



CONSERVATIVE BATTLELINE ONLINE

*The "Bold Colors" Conservative Voice in
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Issue 96 - November 21, 2007

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A Civil Debate on Torture

by Donald Devine

Issue 96 -November 21, 2007

How did torture end up deciding whether Michael Mulcasey would become the Attorney General of the United States? Had he not declared that "waterboarding"--or forcing a prisoner to feel was drowning--was "over the line" and "repugnant," he would not have been confirmed. Even then, many Democrats were incensed that he did not declare it flat-out torture and the Bush Administration's use of it. Indeed, the question of torture has been the of much moral posturing recently, kind of an purpose cudgel of the left to fight the "evil" George W. Bush--but there are real issues behind the rhetoric.

It used to be simple. Growing up in the old of late World War II, Americans were socialized in the patriotic belief that we were good guys, especially in time of war. The Japanese militarists were evil because we saw they used torture. We were good because we did not. A few years later, North Korean and Chinese troops used



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torture called "brainwashing" against our soldiers and that, again, told us where good and bad differed, even in a war we did not much otherwise understand. It was straightforward in the days of easy patriotism.



Later, we learned that U.S. troops did occasionally use torture in dire split-second battlefield conditions but we understood that was an emergency. Up to and including Vietnam, when actual torture or military excess took place and we found out, we condemned it. We denounced North Vietnam for breaking John McCain's bones with torturous "stress positions" and also American excesses at Mai Lai (but supporting the later mitigation of Lt. William Calley's sentence because it was in the heat of battle). When we heard of Vietnam hero Orson Swindle being kept awake for 20 days before breaking during his six years captivity we were sure it was torture and still certain this separated the good from bad guys even when we were in the midst of losing a war.

The pictures from Abu-Ghraib shocked that assurance, even among those who thought themselves rather worldly. Contrary to the America-is-always-wrong crowd, it was not official U.S. policy but the soldiers thought they had a go-ahead when the head of the Guantanamo detention camp visited them just beforehand. Then came the real shocker, the publication of the 2003 Justice Department memo that allowed interrogation procedures that caused pain up to the equivalent of a loss of a limb. This was necessary, according to former CIA director George Tenet, because of the danger posed by terrorists after the 9/11 attack and the effectiveness of aggressive interrogation in saving American lives. But most Americans thought the techniques went too far and the White House subsequently revoked the legal memorandum and issued a new one limiting the methods that were allowed.

The whole issue of torture is back with the partial leaking of a 2005 legal memo interpreting the new procedures as they applied to the CIA. The 2005 Detainee Treatment Act effectively excluded the military from forced interrogations by limiting it to procedures approved in the restrictive Army field manual. The CIA, however, was left free to use aggressive methods on un-uniformed terrorists so long as they did not constitute "torture"—that is, the intentional infliction of "severe pain or suffering"—or "cruel, inhuman or degrading" (CID) treatment. The new legal opinion apparently allowed slapping, hypothermia, sleep deprivation, stress positions, and waterboarding as not constituting torture or CID treatment.



Surely anything equivalent in force to military training cannot be considered severe, cruel or degrading as long as the age and physical and mental condition of the prisoner is considered. American members of a U.N. commission on human rights, David Rivkin and Lee Casey, consider a slap not severe but breaking one's nose is. Maintaining an uncomfortable position is probably acceptable but if it was while naked, shackled to the ground and freezing, this "might be" unacceptable. Bret Stephens, columnist and editorial writer for the Wall Street Journal, maintains a needle under fingernails is obviously torture but "hours held naked in a frigid [50 degrees Fahrenheit] cell; days and nights without sleep while battered by thunderous rock music; long periods manacled in stress positions; or the ultimate waterboarding" only come "progressively closer to the line."

Stephens insists that the greater good of avoiding terrorist attacks justifies even waterboarding.



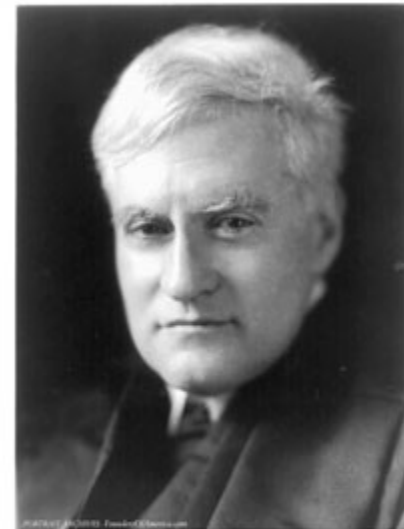
Orson Swindle

"Taken seriously, [refusing to use these aggressive techniques on such as terrorist mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed] says that the civilized world would be better off sustaining a nuclear 9/11 [or having a mother's child murdered] than tarnishing its good name." He says in those circumstances, "it's not a tough call." But the U.S. considered waterboarding torture in the wake of World War II, condemning Japanese officers for its use. Lt. Chase Nielson described its use on him: "I felt more or less like I was drowning, just gasping between life and death," similar to the description of other American and allied prisoners of war, uniformed and not. U.S. soldiers were court-martialed for using the "water cure" to extract information from Filipino guerillas during the American occupation of the Philippines after the 1898 Spanish-American War.

Even Stephens agrees "it is worth thinking through where exactly the limits lie." Personally, waterboarding seems worse than the needle. McCain considers stress positions torture. Swindle insists sleep deprivation is

real torture. It is complex but I do feel deeply that we must find out. We might start with the wisdom of last century Supreme Court Justice, Benjamin Cardozo. "Hard cases make bad law." If a law is passed that broadly allows very aggressive interrogation for extreme situations, inevitably extreme becomes the norm. General rules of law just cannot cover all situations and still be reasonable. That is why Western-inherited Anglo-American common law is flexible--based on specific cases and circumstances, in theory at least--and Islamic law tries to cover everything and is rigid and unyielding so that following the letter of the law kills its spirit.

U.S. common slang puts it another way. "It is easier to ask forgiveness than permission." In the extreme cases of nuclear 9/11 or the troops lurking over the hill or preventing a child's death, if the consequences were obviously dire and the interrogation clearly necessary, prosecutors or juries will understand.



BENJAMIN NATHAN CARDOZO
ASSOCIATE JUSTICE
SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
1932 - 1938

If they do not and the law overcomes the spirit, the culture is sunk anyway. In any event, a civil discussion of torture is essential. We are the good guys and we should know what that entails as we face perhaps scores of years of confrontation with the notorious Sheikh and his mob.

Donald Devine, the editor of Conservative Battleline Online, was the director of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management from 1981 to 1985 and is the director of the [Federalist Leadership Center](#) at Bellevue University.

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Editor**

U.S. #1 On Health

by John Goodman

Issue 96 - November 21, 2007



John Goodman

Which country produces the highest quality health care? In a sidewalk survey, the USA would probably come in first place. Among health policy wonks, however, the results would be very different. The Commonwealth Fund regularly produces studies showing that the US lags behind other countries by one measure or another. The World Health Organization (WHO) ranks the US system 37th in the world, even trailing Costa Rica. (Costa Rica? Yes, Costa Rica.)

On his way to get health care at the Cleveland clinic last year, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi probably flew over a half dozen higher ranking countries, not to mention his own (rated number two!) or neighboring France (rated number 1!). What could he possibly have been thinking? Doesn't he read WHO reports?

A favorite statistic of critics is life expectancy at birth. The US rate is fair to middling among developed countries, despite our much higher health care spending. However, doctors don't control our overeating, overdrinking, overdosing, overspeeding and assault weapon shootouts in the hood.

A better, but far from perfect, measure is life expectancy for victims of cancer - a condition doctors can often do something about. A new, largest-ever international study confirms what ordinary people already think: patients do better in the US.

- The study, published in *Lancet Oncology*, found that the five-year survival rate for all types of cancer among both men and women is higher in America than in any European country.
- Further, US survival rates are higher than the European average for 13 of 16 specific cancer types.
- In a separate NBER study, June and Dave O'Neill found that Canadian survival rates also lag behind the US rates.

Frankly, I'm surprised by these results. The reason: a big factor in cancer care is patients' compliance with their treatment regimens. I would have thought that northern European countries with small, homogeneous populations (and a lot less individualism) would knock the socks off of us. But apparently not.

Don't take too much comfort in these results. There are a lot of health policy wonks (probably most of them) who are still rooting for the other teams - with Michael Moore and Paul Krugman cheering them on.

John Goodman is President of the National Center for Policy Analysis.

For the *Lancet Oncology* study, go to <http://www.thelancet.com/journals>. Unfortunately, you must subscribe in order to retrieve the study or pay \$30 per article. For June O'Neill and Dave O'Neill's study, go to <http://www.nber.org/papers/w13429.pdf>. Betsy McCaughey reported on all this in a *Wall Street Journal* editorial that has been expanded into an NCPA Brief Analysis, which can be found at <http://www.ncpa.org/pub/ba/ba596/>

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Turkish Ambitions

by Daniel Pipes

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[About 100,000 Turkish troops](#), backed by aircraft and tanks, are poised to enter Iraq for counterterrorism purposes. But once there, they might just stay permanently, occupying the Mosul area, leading to dangerous regional consequences.

To understand this danger requires a refresher in Turkish irredentist ambitions harking back to the 1920s. The Ottoman Empire emerged from World War I on the losing side, a predicament codified in 1920 by the Treaty of Sèvres imposed on it by the victorious Allies. The treaty placed some Ottoman territory under international control and much of the rest under separate Armenian, French, Greek, Italian, and Kurdish control, leaving Turkish rule to continue only in a northwest Anatolian statelet.



Daniel Pipes

After Kemal Atatürk's military victories of 1919-22 and the reassertion of Turkish power, Sèvres was never applied. Instead, the Treaty of Lausanne, signed in 1923, established all of Turkey's present borders but the one with British-occupied Iraq. For Iraq, Lausanne stipulated a provisional boundary (the "Brussels line") to be replaced within nine months by a "friendly arrangement to be concluded between Turkey and Great Britain." Failing an agreement, the League of Nations would decide the border.

In fact, Ankara and London did not reach a "friendly arrangement" and the League of Nations ended up assigning Mosul province, with its 600,000 inhabitants, to Iraq. Atatürk's government reluctantly signed a treaty in 1926 based on the Brussels line.

For nearly six decades, Mosul's disposition seemed settled. But it re-emerged during the Iraq-Iran War of 1980-88, when Saddam Hussein lost full control over northern Iraq. Four times after 1983, he permitted Turkish troops the right of "hot pursuit" onto Iraq territory to hunt down a mutual enemy, the Kurdish Workers' Party (Partiya Karkerana Kurdistan, or PKK). These incursions inspired some elements in Turkey to revive the old claims to Mosul.

The Kuwait War of 1991 led to a further collapse in Iraqi authority north of the 36th parallel, prompting Turkish forces to engage in hot pursuit across the border 29 times, further feeding Ankara's Mosul ambitions. These aspirations culminated in 1995, when approximately 35,000 Turkish troops entered northern Iraq in "Operation Steel," leading Turkey's President Süleyman Demirel explicitly to re-open the 1926 file: "The border is wrong," he said. "The Mosul Province was within the Ottoman Empire's territory. Had that place been a part of Turkey, none of the problems we are confronted with at the present time would have existed." Demirel even accused the Western powers of resurrecting the long-defunct Treaty of Sèvres.

Demirel's comments roused immediately, strong, and negative reactions, and he backtracked, saying that "Turkey does not plan to use force to either solve the [border] problem or gain territory." But, as I [wrote at the time](#), "nothing was actually resolved and the Mosul issue could flare up into a crisis, especially if the Iraqi government continues to weaken."

Which brings us to the [current situation](#). Much has changed since 1995, with Saddam Hussein deposed, the PKK leader in a Turkish jail, Islamists ruling in Ankara, and northern Iraq a [flawed haven of tranquility](#). But the PKK again roils Turkish-Iraqi relations, Turkish forces routinely cross into Iraq, and the Mosul question again looms.

In March 2003, Ankara's then-new Islamist government decided against helping the U.S.-led war effort to overthrow Saddam Hussein, a decision that forfeited Turkish influence over northern Iraq. Despite the presence of several Turkish [battalions](#) quasi-permanently stationed in Iraq, [a](#)

[rejuvenated PKK](#) began cross-border attacks in Turkey in 2004, eventually killing thousands. In July 2006, Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced his government was "running out of patience" and Turkish forces repeatedly struck at PKK targets. The issue reached new heights of tension in recent weeks, despite an Ankara-Baghdad agreement requiring that Iraqi troops crack down on the PKK and unconfirmed reports of a [U.S. Special Forces covert operation](#) against the PKK. With Syrian president [Bashar al-Assad](#)'s support, Erdoğan has waved away [American concerns](#) about a Turkish invasion, the Turkish [parliament](#) voted 507-19 to authorize air strikes and ground invasions of Iraq, and Chief of Staff [Yaşar Büyükanıt](#) made bellicose threats.

The Turks have entirely valid counterterrorist reasons to strike the PKK in Iraq, but Ankara's shadowy irredentism since the 1990s suggests that it harbors aspirations to regain some Ottoman real estate. In other words, yet another [unsettled Middle Eastern border](#) threatens instability.

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Editor**

When Movies Were Silent Music

by Spencer Warren

Frequent use of visual imagery and metaphor is a major difference between vintage pre-sixties movies and contemporary films. Vintage films also were different in their generally conservative themes and allusive, indirect treatment of violence and sex. By comparison, films of the past few decades tend to be quite literalistic, even hamhanded. The newer ones have lots of talking in tight shots with frequent close-ups bouncing back and forth between characters (as in the quickly filmed TV shows), but they don't leave the audience with much to remember as they leave the theater – other than graphic violence and sex, or pounding special effects.

Visual imagery and metaphor in film is used to heighten expression, just as they were employed in Western art from the time of the ancient Greeks. Likewise, literature has long employed devices such as allegory, parable and irony, as well as metaphor, in order to make its expression more vivid and memorable (e.g. Shakespeare's "All the world's a stage"). The essence of film, its poetry, is what we see, not what we hear. The common employment of visual poetry in older films helps to explain why, in my view, they are so much more memorable than contemporary films.

There are a number of explanations for this difference. Films initially were a silent medium, so directors had to learn to express themselves visually. Many of the greatest directors of Hollywood's Golden Age, from the 1930's into the 1950's, were veterans of silent cinema: John Ford, King Vidor, Cecil B. DeMille, Alfred Hitchcock, to name only a few. Further, the use of figurative language, written or visual, to heighten and intensify expression was part of the Western tradition and necessary to any artist who felt deeply about his material and wanted to make his point as powerfully and memorably as possible: it defined artistic creativity. In addition, this was a period when transcendent religious truth still governed moral society, as it had for two millennia. Transcendence is expressed by figurative language. The filmmakers today who are products of the radical left, nihilistic Hollywood do not believe in anything higher than their own human selves, so they have no need to express anything over and above earthbound literalism.



Cecil B. DeMille



John Ford

Let us examine some illustrations of how visual expression used to govern the better Hollywood movies. We start with the visual poet of the movies, John Ford. In an earlier essay <http://acuf.org/issues/issue87/070707med.asp>, we posted the famous final shot of Ford's Western classic *The Searchers* (1956): the carefully framed image of John Wayne, now standing alone outdoors, holding one arm as if forlorn, filmed from inside the cabin which the reunited families have just happily entered with the young girl he rescued, sums up the broad theme of the film -- that the warrior on whose talent for violence society depends for protection against the barbaric wilderness can find no place in that society.

The classic Western through the 1950's often glorified our settlement of this vast continent by heroic pioneers – a central element of the American ethos that has come under incessant assault by the left since the 1960's. Ford's *Wagon Master* (1950) is a modest work dramatizing a small wagon train of Mormon settlers setting out for their promised land, overcoming the ritual obstacles along the journey. The final shot is vintage Ford: after the wagons have crossed a stream and reached their destination, Ford shows a fawn gingerly crossing the stream – a lovely metaphor for our then young country on its journey to maturity.

Such Ford visuals could fill a large volume. In his World War II film *They Were Expendable* (1945), an account of a PT boat crew in the Philippines (commanded by Robert Montgomery, who in real life did exactly that, as is evident in his powerful performance), Ford has a scene in the sailors' club, which has just heard the broadcast announcing the attack on Pearl Harbor. Ford gives us a carefully framed, noble composition, in close-up, of a young sailor drinking down a big glass of milk, then slowly wiping off his mouth with his arm: Ford's tribute to the boys, many aged 18-22, who did much of the fighting, as he personally witnessed at the Battle of Midway in June 1942. (See <http://acuf.org/issues/issue85/070603med.asp> .) Again, mere words can barely suggest the artistry of this shot.

Our final Ford illustration comes from another lesser known Ford work, *The Sun Shines Bright* (1953). This film was a throwback even in 1953; its loving depiction of a late nineteenth century Southern small town was the same setting for Will Rogers movies of the thirties, several of which Ford directed (e.g. *Judge Priest* (1934)). The garrulous mayor, also named Judge William Pittman Priest (Charles Winninger), is facing a tough race for re-election. What gets in the way is the unexpected return after many years of a mysterious woman who had fled in disgrace; she was a lady, as they used to say (when shame existed in society) "with a past." She had borne a child out of wedlock. The lady dies, and her coffin is being carried by the horse-drawn hearse through the empty streets toward the church, as the scandalized and shocked townspeople look on. Only one true Christian is accompanying the deceased. As they pass Judge Priest, his conscience impels him, against the desperate pleas of his friends, to join the procession. Whereupon, slowly, all the townsfolk fall in behind the Judge; they silently walk behind the hearse to the church, which is filled to the rafters for the funeral service. Mere words cannot suggest how Ford's pacing and rhythm make this scene so beautiful. With no dialogue, he has crafted an unforgettable scene of Christian charity.



A good illustration of visual artistry and religious transcendence is the final shot of the 1961 story of Jesus, *King of Kings* (1961). One of the many wide-screen religious spectacles of the later 1950s-early 1960s, this film is noteworthy for the understated, intimate direction of Nicholas Ray. The voice of the risen Christ gives His instructions to the Apostles, who have been tending to their fishing net on a beach. With the camera high above, looking down on them, the Apostles stop what they are doing, look upward, and then begin to go off on their appointed mission, as a huge shadow of the cross fills the wide vertical screen and Miklos Rosza's grand, symphonic score reaches its climax. This film opened in Radio City Music Hall and has to be seen in a large theater in order to appreciate its arresting finale. (In fact, all these films need to be seen in real theaters, whereas most contemporary films lose nothing – except their pounding Dolby sound -- being seen only on the television screen at home.)

Perhaps the most ambitious finale in film history is the end of *Intolerance* (1916), directed by the father of filmmaking, D.W. Griffith. He interweaves four stories through the ages: ancient Babylon, Christ's Passion, the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 70,000 French Huguenots in 1572, and a modern labor versus capital story. With amazing skill, Griffith gradually increases the tempo of inter-cutting between each story as they build up toward their climaxes. Finally, the screen is filled with a tableau of mankind seemingly forever at war, whereupon the angels descend from the heavens to bring peace to the world. After almost a century, there has never been a more ambitious film or scene, this coming from the dawn of cinema, in the silent age. If you are to have large themes, you need visual creativity. (Note that the few religious films of the past few decades, in their literalistic realism, have tended to eschew or minimize visual imagery.)

Alfred Hitchcock is not commonly identified with religious themes, but his Catholicism subtly pervades much of his work. Many critics justifiably regard *Vertigo* (1958) as his greatest film. (Readers who have not seen the film and don't wish to know the ending should skip to the next paragraph.) The shattering final shot, taken from on high, looking down (as in *King of Kings*), shows James Stewart, arms spread out helplessly, looking down from the convent's bell tower upon the

body of his beloved (Kim Novak), who has just plunged accidentally to her death, right after he had finally found her following a tormenting search: An unforgettable metaphor of the Fall.

Another subject that used to be depicted in transcendent, lofty terms, and thus challenged the creativity of the Old Master directors, was romance. *The Clock* (1945) dramatizes the whirlwind wartime romance of a New York secretary (Judy Garland) and a G.I. on leave (Robert Walker), who meet by chance in Penn Station. They decide to wed just before he is to go overseas, but the "ceremony" in the city registrar's office, with the registrar hurrying through the ceremony so he doesn't miss his train home, the cleaning staff serving as witnesses and repeated interruption by passing subway trains, could not be drearier. The newlyweds' "dinner" at the automat makes them feel even worse. But as they dejectedly walk down the street, they come upon a formal wedding party exiting a church. They walk inside the now empty sanctuary and sit alone in a pew. Director Vincente Minnelli perfectly frames a distant shot of the couple as they take out the wedding service and quietly recite the holy vows. This beautiful shot, and a comparable close-up of the couple softly reciting the service (seen in the shot together, not head-to-head as we would see today), leaves the audience with an indelible image of the precious sanctity of the wedding vows.

Another lovely image of loving union is the final shot of the 1945 drama *Leave Her to Heaven* (1945). One of the most evil women ever to star in a film, played by the beautiful Gene Tierney (shortly thereafter to become a girlfriend of Lieutenant John F. Kennedy), has gone so far as to kill herself; out of pathological spite, she tries to make it appear the man she has lost (Cornel Wilde) to another woman (Jeanne Crain) has murdered her. Finally cleared after much suffering, he is returning in a motor boat across a long lake in the north woods, as his love awaits him, standing alone on a pier. This is truly one of the most gorgeous color films ever made (the great cinematographer Leon Shamroy won the Oscar). Filmed from a long distance in a glowing sunset by director John M. Stahl, the boat reaches the pier and in the same long shot, the couple are united forever in each other's arms, in silhouette, as Alfred Newman's orchestral score reaches its grand climax. This typically understated scene is the apotheosis of Hollywood romance. Are there any scenes in contemporary films that merit the term "apotheosis"?

The empress of romance was the most enigmatic of movie stars, Greta Garbo. In one of her later silents, *A Woman of Affairs* (1929), her Diana Merrick is hospitalized in a French convent, having suffered a nervous breakdown from the loss of her beloved (John Gilbert). Learning of her condition, he has traveled from England with his wife. Told he has come to visit her, Diana is roused from her depression. She rises from her bed and enters the hallway, where she sees the large bouquet of flowers he has sent her. Not knowing of the couple's presence, she passionately embraces the flowers, in that way making love to her man as the shocked couple look on. Such scenes were specially created for the unique Garbo, and this one represents silent cinema at its best. Again, do contemporary films dramatize intense passion with such artistry – with the actors remaining clothed? One of the most intense romantic dramas ever filmed, the movie was directed by Clarence Brown.



Such brilliant silent film technique is evident throughout the sound films of the great King Vidor, who was one of the most admired silent film directors for his World War I epic, *The Big Parade* (1925), the biggest hit of its era, and for his drama of urban isolation, *The Crowd* (1928). Vidor creates the greatest screen tribute to free enterprise in his 1944 masterpiece *An American Romance* (Vidor wanted the title to be just *America*). The film, made in color, dramatizes the American Dream through the story of an immigrant who rises from the bottom to the top as a great industrialist. Our hero, Steve Dangos (Brian Donlevy), has come out of retirement to convert automobile plants into wartime aircraft production. (His character is based on the life of William Knudsen, president of General Motors). In the climactic scene,

Vidor shows an actual B-17 assembly line – men joined by women, busy at their crucial work. His editing gradually picks up the pace as the giant bombers near completion and move down the line. Then they move out of the plant, one by one, faster and faster. Then we see them taking off, one by one, faster and faster. (Note the similarity to Griffith's editing technique; Vidor idolized Griffith.) Here Vidor inserts a noble composition of Dangos, his son and his long-time partner looking proudly on their creation – a wonderful image of the individual basis, the source and genius, of free enterprise and the industrial power that crushed our enemies. Finally, Vidor's camera looks up at the sky, filled with B-17s flying in V formation, as the soundtrack plays *My Country 'Tis of Thee*. Truly, they don't make movies like this any more!

Vidor once described his view of film as "silent music." Our doughboys' Belleau Wood attack in *The Big Parade* is similarly choreographed. Vidor personally financed his 1934 film *Our Daily Bread*, in which he advocated voluntary rural communes as an answer to the Depression. His sequence of the men desperately digging a long irrigation ditch to save their crop – to dramatize the power of voluntary cooperation – is one of the most admired in film history. It builds as a crescendo to a triumphant climax as the water begins to gush through. (Naturally, the mostly left-wing movie historians cite this scene and ignore *An American Romance*.) Perhaps the greatest demonstration of Vidor's visual genius is his direction of Ayn Rand's *The Fountainhead* (1949). His imagination is so brilliant that this epic of ideas could be viewed without the sound and one would still be immersed in the drama.

Some contemporary films do employ visual imagery on occasion. The Oscar-winning *Shakespeare in Love* (1998) ends with a long shot of our hero's lost ideal woman (Gwyneth Paltrow), seen from behind, slowly walking ashore on the beach in America where her husband has transported her, thousands of miles from England. *The Chronicles of Narnia* (2005) has a long shot of the lion, Aslan, departing the drama, his heroic work done. In each film, the shot is accompanied by a spoken loving tribute. Surely it is no coincidence that these two films stand out among current fare because they are about ideals and transcendence.

Spencer Warren is ConservativeBattleline's movie critic.

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Media Out-biases Blogs

by Rich Noyes

Issue 96 - November 21, 2007

According to a [new study](#), the news organizations that hold themselves up as the most neutral and professional — big newspapers, the broadcast networks and taxpayer-subsidized National Public Radio — are actually producing campaign stories that are the most tilted in favor of Democrats, while online news and talk radio have actually been the most balanced.

The study, released Monday from the Project for Excellence in Journalism (PEJ) and Harvard's Shorenstein Center, found newspapers and broadcast TV outlets devoted far more time to covering the Democratic candidates than the Republicans and that the tone of those stories was much more favorable to the Democrats, mirroring the results of a [Media Research Center study](#) released in August.



Rich Noyes

The PEJ study looked at a wide array of media — broadcast and cable TV, liberal and conservative talk radio, public radio, newspapers and the Internet — but in most cases used sampling techniques to keep the number of stories to a manageable amount. For daytime cable TV, for example, the group looked at just a half-hour per day of CNN, MSNBC and Fox; for newspapers, the researchers only read stories that appeared on the front-page.

Nevertheless, the study — which looked at campaign coverage from January 1 through May 31 — offers additional evidence that the elite news media are tipping in favor of the Democrats, in both amount of coverage and the tone of coverage. According to the report, here's how the researchers measured the tone of each campaign story:

While reading or listening to a story, coders tally up all the comments that have either a negative or positive tone to the reporting. Direct and indirect quotes are counted. In order for a story either positive or negative, it must have 1.5 times the amount of positive or negative comments (with an exception for 2 to 3, which is coded as neutral). If the headline or lead has a positive or negative tone, it should be counted twice into the total value. Also counted twice for tone are the first three paragraphs or first four sentences, whichever comes first.

Using that methodology, the researchers found that the news sources that hold themselves up as the most objective — newspapers, the three broadcast morning shows, the three broadcast network evening newscasts and NPR — were in fact the most tilted, all in favor of the Democrats. At the same time, cable news, commercial talk radio and online news were overall more balanced (with conservative and liberal talk radio basically canceling each other out).

Some news stories on this study have misleadingly charged that Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton has received mostly negative coverage, such as in the [New York Post](#):

If there's no such thing as bad publicity, Hillary Rodham Clinton is walloping Barack Obama — earning twice as many negative stories, according to a new media survey.

The former first lady has been the chief media obsession of the TV campaign, generating more coverage — good and bad — than any other candidate, according to a study by the Project for Excellence in Journalism.

But to reach that conclusion, one must count conservative talk show hosts like Rush Limbaugh and Sean Hannity alongside supposedly objective news sources like ABC, CBS, NBC and the New York Times.

While the report does not detail the tone of Clinton's by each media source, it does report that conservative talk radio accounted for "nearly 20%" of the 294 stories examined, and that "nearly nine-out-of-ten Clinton segments in conservative talk (86%) were clearly negative in tone." Apply some arithmetic and the tone of Clinton's coverage — without conservative talk radio — instantly becomes mostly favorable: roughly 33% positive, vs. 26% negative.

In other words, while Hillary may not be the darling of either liberal or conservative talk radio, the media elite are still showering her with lots of good press.

Rich Noyes is editor of NewsBusters.

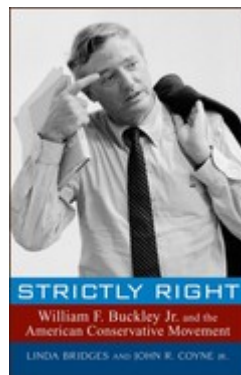
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Strictly Right

by Ron Capshaw

Issue 96 - November 21, 2007

The value of the book "*Strictly Right: William F. Buckley Jr. and the American Conservative Movement*" (by Linda Bridges and John Coyne Jr.: Wiley 2007) is two fold. First, Bridges and Coyne, both insiders with the magazine, but not of its first generation, nevertheless capture perfectly a different era than today when conservatives didn't have a toehold in the media. Secondly, it refutes leftist and mainstream media characterizations of conservatives as likeminded soldiers never deviating from the commands from on high.



Strictly Right chronicles Buckley and his magazine and how they shaped conservatism into what it is today. It is hard to remember in today's climate where John Kerry sports a rifle and a duck blind and Hillary Clinton prays in public how dominant liberalism was before *National Review* hit the stands in 1955.

"Liberalism is the only dominant political philosophy in American life today," wrote liberal critic Lionel Trilling five years before. And it was hard, despite the election of Republican Dwight Eisenhower in 1952 not to agree. By 1955, McCarthyism was a spent force, with former ally vice president Richard Nixon now shunning public appearances with the senator. The Democrats were back in control of Congress, and the magazine circuit was dominated by liberal weekly and bi-weeklies such as *The Nation* and *New Republic*. Even liberals such as critic Dwight MacDonald admitted, amidst all this plethora, "we need a good conservative magazine today."

Enter William F. Buckley and *National Review*. Bridges and Coyne don't always offer a pretty picture of the behind the scenes work that went into the publishing. Buckley spent more time as a fundraiser (from, and this shows how long ago this was, friendly Hollywood backers such as Adolph Menjou, Ward Bond and John Wayne) and refereeing the ideological and personal battles that raged between cubicles: Whittaker Chambers denouncing Ayn Rand's followers as "soulless materialists;" James Burnham arguing for an Eisenhower-Nixon second term, William Schlamm attempting to organize a more purist third party alternative; William Rusher denouncing George Will for his column advocating the dumping of Richard Nixon's Vice President Spiro Agnew, etc, etc. Unlike the Clinton White House, conservatives then allowed such fights to venture out of the "family" and into the public arena.

Couple these squabbles inside the magazine's offices with a necessary purging from the conservative movement of the conspiracy crackpots, racists and anti-semites and Buckley must have been a migraine level by the early 1960s. Unlike the Democratic Party today, which refuses to repudiate support from such hate-mongers as move.on.org, Cindy Sheehan, and Al Sharpton because it might lessen the money flowing in, Buckley condemned the John Birch Society for its naming Dwight Eisenhower a communist spy, and refused the alliance of such anti-semites as the Knights of the White Flower.

Today, writers such as Sam Tannenhaus, have chartered the death of conservatism with the presidency of George Bush. It may be too early to tell, but a reading of *Strictly Right* reveals what a big tent the movement has always been, and how, by its weathering the Great Society, the counterculture, Watergate, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton, it can regain its life.

Ron Capshaw

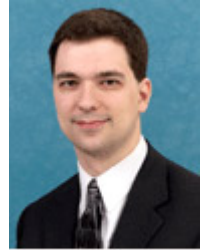
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Editor**

Dems Flunk Budget

by Brian Riedl

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The Democratic congressional majority promised fiscal restraint, adherence to pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) rules, and reform of pork projects. They have broken all of these promises.



Brian Riedl

- Congress has thus far voted to raise taxes by \$98 billion over the next decade (while proposing much more) and enacted a budget resolution that would raise taxes overall by approximately \$2.7 trillion over ten years.
- Despite their PAYGO pledge, the \$98 billion in new taxes does not fully offset the \$179 billion in new entitlement spending passed by Congress with the help of gimmicks.
- Discretionary spending is set to exceed President Bush's budget request by \$275 billion over 10 years. Despite pledging to halve the number of earmarks to 6,746, Congress has included 11,351 in the spending bills. They also watered down promised earmark ethics reforms.
- The Blue Dog Democrats pledged to work for deficit reduction but have voted almost unanimously to raise taxes, increase spending, and expand the budget deficit.

For the full study you may click on <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Budget/bg2081.cfm> (then click the pdf icon for the printable version with charts).

Brian Riedl is Grover M. Hermann Fellow for Federal Budgetary Affairs at The Heritage Foundation.

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Editor**

SAT Not Sex Aptitude Test

by Bob Barr

Issue 96 - November 21, 2007

The decision by a school in Portland, Maine to provide students as young as 11 years old with the most invasive types of birth control, including pills, patches and even implants, has rekindled the debate over "sex education" in public schools. The good news is that this debate has been turned up a notch or two by publicity surrounding Portland's decision. The bad news is that, like most controversies in modern America, it will capture the public's attention only until another scandal or natural disaster pushes it off the front page. That's unfortunate.



Bob Barr

Fundamental questions about what is and what should be taught in our nation's many school systems — and particularly the value of public education in our country — ought to play a far greater role in what passes for public policy debate than it does. In the most recent Republican presidential "debate," for example, while there were a couple of references to education, the questioners and the candidates alike dwelt far more exhaustively on who might be "the most conservative." Former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani regaled us with repetitive pats on his own back about what a great — and "conservative" — mayor he was. Former Senator Fred Thompson sought to prove he was not "lazy" by reading us his resume. Former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney pleaded with us more than once to let him occupy the conservative "house that Reagan built."

Not a single candidate — in either of the two major parties, that is — seems to consider the fundamental questions of what is being taught in our public schools, and how well it is being taught, as sufficiently important to discuss publicly during this campaign.

What is particularly distressing about the Portland, Maine controversy is not so much that it is taking place at all, but that it is occurring even as those very same public school systems fixated on providing their young charges with birth control options, are failing miserably to provide students an adequate basic education in subjects that really do belong in schools.

One might presume that since the Portland school district folks have found the time to focus on giving 11-year olds birth control pills without parental consent, the schools already have achieved a 100 percent success rate in meeting academic standards. Wrong.

As the Portland, Maine education gurus are pushing condoms, pills, skin patches and implants onto middle school kids, more than half of its eighth graders — some 57 percent to be precise — either do not meet or only partially meet state standards for reading. Those same middle schoolers fare even worse in math and science — with 71 percent of eighth graders failing to meet, or only meeting in part, math standards; a figure that rises to 85 percent for science subjects. You get the picture. Portland's middle school students may not be able to read or do math real well, but they'll be able to tell you all about condoms and birth control pills.

It doesn't get much better for Maine's students after they leave middle school and take on the challenges presented them in the state's high schools. The Pine Tree State's SAT ranking is as bad as it can get. Maine is dead last in a list of all 50 states showing how their students scored on the SAT. One might suppose that if the "SAT" stood for "Sex Aptitude Test" rather than "Scholastic Aptitude Test," Maine might rank considerably higher. However, that would hardly be a foregone conclusion. Despite the attention and resources devoted by "educators" in Maine and in other states to sex education, research indicates no correlation between dispensing birth control to students and greater use of contraceptives by those students. In other words, you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him wear it; or perhaps I have mixed metaphors.

Georgia public schools — while thankfully not yet doling out birth control pills and implants to 11-year old girls as in Maine — spend considerable time and taxpayer money meddling in these same areas, even as the state founders near the bottom of objective national education rankings. The Maine school scandal ought to serve as a clarion call to pay more attention to whether our kids can read, write and compute, and less to whether they know how to use a condom or pop a pill. After all, if they can't read the warning labels on a dispenser of birth control pills, do we really want them taking the pills?

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Editor**

Nuclear Is Back

by E. Ralph Hostetter

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Nuclear energy, at long last, appears to be making a comeback following the passage of the Energy Act of 2005.

The latest Gallup Poll taken in March 2007 shows 53% of Americans now approve pursuing atomic energy. This is consistent with other polls taken as far back as March 1994.

During the past two years the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has been refining provisions of the Act which provide loan guarantees of up to 80% of the cost of the nuclear facility, \$125 million tax credits for eight years, insurance that would cover regulatory delays, limits on liability for catastrophic accidents, plus shared application costs.

NRC is now open for business and is accepting applications. It expects as many as 32 new nuclear reactor applications over the next two years.

New Jersey-based NRG Energy on September 24 was the first to file a full application for a new nuclear power plant since the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island in Middletown, Pennsylvania, in 1979. Constellation Energy Group has filed a partial license application to add a nuclear unit at its existing site at Calvert Cliffs, Maryland.

Envirocrats have raised their heads, as expected. Having lost the safety issue with respect to atomic energy plants over the last 50 years, they now complain that new atomic energy plants will be excessively costly. They complain electrical energy will be prohibitively expensive, costing more than natural gas.

The Nuclear Energy Institute reported that for 2002 the nation's 103 nuclear reactors were the lowest cost producers of any source of expandable, baseload electricity. This was the fourth straight year that nuclear energy was the low cost leader. Production costs — which encompass fuel, plus operations and maintenance at a plant — averaged 1.71 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) at nuclear power plants in 31 states.

Nuclear power production costs were lower than coal-fired plants, 1.85 cents/kWh; natural gas plants, 4.06 cents/kWh; and oil-fired plants, 4.41 cents/kWh.

The Nuclear Energy Institute report continues: fuel cost for nuclear plants in 2002 was 0.45 cents/kWh compared to 1.36 cents/kWh for coal and natural gas was 3.44 cents/kWh. By comparison, natural gas costs over seven times as much as nuclear fuel.

In addition, nuclear fuel is not subject to wide variations in cost. From January 1999 to July 2000, only 18 months, the cost of natural gas increased by 88%. From 1990 to 1999, a nine-year period, nuclear fuel costs decreased by 46%.

The construction cost of the fossil-fuel power generating plants as compared to nuclear is also an important factor.

According to Resources for the Future, an independent research organization, these are the relative costs for the various types of power plants: Based on 2006 construction costs in Japan and Korea and estimates from vendors who would likely build plants in the United States, a new 1,000-



E. Ralph Hostetter

megawatt (MW) nuclear plant would cost about \$2 billion and take five years to build. By contrast, a new 1,000-MW pulverized coal plant would cost \$1.2 billion and take three to four years to build.

A definite attraction to nuclear power, once built and paid for, is the extremely low cost of operation.

There is one major glitch in the advancing of nuclear energy development in the United States today. The principal builder of the present atomic energy plants in the United States was Westinghouse Corporation. Through a series of transactions beginning with the acquisition of Westinghouse Corporation by Columbia Broadcasting Corporation (CBS), ostensibly to acquire Westinghouse Broadcasting, the Westinghouse nuclear division was later sold by CBS to British Nuclear Fuels. British Nuclear Fuels got contracts for five Chinese nuclear plants and then sold Westinghouse Nuclear to Japan, which is building an additional five nuclear plants for China. China itself is using Westinghouse technology to build four new nuclear plants.

Steve Mufson, Washington Post staff writer, in an extensive article on nuclear power, reports "about nine necessary nuclear power plant components, including giant pressure vessels and steam generators, can be made only by a Japan Steel Works facility (formerly Westinghouse Nuclear). Some of these parts have a six-year lead time."

Regardless of the obstacles that may seem to impede this new breakthrough to nuclear power, the United States must use every means possible to take advantage of this window of opportunity which can prove a major step toward energy independence.

The rest of the world, particularly China and Japan, is turning to nuclear. Europe is far advanced, with France producing 80% of its electrical needs with nuclear power; Belgium, 70% and little Lithuania, 90%.

If America is to compete in the global market, it must pursue this nuclear opportunity.

The rewards are enormous. Fully implemented, a nuclear program will provide the necessary power to move into electrically operated motor vehicles, reducing and perhaps eliminating America's dependence upon foreign oil imports.

And lastly, it's time to discard the yoke placed around America's neck by the naysayers, far-left radicals, the greens and associated watermelon Marxists. They have had their say for over 40 years. They now cry that the cost is too high.

How high is the cost of losing a substantial part of the U.S. economy brought on by a cut-off of a major portion of America's imported oil? We dare not overlook this nuclear opportunity.

E. Ralph Hostetter, a prominent businessman and publisher, also is an award-winning columnist and Vice Chairman of the Free Congress Foundation Board of Directors.

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Editor**

Food Kills

by Alan Caruba

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It is now a proven fact that eating food—any kind of food—will kill you. No one who has eaten food in the past is alive today and everyone currently eating food will die. Therefore, those noble people who seek to save us from eating every kind of food that the earth provides should be hailed and saluted for their efforts to keep us alive.

I say this as the son of a woman who taught the art of haute cuisine for over three decades and authored several cookbooks. That poor woman died at age 98 and I am convinced it was all that fabulous food that killed her. Ridiculous? YES!



Alan Caruba

These thoughts were occasioned by word that two groups, the World Cancer Research Fund International, based in the United Kingdom, and the American Institute for Cancer Research, will likely announce that eating meat will give you some form of cancer at a press conference scheduled the same day as Halloween. Boo!

In mid-October The New York Times ran an article, "U.S. Cancer Death Rates Are Found to Be Falling." It cited a decline "by an average of 2.1 percent a year...a near doubling of decreases that began in 1993, researchers (from the American Cancer Institute) are reporting." Now this is, of course, good news. The bad news is that smoking appears to be a significant cause of cancer. In the U.S. cancer remains the second leading cause of death after heart disease, with 559,650 deaths expected every year.

Bear in mind that at least 10,000 Americans on the average die every day from something, not infrequently just old age and the infirmities associated with it. If you live beyond age 85 or into your 90s, the odds of dying from something are pretty good.

So why is it that meat is so often singled out as lethal? Well, for one thing, there are any number of vegetarian groups that, like some weird religious cult, flood the Internet and other media with fulminations against eating meat of any kind.

A Google search for "Meat + Health" will turn up links to literally thousands of studies that proclaim that eating meat will cause breast, prostate, colon, and other forms of cancers. That said, if you search all the studies, you will also find those that confirm that meat is as healthy a part of diet as anything else. For example, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) 2005 Food Guide and its Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension Eating Plan recommend two to three servings a week of lean meat.

What so many of the anti-meat studies do not tell you is that the subjects of their studies were, as often as not, also exposed to *other* risk factors that might have contributed to whatever form of cancer is being cited. The correlation between eating meat and the cancer risk cited is a statistical conclusion, but not necessarily the actual cause.

As often as not, if you read the abstract of these studies you will find mitigating phrases such as meat as a "suspected" cause and that those who have a diet high in meat "may" be "particularly" exposed. Now, I admire people who devote their lives to unraveling the mysteries of medical science, but I also know that when you do this for a living, you also have to keep finding correlations or find another job.

I also know there are organizations whose funding and support is dependent on periodically announcing that just about anything you eat, from popcorn to fish, will kill you.

My friend, Frank Murray, the author of dozens of books on nutrition and longtime contributing editor of Let's Live magazine, once co-wrote an entire book, "You Must Eat Meat" with Max Ernest Jutte, MD. The other day I asked him what he thought of all the anti-meat efforts, and he replied that, "It stands to reason that if you eat a lot of highly-cooked meat, bacon, and meats full of nitrosamines, you need to take counter measures, for example, lots of vitamin C and vitamin E." You can either get these vitamins from the foods you eat or, like myself, take them as dietary supplements.

According to Wikipedia, "Nitrosamines are found in many foodstuffs especially beer, fish, fish byproducts, and in meat and cheese products preserved with nitrite pickling salt. *The US government established limits on the amount of nitrites used in meat products to decrease cancer risk in the population.* There are also rules about adding ascorbic acid or related compounds to meat, because they inhibit nitrosamine formation." (Emphasis added)

Let's have a show of hands to see how many of you are going to stop drinking beer or eating either meat, fish, or cheese?

The oldest rule of pharmacology regarding the level of threat from anything you ingest is that the *amount*—the dose—is what determines the hazard. Potatoes, for example, contain trace elements of arsenic, but not enough to kill you even you ate a truckload at one time.

What people are rarely told these days is that meat is a great source of high quality proteins that a vegetarian diet is not able to provide. It also contains all the essential amino acids the body requires. This is true as well for phosphorous which is more easily absorbed than that present in cereals and legumes. Meat is rich in vitamin B12. Nutritionists will also tell you that, in general, preserved meats such as ham, bacon, salami, et cetera, should be avoided because they contain large amounts of fats, salts, nitrites and nitrates that have been associated with increased rates of cancer.

It is common sense that must be applied to the latest assault on meat and it is common sense that suggests that vegetables are good for you, too.

So, keep on eating, but not too much, okay?

Alan Caruba writes a weekly column, "Warning Signs", posted on the Internet site of The National Anxiety Center, www.anxietycenter.com. He is the author of "Right Answers: Separating Fact from Fantasy", published by Merril Press.

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Editor**

4 Year-old Sex Fiends

by Carey Roberts

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In 1994 a Child Protective Services official instructed his employees to dig up child sex abuse cases to justify the agency's budget. Before long 43 parents and Sunday school teachers in Wenatchee, Wash. had been arrested and charged with nearly 30,000 cases of sex abuse involving 60 children. It wasn't until four years and many ruined lives later that the Wenatchee witch hunt was exposed as a fraud.

A decade later, we seem to be on the verge of another moral panic involving sex abuse, but this time with a new wrinkle: its perpetrators are as young as four years old.

Last year a pre-schooler in Waco, Tex. hugged a female aide as he boarded the school bus. The four-year-old's embrace lingered a bit long, and soon the boy was required to defend himself from a charge of sexual harassment. The scarlet letter of "inappropriate physical contact" is now stamped on the child's school records.

In December a kindergartener in Hagerstown, Maryland pinched a classmate's bottom. For that he, too, was branded a sexual harasser. To those who asked how a little boy could understand, much less commit such an action, spokeswoman Carol Mowen came up with this loopy explanation: "It's important to understand a child may not realize that what he or she is doing may be considered sexual harassment, but if it fits under the definition, then it is, under the state's guidelines."

Middle school students in McMinnville, Ore. designated Fridays as Slap Butt Day. Those days "pretty much we would just go around slapping people's butts," recounted Megan Looney. But one day the local police got wind of the racy activities. They came in and arrested 12-year-old Ryan Cornelison and 13-year-old Cory Mashburn, charging each with five counts of felony sex abuse.

Six times the teenage boys were subjected to a strip search. Six days later they were released from jail. Then it took the judge six months to hear a motion to dismiss the case, even though the "victims" had signed affidavits saying they wanted the charges to be dropped.

Even respected media organizations are beginning to jump on the sex abuse bandwagon.

Recently, the Associated Press released a report with the five-alarm headline, "Sexual Misconduct Plagues U.S. Schools." The word "plague" suggests a pestilence descending upon schoolhouses in every hill and dale throughout the land.

But a closer reading of the article reveals that among 3 million public school teachers nationwide, 500 have their teaching credentials restricted each year due to a sex abuse charge. So cause for concern, yes -- a plague, definitely not.

Lest you accuse me of going wobbly on the horrific crime of child sex abuse, I will remind you that when the Congress held hearings on the problem in the early 1970s, similar white-hot rhetoric was bandied about in a calculated effort to convince the federal government to invest millions to halt the abuse "epidemic."

The bigger problem with the AP study is that was run by journalists, not trained researchers. They only looked at teachers whose credentials had been revoked or restricted, and then concluded "in nearly nine out of 10 cases, they're male." Indeed, every one of the teachers highlighted in the AP article are men.

There they go again, those beastly men, this time ravishing young innocents. But hold on a minute ...

What about Debra Lafave, the reading teacher in Tampa who admitted to deflowering a 14-year-old boy in her classroom, car, and at home? Have we already forgotten about Mary Kay Letourneau of Washington who had an affair with a sixth-grade boy?

Very recently, Meredith Vincent, a home school teacher in Van Nuys, Calif. was arrested for allegedly molesting a 14-year-old boy. And Kay Sorg, a science teacher at Albany Middle School, Calif. appeared in court following an accusation of having sex with a high school girl.

According to a 2004 Department of Education report, "Educator Sexual Misconduct: A Synthesis of the Literature," student surveys reveal that 57% of sex offenders are male. That's terrible but a far cry from the nine-in-10 statistic reported by the AP.

We are not going to solve any of these problems by distorting facts or causing panic. Four year olds are not the problem and a little common sense could go a long way in dealing with those who are the real sex abusers.

Carey Roberts is a staff writer for the New Media Alliance, Inc. The New Media Alliance is a non-profit (501c3) national coalition of writers, journalists and grass-roots media outlets.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Anti-Technology Kills

by *Dennis and Alex Avery*

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The global conflict over high-yield farming became even uglier recently when armed activists "for the landless" invaded a Brazilian biotech research farm. One activist and a security guard were killed and eight other people injured.

Unfortunately, the clash over modern farming technology has already had victims by the millions. New technologies that would save millions of lives every year are being held back by activist-scared regulators, using the excuse of "more testing."

- During the severe southern African drought of 2002, eco-activists told local governments that American food aid was "poison" because it contained genetically modified seeds. In at least one country, Zambia, the government locked up the U.S. food aid-despite the starvation of thousands in outlying villages. The food aid was later liberated by a mob that overwhelmed its armed guards.
- Golden rice could provide enough Vitamin A to prevent millions of cases of childhood blindness and death from rice-dominated diets per year, but it is not yet available to farmers even though it was announced by the journal *Science* nearly eight years ago. Its developer, Ingo Potrykus of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, says his rice can save millions of lives among the poor, with no threat to the environment, no cost to the poor farmers who will raise it, and no benefit to corporations. Nevertheless, Greenpeace and other eco-groups ardently oppose this and all other genetically modified seeds. Potrykus says they'd rather have people die than be saved by high-tech seeds.
- African countries refused to allow the import of biotech corn seeds that could have helped overcome the parasitic witchweed, which infests 40 million hectares of African farmland. The International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center had to spend an extra 10 years conventionally breeding a natural tolerance for the herbicide imazapyr into African corn farmers' varieties. The new seeds reliably yield four times as much corn, providing food security for farmers too used to facing starvation because the witchweed stole their grain.
- The Irish government has refused to accept test plantings of a new biotech potato variety resistant to the deadly potato late blight. This is the same blight that caused the Irish Potato Famine in the 1840s when more than a million Irish starved and more than a million more were forced to flee the country. Researchers found resistance to late blight nearly 50 years ago in a wild relative of the potato, but it had never been successfully bred into a domestic potato. Now, three major universities have each bred blight-resistant tubers-and the country which suffered the potato famine won't allow them to be grown. Nor will such African countries as Burundi, which are increasingly dependent on potatoes. An outbreak of a more virulent late blight virus continues unchecked in Britain.

How many people have to die before this travesty of Luddite worship runs its course? How many helpless children will have to go blind before the endless testing of Golden Rice allows it to be distributed to the families who so critically need it?

When will the world realize that Greenpeace and the World Wildlife Fund, for all their preaching about the rain forests, are trying to roll back modern civilization and its long life spans with thickets of overpriced solar panels and windmills? They willingly fail to see that without the high yields from the Green Revolution and biotechnology, hungry people will quickly clear the world's remaining forests for low-yield crops.

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Editor**

The Value of Vetoes

by Paul Weyrich

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President George W. Bush set the record by not vetoing a single piece of legislation in his entire first term. Then in the first two years of his second term the President vetoed but a single bill. That, of course, made the record books. Now, it would seem, the Administration is issuing a position paper a day indicating if this bill or that reached his desk he would veto it. Better late than never.



Paul M. Weyrich

The Bush Administration has less than a year to veto bills because Congress will want to adjourn for the 2008 election. My guess is that Congress will stay in session fairly long, especially if it remains unpopular. Should Congress recover its popularity before election day it would adjourn sooner. But should it continue to remain less popular than President Bush it would remain in session, claiming to do the people's business, until three weeks before the election or thereabouts. That would take the mind of the people off individual Congressmen and focus upon issues Congress would attempt to pass.

This President has a problem. Because he did not veto any bill for so long, he must establish credibility in the minds of the American public. His excuse for not vetoing bills for so long, by the way, was that he did not want to argue with the Republican-controlled Congress. Thus, he permitted Congress to get by with profligate spending. He also allowed Congress to pass other bills regulating the economy which he claimed were against Administration policy. Time and time again the President drew a line in the sand and time and time again he kept moving the line to the point at which no one took him seriously. Unfortunately for this President, he no longer has needed credibility and he has a very short time to establish same.

This is the third Republican President in my lifetime in the position of exciting his base by using his veto pen. In the 1958 election Democrats won a victory which makes the 2006 victory appear to be almost irrelevant. Democrats won about a two-thirds margin in the Congress. President Dwight D. Eisenhower enjoyed a Republican-controlled Congress for only two years of his Presidency. But in the election of 1954 and again in 1956 the margins were very close. Then there was far less partisanship than there now is. Yet during the years from 1953 until 1958 President Eisenhower vetoed a sufficient number of bills that when he decided on a veto strategy following the 1958 election he had the credibility to do so. What amazed the media is that veto after veto of that period beginning in 1959 and through the election period of 1960 was upheld, even though President Eisenhower had no margin to spare. In those days conservative Democrats often supported the President. The vetoing especially of appropriations bills excited the Republican base. Because of that Vice President Richard M. Nixon was nearly elected President in 1960. In fact, there was evidence to show that votes were stolen and that it was Nixon and not John F. Kennedy who won that razor-thin election but Nixon "for the good of the country" chose not to challenge the results. The point is that if Eisenhower had not excited the troops during his last Congress while in office the result would not have been close.

Another President who used the veto strategy was Gerald R. Ford. Ford was our one and only President never elected either President or Vice President. He first became an appointed Vice President when Vice President Spiro T. Agnew was forced to resign over corruption charges. Then when President Nixon himself was forced to resign or face impeachment charges Ford became President. At first Ford was enormously popular, proclaiming that "at long last America's long nightmare is over." But then Ford pardoned Nixon and there were rumors of a behind-the-scenes deal. The public turned on Ford with a vengeance. In fact, he was so far behind whomever the Democrats would nominate that he was just written off. Not only popular California Governor Ronald W. Reagan announced he was running against Ford. The situation appeared hopeless—that is, until President Ford pulled out his veto pen. Congress sent Ford appropriations bill after appropriations bill

which were far greater than the Administration had proposed. In addition, Congress sent Ford new authorizations of programs of which Ford did not approve. Ford vetoed and vetoed. He excited the soul of the Republican Party. As a matter of fact, I delivered the news to Ronald Reagan at a dinner we had that Senator Carl T. Curtis (R-NE), Chairman of the Senate Republican Conference, and a host of other conservative Senators were supporting Ford. Reagan had counted on these conservative Senators to be in his camp. It was a startling blow to Reagan. When Reagan asked me for an explanation I said one word, "Vetoes."

In fact, it was vetoes which made for another razor-thin election in 1976 over the Democratic nominee, Jimmy Carter. Again, there was evidence of voter fraud in a couple of small states which might have thrown the election to Ford, but as was the case with Nixon, Ford chose not to contest the election results.

The next opportunity for a Republican President to save himself via the veto strategy came with the Presidency of George Herbert Walker Bush. Bush '41 had succeeded Ronald Reagan. There was very little that the electorate knew about the elder Bush except his words pronounced during his acceptance speech, "Read my lips. No new taxes." That phrase stuck with Bush and along the way he had vetoed enough bills to be credible. But when the moment of truth presented itself, Bush, instead of vetoing the tax increase the Democrats presented to him, capitulated and agreed to the tax increase. It ruined his otherwise successful Presidency. Had he just vetoed that tax increase he almost certainly would have been re-elected in 1992, especially considering his success in the Gulf War.

That brings us to Bush '43. He is now anxious to veto bills which the Democratic Congress will send him. The problem is the very close margin in the United States Senate. There are 49 Republicans in the Senate. It takes 60 votes to pass anything in that body. And Minority Leader A. Mitchell (Mitch) McConnell (R-KY) can filibuster bills. For example, the "Mother of all tax revisions" proposed by House Ways and Means Chairman Charles Rangel (D-NY) would be "dead upon arrival" if it passed the House and reached the Senate. The fact is President Bush will receive too few bills to veto. Most bills, even if passed by the House, would not get the 60 votes necessary to pass the Senate and be sent to the President. So it is too bad for Bush '43. He most likely would not have enough bills to veto in the next year to excite the grassroots. No doubt Bush wishes he had vetoed more bills all along so that he would not have to use the few remaining bills to establish credibility. Republicans can only hope that in the next year he receives a sufficient number of bills to veto that the base will get excited. It is unlikely but who knows.

Paul M. Weyrich is Chairman and CEO of the Free Congress Foundation.

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Rudy's "Winnability" Gamble?

by David Keene

Issue 96 - November 21, 2007

Rudy Giuliani and his supporters are hoping that with Hillary Clinton as the odds-on favorite for the Democratic nomination, Republicans will pay more attention than usual to the question of which of the possible Republican nominees may have the best chance of denying her the White House. They hope Republicans will end up convinced that Rudy would be stronger than the others.



David Keene

Thus, when one encounters a rabid Giuliani supporter these days, the argument goes something like this: "Only Rudy can beat Hillary, and, therefore, any Republican who wants to win has to support the man." Some will go further and suggest that if you don't support Rudy it really means you don't care much or enough about retaining the White House or, more importantly, denying it to Mrs. Clinton.

The argument that only Rudy can win is meant to negate questions or concerns about his positions on major issues or whether he would make the sort of president Republicans will be proud of once he actually gets to the White House. It's a gamble, but one Rudy's supporters must think worth taking in spite of the obstinate historical tendency of primary voters to ignore what is called "winnability" in selecting a party nominee.

It was the argument used by GOP establishmentarians who opposed Barry Goldwater in 1964 and Ronald Reagan in 1980, and is ordinarily trotted out in favor of more "pragmatic" or "moderate" candidates who are out of step with their party base. Typically, one hears such a candidate's supporters and media analysts suggesting that "he would undoubtedly be the strongest general election candidate the party could choose, but he probably cannot be nominated." Republicans and Democrats alike have heard the argument repeated in one form or another so often that most know it by heart.

The essential problem with the argument is that primary voters and caucus attendees don't under ordinary circumstances opt for one candidate over another simply because they think that candidate can win. They look instead for a candidate they believe agrees with them on major issues and hope he or she can also win once nominated.

In addition, the electability argument is often made on behalf of candidates who may prove far less electable than their supporters suppose or who have little empirical evidence to support their claim of greater electability.

This may be Rudy's emerging problem. Let's assume for the moment that many Republicans so fear the possibility of a Clinton victory in November of next year that they will overlook almost any position. Those voters would have to be convinced that the candidate running as the most electable potential nominee out there is in fact so much more attractive to general election voters than the others that they would be foolish to pick any other candidate.

Rudy's emerging problem is that the very people he and his supporters are trying to convince that this is true, don't seem to be buying. The polls show Rudy running a few points ahead of other candidates like ex-Sen. Fred Thompson (Tenn.), for example, in match-ups against Hillary, but not by enough to convince anyone that he is the only potential nominee with a chance of beating her.

Perhaps as a result of the evidence out there, as well as their own suspicion that some Republicans might stay home or support him less enthusiastically than they would others, Republican base voters aren't all that convinced that Rudy would be all that much stronger than Thompson, Romney or even

McCain in a race against Mrs. Clinton. In fact, the perception of Rudy as the most electable Republican is slipping among those very folks he needs to believe in him ... his fellow Republicans.

A September Rasmussen poll found that 72 percent of Republicans believed in September that if nominated Rudy would be at least "somewhat likely" to beat Hillary next November. This month Rasmussen reports that number has slipped to 66 percent, while Thompson is seen as just as electable by some 61 percent of those polled (up from 57 percent in September).

What's more, among those who give their party's potential nominee a real shot at winning, Rudy and Fred are virtually tied. These numbers are especially important when one realizes that GOP primary voters see Thompson as much more conservative than Rudy and thus more the sort of candidate they would like to be able to support.

If voters believe that Thompson will run virtually as well against Hillary as would the far more liberal Giuliani, Rudy's main argument and ultimately his candidacy could be in real trouble.

David Keene is the chairman of the American Conservative Union.

**E-mail the
Editor**

To Be a Republican?

by Lisa Fabrizio

Issue 96 - November 21, 2007

You may have been treated to an email containing a [list](#) called, "Things you have to believe to be a Republican," that's been wending its way around cyberspace lately. It's a real hoot, but not for the reasons its unknown authors intended; for it says far more about them than about us. In the interests of compassionate conservatism, I thought I'd give them a hand in reaching a better understanding of their opposition.



Lisa Fabrizio

To be a Republican you need to believe:

Jesus loves you, and shares your hatred of homosexuals and Hillary Clinton. No, Jesus loves all of humanity, even those whose disdain of him prompts them to use his name for alleged comical purposes.

Saddam was a good guy when Reagan armed him, a bad guy when Bush's Daddy made war on him, a good guy when Cheney did business with him, and a bad guy when Bush needed a 'we can't find Bin Laden' diversion. No, Saddam Hussein, like Joseph Stalin, was always a bad guy, who was at times, a useful ally. See the next paragraph for what Bill Clinton thought of him when he needed a 'blue dress' diversion.

The United States should get out of the United Nations, and our highest national priority is enforcing U.N. resolutions against Iraq. Yes, we should; and the [resolution](#) authorizing the use of force against Iraq was overwhelmingly passed by the U.S. Congress in October, 2002. Part of it reads, "Whereas the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 expressed the sense of Congress that it should be the policy of the United States to support efforts to remove from power the current Iraqi regime and promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime..."

A woman can't be trusted with decisions about her own body, but multinational drug corporations can make decisions affecting all mankind without regulation. A typical liberal non sequitur, but here goes: the last time I checked, drug companies were in the business of making money, and not in the intentional and deliberate taking of innocent human life, which some of us still call murder.

The best way to improve military morale is to praise the troops in speeches, while slashing veterans' benefits and combat pay. It is often said that a [lie](#) repeated enough becomes the truth, but not in [this](#) case. Maybe our friends on the left feel the best way to improve our troops' morale is to compare them to Nazis, call them terrorists, insult their generals, judge their mission a failure and organize protests with signs [reading](#), "We support our troops when they shoot their officers."

If condoms are kept out of schools, adolescents won't have sex. If the indoctrination of free-love, "alternate lifestyles," and sexual promiscuity had been kept out of our schools--where they had no business in the first place--our children wouldn't need condoms.

Global warming and tobacco's link to cancer are junk science, but creationism should be taught in schools. While the latter is a matter of faith, not science, the perils of second-hand smoke and the human impact on climate change are indeed theories. Much like that of Charles Darwin, which has been crammed down the throats of American children as science for almost a century. But take heart liberals; someday the 'missing link' between global warming, George Bush and every national disaster in the past six years may indeed turn up.

A president lying about an extramarital affair is an impeachable offense, but a president lying to enlist support for a war in which thousands die is solid defense policy. Listen closely: lying under oath is called perjury, the prosecution of which Bill Clinton narrowly avoided by accepting Arkansas

and U.S. Supreme Court disbarments and fines. And if George W. Bush was a liar as regards Iraq, his predecessor--who, in direct defiance of the above mentioned [Iraq Liberation Act](#), used military action against Saddam--[sounded](#) a lot like him when he sent our troops into harm's way (emphasis added):

Their mission is to attack Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs and its military capacity to threaten its neighbors. Their purpose is **to protect the national interest of the United States**, and indeed the interests of people throughout the Middle East and around the world.

Being a drug addict is a moral failing and a crime, unless you're a conservative radio host. Then it's an illness and you need our prayers for your recovery. Let's try turning this one around, shall we? Being a drug addict is an illness and you need our prayers for your recovery, unless you're a conservative radio host. Then it's a moral failing and a crime.

Government should limit itself to the powers named in the Constitution, which include banning gay marriages and censoring the Internet. I know it's tough to read through an entire eight page document, but amendments to the Constitution actually become part of the Constitution (hint: see Article V).

[Lisa Fabrizio](#) is a columnist who hails from Connecticut.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Reincarnation Unlawful?

by Joseph Morris

Issue 96 - November 21, 2007

The Government of the People's Republic of China has long demanded the authority to approve appointments by churches and religious groups of their respective ministers, bishops, priests, and other leaders.

The PRC has also long insisted on a government monopoly on the recognition of "living Buddhas", a matter of some sensitivity, particularly in Tibet.



But now the Chinese Government claims power to regulate reincarnation. I'm not making this up.

On July 13, 2007, the PRC's State Administration of Religious Affairs adopted State Religious Affairs Bureau Administrative Order No. 5, effective September 1, 2007.

Under that decree, henceforth, to reincarnate in China one must first file an application with the government. No reincarnations will be permitted without government approval.

Mr. Jefferson, call your office (if you have a branch office in Beijing).

In China, it would appear, the "wall of separation" is not a "Great Wall".

The reincarnation regulatory scheme even includes provisions for "Buddha-impact" metrics and make-work opportunities for social workers. I swear I'm not making this up. *See*, for example, Article 7, which provides in relevant part:

"Once an application for a living Buddha's reincarnation has received approval, depending on the size of the living Buddha's impact, the corresponding Buddhist Association shall establish a reincarnation guidance team...."

One is tempted to say that this is one law that it would be fascinating to see enforced. But, I suppose, a prudent lawyer would caution: When visiting China, do not attempt reincarnation without a license.

(Legal opinion applicable in Illinois only: Feel free to reincarnate at any time in Illinois. No license is required and, as of this writing, reincarnation is still not subject to tax anywhere in this State, including, remarkably enough, in Cook County and Chicago.)

Words otherwise fail to comment justly on the decree. One must read it for oneself.

If you do not believe the document is authentic, see

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/article2194682.ece> and

http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2007-08/04/content_5448242.htm)

Joseph A. Morris is senior partner in the firm of Morris & De La Rosa in Chicago and is a member of the Board of Directors of the American Conservative Union.

**E-mail the
Editor**

Clinton Says Nothing

Issue 96 -November 21, 2007

by Jeffrey Folks

In the recent Democratic debate, Hillary Clinton revealed her true colors. That is to say: she revealed almost nothing.

In the much reported give-and-take with NBC commentator Tim Russert, Clinton avoided giving a direct answer to every question that she was asked. Would she prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon? Her answer: we should "put pressure" on President Bush. Then maybe he'll do something. But if he uses force to do something, that's wrong. "We should not be doing that. But we shouldn't be doing nothing."

That sounds like a great way to defend this country from terrorism. We should not be applying force, but we should be criticizing our president, no matter what he does. We should not be gathering electronic intelligence through surveillance, but we should be gathering information through surveillance. We should not be waterboarding terrorists, but we should be coercing information from terrorists. How would she do that? She'd have to think about that. She can't really say until after the election.

Given this approach to foreign policy, imagine what Hillary could do for the economy. Does she support higher payroll taxes to pay for Social Security? She does not, but she might. She would have to think about it. Gee, I thought presidential candidates a year into the primary campaign would have thought about issues like taxes. Maybe she doesn't consider raising taxes on the American people to be a big deal. In any case, she doesn't think the American people have a right to know what she thinks about taxes.

Does she agree with Rep. Rangel's plan to raise taxes on the "rich" to reduce the effect of the Alternative Minimum Tax? Her answer: It sounds like something we need to "address." But do you agree with raising taxes? Her answer: she'd have to "consider" that. She can't answer any questions on raising taxes until after the election.

One of Hillary's characteristic rhetorical moves is to deflect a question by commenting on the actions of somebody else. It is like the playground bully who gets caught smacking Bill (well, maybe not Bill in this case-or maybe so) and immediately cries out, "Did you see Bill smacking Bob, only harder?"

According to the principles of logic, what Hillary is doing is called "introducing a red herring." Hillary has used this tactic so often that, by now, there are dozens of red herrings lying around, none of them smelling very pleasant. Hillary was asked in the debate whether she supported the New York state plan proposed by Gov. Spitzer to offer driver's licenses to illegal immigrants, and thus, in practice if not in law, to extend voting rights to them. Her answer was yes, no, probably, well not really. Finally, she came out with the "clarification" that "I did not say that it should be done, but I certainly recognize why Governor Spitzer is trying to do it."

Yeah, most observers also recognize why the governor is trying to do it: to extend de facto voting privileges to a population that can be counted on to vote for Democratic candidates.

It's strange that Hillary is not taking a position on this important issue, just leaving it to the wisdom of Gov. Spitzer. I thought that she was a citizen of the state of New York and would have an opinion. Come to think of it, I believe she is the junior senator from the state of New York. But she has no clear opinion on this or any other controversial issue facing the state of New York or the nation.



If Hillary is behaving this way during the primary election-we're still almost a year away from the presidential balloting-how would she act if she were actually elected president? Harry Truman said, "The buck stops here," and everyone admired him for it. What maxim would Hillary have sitting on her desk in the Oval Office?

Since Hillary seems to have been a bit tongue-tied (or at least tongue-forked) in the recent debate, I thought she could use some help with this. Here are a few suggestions for that paper-weight on her desk:

"For me to know and you to learn."
"All quiet along the Potomac."
"Ask me no questions, I'll tell you no lies."
"Ask Bill."

Or for a woman who finds herself habitually astride all issues, there's always, "My kingdom for a horse." Only, in this case it's not her kingdom that's at stake, it's ours.

Dr. Jeffrey Folks taught for thirty years in universities in Europe, America, and Japan. He has published nine books and over a hundred articles on American culture and politics in national journals and newspapers. He is currently writing on issues in American literature, media, family, and education.

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Editor**

Reader Comments

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Editor: Wow what an issue!! Particularly the article on "Conservative Restoration:" this is a powerful and thorough review without the "crushing" investment of personal time researching these pivotal philosophers that would be necessary without this thorough analysis. Well done! Edward Feser. Well done! Donald Devine and well done "Conservative Battleline"!! Bob Langelius

Editor: This did it! "What's With Nobel" by Dennis Avery is right. Giving the prize to Al Gore convinces me that the Nobel Prize is no longer what it was set up to be. Giving this award to Arafat, Jimmy Carter and now Al Gore, none of who are noted for their peace making abilities proves the Prize is a lot of bunk. It's the same as the Oscars, Emmys and other awards given to "special" people because they played the right politics. The fact the prize was given to Gore rather than Rush Limbaugh is a big plus for Limbaugh for he truly is a man of the people who is a peace maker. The Nobel isn't anything to be proud of any longer considering those who have been chosen recently to receive it. Carolyn A. Widmer, Jefferson, Georgia

Editor: Regarding "What's With Nobel" by Dennis Avery about the awards to Al Gore, Yasser Arafat and Kofi Annan, it is very obvious as to what is going on. Arafat had suckered Israel and America over and over again, killed thousands of people, broke every agreement he ever made with us and Israel, and stole millions of dollars given to him by us. Annan's head swelled until he thought that he was king of the world. He enriched himself, his family, and all his buddies--the way he and his minions stole money and pilfered in other ways from the "oil for food" debacle. Al Gore is their hero and the smartest politician around. Other than demonizing Bush, his administration, and Republicans in general the Dems had nothing to counter the Republicans with. They needed more and Al was the man to deliver. Al came up with the perfect boogiemer, "Global Warming". To the lay person it makes sense that with all the cars, trains, planes, power plants, and coal mines the world might be heating up. The number of other factors that need to be considered never are--never mind that the latter part of the 1800s was much warmer than today and that less than fifty years ago, this same type of odd-ball logic was scaring people with an "Ice Age". The world is full of little people and some times these little people get into positions that make them believe that they can and should run the world. So it is with the American-hating folks handing out the Nobel Prizes. Best Personal Regards, Vladimir Val Cymbal

Editor: Amen, not much more to be said after Alan Caruba's "Science of the Climate Act." I wrote an article for our local paper (attached) that said pretty much the same thing. Lowell A. Nielsen

Editor: Regarding Alan Caruba's "Science of the Climate Act," cosmologists believe the sun is in a higher radiation period and all the planets and moons are warming. That includes Mars, Venus, Saturn, Jupiter, and Pluto. In the Cretaceous period the earth was actually so warm that there were no polar ice caps, seas were 400 feet higher, and there was no ozone layer (National Geographic). Obviously, the earth warms and cools itself on its own schedule, maybe according to space dust as we swing around the galaxy or varying sun radiation cycles. Renny Hartmann

Editor: Thanks to Alan Caruba and his "Science of the Climate Act" and to you for printing the truth! Blessings, Anne Menaldo

Editor: Regarding Carey Robert's article "AIDS Failure", the problem 25 years ago was that we didn't isolate those first dozens or hundreds with AIDS. It works with TB. William F. Smith III

Editor: Well done article by S.T. Karnick on "TV More Moral?" Moralistic, perhaps; moral---well, that may remain a stretch. Network TV panders to a relatively narrow group of people, and they respond to the same pandering hot buttons that they did 10, 20 or 40 years ago. One of the best marketing tools ever devised by the networks is the "Some scenes or subjects may be inappropriate for younger viewers"----which, translated means "Hey, kids: this is a GREAT show! Just don't tell Mom that you're watching, OK?" Occasional shows are exceptional in teaching/illustrating important moral and social points; these unfortunately only serve to show the exceptional dearth of value in the other 95%. 'Extreme Home Makeovers' and 'Dancing with the Stars' are pleasant and, in their own way appealing; they continue to be swamped however by 'The View', 'CBS News with Katie Couric', and every precursor & successor to 'Sex and the City'. Would that it were otherwise, sincerely, Michael Lyster, Riverwoods IL

Editor: Regarding Rich Noyes' "Media Praises Soviets," I read of how Sam Jaffee-- Gunga Din, Ben Casey's mentor and communist party member--was head of a secret cell which ensured that anti-communists were blacklisted and didn't get jobs of any kind. John Ford's Irish-American crew was the one group of anti-communists that got work. My problem is that I can't remember in which book I read this. I've been searching for years. In Ayn Rand's "Journals," she has the pamphlet she wrote about how communists tried to insert a few anti-capitalist lines in every film. Today, they're doing it with the Iraq war. When Rand's anti-Soviet novel, "We The Living," was published it got no or bad reviews but began to sell via word of mouth. Then the Manhattan Marxist Mafia urged Macmillan to burn the plates of the book, consigning her to several more years of suppression. They're the true blacklisters not us. Thanks for your essay. Sandra Mendoza, Tiburon, California

Editor: Spencer Warren's description in "Biased Hollywood Ten Tales" is dead on. See also "The Hollywood Writers' Wars" by Nancy Lynn Schwartz, whose father was a member of the Writers Guild. She explains how in the late 1930s the Communists used nefarious means to take over the Guild and make it a voice of Communism. And in his book "Elia Kazan: A Biography", Richard Schickel, former movie reviewer for TIME, and certainly no right winger, describes how the Ten and many others in Hollywood were not only Communists but were, in fact, Stalinists, who knew the evils of Stalin and the Communist Party in Russia, yet supported him and aspired to duplicate Russian Communism in America. It is often said that blatant Communist ideas were rarely seen in movies written by the Ten and other Communists. Of course! Their mission was to shape the view without it being obvious. A. P. St. John

Editor: Thanks for Spencer Warren's "Biased Hollywood Ten Tales." I followed the link from "Power Line." I've been watching TCM for years, in fact, it's my favorite channel. But I've always wondered about Robert Osborne and some of the remarks I've heard him make. I was sort of taken aback. What is he saying? Now I know--thanks for clearing this up. And the article just reinforced Ronald Reagan as one of my heroes. Artie Curtis, Fredericksburg, Virginia

Editor: I've been missing Spencer Warren's reviews due to my own time constraints, much to my chagrin. I just read his "Letters From Iwo Jima" review in ConservativeBattleline.com and it is perfect. I tried to convince my wife from my knowledge after seeing the movie and the distorted movie review in the Flint Journal, by a fellow who is an inveterate part of the far left loonscape, but to little avail in either case. Now I'll try his review and hope that it has a far greater impact than my impoverished attempts did on her. I also read his review of the PBS Ken Burns' film "The War" and especially appreciate his treatment of Michelle Malkins, "The Internment" of the Japanese, Italians, and Germans (but not the relocation of the Japanese), and how Burns dismissed Roosevelt for his decision regarding the relocation, which one can disagree with, but which was not a racist decision, made in a vacuum, or made without a fair amount of consideration of all viewpoints and knowledge of the day. Regards, Fredrick P. Wilson, Grand Blanc, MI

Editor: Having just read and enjoyed S.T. Karnick's article, "Boys Will Be Girls", I wanted to applaud Mr. Karnick for noting and taking on the anti-male trends in modern entertainment and connecting them to a larger cultural war against masculinity. Other commentators have noted an increased tendency to pathologize male behavior or minimize male contributions to family and culture, and I am grateful that Mr. Karnick and The American Conservative Union Foundation are aware of the harm that this could do to our society. Sincerely, Malia Blom, Director, Boys and Schools
www.boysandschools.com

Editor: George Liebmann's "Clinton Coronation?" is precisely what Americans need to know about this woman. Keep up the spreading of this information. American citizens desperately need to wake up. Burnie Vaughn

Editor: George Liebmann's "Clinton Coronation?" is an exceptional article about a charlatan...an exceptional warning about a dangerous woman...an exceptional article that makes you realize there are some out there who haven't the slightest clue about Hillary's absolute lack of skills to run this nation. She believes her own press releases, and can be absolutely destroyed by a ruthless debater and challenger. She is dangerous. Sincerely, George Maurer

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