every erudite note and esoteric sidelight he discovered while researching the book, often overloading rather than enlightening the reader.

Like a vaudeville juggler, he tries to keep all his topics in the air at one time. Will his theme be the role transportation played in the rise and demise of vaudeville? The role vaudeville played in addressing and breaking down racial prejudice? Vaudeville's roots in pagan worship? The Christian church's role in demonizing the theater? Alcohol and

prostitution in the theater, from ancient Greece to the present? Seemingly reluctant to cut any of the act, he introduces his topic again and again from all these

Don't wait for consumers to tell you what they want; create something useful and convince them that they want it.

angles in the "Overture" of his book, while the audience becomes more and more restless for the real show to start.

But start it finally does. The middle chapters present a fascinating history of American vaudeville, often from a business perspective. "Vaudeville circuits," he writes, "were among the world's first corporate chains." Entertainers were not just artists, they were entrepreneurs, and in vaudeville, where each act stood on its own, "the principle of every man (or every act) for himself works just fine." As show business became big business, the "new competitive spirit" saw "each of the major managers shaking off his own complacency and racing to discover and debut the next superlative act." In other words, competition led to better quality, higher salaries, lower prices, and larger profits. Under a free and competitive market, everybody gains.

Trav argues that entertainers responded to market demand, giving the customers what they wanted, from the prudish "good clean fun" of the Victorian age to the more sexually explicit entertainment of the 20th century. But I would argue that the entertainment market, like all other markets, is supply driven, not demand driven: people don't know what they want until it is offered to them. Did consumers band together five years ago and demand a portable device that could hold 10,000 songs? No. But when an entrepreneur developed and supplied one, suddenly half of America demanded to have it. Did Americans demand a museum full of freaks and oddities because they thought of it themselves? No. But they rushed to buy tickets after P. T. Barnum supplied it in his "dime museums."

As Trav rightly explains in a different section of the book, demand for the new family-friendly entertainment was created by Barnum's masterly use of advertising. This may seem like a small difference, but it's a significant lesson for anyone who desires to be an entrepreneur: don't wait for consumers to tell you what they want; create something useful and convince them that they want it.

Competition eventually led to vaudeville's demise, as entrepreneurs developed new technologies. Faster rail service made it easier to bring live entertainment to more markets, but the invention of the phonograph, the radio, the silver screen, and the boob tube made it possible for ordinary people to enjoy the stars without actually going to the theater. Vaudeville impresarios had introduced the world to silent films in their theaters as one of several acts, but the talkies would eventually change the demand of the fickle public. Fortunately for those who love comedy, the entrepreneurs of vaudeville followed the money to Hollywood, starring in classic films that we still watch nearly a

hundred years later.

Can you judge a book by its cover? The cover and jacket blurbs of "No Applause — Just Throw Money" promise a book full of light, entertaining anecdotes. But inside, for much of the book, he lectures. Yes, it's interesting to know that the word *vaudeville* came from the French *val de vire* (or perhaps *voix de ville*); that the tradition of the theater traces back to the Bacchanals of ancient Greece; that traveling minstrels took advantage of the Erie Canal. I'm sure many readers will chuckle at Trav's jabs at religion and other satiric asides. But slapstick it ain't. It took me three attempts to get past the opening chapters; in vaudeville, I think he would have gotten "the hook" after chapter one.

But an audience that walks out before Act Two of this book will miss out on a fascinating, witty, impressive history of a remarkable legacy, one that continues to influence entertainment today. Like many good books, this one is hard to get into, but it's worth the effort. Drop the juggling act at the beginning, and I'd say Trav S.D. is ready for the big time. □

Filmnotes

Attitude — Many of us who grew up in the 1970s and 1980s (the post-Baby Boom, pre-Gen X generation) became politically aware through the music of punk rock — and libertarianism (which is after all no more than being politically and economically aware) and punk music go hand-in-hand.

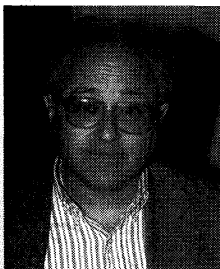
Punk was a rebellion. In the U.S. it was an artistic rebellion against a staid and monopolistic music industry and an overtaxed and urban-decayed "downtown scene" in New York City in the mid-1970s. When punk was picked up in the UK a year or so later, it combined the New York do-it-yourself entrepreneurial aesthetic with rebellion against life on the dole in the English cities. The kids wanted to make something of themselves and for themselves, and grouping together around energetic, fun, lyrically-challenging music was

one way to escape the growing welfare state.

"Punk: Attitude" (Fremantle Home Entertainment, 2005, 89 minutes) is the latest film by Don Letts, a black British DJ and filmmaker whose London flat was a hangout space for a group of UK kids who, influenced by the reggae music Letts spun, went on to form politically aware punk-rock bands. The film intersperses interviews of musicians, photographers, filmmakers, and journalists with live concert footage and still photography, taking the viewer through 35 years of the "punk" subculture with its various twists and turns and offshoots, its setbacks and small victories.

The chronology starts with 1960s garage rock bands in the U.S.: the Velvet Underground, the New York Dolls, and the Ramones, all the way through to Blondie, Television, and the Talking

Liberty Lives!



David Friedman

Economist, professor at Santa Clara University

School of Law, author of *The Machinery of Freedom*, and Bill's favorite anarchist scholar.



Randy Barnett

Carmack Waterhouse Professor of Legal

Theory at Georgetown University Law Center. He appeared before the U.S. Supreme Court to argue the medical cannabis case of *Gonzales v. Raich*.



Mark Skousen

Professor, investment adviser, and author of

The Making of Modern Economics.



Tim Slagle

Renowned political satirist and libertarian comic.

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Questions about the conference, as well as suggestions for ways to remember Bill at the reception, may be e-mailed to:

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Not all suggestions can be used, but all are deeply appreciated.

The 2006 Liberty Editors Conference in Las Vegas

Stephen Cox

Editor of *Liberty*, author of *The Woman and the Dynamo*, and professor of literature at the University of California San Diego

Charles Murray

W.H. Brady Scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and author of *In Our Hands*, *Losing Ground*, and *The Bell Curve*

Durk Pearson and Sandy Shaw

Authors of *Life Extension* and opponents of FDA restrictions on dietary supplement labels.

John Pugsley

Acclaimed speaker, chairman of the Sovereign Society, author of *Common Sense Economics*, and founder of the Bio-Rational Institute

Jo Ann Skousen

Writer, critic, speaker, and instructor in English literature and writing at Mercy College, Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.

Bruce Ramsey

Journalist, senior editor of *Liberty*, and editor of *Insatiable Government and Other Old-Right Commentaries, 1923–1950*

Randal O'Toole

Senior economist with the Thoreau Institute, prominent critic of "smart growth," and author of *The Best Laid Plans: The Case Against Government Planning*

Neal Levine

Campaign manager for CRCM, the group behind the Nevada initiative to decriminalize marijuana — just days before the initiative is voted upon! (Patrick Killen, communications director, may substitute.)

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Heads, then on to England for the Sex Pistols and the Clash. Next comes the second generation in Los Angeles, with the band X (strangely absent from Letts' film, even though X has proved to be the most popular American group from this generation), the Germs, and Black Flag; and in San Francisco with the Avengers (also absent, even though they were the best American political punk band, singing, "Ask not what you can do for your country, but what your country is doing to you") and the Dead Kennedys. Washington had the all-black Bad Brains, who came from ultra-poor southeast D.C., and the straight-edge (no drugs or drinking) Minor Threat, from ultra-wealthy northwest D.C. Then the third generation arrives, with the grunge of Nirvana and the avant-punk of Sonic Youth. The now-popular Green Day are maybe the fourth or fifth generation, depending on who's counting.

What I like best about punk is that it is inclusive. There were women who formed and played in important bands: Chrissie Hynde of the Pretenders, Siouxsie of Siouxsie and the Banshees, Kim Gordon of Sonic Youth, and the all-girl Slits (whose lead singer, Ari Up, is one of the film's most engaging interviewees). Gays were punk and punks were gay, with Jayne (Wayne) County and the Electric Chairs and the Tom Robinson Band the most renowned. One of punk's offshoots, the mixed-race British ska of the late 1970s (unfortunately also missing from the film), explicitly embraced the idea of black and white people living together in the "urban jungle," and asked that people

put aside their prejudices and pursue harmony.

Over time, the punk movement has become diluted and formulaic, and some subgenres are now unfortunately exclusionary, pessimistic, and self-righteous (a bit like free-market economics). But punk's beginnings make for a story worth hearing — and, in the case of "Punk: Attitude," worth seeing, too.

— Cameron Weber

Sunshine daydream —

Young Olive Hoover (Abigail Breslin) isn't your typical beauty pageant contestant. She's a little pudgy, her teeth are crooked, she wears big glasses (even on stage), and she doesn't own a can of hairspray. In fact, she only entered the local "Little Miss Sunshine" pageant because she was visiting her aunt, and she only qualified for the national competition because the winner got sick.

But participating in the contest has become her dream, so when the call comes for the runner-up to step up, the whole family piles into a 20-year-old VW bus and heads to California. Along for the ride: her father (Greg Kinnear), a goal-setting motivational speaker who can't motivate a dozen people to attend his workshops; her uncle (Steve Carrell), who can't be left alone because he just attempted suicide; her grandfather (Alan Arkin), who reads girly magazines and drops the F-bomb in every sentence; her teenage brother (Paul Dano), who hasn't spoken a word in nine months; and her mother (Toni Collette), who is just trying to hold it all together.

A hit at Sundance, "Little Miss Sunshine" (FoxSearchlight, 2006, 102 minutes) embodies the best characteristics of indie films: talented cast, quirky script, tight editing, economical camera work, hilarious situations, and a human quality that lifts it above the typical ensemble road comedy. If

you can handle Arkin's foul mouth, this film is a home run.

— Jo Ann Skousen

Abracadaver — "The Illusionist" (Yari Film Group, 2006, 110 minutes), an atmospheric costume drama set in 19th-century Vienna, has all the makings of a great film. It's a hot pick at rottentomatoes.com, with a 73% approval rating from the critics. It sports two undersung talents in the lead roles: Ed Norton ("Fight Club," "25th Hour," "The Italian Job") as a lovesick magician who conjures the dead, and Paul Giamatti ("Sideways," "Cinderella Man") as the police chief trying to prove he's a fraud. (For the talented Giamatti, this is strike two for the year.) It also stars Jessica Biel ("Seventh Heaven") as the aristocratic beauty who loves the magician.

Opening with a lush score by Philip Glass, "The Illusionist" is an indie film with the sound of a blockbuster — when it is audible. But too much of the film is oddly, noticeably quiet. I had to stop chewing my popcorn for fear of bothering my neighbors. And it's slow. Ponderously slow. And cold. For what is supposed to be a passionate love story, it is cadaverously cold. And predictable. It wasn't just the ghosts who were transparent.

So let me save you some time and money. "The Illusionist" is sadly disillusioning.

— Jo Ann Skousen

Facing consequences — "A Scanner Darkly" (Warner Independent, 2006, 100 minutes), Richard Linklater's adaptation of Philip K. Dick's 1977 novel, is a sleek, ultramodern comic book brought to life through computerized manipulation of live-action filming. The technique allows Linklater to simulate the drug-addled paranoia of the characters, with images that constantly morph and blur. The simulated animation, while cool and interesting, distances the audience from the characters, however. I kept wanting to see the real Winona Ryder, the real Robert Downey, Jr., the real Keanu Reeves, instead of their pseudo-animated copies.

But that distancing from the characters is one of the main points of the story: in a world where everyone is doing drugs, no one is real. The film's title comes from Paul's letter to the Corinthians: "When I was a child, I understood



"Kix? Yes, ma'am — You can get your Kix in aisle 66."

as a child. . . . Now we see through a glass, darkly."

Keanu Reeves plays an undercover narcotics agent called "Fred," who wears a "body scrambler" that prevents even his coworkers from knowing his true identity. He is actually a small-time drug user named Bob Arctor, who lives in a run down house with several run-down friends. At one point he says of the house, which he used to share with a wife and daughters before drugs ruined his brain, "They ought to confiscate it and put it to better use."

The film emphasizes the hypocrisy

of a system in which agents must take drugs in order to catch people who are taking drugs, and in which a program designed to rehabilitate drug users must rely on a continuing stream of users in order to remain in business. When one of Arctor's closest friends (played with hilarious frenzy by Downey) turns him in to the drug authorities, "Fred" is assigned to keep himself under surveillance. Already brain damaged by "Substance D," Fred/Bob's schizophrenic breakdown is inevitable.

Philip K. Dick faced his own demons as a drug user, and the film, like

the book, is dedicated to a long list of Dick's actual friends who died or whose brains were permanently damaged through drug use. When one character chooses to die with a copy of Ayn Rand's "Fountainhead" on his chest, the message is subtle but clear: yes, you have the right to choose your own actions, but no philosophy of Objectivism or personal freedom has the power to free you from the natural consequences of those actions. And the natural consequence of drug use, according to PKD and this film, is misery, paranoia, betrayal, and death. — Jo Ann Skousen

Why Libertarians Should Call Themselves Socialists, *from page 22*

There is a growing entrepreneurial class in China, and these entrepreneurs are helping their nation gradually become more capitalistic. They are foxy — like the 18th-century American nationalists who called themselves federalists and the 20th-century American statists who called themselves liberals. These entrepreneurs are promoting capitalism, but they wisely aren't calling it that. If they did, the authorities would

Despite the abysmal failure of socialism around the globe, many people still get warm and pleasant feelings when they hear the label.

crack down. But by using such bizarre labels as "market socialism," they can get the authorities to look the other way, to capitulate, while pretending to themselves that no "betrayal of socialism" is occurring on their watch.

According to a recent article in Barron's (July 31, 2006, p. 23), "China saved communism by embracing capitalism." That, of course, is absurd. One doesn't and one can't save tyranny by embracing freedom. In the same article, we are told that the output of state-owned companies in China "now accounts for about 30% of GDP, versus 70% 10 years ago," and that in China today one can find "factories, real estate and other assets owned by companies based in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, the U.S. and other lands." Does *that* sound like "saving communism"? China isn't saving communism by embracing capitalism. What's happening is that China's entrepreneurs are steering the country toward capitalism by embracing the label of capitalism's opponents — advocating capitalism while calling it communism.

I'll gladly abandon my label and adopt my opponent's, if it encourages him to abandon his ideas and adopt mine. I'd rather reside in a capitalist country that calls itself socialist, than reside in a socialist country that calls itself capitalist. Or to put it another way:

I'd rather be a freeman who is erroneously called a slave, than be a slave who is erroneously labeled a freeman.

Over the years, freedom's friends have tried an extensive array of handles, including libertarian, individualist, capitalist, laissez-faire capitalist, liberal, classical liberal, anarcho-capitalist, and voluntaryist. It doesn't seem to me that we've made much progress with any of these. Maybe it's time to try something completely different — something that at first glance seems off the wall. Maybe it's time to pick a label our opponents would never expect us to select. *Theirs*.

Hey, it's a free country, right? A freedom-lover ought to be free to call himself whatever the hell he pleases. What are the current socialists going to do? Accuse us of "stealing" their name? Like it's their "private property" or something?

By swiping the label "federalist," the nationalists got what they wanted: the United States became one big nation with a heavy-handed central government. By swiping the label "liberal," the advocates of more taxes and more regulations got what *they* wanted. Commandeering the label of one's opponents seems to work.

So what do you think? Shall we give it a try? Might the quickest, most efficient way to turn America into a freer society be for freedom's advocates to adopt the label of their opponents? If the tactic succeeds, perhaps it won't be long before a few dictionaries actually define socialism as "a form of society in which people are encouraged to be sociable by interacting consensually."

Fighting "socialism" is for folks who've learned nothing from history. It's wiser simply to advocate a sounder version of "socialism." Just ask the original federalists and the original liberals.

The last time an essay of mine appeared in *Liberty*, the publisher sent me several copies of that issue of the magazine. I gave those copies to my friends. This time, I think I'll take my contributor's copies to the University of Wisconsin campus and hand them out to students. "Here, give this a read! It's the very best *socialist* magazine you'll ever come across!" □

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See pages 42–43 for details.

Health Care: Three Fantasies, *from page 17*

portion of that budget to spend. What will you do?

Take some time and think about it. I don't believe that the answer is completely obvious, but I would guess that if people think seriously about this fantasy, they will identify a number of ideas that clearly should be tried. I believe that if hundreds of highly qualified scientists, doctors, and entrepreneurs were asked to describe how they would proceed, many useful options and insights would emerge. I have performed this exercise a number of times myself. No matter how often I reconsider the issue, I just do not see people arriving at something like this:

I have it; I see the key principle. What we need to do first is to make it impossible for anyone to take a drug that might kill him. That is where we should start. Then we need to construct a list of cures that have been proposed but probably won't work. We will make sure to prevent such scams.

The idea that sensible people might come to such conclusions strikes me as completely preposterous. Yet as you know, these are the policies that are now in place, supported and mandated by government and the health care establishment. The result is predictable: our ability to provide medical technology to patients in need is dramatically constrained, and the cost-benefit analyses that underlie all business decisions, and should underlie all practical decisions about health care, are heavily skewed to reflect the costs of conforming to regu-

latory requirements.

It is clear that most Americans sincerely believe there is nothing but goodwill behind this system. I have no doubt, however, that your own fantasy of what you might do to help the terminally ill will stand in judgment of things as they are.



I have used three fantasies to argue that the current health care industry in the United States is crippled by regulation and risk aversion. The effect has been to constrain product development and innovation.

What is truly upsetting about this situation is that we are commonly confronted with arguments in which the U.S. health care system is designated as "private" and contrasted with the "public" systems of other countries. This distinction focuses on the delivery of the existing technology of health care. Instead, the focus should be on the set of industries that advance the technology of medicine and medical procedures. In that context the critical issue is the degree of regulation, which in turn affects the rate of innovation.

Medicine, like computing, is entering a period in which extremely rapid innovation is possible, most notably advances relating to the availability of genomic data. I believe the advances that will inevitably occur will be so stunning that we will lose sight of how paltry they are — compared with what might have been, if innovation had been unconstrained. □

Charity? Humbug!, *from page 20*

and you've known them all their lives, you'd think they'd be ideal recipients. Certainly, we're all genetically predisposed to see our children in the best possible light. Not leaving your money to your children is tantamount to admitting that you either brought them up badly, or that they were just bad raw material. Marcus Aurelius, the most philosophically inclined of the Roman emperors, left the empire to his son Commodus — a man who should make Americans see a distant mirror when they watch Baby Bush. Both Marcus and the elder Bush could have done much better had they adopted someone with character and intelligence.

The Romans had a big advantage, in that they typically didn't put the kind of store we do in genetically related children. Caesar, for instance, adopted Augustus. Adoption for the purpose of inheritance was quite common, and it makes a lot of sense. Why not choose the best person to benefit from your wealth and power, to make them grow, instead of leaving your estate to someone who might have no merit except, as Buffett observed, membership in the lucky sperm club? Leaving a million (or ten, or a hundred) to the right young person might give him a huge head start on turning it into a billion. Which would benefit all mankind, because that billion represents real wealth that, unless it's frittered away by a charity, a government, or a wastrel — the three enemies of prosperity — will continue to exist even after the heir dies.

That being the case, let me reemphasize that the good Buffett and Gates have done for humanity lies in creating the capital in question, not in giving it away. Of course, they have a perfect right to convert their assets into \$100 bills, throw them in a huge pile, and put a match to their fortune. But that

would be stupid: since the currency is a liability of the U.S. Government, the government would be the only beneficiary.

I'm sure you're thinking of lots of objections to what I've been saying; philanthropy is accepted as automatically as . . . shudder . . . democracy for being an unalloyed good thing. The usual straw men beg to be set up: "What about the blind baby that's thrown into a trash can?" and such. My answer is that most people would want to see the baby rescued. And the richer the world is, the more likely it is that people will try to do so. In poor countries babies in trash cans are hardly noted; here they make headlines simply because they're so exceptional. Are we more moral than poor Third Worlders? No. We're just richer.

So what would I do with Buffett's billions? With that kind of money one could literally buy a country. The place could be made devoid of taxes, regulations, and legislatures. It could make the progress of places like Hong Kong and Dubai seem retarded by comparison. And it would actually and sustainably do what the lame-brained Gates Foundation says it hopes to do.

Do I give to charity now? Sure, but strictly on a person-to-person basis. Notwithstanding my reservations, it would seem that humans are almost programmed to do it. But I'm extremely discriminating, even if somewhat mercurial and eclectic.

What will I do with my money at some point in the future? I think I've spelled out the theory and the alternatives. One thing I can promise is that a charity won't see any of it. Nor, hopefully, any wastrels. Nor, absolutely, any government. □

Las Vegas

Temporary advance in zoning, noted in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*:

City officials have made it illegal to sleep within 500 feet of urine or feces, but city attorney Brad Jerbic says the new law was passed by mistake and won't be enforced.

Columbus, Ohio

Innocent until someone asks otherwise, from the *Toledo Blade*:

An Ohio legislative panel rubber-stamped a process that would allow sex offenders to be publicly identified and tracked even if they've never been charged with a crime.

The law allows county prosecutors, the state attorney general, or, as a last resort, alleged victims to ask judges to civilly declare someone to be a sex offender even when there has been no criminal verdict or successful lawsuit.

Celje, Slovenia

Consternation among anti-Semitic entomologists, noted in *National Geographic Deutschland*:

A blind beetle named after Adolf Hitler is under threat of extinction because of the demand for it within neo-Nazi circles.

Anophthalmus hitleri, or "eyeless Hitler," is being hunted in large numbers in its natural habitat in a single cave in Slovenia and specimens are selling for as much as \$1,200. The beetle was named by Oscar Scheibel, a Zagreb entomologist and Nazi supporter who discovered it in the 1930s.

Donghai, China

Lamentable renewal of the Cultural Revolution, passed on by *Xinhua*:

The leaders of five striptease troupes have been detained in China for performing send-offs at funerals. The once-common events are held to boost the number of mourners, as large crowds are seen as a mark of honor.

Local officials say funeral plans now must be submitted in advance.

Columbus, N.M.

Protecting our nation from illicit *queso*, reported in the *Houston Chronicle*:

After an X-ray machine showed the outline of 16 bulky packages in a secret compartment behind the seat of a pickup crossing from Mexico, border police thought they had found a drug smuggler. "Generally if you see something you expect it to be narcotics," said spokesman Roger Maier. "But this time it turned out to be cheese."

The officers arrested the driver, seized 88 pounds of cheese, and confiscated the truck.

Olympia, Wash.

A new threat stalks Ecotopia, ripped from the headlines of the *Tacoma News-Tribune*:

Psycho Killer Raccoons Terrorize Olympia

U.S.A.

Movable type's logical conclusion, announced by the *MyFonts* newsletter:

"Catholic School Girls" is totally inspired by the handwriting of, like, teenage girls. You'll note that the [] keys are actually little hearts! Totally rad! This font includes enough European characters to fill a loose-leaf binder.

Hixton, Wisc.

The thin blue line separating society from chaos, from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*:

Sheriff's deputy Michael Haldeman earned the nickname Sgt. Pepper after opening fire with pepper spray on a Fourth of July parade float after one child threw water at him.

Some of the children, seeing Haldeman spraying in their direction, shot back with their squirt guns, thinking he was playing along. They found out otherwise and had to flush their eyes with water.

Lincoln, Mont.

The dehumanizing effect of technology, from the *San Francisco Chronicle*:

By a judge's order, items belonging to Theodore Kaczynski, the convicted Unabomber, will be sold in an Internet auction. The proceeds will go toward his \$15 million restitution debt.

Sacramento, Calif.

Legislative rebuke, recorded in the *San Jose Mercury*:

Miffed that his fellow legislators had again failed to deal with the tough issue of redistricting reform, Assemblyman Keith Richman was curious to see what they would rally around. So he circulated House Resolution 36, condemning the "mean-spirited" International Astronomical Union's decision to strip Pluto of its planetary status:

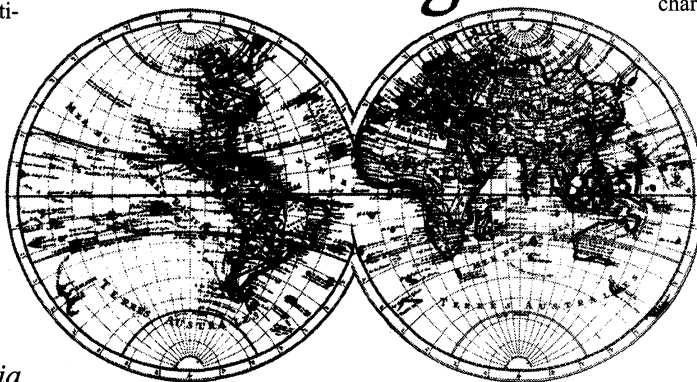
"WHEREAS, Pluto, named after the Roman God of the underworld and affectionately sharing the name of California's most famous animated dog, has a special connection to California history and culture; and

"WHEREAS, downgrading Pluto's status will cause psychological harm to some Californians who question their place in the universe . . ."

"WHEREAS, the deletion of Pluto renders millions of textbooks, museum displays and children's refrigerator art projects obsolete, and represents a substantial unfunded mandate that must be paid by dwindling Proposition 98 education funds . . ."

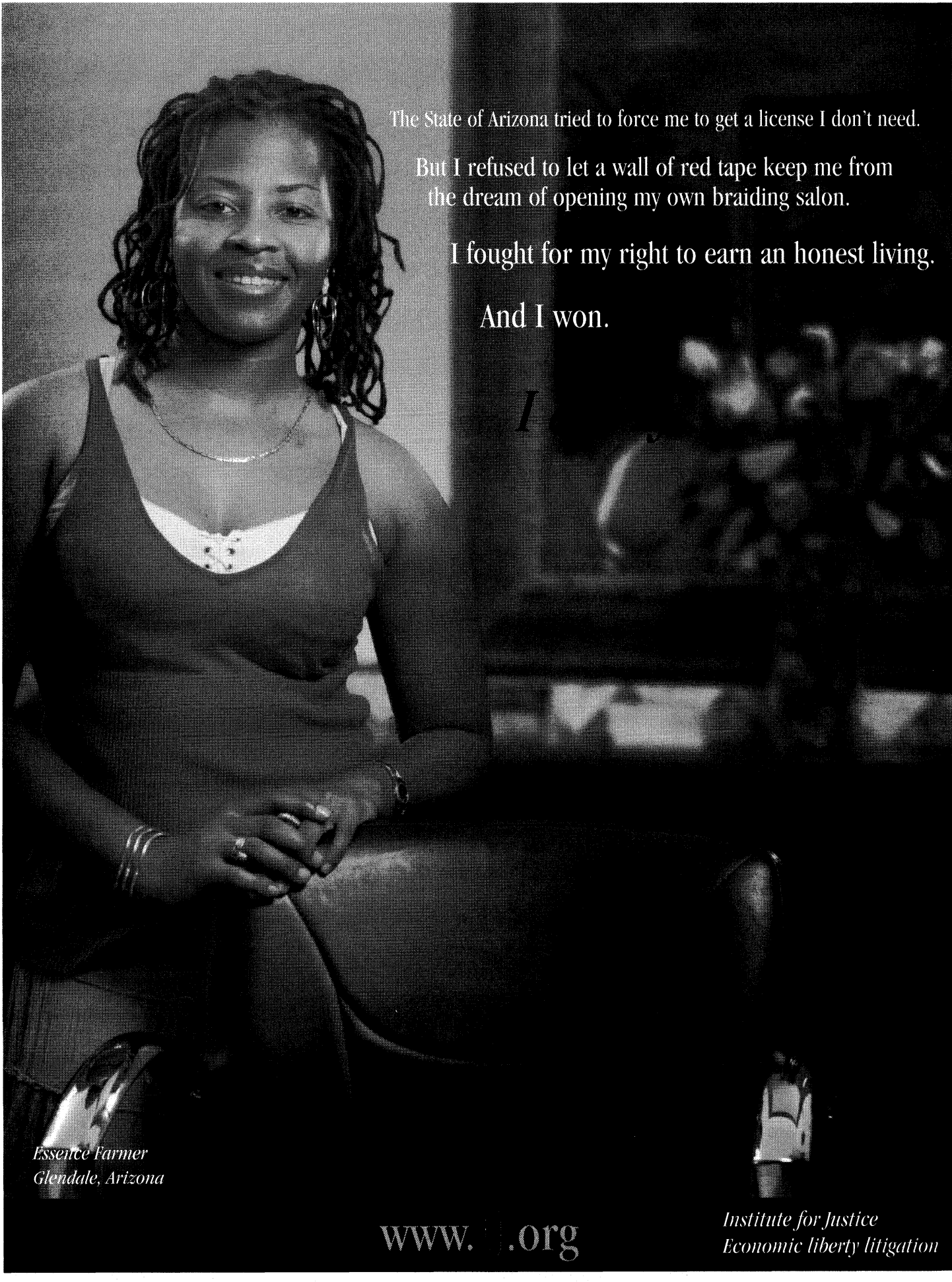
Fifty-three Assembly members signed on to HR 36 as co-sponsors.

Terra Incognita



Special thanks to K. Bolka, Russell Garrard, Thomas Giesberg, and Patrick T. Peterson for contributions to Terra Incognita.

(Readers are invited to forward news clippings or other items for publication in Terra Incognita, or email to terraincognita@libertyunbound.com.)



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