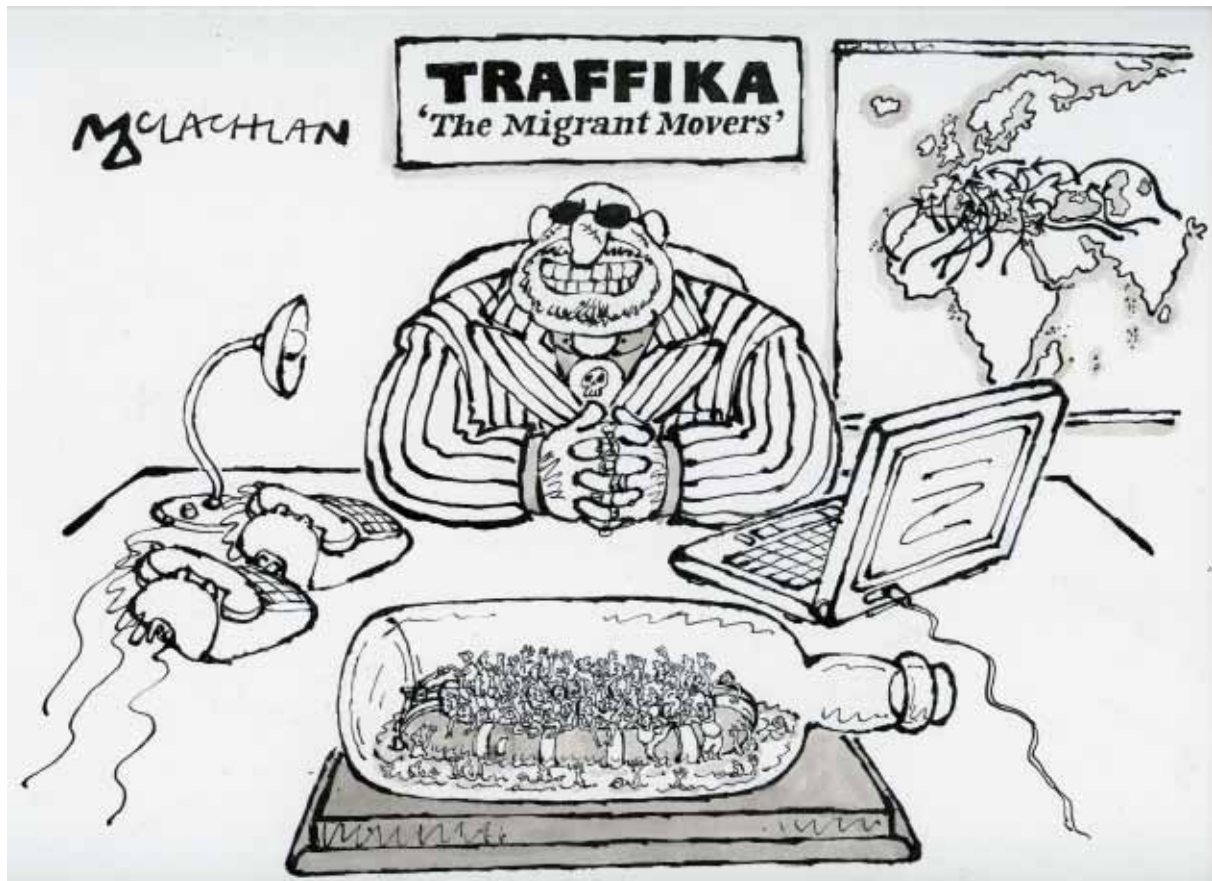


The
Salisbury Review
The quarterly magazine of conservative thought



Hadrian's Last Ditch

Mark Griffith

Dodgy Drachmas

Demetri Marchessini

Guilty until proved innocent

James Docherty

Vichy TV

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Autumn 2015
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The real cause of the giant queue of lorries outside Dover, and why Calais is under permanent siege, are lawyers. Lawyers have ensured that once an asylum seeker steps on British soil he has set before him a smorgasbord of rulings, precedents and injunctions making it almost certain he will never have to leave Britain. The lawyer of course will serve the particular dish and take his fee, a fee paid by the British taxpayer. Any attempts to tighten the law, to interpret it in favour of the native population, are treated with contempt. In June Britain's fast track asylum system, which for the last ten years has speeded up the deportation of illegal immigrants, was ruled illegal by the High Court. Such insane, but for lawyers financially highly rewarding, rulings are why, despite the millions invested in our immigration courts, the latter do not work. Courts sit, defendants are put before them, rulings are made, but virtually nobody who does not want to go home goes home. By a series of stays, refreshments, and appeals the legal system can be played like an exhausted fish for years until in despair the Home Office's lawyers give up, and stuff the case papers into a great pile awaiting the next undeclared amnesty. There are said to be two million illegals of all types in Britain. Not that immigration judges or lawyers have any great objection to seeing the law fail in so spectacular a fashion. You will be hard pressed to find a Tory judge on an immigration bench, or a Home Office official at a Conservative Garden Party.

For both lawyers and politicians immigration law creates a warm feeling of offering justice to the dispossessed, while in reality handing out gross injustice. It robs poor countries of their brightest citizens, we our taxes. All who deal with it cannot fail to recognise its hypocrisy and cant.

Consider a different warm feeling, the one that arose from the 9000 volts delivered by the power cable of a cross channel express when, as is suspected, it touched with fatal result the foot of a 15-year-old refugee clinging to the train's roof. Until this Autumn

when Germany decided to write its own suicide note, the reason refugees attempted the desperately risky crossing was because every one of them knew that once you set foot on British soil, unless you are exceptionally honest about your motives for coming here, there was only a slim chance of you being deported.

Our weakness as a nation, reflected in our judges and lawyers, is born of fear and vanity. Fear of the witches' accusation of racism, bolstered by a narcissistic faith in the superiority of our culture. We believe that British culture is so right and natural, it is the acid in which all third-world cultures dissolve. We are therefore only too happy for all non-European migrants to sit at our socialist knee and absorb equal opportunity theory, women's rights, child-centred education, gay marriage and males being inferior to females. It is why the establishment is confident that Islam will never become the established religion, Sharia judges will never process to the Inns of Court behind a Somali Lord Chancellor, doctors' waiting rooms will never be segregated, Hindu funeral ghats will never appear on the banks of the Avon or the Cam.

We should take a lesson from King Atahualpa of the Incas. When Pizarro arrived in Peru with 168 soldiers and a handful of missionaries, few of the natives, least of all their king, thought they had anything to fear from such a rag-tag army. But within 14 years the King was dead and Peru in the hands of the Spanish. The key to Pizarro's success, apart from disease and internal faction, were his fanatical Spanish missionaries, the ISIS of the times, who strangled and baptised their way into the heart of Inca society. Islam, the religious hand luggage of a huge number of refugees, which opposes every tenet of our open society, from free speech to the universal franchise, will in two decades be the majority religion in Britain. Liberals think we can erase this culture by reasoned argument, but their lawyers riddling the establishment have removed our only defence, free speech. Britain is being sold to pay their bills.

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Under the Heel of the Femintern

Edward Coplestone



On 12th November 2014 Matt Taylor, an astrophysicist who had helped land a space-probe on a comet hurtling at more than 24 thousand miles an hour through space (a feat compared with landing a fly on a speeding bullet), held a press conference to tell the world about it. He did this while sporting a brightly coloured shirt depicting attractive young women posing in sexy costumes. Feminists around the world immediately recognized that the shirt, rather than the feat of space-exploration, was the real story, and began – by means of countless articles, blog-posts and tweets – a propaganda campaign against him. The barracking continued and intensified until, eventually, Taylor made a televised apology for his error of judgement, during which he broke down in tears.

On the 9th of June 2015 Tim Hunt, a distinguished biochemist and joint winner for the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine, gave a speech to the World Conference of Science Journalists in Seoul, during which he half-cheerfully, half-apologetically, declared that he had always found working with women colleagues in the laboratory something of a trial, given his tendency to fall in love with them, and their tendency to burst into tears when criticised. This little confession, however, was just Hunt's prelude to a more serious matter: he wished to emphasize that South Korea's economic development was due, in part, to the efforts of its female scientists, and he wished to encourage women's further involvement in science 'despite monsters like me'.

Once again, there were feminists, inside and outside the auditorium, who recognized that the hot ticket was not 'even antediluvian old boys like Tim Hunt recognize women's scientific achievements, and would welcome more of them' but rather 'Tim Hunt is a

misogynist who believes a woman's place is anywhere but in the lab!' In the course of the next couple of days Hunt was obliged (on pain of a public sacking) to resign his honorary professorship at UCL.

What do these two cases have in common? There is the obvious discrepancy between the purported wrongdoing and the vengeance wreaked. The right reaction to a man wearing an inappropriate-for-the-occasion shirt, is that he be asked to put on something less distracting; the right reaction to a man who relates an anecdote that doesn't come off, is that he be regaled with silence. To make them the focus of an international hate campaign, to have them declared misogynistic, oppressive malefactors before the tribunal of public opinion, is a response so disproportionate as to make one doubt the sanity of the people behind it. But that, of course, would be to miss the point. It isn't what Taylor and Hunt *did* which brought a tidal wave of opprobrium down on their heads. It is what Taylor and Hunt *are* that matters: two prominent male scientists, and as such the perfect villains in a feminist psycho-drama which has been long in the writing, but for which suitable actors – given the inevitable public reaction – have been reluctant to audition.

This feminist script has been developed to explain the following phenomenon: despite the fact that women constitute a clear majority of university students, comparatively few of them choose to study in the so-called STEM fields – Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics – which continue to be dominated by men. Many of us would regard the sexual complexion of these disciplines to be a matter of indifference, on the grounds that the crucial thing is that engineers, physicists etc be good at their job, irrespective of whether they possess XX or XY chromosomes. But feminists do not see the matter in

this light. For, although they view men's domination of the work force on oil-rigs, down sewers, and in construction, with the same equanimity as do their less militant sisters, they consider women's absence from the prestigious STEM fields to be a dishonour. Surely, given that women have been granted unfettered institutional access to these disciplines, they ought to be as numerous and successful as the men are? What can the matter be?

There are a number of plausible answers to that question. For example, one might speculate that an aptitude for the abstract mathematical thinking so necessary to all STEM disciplines is more common among men than it is among women; or one might, dispensing with such 'essentialism', point out that very few people of either sex feel greatly drawn to such thinking, but that men – who, as prospective heads-of-family, must acquit themselves of their traditional duty to earn as much as possible – have more compelling reasons to get over their distaste for it than do women. But neither of these explanations is acceptable to feminists, who dispute that there is any inherent psychological difference between the sexes, and also that men could ever – in a patriarchal society created to benefit them at every turn – face greater social burdens than women.

What, then, might be an explanation compatible with feminism? Of course. The reason women show little inclination to pursue a career in STEM fields is because the men who dominate them are sexists, misogynists, traditionalists... so that young women, potential Nobel Prize-winners in mathematics and physics, having got wind of such hostility, opt instead to study Theatre Design. The trouble with this explanation, though, is that mathematicians and hard-scientists are no more sexist, misogynist, or traditionalist than their counterparts in the Social Sciences and the Humanities – something we could conclude from the flimsy case against Messrs Taylor and Hunt. One of them wears a garish shirt with some attractive women printed on it, and the other 'outs'himself as somewhat old-fashioned in order to underline the sincerity of his admiration for the achievements of women scientists – that is the best evidence feminists can find that men in STEM fields are keeping women out?

At this point, a fact needs to be shouted from the rooftops – despite its being common knowledge. No woman with the ambition to become a mathematician, a physicist, or an engineer, would be held up for a moment by a shirt or an ill-judged speech – ambition should be made of sterner stuff. And it is. Consider, for example, the sexual transformation of veterinary medicine. This was once an exclusively male preserve, but since the 1980s increasing numbers of women have

been choosing it as their profession, to the point where they now constitute the majority of practitioners. The first cohorts of such aspiring women were taught by crusty old veterinary professors, and in the company of male veterinary students – renowned less for their political correctness than for their propensity to swear, drink, and fornicate to the last degree of immoderation. But that didn't stop them becoming vets, because the mere prospect of occasional boorishness could never dissuade a young woman from doing something she genuinely wanted to do. If all that stood between women and careers in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematical fields were the trivial misjudgements of Taylor and Hunt, they would dominate them by now.

So much is known to everyone – including to the feminists who campaigned against Taylor and Hunt for contributing to the scarcity of women in STEM fields. But what choice did those feminists have? They were hardly in a position to demand of young women applying for university courses in Music or French that – personal preference be damned – they should really be applying to study Engineering or Mathematics, on the grounds that 'more women in STEM must be a good thing'. The answer would inevitably be, 'If it's such a good thing, why didn't you choose a STEM subject, rather than Gender Studies?' The present strategy can best be understood as an unspoken pact between feminists on the one hand and the less ideologically driven female population on the other – a female population which no more wishes to dominate Maths and Science than it wishes to dominate deep-sea fishing, but can see the value in making its own lack of interest in those fields men's fault. 'Don't worry,' is the subliminal message these women receive from feminists, 'we won't reproach you for not specialising in science – good grief, we never wanted to have anything to do with it either! Rather, we're going to foist on society, and particularly on credulous men, the notion that your getting the chance to study what you wanted is evidence of misogyny. In fact, it's nothing short of oppression, for which womankind in general, and you in particular, are owed compensation. Get on to your MP, or at least your husband, about it!'

If one bears this in mind, the apparently inexplicable persecution of Matt Taylor and Tim Hunt makes perfect sense. And it is only a matter of time before other distinguished scientists, presently as ignorant of the ideological venom distilled in Gender Studies classes as an octopus is of macramé, wake up to read in the morning paper that their reputation is ruined and their career at an end.

Edward Copplestone is a linguist [back to contents](#)

Prime Minister Spart

Gabriel Hershman

I once had a long chat with Jeremy Corbyn on the tube. It was a few weeks before New Labour's landslide victory in May 1997. He was reading the *Standard* opposite me when I got on at Victoria. We made eye contact. I said 'Jeremy Corbyn'. He said 'yes' and the paper was immediately deposited inside a little briefcase. My mother always used to say you never get a second chance to make a first impression. I have to say I was pleased. Accessibility. People like that.

Corbyn forecast that Labour would win the election with a majority of 'about 20-30'. This was a rather strange comment. Although public opinion tends to be to the right of pollsters and pundits, there was a palpable expectation of a looming Labour landslide – that people wanted a change after 18 years of Tory rule. Corbyn's prediction, of course, seriously underestimated the pull of New Labour. (Blair won with an overall majority of 179.) Corbyn added that a slender Labour majority would be good because it meant 'we' (which I took to mean members of the Campaign Group of which he was a member) could exercise more leverage against the Blair regime. Corbyn said he continued to support the Bennite doctrines of the early 1980s, mentioned that he thought Arthur Scargill could be 'difficult' and 'authoritarian' but underlined his backing for him too. But what most impressed me was that he peppered me with questions about my attitudes to privatisation and other sundry policies. People like that too. It makes them feel important.

Truth is, most people view politicians as detached, bereft of original ideas and circumspect about expressing them even if they have any. So Corbyn has, perversely, reinvigorated the debate. His campaign warns us about the excesses of the Left and that some crazy pseudo-Marxist ideas have a knack of re-emerging.

But Corbyn's candidature also reminds us of problems that won't go away, the buy-to-stand-empty policies of billionaire oligarchs that leave some areas of London blacked out after 9pm, the impossibility of getting on to the housing ladder for those not earning massive salaries in the financial sector and graduates drowning in debt. Concern about such issues doesn't mean one has suddenly had a conversion to the Corbyn world view

or that one will don a Leninist hat and stick photos of Castro and Chavez on one's wall. These are just issues that all sensible politicians have to address.

So by all means expose some of Corbyn's crazier views. And don't worry unduly about the prospect of a 71-year-old 'veteran socialist' (as the press insist on calling him) walking into Downing Street in 2020. It would be wise, however, not to condescend too much. The more the establishment treats him as an anachronistic irrelevance, the more appealing he becomes to younger voters who feel disenfranchised by the whole process.

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Gabriel Hershman is a British journalist and author currently based in Bulgaria.



Culture

While Islamophobia is widely recognised as an unreasoning hatred of Islam, its twin disorder, Americanophobia, a belief that everything wrong in the world has been caused by America, goes largely unrecognised. Extreme Americanophobics are only too ready to believe the Tunisian Beach massacre was a CIA false flag operation to stoke anti-Muslim feeling in the UK, that 9/11, also run by the CIA, did the same for America, and that Osama Bin Laden, far from being dead, is enjoying a happy retirement in Texas under a witness protection programme in reward for his services to the US. Lesser forms of this bizarre cargo cult, worthy only of primitive New Guinea tribes, that Americans are stupid, their culture childish, their grasp of world politics that of a backward teenager, are common among left wing intellectuals here in Europe. In reality America is the Rome of the modern world, a position it achieved by intense effort and intellectual rigour, and in consequence, like its predecessor, hated by the barbarians it rules. Do we want to join these intellectual forest dwellers or are we America's ally?

Editor

I am offended therefore I am

Theodore Dalrymple

Everywhere there are people willing, and one suspects eager, to take offence at whatever one says or writes. These days we have to mind our Ps and Qs: and our Rs, Ss, Ts, Us, Vs, Ws, etc, as well. It is as if by taking offence these people find meaning in life: not *I think, therefore I am*, but *I'm offended, therefore I am*. And the offended have rights *ex officio*, as it were.

Increasingly, offended people now go crying to mummy – that is to say some official body or other set up ostensibly to prevent or reduce offence, but in reality to provoke it. Complaints rise to meet the number of bodies available for their investigation. The world is now full of enthusiasts (in the Eighteenth Century meaning of the word), obsessives, monomaniacs and fanatics who would like to silence those with whom they disagree on their pet subjects.

Not long ago I published an article in a newspaper about a medical matter. I derived my opinion from the studies published in medical journals. Before long, the newspaper was informed that a complaint to the Independent Press Standards Organisation, IPSO, a body set up in the wake of the Leveson Inquiry, had been made by a reader about the accuracy of my article. IPSO was investigating the complaint and the newspaper asked me to provide documentary evidence in support of my views, which I duly did.

In essence, IPSO was obliged to enter into the question of whether there was any scientific evidence for my views and whether I had seriously misrepresented that evidence. Of course, it had decided for itself that the complaint had come within its remit. The ruling, when it was published, was in my opinion judicious (it ruled in the newspaper's favour), and I have no doubt that those who produce IPSO's rulings are conscientious and serious-minded people who are trying to be fair. Whether they should be producing such rulings at all is another matter entirely, and whether they will remain judicious if the organisation is infiltrated by various obsessives remains to be seen. But it seems to me odd, and by no means reassuring, that the complainant, instead of writing a letter to the editor, or appending

a comment on the article with which he differed on a matter of scientific interpretation on the newspaper's website, or posting his opinion of it on one of the so-called social media, should have resorted to some kind of officialdom to adjudicate between us. There are more ways nowadays for people to express their opinions in public than ever before, but it was as if the informal marketplace of ideas, the normal rough and tumble of discussion, was not good enough for the complainant. He wanted an official *imprimatur* for his view. Just as people are inclined to make the law the sole judge of good and evil by saying in defence of their own behaviour that 'There's no law against it,' so the complainant sought an official seal of truth for his opinion from which no dissent would be tolerated.

Thus an atmosphere of slight but discernible intimidation is set up, a discouragement to forthrightness on yet another subject; for however minor the inconvenience of having to answer a complaint (though with the threat of sanctions if one does not), no one wishes to gain a reputation for constantly

provoking complaint. And since there are so many 'obsessives' about, whose one subject is the focus of all their intellectual energies, and who tirelessly complain, it is safest to avoid the subject altogether. For everyone who is not such an obsessive, after all, the world is full of subjects worthy of remark. Thus the war between the obsessives and the rest of the world is asymmetrical: the little guerrilla army of the obsessed wears down the regular troops of the more balanced.

The person of one subject (valuable as he may be in scholarship, but a menace in public affairs) devotes all his attention to policing attitudes on that one subject, which he demands should be his own. Pressure groups of like-minded enthusiasts, who are often seething with resentment against something in particular and against life in general, can impose their views by making it too expensive in time or painful in emotion to oppose them.

I once crossed swords with such a group of obsessives. I wrote an article (admittedly not in emollient fashion) against their views. They tried as a result to get me sacked from my job and made unpleasant phone calls to me. They were able to trace



me to my home, even before the universal use of the internet; even then they ran a formidable intelligence service. Like many another writer on the subject, from radio journalists to university professors, therefore, I will not return to it. No one wants to fight enthusiasm with an equal though opposite enthusiasm, which is probably the only effective method of countering it.

Marxism, whatever else may be said about it, gave people who were inclined for one reason or another to obsession a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives. As obsessions go, provided it was not adopted by the state, it was a relatively good one, for no one can deny that it sometimes inspired real attempts at scholarship, understanding, and even art and literature. With its decline, however, obsession has become Balkanised, as it were, the Hapsburg Empire of Marxism transformed into petty Balkan obsessions, each anxious to impose its own orthodoxy by the same methods of intimidation. An increasing number of subjects are now off-limits to the wary; pressure groups long ago realised that you don't have to go in for the crudity of Islamic fatwas

and the *Charlie Hebdo* killings to exclude unwanted commentary. Who after the dismissal of Professor Sir Timothy Hunt by the cowards and poltroons of University College, London, terrorised as they were by the National Union of Harridans, would dare to repeat his sentiments in public, even as a joke? If a Nobel Prize doesn't protect a man from a witch-hunt, what hope is there for the rest of us?

Freedom of expression and opinion, while it requires a general institutional framework, is also (and importantly) a habit of the heart and a discipline: namely a willing suspension of outrage towards those with whom we disagree, however strongly. 'Maintain your rage,' the Australian Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, said to his supporters after he was dismissed from office by the Governor-General. I say (including to myself because, alas, it is often necessary to do so), control your rage, for a nation of obsessed *enragés* cannot be free.

Theodore Dalrymple is a retired prison doctor and psychiatrist.

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A Rich Harvest of Lies

James Docherty

In the United States in the 1990's, the media were full of reports of 'recovered memory'. Therapists had discovered that the anorexia or depression of which their clients complained was often due to sexual assaults in childhood. The culprit was usually the father and many men were charged and sometimes convicted.

The subject was discussed seriously in the journals by psychologists, psychiatrists and lawyers. Still in print are the many books and articles published at the time; some supporting the theory, but most rejecting it. Cases which led to prosecution raised serious doubts. George Franklin was convicted of murder, solely on the evidence of a daughter who had suddenly recalled something she had seen thirty years earlier. One Gary Carmona sued his daughter's therapist and got \$500,000. Another accused dad hired a female detective to enrol as a patient of his girl's therapist. After three sessions

she was told that her (fictitious) symptoms were the result of sexual abuse in childhood. The subject was discussed in a serious way and eventually the notion of 'repressed' or 'recovered' memory was discredited and no attorney would now present it to an American court.

In Britain in the past year there have been hundreds of cases of people who claim to have suffered sexual abuse thirty or forty years earlier, not, curiously enough, by Dad or Uncle Jack, but by teachers, priests and politicians. The government takes the accusations at face value and has set up an inquiry into 'historic offences'. Lawyers have been busy on TV and in the press and there is now an 'Association of Child Abuse Solicitors'. Their clients are interviewed sympathetically by the media, who refer to them as 'victims' or 'survivors'. There are titillating hints about 'a former Minister', 'a Bishop in the Midlands' and 'the headmaster of a well known Public School'.



In our free and untrammelled press, no one has dared to suggest that some, at least, of these ‘victims’ might be mistaken, that some may have imagined incidents of years after or indeed, that some may have invented stories in the hope of financial gain. Victims may be able to recall events of long ago in detail, but those who write about them seem unaware of anything earlier than last week. Books like *The Myth of Repressed Memory* by Elizabeth Loftus and *Making Monsters* have been widely read in the US and in Britain but not, apparently by the media. Our home-grown scandals have made as little impact – the Cleveland Sexual Abuse case, 1987 and the Great Orkney Satanic Abuses Case in 1991-2. In each case an official inquiry concluded that children had been removed and adults accused without evidence or justification. Poor Lord Clyde, listening to hours of rubbish about the devil and all his works in Kirkwall, may have thought about that similar case in *The Crucible*: John Proctor: ‘there might be a dragon with five legs in my house’. Rev Parris: ‘We are here Your Honour, precisely to discover what no one has ever seen.’ One does not need to be a doctor or a psychiatrist to know that people have sometimes

completely forgotten past events and have ‘recalled’ forgotten others that could not have happened. Young people often have sexual fantasies. Crushes on teachers are well known, but such facts are not mentioned in the papers: easier to print gossip about Lady Butler-Sloss’s late brother or Dame Fiona Woolf’s friends.

The intellectual feebleness of much public debate in Britain is displayed not only by lazy journalists. One might have hoped that here, as in the US, an eminent lawyer or a professor of law would have raised doubts about the legal issues. As far as I know, none has spoken. Would it be unduly cynical to suggest that they don’t wish to spoil the rich harvest that their colleagues hope to gather from these cases? The inquiry could run for years and the members of the Association of Child Abuse Solicitors are on to a good thing.

Even nastier than the financial aspect is that anyone who has had any contact with children is at risk, forty years on, of being accused of a crime against which there can be no defence. Uncorroborated accusation is met with simple denial: whom will the jury believe?

James Docherty is a retired general practitioner.

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Hadrian’s Last Ditch

Mark Griffith

While some refugees from the Near East are entering the EU on makeshift boats and rafts, a growing number are taking the overland approach up through Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia. In early July this prompted the government of Hungary to start building a border fence, claiming it will be finished by November. The numbers of people being caught entering Hungary without papers across the Serbian border have passed over 1,000 a day, increasing quickly. This route up the Danube through Serbia or Croatia was the way the Ottoman Turks brought armies deeper into Europe. Muslim Caliph Suleiman the Magnificent personally led an army of over 100,000 men this way when he came to besiege Vienna in 1529.

The wave of refugees attempting to enter the European Union through Hungary might reach the size of Suleiman’s army this year, but of course they are unarmed. Ministry officials told me off the record that in the whole of 2014 on the Hungarian-Serbian border 37,000 refugees were arrested (pointing out that they don’t know how many got through without being

captured by border guards), while in the first half of this year, 2015, already around 65,000 people have been caught coming over that section of border, from where they’re put in old Soviet barracks at different points of the country while the authorities process their asylum claims. A smaller or larger number of people might have successfully crossed through the unfenced woods that dot the frontier. Numbers are climbing steadily: over 1,200 a day are being arrested along the border with Serbia at the moment, sometimes 1,300, usually in the mornings. With this in mind, a year-end total of over 150,000 arrested border-crossers for 2015 sounds more than plausible.

Although the militant state of Daesh has boasted the refugee groups contain sleeper cells and future terrorists, these unfortunates are clearly not an army, so the comparison with Suleiman’s janissaries is rather unfair. Many of the refugees seem desperate and helpless. Daesh in its Arabic name (ISIS as it pompously labels itself in English) is bound to say the refugees are seeded with subversive future terrorists, which fits right in with their big-mouthed approach to self-publicity. Most likely

the refugees are just what they seem – displaced people who have lost everything. They dream of reaching somewhere prosperous like Germany or Sweden to make a better life for themselves. In towns 5 or 6 miles inside the frontier all along this section of south-western Hungary you can see the successful refugees in groups of 20 or 30, those who got through the forests without being caught by border patrols. Whether they are part of the lucky few or the lucky many it's hard to tell. Mainly Syrians and Afghans, they stand around in baking unshaded heat outside railway stations with their children, talking in broken English to aid volunteers at impromptu soup kitchens serving sandwiches and bottled water. July and August in Hungary are far hotter than most visitors expect.



Muslim refugees flood Budapest (courtesy Edd Carlile)

Although the countryside that will have Hungary's first newly-wired border in half a century is lush, not unlike a very fertile and fruitful version of southern England, the refugees know a not-so-prosperous republic when they see one. The hot summers and the plum trees (along with the apricots, walnuts, two kinds of cherry tree, melons, sweetcorn...) have little to offer homeless foreigners. There isn't much use for extra people on the land, and Hungary is still mainly a nation of villages. Foreign refugees really need to find large cities further north to have a hope of finding a niche they can survive in; they need to get to Hamburg, Rotterdam, Paris, London or Vienna.

The last attempt by the Ottoman Muslim Caliphate to capture Vienna with a big land army occurred as recently as 1683. After all, it was only in 1453, a couple of centuries earlier, that they had overrun Constantinople (now Istanbul), the great capital of Eastern Rome, then thought impregnable. So why not Vienna again? They had almost managed it in 1529. So in 1683 another 100,000+ well-equipped soldiers under the command of Kara Mustafa Pasha came this way. They breached and took control of part of the Austrian capital's city walls by mid-July. The Viennese defenders showed grit and hung on grimly until a daring mid-September attack by fresh Polish reinforcements pushed the Turks back into Hungary.

Hungary's announcement that it would build a 4-metre/12-foot-high fence along a hundred miles of wooded, rural border with Serbia came right after a campaign of large billboards telling immigrants

to respect the country's culture. These were written in Hungarian, making them transparently a gesture to Hungarian voters and no-one else. Both moves distressed *bien-pensants* further west. German Chancellor Angela Merkel said the fence 'made no sense', a remark perhaps easier to say in Berlin than on the border of a country whose inhabitants still mourn their defeat by the Ottomans at the 1526 Battle of

Mohacs. Whatever other sins he may commit, Hungarian prime minister Viktor Orban still has quite a good ear for public opinion, and every Hungarian I've spoken to thinks this fence makes perfect sense. However, even liberal-minded Hungarian urbanites who privately concede they see the point of closing the border have long been

embarrassed by the Fidesz government's xenophobia. Some groups responded to the billboard campaign by paying for some billboards of their own – using the identical font and layout to the government posters but in English, apologising to visitors to Hungary for their prime minister's rudeness.

Construction of a short test section of the border fence at the town of Morahalom has been underway for about two weeks now. The test section will be around 170 metres in length (under 200 yards) and is intended to allow comparison of three separate designs for strength. Once they finish that 200-yard stretch, only another 109 miles left to do. That's slightly longer than Hadrian's Wall. There is much muttering about how Hungary was once famous for cutting *open* a fence, the Iron Curtain, a comparison that's not strictly fair. In the summer of 1989 communist Hungarian Foreign Minister Gyula Horn, along with his Austrian counterpart, pulled down a section of the border fence in front of press cameras. East Germans inside Hungary were allowed across the border in the following weeks, helping to bring down the Berlin Wall, the Communist East German government, and the USSR. Everyone knew the Iron Curtain was to keep East Europeans *in*. This new fence is to keep people out.

Many people reading that Hungary is walling off Serbia must have blinked and asked themselves – so there isn't a fence already? It might be a surprise to hear that land borders are usually unmarked. Fences are expensive to build and patrol – for one thing anyone serious about making a barrier like this usually has to cut down thousands of trees so there is 20 or 30 yards

of clear land either side of the wire, making it hard to approach or cut under cover. That's one reason the Iron Curtain was famous: they *actually built it*, and at great cost. Back in the 1990s I once crossed a border with no visa and no money through the forest (from Slovakia into Poland) largely to see what it was like. When you're inside the woods it's not easy to spot where that international dotted line is. I would reach a tree roughly daubed with a swipe of blue gloss paint and another swipe of red paint: must still be in Czechoslovakia (no repainting to mark the separation of Czechs and Slovaks a couple of years earlier). Twenty trees on another tree trunk smeared with a six-inch-wide stripe of white house paint and another of red paint. Still in the forest, but this must be Poland. No fence, no wire, no row of sticks on the ground.

There might have been landmines of course, but then I wouldn't be around to write this. After you cross an actively-policed border this way (though I'm certainly not recommending readers try this themselves) there is an eerie sense of having seen behind the fake stage set. 500 yards away, a single road leading to a striped pole is funneling a mile-long queue of crawling road vehicles past two armed men rubber-stamping passports. Yet either side of that symbolic crossing the woods offer no barrier to anyone prepared to walk for a couple of hours.

Many people applauding the achievement of visa-free travel inside the Schengen zone of EU countries don't realise that most of the west European fences were never there to start with. Anyone prepared to step ten feet outside the regulations has been crossing land borders without papers for centuries. Typically the only sign you're in a new country when you cross through the 'green border' is some official symbol in the first villages, not on the frontier itself – different-coloured postboxes, or otherwise identical corner shops signposted in another language. Every villager near a European land frontier violates that invisible line many times a week, whether to pick mushrooms in no-man's land or to take a naked summer dip in that secluded pond in the woods.

On my trips to see the fence with Serbia I met lots of characters with that knowledge that borders aren't real. A train driver laughed and suggested the fence might get more people to buy tickets for his near-empty cross-border train again. A middle-aged lady ringleader of some comical cigarette smugglers (after first taking me for an undercover customs agent) told me that no-one likes Viktor Orban because he's corrupt, but no-one likes the refugees either. She was quite pleased with

her even-handed allocation of dislikes. Some border guards grumbled that Greece was not doing its duty and was just passing refugees onward as fast as it could. Everyone liked the idea of the fence but doubted it would be built on schedule.

On the grander scale of course the fence will fail. Hungary has a much longer border with Romania, which itself has even longer and harder-to-police borders with the south and east. Hungary is simply the boldest of the EU members belatedly realising that the outside membrane is full of holes, and plugging a few is wise. It naturally doesn't want to carry on indefinitely

stocking disused Soviet barracks across the country with tens of thousands of destitute Syrians, all with asylum claims to process. Hungary has sound domestic reasons to slow the flow. But

what Churchill called the soft underbelly of Europe, especially the long Italian coast, is going to be near-impossible to close. The fence-them-out strategy also leads to increasing paranoia in European cities, nastier politics, and an ever-growing drive to chip, bug and tag citizens with barcodes, ID cards, and DNA tracking. Stopping hundreds of thousands, and soon enough millions, of desperate people with nothing to lose is harder than it sounds on paper. A real solution would be a different article, but the fundamental choice is one that Europe had to take before, under similar pressure from forces pushing out of the Near East: to retreat or to expand. The West expanding again might seem unthinkable now, but thinks often get rethought.

As I shelter from the burning sun inside one cool railway station near the border, the girl at the sandwich counter tells me excitedly how the fence test sections are being made with special tough bracing so that refugees cannot just charge it down. I ask if the government really will build the whole thing right along the border. 'Oh yes,' she says, 'There's no doubt about that. Everyone wants it built.'

But then she bursts out laughing and raises both her hands, wiggling, on each side of her head. 'But the refugees will just burrow underneath!' she chortles, making the universal scrabbling gesture for being a mole ...who is digging a hole.

Mark Griffith lives in Budapest and tweets regularly from a Twitter account at <http://twitter.com/worldcrisisbook>

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Mindfulness: Psychobabble or Therapy?

Alistair Miller

Ever since Rousseau's *Emile* leapt fully formed into the educational consciousness, (he consigned his other bastards to a foundling home where most perished) there has been a strong current of progressive child-centred education running counter, though not always counterproductively (witness the kindergarten) to the mainstream. Its main targets have been teaching (which should be less didactic, more discovery-centred, its curriculum content more relevant to pupils' needs, its discipline, naturally, less authoritarian). But the progressives have never attempted to manage what pupils actually think or feel – until now.

With the advent of social and emotional education, something more profound is afoot. The 'SEAL' (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) programme, inspired by Daniel Goleman's work on emotional intelligence and now a staple of the school curriculum, already seeks to manage pupils' emotions so as to enhance their feeling of well-being by (according to the Department for Education's SEAL guidance) learning to say things like 'I know what makes me feel good and know how to enhance these comfortable feelings'. Over the past two decades, the new science of positive psychology claims it has provided a mass of empirical evidence to support this therapeutic turn in education. But these developments have, as yet, been confined to the periphery of the curriculum.

However, social and emotional education has now returned to the stage in a far more virulent form. It would be easy to dismiss mindfulness (a form of heightened awareness brought about by meditation) as a harmless fad, a useful stress-reduction tool for high-achievers or the self-obsessed in search of meaning. It may well be that, like positive psychology, its predecessor, it has clinical value as a form of cognitive behaviour therapy for patients suffering from chronic anxiety and depression; indeed, it is endorsed by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence and prescribed by a growing number of GPs. What is disturbing is that mindfulness is now being taught as a key subject in a growing number of schools, not merely as a motivational aid, but as a means of better focusing attention and generally enhancing well-being

by altering the entire mental and emotional outlook – the consciousness – of the pupil. It would be hard to imagine anything more Orwellian.

The godfather of mindfulness in the West is generally acknowledged to be Jon Kabat-Zinn, a professor of medicine at the University of Massachusetts medical school, who recast the ancient Buddhist practice of developing mindful attention through meditation as a stress-reduction programme ('mindfulness-based stress reduction' or 'MBSR'). The idea, according to Kabat-Zinn, is to cultivate through meditation 'particular qualities of attention and awareness ... the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment'. Mountains of research papers claim that mindfulness training reduces anxiety and depression, enhances 'positive emotional states' and general feelings of well-being, and by enhancing the capacity to focus attention has the potential to raise academic achievement. An All Party Parliamentary Group has been formed to study the benefits of incorporating mindfulness into public policy and no less than 70 parliamentarians and staff have enrolled on mindfulness courses. The 'Mindfulness in Schools Project' is busy designing training programmes for pupils and their teachers, and these are being taken up by a growing number of schools, state and private.

What, then, are we to make of this research evidence? So far as well-being is concerned, mindfulness suffers from the same circular reasoning as positive psychology. By equating well-being or happiness in the sense of 'the good life' with a state of mind that characterises the cheerful optimistic extravert untroubled by anxieties or doubts, it is almost guaranteed that mindfulness training will raise levels of well-being in the short run. But this tells us nothing significant except that proponents of mindfulness subscribe to the contemporary cult of extraversion, according to which introverts are diagnosed as mentally ill and in need of psychiatric treatment or therapy.

The argument that mindfulness training enhances the capacity to focus attention by training the pupil not to get entangled in distractive thoughts and feelings, but

rather to observe them with detachment and allow them to float harmlessly by, is more interesting. But though the research evidence here is plausible, the nagging question remains ‘if mindfulness is so advantageous, why did we not evolve to attend mindfully in the first place?’ Why is it that our minds typically wander for around half the time we are supposed to be sustaining attention on the task in hand? This opens up an intriguing avenue of research, and though not nearly as voluminous (or indeed marketable) as it is for mindfulness, there is research in this area to draw on. In a paper entitled ‘Ode to positive constructive daydreaming’, Rebecca McMillan, Scott Kaufman and Jerome Singer review this mind wandering research and conclude that ‘positive constructive daydreaming’ has numerous adaptive functions: it enables people to make personal sense of their thoughts and experiences, to access key insights and precious memories, make sense of troubling events, incubate ideas and revisit unsolved problems, reinterpret the past and frame future plans; in other words, our mental health, our creative and intellectual activity, and our self-understanding require that we do not live in the present ‘mindfully’. In the light of this research, it would be much better to have pupils exercise frequently (which research also shows reduces stress and improves concentration) – or indeed, chew gum, drink green tea, cuddle dogs, gaze at trees, smell flowers, sleep longer and go fishing – and forget about mindfulness.

There is, however, a more profound problem with the notion of mindfulness in education, and this concerns the nature of the well-being it is supposed to foster. A state of mindfulness does not merely entail stress-reduction; it engenders an entire mental and emotional outlook. In Buddhism, the aim is to eliminate anxiety and suffering, to induce a sense of calm acceptance and heightened awareness of the present, by extinguishing the self, the soul and the ego. We are at one with the world in a state of impersonal consciousness exuding enlightenment and compassion; and there may well be times when we wish we could be transported into this state. But there is a price to pay. Our Western civilization is founded on the intimation that there is a self, that this self has a soul, and that each self exists in relation to others and to God. On the one hand, the belief that man is made in the image of God, that man contains a divine spark, is the spur to the marvellous creative achievements of the West. On the other hand, it imposes on us a moral duty to lead a certain sort

of life, to recognise that all people are equal before God; and for Christians, it imposes a particular call to sacrificial love – a call not to radiate compassion, but, as in the parable of the Good Samaritan, to love your God with all your heart, and your neighbour as yourself. All this, we stand to lose.

Applied to education, the mindfulness project symbolises the final retreat from liberal learning. There will still be academic study, if only out of economic necessity; but any notion that education might initiate into a cultural inheritance, that it might furnish an ideal of the good life, has gone. It is because mindfulness is symptomatic of something insidious that it is all the more dangerous. Who could possibly argue against a ‘scientifically proven’ recipe for raising pupils’ well-being and, potentially, their academic achievement? Except that the achievements of Western civilization were not purchased through mindfulness of the present moment, heightened self-awareness, and the suspension of judgement; but through the



Mindfulness, psychobabble?

initiation, in Michael Oakeshott’s words, into ‘a continuity of feelings, perceptions, ideas, engagements, attitudes and so forth’ that together compose ‘what I shall call a conversational encounter’. In *The Voice of Liberal Learning*, Oakeshott writes that the Delphic injunction ‘Know Thyself’ was not ‘an exhortation to buy a book on psychology’ but to ‘learn from what men have made of this engagement of learning to be a man’.

If mindfulness produces a state of heightened awareness and psychic well-being, it is only because as cultural, moral and spiritual beings, we have extinguished ourselves in the process. In programming children to be mindful, have we not, in fact, perfectly realised Rousseau’s vision for Emile? When presented with the challenge of parenting his own children, Rousseau elected to send them to a foundling home, where many of them died. The fictional Emile, by contrast, was the beneficiary of a totalitarian programme of mental and emotional training. In Rousseau’s chilling words, ‘So long as I could not get the mastery over his will, I retained my control over his person; I never left him for a moment. Now I sometimes leave him to himself because I control him continually’.

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Alistair Miller’s book A New Vision of Liberal Education: The Good of the Unexamined Life is to be published this year by Routledge.

Vichy TV

Daryl McCann

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) runs a television programme called *Q&A*, our very own version of the BBC's *Question Time*. Five (mostly left-leaning) public figures make up the panel, along with left-leaning host Tony Jones, who responds to left-leaning questions by a left-leaning audience in what the ABC officially calls 'adventures in democracy'. The purveyors of left-wing opinion in Australia, the ABC, the Fairfax press, the cognoscenti, the Labor-Greens and so on, are not only subject to groupthink but the kind of groupthink that is seemingly incapable of entertaining a contrarian position on anything. For the most part, *Q&A*'s treatment of token conservative politicians or pundits has all the attraction of watching Romans feeding Christians to the lions.

Ordinary Australians have more pressing things to attend to on a Monday evening than watch the tax-funded commentariat disparaging ordinary Australians. Only occasionally do they sit up and notice. This happened, for instance, back in 2010 when a member of the audience threw a pair of shoes at former conservative Prime Minister John Howard. Controversy again ensued again this year, after the Monday, June 22, programme when a chap called Zaky Mallah turned up in a *Q&A* audience to censure the Abbott government's Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Steven Ciobo, about the Coalition's proposed new citizenship rules for those joining violent Jihadist movements. Mallah was found guilty in 2005 of threatening to kill Australian government officials but was acquitted of terrorist charges. His pre-approved *Q&A* question asked whether Parliamentary Secretary Ciobo thought the government's proposed new anti-terrorist legislation, had it been in force a decade ago, would have denied Mallah justice. This disingenuous thrust was sharp enough to draw immediate applause from the 'non-partisan' audience representing the – cough, cough – full diversity of Australian opinion. The crowd, to be fair, might have been unaware of Zaky Mallah's on-going terrorist sympathies and so had the impression everything was proceeding according to *Q&A*'s customary narrative: victim holds to account a conservative through an act of

public shaming. Cue for two minutes (or fifteen seconds) of Orwellian hate.

And then it all went wrong. This attempt to embarrass the Abbott government came undone because Steven Ciobo happened to know the full particulars of Mallah's case before the Supreme Court along with the Islamist's continuing endorsement of militant Jihadism. More than a decade ago Zaky Mallah purchased a rifle and ammunition and made a farewell video after being denied a passport to travel to the Middle East. Soon after he was charged under Australia's new anti-terrorism act when he accepted \$500 from an undercover agent posing as a journalist. Mallah, in exchange for the money, planned to take hostages at the headquarters of ASIO, Australia's security agency, before providing the 'reporter' with the inside story.

Mallah, according to Justice Woods, was less a full-blown terrorist (excuse the expression) than a professional provocateur who 'enjoyed posing as a potential martyr' – just the sort of character who now encourages an increasing number of Australian Muslims to identify themselves as victims of institutionalised bigotry and oppression. This is the mouthpiece the ABC selected to undermine the Abbott government's anti-terrorist legislation.

Instead of beating a retreat in the face of Mallah's phoney victimhood, Parliamentary Secretary Ciobo took the offensive: 'I am happy to look you straight in the eye and say I'd be pleased to be a part of a government that would say you're out of the country as far as I'm concerned. I would sleep very soundly with that point of view.' Mallah was panicked into disclosing his real agenda on live national television: 'The Liberals (conservatives) have justified many Australian Muslims in the community tonight to leave and go to Syria and join ISIL because of members like him.' The formerly supportive audience was silenced. An alarmed Tony Jones went into emergency mode, ruling Mallah's admonition 'out of order' and insisting on an abrupt change of topic, but it was all too late. 'Traitor TV!' screamed the headlines in the morning tabloids after discovering the ABC had facilitated Mallah's not-so



Limitless indulgence of the left towards ISIS atrocities

random appearance on the show. Even Prime Minister Abbott, usually circumspect in his comments about the national broadcaster, came up with this question for the *Q&A* team and the ABC in general: ‘Whose side are you on?’ He also placed a temporary ban on his ministers appearing as guests on the programme.

A representative of *Q&A* was forced to admit ‘an error of judgement’ but in our modern-day *Kulturkampf* only one side gets to play victim – and that, of course, can never be the side of ordinary Australians, let alone the conservative Coalition government. Two days later, the ABC’s managing director Mark Scott was blasting Tony Abbott for wanting to turn the tax-funded corporation into an ideologically driven state broadcaster of the type currently operating in North Korea, Russia, China and Vietnam. Scott had it wrong on a number of counts. Nobody in Australia can name a single journalist, director, writer or presenter in the ABC’s vast radio, television and online network who might be even vaguely sympathetic to our conservative Abbott administration. The ABC is not the mouthpiece for a government viewpoint but its intractable enemy. The editorial bias of the ABC makes its creedal orthodoxy analogous to that of state-aligned broadcasters in North Korea, Russia, China or Vietnam – not *because* of government interference but, rather, in the absence of an outside authority demanding a strict adherence to its charter, which insists upon a balance of political viewpoints being presented.

The bohemian socialist dogma of the ABC might not be as deadly as North Korea’s *Juche* or *Kimilsungism* but it is tiresome and stultifying enough. Australia’s national broadcasting network abhors ideological diversity but has taken upon itself, in the name of so-called *cultural* diversity, to provide a platform for the grievance industry. This rainbow of incongruous discontents is held together by a kind of negative cohesion, necessitating a shifting hierarchy of victimhood depending on the circumstances at play. When *Q&A*’s Terry Jones, at the outset of the 29 June programme, apologised on behalf of the ABC for allowing Zaky Mallah to be a part of a live television audience, the contrite host did so on the grounds of two misogynist Tweets coming to light and *not* because of the Islamist’s past criminal record or known sympathies for violent Jihadism.

This devotion to diversity and inclusivity, opined ABC managing director Mark Scott, was why an extremist such as Zaky Mallah was on *Q&A* in the first place: ‘At times, free speech principles mean giving platforms to those with whom we fundamentally disagree. It was the crux of the *Charlie Hebdo* argument last year and, of course, the source of the maxim that was used to describe Voltaire’s beliefs.’ The idea that the ABC defends the rights of conservatives, let alone to the death, whilst employing only left-wing staff for political commentary strikes many as risible. The *Charlie Hebdo* illusion is especially odd, since the Australian left tends to think

that French journalists and artists provoked their own deaths. But there are still honourable voices among Australian journalists. Chris Kenny, responding to Scott in the *Weekend Australian* newspaper, encapsulated the disingenuousness of the ABC’s managing director: ‘The artists and journalists slaughtered in Paris in January were targeted because they refused to cower in the face of Islamist extremists. What *Q&A* did was virtually the opposite.’

When watching an ABC programme or listening to its radio service I often experience a sense that Australia must have lost an important war somewhere, our own Battle of France, only the public has yet to be informed. It is not so much ‘Traitor TV!’ as Vichy TV. The nihilism at the heart of modern-day Leftism blames Australia, and more generally the West, for everything from the Catastrophic Anthropogenic Global Warming hoax to the genesis of the Islamic State. Our way towards ‘national revival’, as per Vichy, can only come from blaming ourselves for all the wrongs of the world and atoning for past sins. The appearance on *Q&A* of Zaky Mallah, convicted criminal and terrorist sympathiser, constituted a ploy on the part of the ABC to propagate a leftist delusion about the inequities of strengthening national security. Mallah has now admitted as much: ‘The producers called me back and got back to me and said, ‘Look, we are going to restructure your question, take some things out, add some things in’’. The ABC’s plan to denigrate the Coalition was only foiled after a conservative politician stood his ground, causing the terrorist sympathiser to abandon his carefully scripted performance and explicitly justify Global Jihad in terms of blowback from Western bigotry.

Jolted by the cries of ‘Traitor TV!’ the national broadcaster did announce the formation of an editorial review to investigate any political partisanship in *Q&A* over the past 23 programmes. Two left-leaning former ABC employees were duly appointed for the task, administrator Shaun Brown and television personality Ray Martin. The latter went on the record – *before* the panel’s first meeting – to predict a not guilty verdict: ‘I suspect that Tony Jones was just as tough on the Labor government as he is on the Coalition right now.’ Brian McNair, Professor of Journalism at the Queensland University of Technology, was not alone among progressives in dismissing as spurious the notion of a ‘conspiracy within the ABC to denigrate or undermine the right-wing of politics in Australia’. Nevertheless, the good professor anticipated ‘some impartial, fact-based answers to the charges of *Q&A* bias’ from the Brown-Martin enquiry, despite admitting this ‘might be touching naiveté’ on his part. That would be one way to describe it.

Daryl McCann has a blog at <http://darylmccann.blogspot.com.au> [back to contents](#)

Tossing Bad Euros after Dodgy Drachmas

Demetri Marchessini



In order to write knowledgeably about Greece, one must first know something about its history. The first thing one must grasp is that Greece has never been a self-sustaining country. It has always existed on remittances from Greeks living abroad, or 'loans' from other countries, particularly Britain, France and the United States. Since modern Greece was established in 1832, the Greek Government has defaulted seven times, and has spent ninety of those one hundred and eighty three years, since independence, in financial crisis – either in default or in debt restructuring. It was, therefore, insane of the Euro Zone to admit Greece. It is rather like entering a donkey in the Derby.

This situation is due to several reasons. One is that Greece is a poor country. Another is that there is a history of dishonesty, because of the 400 years of Ottoman rule. But most of all because, since its inception as a sovereign country, Greece has been ruled by the government civil service. Greeks are naturally clever and hard working, and the Greeks who have emigrated abroad to the US or Australia have been very successful. But in Greece, it is not possible to succeed unless one has very good political connections.

The most important problem in Greece, which is never addressed either by the government or by the Western press, is the Greek civil service. The UK has a population of roughly 65 million, and has about 500,000 civil servants. Greece has a population of 11 million, so by analogy, it should have roughly 85,000 civil servants. But it actually has 785,000 civil servants. In other words, there are 700,000 people in Greece not doing any work, but being paid. 50,000 of them do not even have desks. They, therefore, do not bother going to work, but they still get paid. Not long ago, a man was killed in Salonika. The two accomplices were caught, and sent to jail. Recently, it came to light that while in jail, they were still being paid by the government, because they were civil servants. That is Greece. Indeed, until recently it was illegal to sack government civil servants. The Troika forced the previous government to repeal its law so it is now possible, but the previous government only succeeded in sacking 12,500 people. As soon as the

present government came into power, the first thing it did was reinstate the 12,500 people. Now, to be fair, it would be very difficult for any country to sack 700,000 people. Together with their families, that would be 3 million people, which is 30 per cent of Greece. Yet the fact remains that 70 per cent of Greece is supporting 30 per cent, who do no work.

There has been a lot of clamouring about Greeks not paying their taxes, but if you look at a list of the amount of tax paid by various European countries, Greece is not at the bottom. That is because although Greeks pay less income tax, they pay other taxes which other countries do not have. Also, although the rich people are as usual blamed for not paying tax, the non-payment of tax is much more pervasive in the lower and middle classes (taxi drivers, shopkeepers etc). It is very difficult for the government to force these people to pay more tax, because many of them are already on the brink of poverty, and paying more tax would put them under. Finally, the Income Tax inspectors are dishonest. If an Income Tax inspector comes to your office, and asks for a bribe in return for reducing your tax, what would you say? Would you refuse, and infuriate him?

The Euro-Zone has only two choices – support Greece indefinitely, or kick Greece out of the Euro-Zone. Obviously, the only sensible solution is to do the latter. The problem is that the Euro-Zone members are reluctant to do so, because Greek bonds are held in their balance sheets at face value, and if they had to write them off, that would be a big hit on their already fragile balance sheets. In addition to that, there is the money owed by Greece to the European Central Bank under Target 2. Any losses by the ECB must be split between all the members. This, in effect, means that most of the bill will have to be picked up by Germany, and now we are talking enormous numbers. So the Euro-Zone countries wriggle and try to postpone the evil day. But, surely, it cannot be sensible to throw good money after bad?

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Demetri Marchessini has been active in shipping for most of his life and regularly writes blogs and tweets.

1985: The Defeat of the Miners' Strike

Christie Davies

It is now thirty years since the end of the last major miners' strike, truly a turning point in British history. The strike of the coal miners in 1984-5 was one of the longest, bitterest and most close-run industrial disputes in recent British history. The defeat of the miners in 1985 seriously undermined a trade union movement that had become overwhelmingly powerful and had dominated politics in the 1970s to the detriment of the country.

In 1983 Mrs Thatcher appointed Ian Kinloch MacGregor, a tough Scottish Calvinist who had worked in America, to be the head of the National Coal Board. Mr MacGregor had previously overseen the rationalization of British Steel, greatly reduced its losses and halved the size of its work force. His remit was to reduce the size of the very large subsidy given to the coal industry; it was clear that this could only be achieved through the closure of a large number of loss-making collieries. Given that Arthur Scargill, the President of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) was a militant socialist, it was clear that there was going to be a confrontation.

In March 1984 Scargill announced that there would be a national strike covering all of Britain's coalfields. Scargill did not ballot his members to get their agreement, on the grounds that it would be unfair if the miners in secure pits and regions were to vote to ignore the plight of those whose jobs were being threatened. If there had been a vote, Scargill would have lost, as he had done in ballots on questions of redundancies in 1982 and 1983. However, his position was undermined when the miners of Nottinghamshire and southern Derbyshire simply continued working and voted out those of their local union officials who were loyal to Scargill; these miners saw the strike as unconstitutional since they had not been properly consulted. They were later to form a breakaway union, the Union of Democratic Mineworkers. The proportion of miners who went on strike was also very low in Leicestershire and North Wales where black-faced blacklegs were in the majority. One group of Nottinghamshire miners took the NUM to court

for illegally striking without a ballot. The union was very heavily fined and to avoid paying the fine the NUM moved its assets abroad.

The strike lasted for a year and was marked by considerable violence between the union's pickets and those miners who continued working. There was further violence between the pickets and police officers brought in to protect the working miners and to ensure the free movement of supplies of coal. The miners lost in 1985 because Mrs Thatcher's government was extremely well prepared for a fight, something that had not been true with Heath the Unready. In 1974 severe power shortages had led to the imposition of a three-day working week to save electricity and to conserve stocks of coal. People were forced to light their homes with imported candles. But in 1984 substantial stocks of coal had been built up in readiness for a new strike. Road haulage firms were ready to shift the coal to where it was needed and to blacklist drivers who refuse to co-operate. It meant that any attempt by the railway unions to boycott the movement of coal, coke and oil could have no effect. Police from all over the country were mobilized and sent to the coalfields to ensure that the coal got through and that mobs of militant miners from Kent or Yorkshire could not easily travel across country to cause trouble at the pits in the Midlands that were still working. It is worth noting in passing that in areas in the south of England that had had half their police force drafted to the coal mining areas there was no rise in the crime rate.

As important as the output of the pits not on strike was the importation of large quantities from Poland. The Soviet Union had expressed sympathy and support for the NUM but Poland was utterly desperate for hard currency, just to keep its economy in being. The NUM was so angry that it placed an official picket line outside the embassy of the People's Republic of Poland. Scargill had anyway rather limited support among the workers in Poland, since he had opposed the formation of the free trade union Solidarity, which he had accused of sabotage and trying to bring down

a Socialist government. Now with the NUM trying to bring down a democratically elected government in Britain, the Polish workers returned the compliment. Scargill had given his support to General Jaruzelski's government during the time of martial law in 1981. The Polish workers must be loyal to their Communist masters and stop rattling their chains. The irony is that the Polish miners in Silesia who might have supported the NUM were prevented by their government from going on strike; they were quite unable to frustrate the mining of scab Polish coal and its export to Britain. Socialist oppression in Poland had saved democratic capitalism in Britain.

The miners lost their long war of attrition because they ran out of funds. Mrs Thatcher's government was able to spend a great deal on the fight, whereas the miners' funds had been sequestered or driven into exile. The miners received very little financial support from the other unions,



though the gallant little Lesbian and Gay Support the Miners' group, the LGSM, did raise a substantial sum through its wonderful benefit concert, Pits and Perverts at the Electric Ballroom in Camden. More and more miners began returning to work because they were exhausted, hungry and fed up with being on strike. Public opinion had already turned against them. At first there had been some sympathy for men in a dirty and dangerous occupation who had experienced very hard times in the past. But then Mr MacGregor made a generous concession. He offered a deal with no compulsory redundancies and adequate compensation for those willing to leave voluntarily. Scargill turned the deal down, saying he wanted to fight on, so that in the future the sons of miners could also look forward to working underground. It was an essentially feudal demand and the public turned against him. The government had won a great victory.

The collapse of the strike forced the middle-class scribblers of the Left completely to redefine their creed. The victorious miners' strikes of 1972 and 1974 that had ended Edward Heath's attempt to reform the trade unions and brought down his government had encouraged the left's delusions of a socialist revolution. This time the miners were utterly crushed and the leftists abandoned their former

macho working class heroes and took up political correctness, greenism, feminism and boycotts of Israel instead.

It had already become clear to me as a sociology lecturer in the 1970s that, to use the jargon of those times, the working class was a 'historically backward class', a regressive class involved in a futile struggle to hold back an inevitable future. That is its tragedy. Capitalism achieves progress through creative destruction, both through the rapid introduction of new technology that renders old skills and machinery obsolete and through the opening up of trade

and the undermining of local monopolies. The organized manual workers of the 1970s were Luddites trying to obstruct these processes. Along with the miners there were the dockers and the printers. The dockworkers had tried to hold up containerisation and had even struck to get compensation for 'loss of pilfering

rights'. Soon after the end of the miners' strike the printers' union entered the 'Battle of Wapping' to try to prevent the introduction of new, cheaper computerised printing methods. As with the miners, there was a long and at times violent dispute, the violence being exacerbated by the intervention of middle class fanatics from the far Left. It ended in total defeat for the printers with their union close to bankruptcy and threatened with legal action. Up until this point the printers' union had been able to extort very high earnings from the newspapers because they had the power to stop tomorrow's paper being printed or even to close a newspaper down. Their defeat following hard on that of the miners meant the end of the organised working class movement. What had seemed solid melted into air.

The printers had been one of those groups of highly unionized workers, most of the others being in the transport and energy sectors, able to obtain high rates of pay at the expense of the consumer; these unions alone had the power to shut down vital services quickly, a power which other groups whose work was in the long run just as important did not possess. Groups such as the miners or the dockers who lived only among their own kind could combine intense solidarity with total indifference to the

sufferings of invisible others. What did the dockers care if perishable food rotted on board ships they were refusing to unload at a time of rationing? What did the miners care if people at the other end of the country died of hypothermia? It is not a view that can be taken by those who can see directly what would be the consequences of their going on strike or who are exposed to the indignation of their neighbours. This substantial inequality in power between different groups of workers is never mentioned, let alone studied by those on the left.

I have often wondered what would happen today if we still had a large coal industry and a greenist dominated government decided radically to cut production and close a large number of pits to combat global warming. Burning coal produces more carbon dioxide than any other fuel. If the miners went on strike would the leftists turn out with banners saying ‘Save the Planet from the NUM’? Would left wing families be bitterly divided between red-green and green-red factions or would they become red-green colour-blind?

The history of Britain is that of the rise and fall of coal. Coal enabled us to become the world’s first industrial nation (coal rich Belgium was the second). Coal was needed to make iron and later steel and industries were powered by steam and later electricity made in coal-powered generating stations. People kept their homes warm with coal fires, so that London became as choked with smog as present day Beijing. But a turning point came just before World War I when the British navy switched from steam coal to oil. After that war the coal export trade declined and the industry was in crisis, which led to the miners

going on strike and to the General Strike of 1926 when other unions joined them. During the inter-war period the traditional coal-fed industries tied to the coalfields declined sharply while new manufacturing and service industries grew up in the south and provided employment there. The same trend was to continue down to our own times. Today Britain is a dual economy with a prosperous but over-crowded South East of England where few can afford housing and a Northern rust belt in terminal decay. The mining villages without work are the worst example of this decay. Keeping the pits open was never an option and the NUM’s obstructiveness blocked any forward thinking about how other forms of employment might be provided after the death of coal.

What depresses me is that none of Britain’s political parties have any rational idea of how to solve the problem of our dual economy. We cannot go back to 1700 when London was the only large city and the places where unmined coal lay underground had hardly any people. Nor can we retreat to the endless subsidizing of the commanding depths of the economy as Labour and the SNP would have us do. Building a very costly high-speed railway link will not make any noticeable difference and it would be done at the expense of other better corrective measures. Thirty years on from the victory over the miners we are still faced with the divide between metropolitan Britain and what was once coalfield Britain. We are divided into two nations by economic geography. We have to make them one.

Christie Davies is a former Wrenbury Scholar in Political Economy at the University of Cambridge.
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The Big Sleep

Leon Houseman

The Algarve coastline is one long eyesore, dotted with aborted half-built hotels. The recent crash saw some property values fall by half. Yet the strength of the pound now hands Brits some real bargains. An apartment with a sea view, €100,000, is really only £70,000 and falling, small change for some Londoners.

A friend of mine once dubbed it Costa Geriatrica. Recently visiting a relative there I noticed that dreaded four-letter word, H-O-M-E, on many a frail

lip. Reliable state care is hard to find. Treatment in Portuguese hospitals is perfectly decent. Yet beds, like everywhere else, are in short supply and doctors discharge patients fast. If you’re an elderly, frail person living alone in a one-bedroom flat then, even if you could afford it, a night nurse won’t stay with you. Carers need their own room and there’s the rub. On the other hand, many elderly expats realise they can’t continue to live alone in large villas or they can no longer pay the bills. So, in the end, they need to be

closer to relatives. As for private care, well, you need full pockets. We were quoted a price of €600 for a fairly routine surgical procedure for my mother that did not require an overnight stay.

I had frank conversations with several retirees, some of whom, a decade back, had expressed a wish to be felled at around 70. I remembered others saying they'd rather take a one-way trip to Switzerland before lingering illness took hold. Now they're 80, frail, dulled by dementia, Parkinson's, strokes or whatever else gets to them. Yet, it seems to me, most people resist death the closer it looms. And so they should. We can learn so much from old people.

One day I swam alongside a 90-year-old D-Day veteran. He had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's yet had clear memories of 71 years ago. He had forgotten my name when I met him again the following day but that doesn't matter. He did have awesome stories to tell about the landings. Later, I commiserated with a lady in her eighties who told me, with almost tangible regret, that she had once met Jimmy Savile but he had never laid a finger on her. She looked downcast so I offered her a little tea and sympathy and placed a caressing hand on her shoulder to give her an inkling of what might have been. With whom could one have such politically incorrect discussions except the elderly?

A Portuguese neighbour, one of the very few in the street, told me to get back to England when I complained about his broken down car blocking our front door. Well, I haven't lived in the UK for 14 years. 'Get back to Bulgaria', he should have said, because the following day I left for Sofia. It occurred to me that for my generation Europe is already, in some ways, one country. For the old and sick, especially those without much money, it's all rather different. H-O-M-E may be a profanity viewed with disdain but it can be a necessity. And H-O-M-E is Blighty.

The great film director John Huston, a macho man if there ever was one, gave a slightly self-pitying interview when he was about 80 in which he bemoaned the debilities of old age. I think of his words when I see some people whom I know to have led such active lives, struggling with daily chores. But then again what's the alternative? Is the Big Sleep better? We should be careful lest anyone with problems comes to be viewed as burdensome. Euthanasia can become a form of healthcare cost-containment or even a way to protect the inheritance of children. Let's knock off the

old trout off before she blows it all on medicine and nursing care. Soon, we'll be making elderly loved ones feel guilty if they don't depart. We need more children to take responsibility for their elderly parents.

Nobody knows what life will bring. The exception is, of course, those diagnosed with a terminal illness. Yet, even then, there can be ways to make good use of the little time you have left. You can amend for past mistakes, apologise to those you have slighted or even – knowing you have nothing to lose! – tell certain rogues what you really think of them. I don't mean this flippantly; sometimes the long goodbye is more

meaningful and rewarding than a sudden departure. Sometimes, too, one should be wary of possible misdiagnosis and underrating one's own ability to recover from even life-threatening illnesses. One thinks, obviously, of Stephen Hawking, given two years to live at 22, still very much alive, and feted at 73. Remember actress Patricia Neal who suffered a devastating stroke at just 39; was even pronounced

dead by one newspaper, and lived to be 84. Or there's Kirk Douglas, also paralysed by a stroke 20 years ago, when he was just shy of his 80th. Next year he'll be 100. Over the past two decades he has written several books and memoirs. Perhaps, in a moment of despair, he might have contemplated a quick exit but look at what he has accomplished since.

I know a lady who's supposedly been at death's door ever since her 70th birthday, her life punctuated by regular bouts of hypochondria, depression and talk of exiting. Periodically, when feeling particularly weak, she would give her boys and girls a 'final' pep talk, telling them how proud she was of them. Her children would stagger outside, deeply moved. If it were a film the next shot would be that of a golden sunset – all accompanied by Sinatra's *My Way*. Her children go to sleep, psychologically preparing for the next great journey in their mother's life. Next morning, having forgotten about the night before, she toddles off to the local café as usual. This scene has been repeated endlessly over the past 15 years. She is lucky. Had she happened to live in Zurich, she would have long ago taken the poisoned Eidelweiss. Moral? There is no more dignity in Dignitas than there is dignity in extreme old age on the Algarve. Make sure you die at home.

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Leon Houseman is a journalist and author.



Indecent Exposure

Jane Kelly

Last November Lucas Chansler, 31, from Florida, was sentenced to 105 years in prison after he pleaded guilty to nine counts of producing child pornography. He had received photos on line from 240 girls aged between thirteen and eighteen who'd volunteered obscene images of themselves. They came from twenty-six US states, three Canadian provinces and of course the UK.

He didn't meet any of these girls, who are known in court and the media as his 'victims,' and they were not little children, in fact those from the age of 16 onward were old enough to get married. Nevertheless he has been given a gaol sentence worthy of a mass acid bath murderer who has not had the good fortune to have his psychosis recognised by an understanding jury.

So desperate and odd was he that according to the FBI, he would target girls through social networking sites and pretend to be an acquaintance, friend or admirer. Once he gained their trust he'd persuade them to expose themselves or engage in

sexually explicit conduct on video chats he secretly recorded. He then threatened to put the images online or send them to the girls' parents unless they agreed to provide more graphic images.

He was caught in 2010 when the parents of one of the girls came forward. Of course the on-line sexual exploitation of children is horrendous and does deserve severe punishment and Chansler was a very nasty man. Young children cannot protect themselves against cruel adults who force them into sexual postures and situations and take photographs of them to sell on line. But these girls had reached the age of puberty when they might have been expected to go out with boys their own age, and they were alone when they sent the photos, not forced to do this by anyone they knew. There was no parental or peer pressure here.

The whole proliferating business of girls and women sending graphic images of themselves via mobiles and the Internet seems very confused. Some celebrities love to do this but get it mixed up with their strangely contradictory need for intense privacy. Some have been able to sue newspapers and gain large amounts

of money by stressing that their privacy has been violated, despite their addiction to pasting their nude bodies on-line for the world to see. Other people have been surprised to find themselves humiliated by angry, rejected partners who punish them by posting 'private' images on line.

From this rather perplexing modern craze, which has its own new noun, 'sexting', only one thing is clear: The people who take the photos of their own genitalia and post them to boyfriends, girlfriends, partners and the whole world in general are victims. Those who receive them and use them in a way the victims don't

like, are the criminals. A new law is currently being framed to prosecute the perpetrators of 'revenge porn'.

Thousands of people each year are humiliated and embarrassed after explicit pictures and videos of them are posted online without their consent. In February this year, the Ministry of Justice said the new offence would cover photographs or films which show people engaged in sexual activity

or depicted in a sexual way, or with their genitals exposed, where what is shown would not usually be seen in public. Those found to have committed a sexual offence can continue to be prosecuted under existing legislation, which can lead to sentences of up to 14 years in prison.

Chansler, now sitting in his cell for much longer than that, in perpetuity in fact, apparently seduced hundreds of girls into doing what he wanted by showing them an image of a teenage boy masturbating. He used this in the way shadowy men in far off times used dirty macks and packets of sweets in a childrens' playground, or oily men with wandering hands in the Typing Pool used the offer of a weekend in Brighton where a carefully selected hotel might have a mirror on the ceiling. But Chansler knew what he was about; girls don't ask much these days and his photo of a teenager having an 'Arthur Rank' obviously had a magic effect with no shortage of willing girls dropping their thongs and exposing themselves at will, or rather at Luke.

I can't help recalling that when I was a teenage girl, between the age of 13-18, and I also speak for my



Paedophilia: masked assaults

friends, if we had seen an image like that we would have had a fit of hysterical laughter, mixed with a certain dread of what exactly the future held for us. We wouldn't have looked at it for more than ten seconds before fleeing in disgust.

What has happened to young women since I was young in the 1970s? They are better off, better looking, with more opportunities than ever before, so why are they spending their evenings alone in their rooms

exposing themselves to fantasy boys on line, rather than going to the pictures and getting a grip on the real thing? And why do people of all ages now take obscene photos of themselves and then feel surprised when they are passed around among very, very large numbers of people?

Jane Kelly was a celebrity interviewer for The Daily Mail.

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Southern Comfort

Mark Mantel

Last night, indecently late, my pregnant wife finally asleep, and not a movement to be found in the bedroom, I put on my slippers and mutedly made a rush for the door, robe sweeping the floor. A sombre fire still glowed in the den as I curled on the sofa. In a whisper, I grabbed the cigarette lighter, turned on YouTube, and wearing only my undergarments, played the video. It was a video of a man. In particular, a man with wild golden hair and a distinguished face. Have you ever seen the philosopher Roger Scruton? It was for him I performed these

acrobatics, which ought really to have included a lantern. There he stands with his horse, in some tranquil hinterland, wearing a dark hunting-jacket and white neck-wrap. And he talks about the ritual of hunting, and Beauty, and says many charming things. Well, in any case, I like this video very much, but my pregnant wife is decidedly annoyed by it. She doesn't like me to watch it anymore. Why do I like it? Well, probably his talk about the mysterious and sacerdotal parts of existence helps me to forget the legal briefs and motions cluttering my desk at work. I don't know.

So, from 4,700 thousand miles away, not far from the Pacific Ocean, I watched Roger Scruton and wondered: how could I, a 21st century American lawyer, in my modern apartment, and without a horse, without even a flowering tree to scent the air, practise a word of what he says? How could I make my morning bus ride to Seattle a little more sacred? Sure, a Baudelaire or an Eliot might depict in verse the wonderful mystery which exists in common streets and squares. *They* didn't require some idyllic tableau. But how could



I, who waddle over carpets, not sweet alleyways or sawdust restaurants with oyster shells, live out the 'Permanent Things?'

True, I breathe the smoky air of ancient liturgy every Sunday. There, I can watch the infant and the old one receive Holy Communion under my priest's venerable beard. And I can listen for the thunder to speak. And sometimes, even, I happily hum the Cherubic Hymn all the way home. But soon these finer feelings are eroded, little by little, by strip malls with synthetic lights, by advertisements with grinning faces, and, alas, by my overstuffed couch. Should I perhaps go to the Chesterton Society and eat cheese and listen to another lecture about Graham Greene?

I know that traditionalism doesn't latch itself too tightly to any particular ideology. It is more a cast of mind, a way of going about things, a recognition of the divine

order. And it teaches general things like that it is good to live in families and it is better to cook a side of beef in a pot instead of buying a jar of jelly to accompany one's peanut butter. And I also know that things would be better if we do these things not too self-consciously, so that it's not forced and stilted, in the way of vegetarians, and all the others with impertinent food-pretensions these days. Still, all this understanding doesn't quite buy me an hour under the radiant skies of Roger Scruton's riding fields, does it?

My question is: Are there examples of folks who try, like Scruton, to be traditional *in America*? Well, how about in Eugene O'Neil's play *A Touch of the Poet*? A man named Con Melody, once an officer in the Duke of Wellington's army, tries to live like a British officer

in America. Trouble is he's poor and keeps a tavern full of drunken Irishmen. The funniest scene is when Melody tries to pay a dowry to the respectable Hartford family, which leads to utter confusion, because they thought that *he* wanted money from *them* in exchange for keeping his daughter away from their son. And Melody tops this off by challenging Mr. Hartford to a duel which ends by Melody getting heartily thrashed by the Hartford servants.

And so here lies my trouble. Many of the roots that clutch, such as dowries and duels, are not especially American.

But what of the Hartford clan? What of the Bostonian folks in *Silas Lapham*? Or what of all the conservative commentators making chatter on televisions all over the land? Can some basis for an authentic traditional life be extracted from any of it? Well, I guess to me it all seems just a tad too thin. I must look elsewhere. And I'm not alone in this sentiment. For instance, Henry James complained that America had:

No sovereign, no court, no personal loyalty, no aristocracy, no church, no clergy, no army, no diplomatic service, no country gentlemen, no palaces, no castles, nor manors, nor old country houses, nor parsonages, nor thatched cottages nor ivied ruins; no cathedrals, nor abbeys, nor little Norman churches; no great Universities nor public schools – no Oxford, nor Eton, nor Harrow; no literature, no novels, no museums, no pictures, no political society, no sporting class – no Epsom nor Ascot!

And Hawthorn also said it:

No author, without a trial, can conceive of the difficulty of writing a romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a commonplace prosperity, in broad and simple daylight, as is happily the case with my dear native land.

But all this is of the North. What about the South? Here, the antebellum culture, perhaps, succeeded in creating a genuine traditionalism? Well, let me start with the bad. As W J Cash says, the South did not quite succeed in making the Southern men into English squires or Cavalier noblemen. And everyone knows that, except in Virginia, the South never quite brushed all the fleas from its frontier rump.

Still, even Henry James said that if he ever returned to these shores, he would go to live in Charleston – I won't talk about Rhett Butler going to Charleston, since that would ruin what little chance I've got of getting these thoughts published in a proper journal. So, Rhett aside, did that tragic sense of life, that poetic and feminine spirit, that contemplative existence that,

say, James McBride Dabb talked about ever exist in the South? And if so, does it exist there still?

Well, I was born in St Petersburg, the one laid siege to by the Wehrmacht. But I lived in the South during my school days. Maybe if I ever open a fusion restaurant I'll call it the 'Russian Redneck', or something. In any case, there really is a certain something to the South as opposed to the North. I have come to agree with Allen Tate that despite all his culture, a Northerner like Henry Adams did not have the inheritance of the soil. Chekhov could not have written in the North. But he could easily have written any of his plays in Biloxi or Charleston or New Orleans. That notion of European leisure only ever existed in the South.

Sure, the Northern merchants built their stately houses, and their heirs danced during the Jazz Age. But, as any trip to the Hamptons even today shows, these gilded children defined leisure in terms of either inactivity and idleness, or hedonistic and frenzied activity. There was, and is, no sense of festivity as the expression of worshipful celebration there. No *vita contemplativa*. And even the ones who tranquilly garden and bicycle about nowadays, seem, to me anyway, to lack the distinctive mark of conviviality one finds in the South.

These days, admittedly, northern liberals are much more likely to show enthusiasm for European life than are most Southerners. Probably they sense some kindred spirit with the scraggly kids who sit on the floors in the Stockholm airport; I don't know. Yet the South seems to me the only true refuge for the old European culture that valued privacy, civility, chivalry and love of spiritual pleasures. And now I must mention Allen Tate again: 'We must be the last Europeans – there being no Europeans in Europe at present.'

But can it genuinely be uttered, for instance, that my old Southern playmates really possessed some traditional European culture, or that some tragic sense of life gently percolated in their bosoms? Well, no, not exactly. In many ways my old school, forgive me, was indeed H L Mencken's 'Sahara of the Bozart'. And I might even add that kids were as steeped in the latest vulgarities as anywhere. Moreover, when I visit the South today, I am often disheartened that people seem more attached to franchise foods and obnoxious fads than are folks in the Pacific Northwest. All this I must admit. Yet this isn't the end of the question.

And what *is* the end of the question? Well, it was said by Ortega y Gasset that: 'Barbarism is the absence of standards to which appeal can be made.' And I think here is the point I am grappling for. The South is different because it once had an agrarian culture that believed in chivalry, honor, and tragedy, *and so appeal can still be made to such sentiments*. And this is not just

my deep-seated romanticism speaking. I unabashedly declare again, that because once upon a time, there really were planters who read Walter Scott, and yes, sipped juleps on the veranda, and danced, and fought duels, appeal can still be made to gallantry, tradition, loyalty, and a whole heritage of beliefs, in the South today. Unlike anywhere else, it is a place where the traditionalist will be given an ear, and given air to breathe.

So, could Roger Scruton live comfortably in our South? Yes, I think he could, and that we might put him somewhere near Charleston.

I don't say that he will be especially delighted. But

the antebellum culture, perhaps, succeeded in creating a genuine traditionalism

he could ride his horse there in ecstasy, just as the Polish count in *All the Kings Men* rode, immaculate and dashing. He will not find a Royal Albert Hall or Wallace Collection there to retreat from the world's frantic efforts. But he could meet the only folk left who hold a candle to Nestor and Menelaus in hospitality, and who alone today, by those ancient campfires, would be fit to unwind in sweet intimacy.

And I think there is another piece of good news about the South. Indeed this, to put my cards on the table, is the thing that excited me most. Because the South accepts the Christian tradition it may have the strange fatality of being the only conservator of the Western cultural heritage. I think that the reason that little great poetry or art is produced in the South now is that it has no big and no new idea about its destiny. Probably, for practical reasons, it was right to abandon agrarianism. But it was wrong, it seems to me, to embrace a mania

for politics and business. These things are transitory and provisional. Instead, the South's aim ought to be cultural, and nothing short of renaissance.

What do I propose? Do I say that Southern school kids should be steeped in Homer? Should they learn to list the petty kings of France? Or should some tireless labour, like the old Celtic scriptoria, be founded in Birmingham? Yes, perhaps all this. I think the South should be infected with the idea of a great work, religious and cultural, of restoring Christendom. And I think too that the 'lawyer class' should look south of

England for inspiration. For perhaps their predecessors, the planters, failed to be like

English squires, because they were more like great Roman landowners, or the Norman barons in Sicily during that island's golden age.

And what about poor me? Do I really propose the simplistic notion that the only way I can be a traditionalist today is to go live in the South? Yes, maybe I do propose something like that. And maybe I propose that I go to Louisiana, where they are Catholic, just as Allen Tate said the South should be. And I further propose that maybe this is the only way anyone in America can really be a traditionalist today. And if I do go there, I shall hang upon my side of the wall a large portrait of General Beauregard, right beside one of Roger Scruton. The only question now is: How can I muster the eloquence to convince my pregnant wife of the wisdom of my plan?

Mark Mantel is a Seattle lawyer:

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Up Fleet Street without a paddle

Trevor Leighton

'Journalists on top', Robert Maxwell used to say when he owned the Mirror Group. 'Everybody else on tap'. Sadly, exactly the opposite is now the case, which means that young journalists starting out in their careers can only look back on the money that was to be made in the fat fraudster's day – along with the attendant fun and glamour – with wide-eyed wonder.

If someone ever writes an honest book about The Decline and Fall of Newspapers, he or she will have to start with a few basic premises. One – the highly paid grandees who presided over the industry did not see the threat posed by the Internet until it was much

too late. Two – a lot of the remedies that they then tried to save newspapers had the effect of hastening their demise and certainly whittling away what little money they still had. Three – the newspapers that they ended up putting out were pretty rubbishy and no one in their right mind could ever have expected anyone to want to read them.

Paul Dacre, the veteran boss of the *Daily Mail* who is regarded as the last of the great imperial editors, memorably told his staff at their summer party not much more than a decade ago that he had heard how the Internet represented the future. 'And to all these people who say this I have the same answer,' he

boomed at Hampton Court. ‘Bollocks to that dot com.’

Vulgar as it might have been, Dacre’s response now looks spot on. The newspapers should never have put a single one of their stories online, certainly not without making people pay for them. They should have had nothing whatsoever to do with the Internet. The majority of people are now, however, used to obtaining their news for free, which means that they don’t bother to buy newspapers, which means, in turn, that sales keep falling. And for all Rupert Murdoch’s heroic, if belated efforts, they have no time, either, for paywalls. A generation of people has now come up who would no more think of paying for news online – or, heaven forbid, actually going out to buy a newspaper – than sitting themselves down on an outside lavatory.

For all his faults, Maxwell and the proprietors he competed with recognised one thing: newspapers had to have interesting things to say. That meant filling newsrooms with some weird and wonderful collections of eccentrics, ne’er-do-wells and misfits who nevertheless had in common the ability to find great stories and to write them in a way that was compelling. It was the age – certainly on the more serious newspapers – when ‘fine writers’ commanded premium salaries. In those far off days, the best and brightest youngsters all naturally gravitated towards print journalism. It was the most glamorous trade on the face of the earth.

Now I would say the great communicators are all heading off for public relations or politics or law – or, if they are still intent on journalism, then television or radio. Newspapers that had once seemed to attract the best and the brightest have become joyless homes to the sort of hunched, anaemic-looking and socially maladroit youngsters you would more naturally picture working for the London Underground or a suburban supermarket. As for wise old heads, they were mostly dispensed with long ago: much too expensive, of course. Mistakes are now inevitably creeping into copy – the *Daily Telegraph* muddled a Hurricane with a Spitfire in a front page caption the other day, much to the annoyance of its older readers. Some newspaper lawyers are quietly conceding that while the younger journalists may be cheaper to hire than their older counterparts, they are costing their companies dear in terms of libel actions and payouts for blunders that more experienced journalists would never have made. They are also in some cases causing their employers untold reputational damage.

Alas, the good journalists were all too easy to sack. Many of them – sensing how things were going – went of their own accord. They had become unit costs whose fine writing and great scoops didn’t translate

into any bottom line benefits for the accountants, who started to become more powerful than here-today-gone-tomorrow editors. There was a sense, too, of a lot of old scores being settled: the boring ‘suits’ who had for so long had to kow-tow to the newsroom stars suddenly found they had the whips in their hands and what fun they had cracking them. As for the newspaper executives, they tend, by and large, to look after their own. On a lot of newspapers, they now outnumber the reporters. If newspaper managements had a pronounced blind spot, it appeared to be their own front pages.

Newspaper organisations – they mostly prefer to call themselves media groups these days – now have multiple ‘platforms’, but seldom, if ever, anything of interest to say on any of them. The digital gurus who once held out hope for the future have mostly been dispensed with, their plans for great empires that would last a thousand years lying in ruins. There is talk that the *Daily Mail*’s crass, downmarket website, vacuuming up every item of celebrity news that is put online, and illustrating it with titillating photographs, is making up in revenues for what the print edition is losing. But Lord Rothermere’s heart doesn’t seem to be in it any more. Newspaper bosses seem for the most part to be reconciled to managing decline or looking for a cash exit in the form of an overseas buyer. Lakshmi Mittal has been linked, perhaps optimistically, to the *Telegraph*. The Mirror newspaper group might buy the *Express*, a marriage made in utter political confusion. The mood is meanwhile one of all-pervading gloom.

One hears all sorts of horror stories from newsrooms: youngsters working appallingly long hours on little more than living wages and being judged all the time by devilish instruments of torture that gauge and monetarise how many accursed ‘hits’ they are obtaining. And, as for the sacred divide that once separated the worlds of editorial and advertising, it now looks as compromised and redundant as the Maginot Line after the Germans took France.

This is all great news for people like Steve Coogan and Hugh Grant who always hated newspapers, with their nasty habit of writing about their private lives, but I wonder if the rest of us should be celebrating too. We have already had the Iraq war, which perhaps would never have happened if even just one newspaper had still retained an office in Baghdad and a doughty old correspondent who could have written a piece about how anyone can win a war in Iraq, but what then? Not a single newspaper ever asked that question, but then they had other things on their minds at the time...

Trevor Leighton lectures on Media Studies.

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ISIS. A Running Obituary

Benedict Beckeld

It seems almost pointless to complain about particular acts of Islamic terror, because the various deeds by representatives of the religion of peace around the world constitute little more than a running obituary. As much as people like to point out that these acts are committed by a minority of Muslims, the fact is that a majority of Muslims, and most certainly of Arab Muslims, sympathize with many of the barbarisms performed in the name of Islam. The only moral difference between Islam's warriors and their sympathizers is that one might harbour a perhaps naïve hope that a mere sympathizer, if he suddenly found himself on the battlefield, might experience a moment's qualm of conscience before pressing the button that would send him and twenty children to their deaths.

It is hardly a novel idea, but nonetheless one worthy of repetition, that political correctness prevents us from recognizing the true traits of culture, both our own and that of others. So let us remember this: political correctness kills, because it allows division to fester while pretending that it is those pointing out the existence of that division who create it. Do people not notice the almost Orwellian way in which the word 'Islamist' has developed, very subtly, to replace the word 'Muslim' whenever a Muslim does something bad? But is not an Islamist a follower of Islam? What is supposed to be the difference between Islam and Islamism? Any -ism must be an -ism of something. This has given rise to the misnomer 'islamophobe'. I am not the first to point out that this word prohibits the critique of an idea. As opposed to anti-Semitism, which is the irrational hatred of Jews regardless of actual Jewish philosophy, 'islamophobia' is used as an epithet against those who criticize the idea of Islam even though they do not irrationally claim that every single Muslim is evil. By adopting this word, the Western world has also adopted the totalitarian Islamic notion that the argumentative critique of an idea is the same as bigotry. This is an incredibly dangerous attitude. People who merely count lives and insist that Islam is not such a great threat because, all things considered, not all that many Westerners are killed by it, forget the importance of culture. And besides, do immoral acts suddenly become moral when their victims are not Westerners but other Muslims far away? When we have already adopted the vestiges of an Islamic totalitarian

tenet and incorporated it into our way of thinking, the barbarians do not need to kill all that many of us in order to declare victory.

The cultural and theological division between Islam and the West is real. Even though there are peaceful, Westernized Muslims, Islam and the West are and always have been mutually exclusive at their cores. Islam, indeed, is a type of fascist, totalitarian dogma, because it explicitly weds its theocratic principles to a political construct. It is not a critique *per se* of Islam to point this out. Muslims themselves, starting with the establishment of the first Islamic state in Medina in 622, have prided themselves on the notion that, unlike the other two Abrahamic religions, Islam is not merely a religion, but also a political aspiration, and they will happily explain that Islam is a total system that makes little or no distinction between personal belief and political authority. This is especially evident in the Medinan suras of the Quran, as opposed to the Meccan ones. The state in Medina was probably quite liberal for its time and place, but that soon changed once the merry Muslim men set out on their conquests. Western apologists for Islam, who like to accuse Islam's critics of ethnocentricity, are in fact themselves the true ethnocentrists, because they view Islam through a Western lens, where religion and political life are kept separate. This is not so in Islam. And once one combines Islam's political aspect with the element of proselytism, which Islam also contains, of course the result is a type of fascism. Obviously, not all Muslims are fascists, nor do all believing Muslims aspire to political triumphs, and there are Muslims who are trying to rework or reinterpret their religion to make it more democratic and appropriate for Western ideals. I hope but doubt they will succeed; but Islam itself in its original and still prevailing form is fascist. Islam can and does exist in the West, just as Communism and various forms of right-wing fascism can and do exist in the West, but, like these home-grown Western dogmas, Islam is essentially anti-Western, because it seeks to restrain much of what is great with the West: freedom of speech and press, equal rights for women, open inquiry, scientific and philosophical scepticism, human rights, and much else. For the most part, Islam has only been tolerant when it was powerless. It is therefore our task to keep it powerless in the West,

by curbing immigration from certain countries (and certainly not by horrible, anti-Muslim violence). Small but not large numbers of Muslims are tolerable among us, just as small but not large numbers of Communists and fascists are tolerable among us before a critical mass is reached.

To compare with the two Abrahamic religions that as opposed to Islam are largely Western, Christianity is proselytizing but in its founding philosophy apolitical: most famously by Jesus' urging to render unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto God what is God's (Matthew 22:21); by Jesus' reply to Pontius Pilate that his kingdom is of another world, and that therefore his followers will not fight for him (John 18:36); by Paul's claim that people must obey the polity of which they happen to be part (Romans 13:1). Judaism, though its politics is more nuanced and difficult to define, is not proselytizing. Whereas Christians and Muslims believe that only their own kind will be saved, so that they want to proselytize other people for those people's own sake, Jews believe that righteous gentiles will also reach salvation (Talmud tractate Sanhedrin 105a), and the proselytizing urge is thus lessened.

Further, Islam almost by definition has always required an enemy – those who do not follow God as they see him. Although it is obvious that Christians have often not lived up to Christian ideals, the Christian message itself is one of brotherly love; the Jewish message, although it considers the Jews to be the chosen ones, has room for righteous non-Jews too, not only in this life but also in the next. But Islam needs an enemy. That is why for most of its history Islam has divided the world into the *dār al-Islām* (the House of Islam) and the *dār al-Harb* (the House of War). Between these two houses there is a constant state of conflict, until the House of Islam will have conquered the world. Any peace treaty signed with the West is but temporary, a delaying tactic for the purpose of gathering strength for a renewed attack. One cannot understand the history of Islam without understanding this. For this reason, to take one of the more well-known instances of current conflict, a knowledge of history would reveal to us the pointlessness of the Middle East peace process: If the Palestinians ever bring themselves to sign a treaty, and even that seems highly doubtful, it will simply



be for the purpose of, in due time, re-launching the war against the Jews from a more advanced frontier. Even among secularized Muslims today there is an extreme obsession with Israel and the Jews, an obsession stemming from Islam's ancestral need of an enemy. And this need is no coincidence. Examine any totalitarian dogma or regime in history, whether in the East or West: the first thing it needs for its own legitimacy is an enemy upon which to vent the wrath of its massive inferiority complex.

When two such disparate cultures live side by side in the same space, as they do in much of Europe, there will always be conflict. But we deny this, because we have become so far removed from the sources of our own culture that we refuse to believe that others can be so close to theirs. Because they are, they will fight harder for it than we do for ours. And why should we? Decades of moral relativism (not to mention failing schools, both in Europe and America) have convinced

whole generations that culture is merely a matter of knife and fork vs chopsticks, of dumpling soup vs matzah ball soup. We have entirely forgotten the antiquity and sacredness of culture, what culture actually means. If, however, we undertook the study

of Greek and Latin, of English literature, Western tonality, and much else, a study rendered easier by and in turn fostering a certain pride in one's own civilization, then we would better comprehend that the ballot box, our Latin alphabet, the separation of church and state, and the sonorous diversity of strings, woodwinds, and brass are all expressions of our particular Western culture. But since we do not, we are often surprised at the extent to which other peoples around the world, who are closer to their own cultures, are willing to fight and die for what they believe. Since we are not willing to die for anything at all, we convince ourselves that Islam wants peace as much as we do, that surely they have not already, since ancient times, assigned us to the House of War.

Dr Beckeld is a Swedish-American freelance writer based in New York City with a PhD in Philosophy and Classical Philology from Heidelberg. He has also taught in Paris. [back to contents](#)

Some are born Lesbian, some have Lesbianism thrust upon them

Penelope Fawcett Hulme

I have just become a Mrs, and it came as a bit of a shock. In my salad days, sadly I never married, my desires have always been for men and I had lots of boyfriends, but looking back despite this I don't think I was ever cut out for marriage, close friends were about all I could cope with. In the past many old fashioned people assumed that I was married. 'But surely you are married', they gush as a means of flattery. Now they just assume that I am, just from my age. Shop assistants write down 'Mrs' on the receipt when I buy any kind of furniture and arrange a delivery, as if single people don't need sofas and double beds. And these days fraudsters often ring up from somewhere in Asia to try to sell me some kind of financial deal, or get inside my computer. They always call me, 'Mrs.' As soon as I hear the strangled high pitched voice which sounds like there is a peg on the nose followed by the whining words, 'Hello, Mrs Kelly, how are you today?' I put the phone down.

I was annoyed in a different way when I recently replied to an invitation to a forthcoming social event in London, saying I would be there, 'with a friend', and I gave her name. Later I received what seemed to be an enthusiastic acknowledgement of my RSVP, saying that they would be delighted to meet me and my wife! So there it is, other powers have decided.

Why they decided I had entered into a same sex marriage I don't know. I looked back through my e-mails but couldn't see any reference to any kind of particular closeness to the other person, who in fact I don't know particularly well.

I think the desire on the part of the hosts of the event to show that they fully accepted and appreciated gay marriage was responsible. They actively wanted me to turn up with a 'wife'. I don't want to disappoint them but I have hardly caught up with this new movement. I am nowhere near accepting women talking about their wives, or men their husbands, to me that still sounds daft. And I can't see photos of Stephen Fry with his young husband without a shudder of disbelief.

But I suspect that this will not be the last time someone takes me for a lesbian. To be single at the moment is to attract suspicion. It is hard to be a single person anywhere. In many parts of the world it is entirely unfeasible. In some places it is extremely dangerous as lack of a wedding ring attracts the accusation of homosexuality, and the penalty for that is death.

Jamaica criminalizes same sex intimacy. Gay people there run the real risk of being beaten, assaulted with deadly weapons, attacked by rampaging mobs, stabbed, harassed by prison wardens, inmates or hospital staff or even shot. Lesbians have had the additional nightmare of 'corrective rape', meaning being sexually assaulted by men who believe that forcing women to have sex would rid them of desires for other women.

It is possible to connect the scourge of homophobia in Jamaica with the country's increasingly thuggish reggae music scene. The rap artist called Elephant Man declares in one song, 'When you hear a

lesbian getting raped/ It's not our fault ... Two women in bed/ That's two Sodomites who should be dead.' Another called Bounty Killer, urges listeners to burn 'Mister Fagoty' and make him 'wince in agony'.

The people committing these crimes in the developing world might crudely be termed right wing, they are at least highly traditional. In the Caribbean, Africa and Central America many attacks on gays and lesbians and people suspected of being gay are carried out by uneducated evangelical Christians. Here in post-Christian Europe hostility comes from the exact opposite corner. If people think you are gay, or that you should be, you better be.

The growing gay and transgendered lobby in America and the UK now have their own acronym, 'LGBTI' the 'Lesbian, Gay, I'm not sure what the rest of it stands for community.' They are increasingly militant and demanding.

This anger can be traced back to 1994, when Peter

Jamaica criminalizes same sex intimacy. Gay people there run the real risk of being beaten, assaulted with deadly weapons, attacked by rampaging mobs, stabbed, harassed by prison wardens, inmates or hospital staff or even shot.

Tatchell unveiled placards inviting ten C of E bishops to admit they were gay. Tatchell is a personally brave man and a charming person to meet at a party but he is a long term member of 'OutRage!' a group passionately committed to 'outing' reluctant gays, forcing them into the gay community, undoubtedly a nasty form of bullying.

He accused the bishops of condemning homosexuality in public while leading secret gay lives. Shortly afterwards the group wrote to twenty MPs condemning their alleged support for anti-gay laws and claiming they would be outed if they didn't support changes in the law. Sir James Kilfedder, one such opponent of gay equality, died two months of a heart attack two months after receiving his letter, on the day a newspaper planned to 'out' him.

On 12 April 1998, Tatchell led an OutRage! protest, which disrupted an Easter sermon by the Archbishop of Canterbury, with Tatchell mounting the pulpit to denounce what he claimed was George Carey's opposition to legal equality for lesbian and gay people. Gays have not been quiet in our churches since that date. Recent church debates, even one about 'the future of the Church of England', have been entirely taken up, or some might say hijacked by the issue of 'Gay rights.'

In 1996 Tatchell led an OutRage! campaign to reduce the age of consent to fourteen. He hasn't succeeded in that yet, but in most matters he has gained his ends and his actions have helped to change this country's attitudes to sex and marriage, although he has lost the support of many hard pressed Gay leaders in Africa because of the virulency of his campaigning.

The willingness of people to roll over and go along with the rise of radical homophilia is puzzling. Perhaps most people just want a quiet life. The age of consent has not been lowered as drastically as Tatchell wants, it is down to sixteen for gay men, but children are affected in other ways. As part of the move to normalise homosexuality and to push towards saying that it is the norm, even young children are now being questioned about their sexual preferences.

Child gender swapping has just arrived from the USA with the probable ubiquity once enjoyed by hoola-hoops and chewing gum. It's a brand new industry already characterised by a host of acronyms and grammatical distortions. The Tavistock Clinic in north London and the Portman NHS Trust which has clinics in London and Leeds are now researching the gender preferences of children. The Tavistock with surprising common sense says that gender dysphoria in young people is a 'complex and rare condition where there is incongruence between the young person's perceived gender and their biological sex.'

No-one knows how many people actually have

what is now called, 'gender dysphoria' in the UK. A survey of 10,000 people by the Equality and Human Rights Commission in 2012 suggested that 1% of the population is transgender. That number is bound to rise as the issue has suddenly become topical, and children are now being examined on that basis. Over the past six years there's been a four-fold increase in children aged 10 or under being referred to these clinics. Of those children, 47 were aged five or younger and two of the children were three years old.

Mermaids, a new charity has swum into view to help with this new 'need'. Its head says she's received around 60 calls in the past year from parents of under tens who think their child might be transgender. They were formed in 1995 by a group of parents who were came together because of what they termed, 'their children's longstanding Gender Identity Issues.' Membership has grown, and they have what they call, 'young transmen and transwoman' on their committee. According to their web page, 'Over the years we have built up alliances with other organisations across the UK, and in some cases internationally, to try to support, educate, and alleviate suffering.'

They are probably on a roll, there is nothing like a new social condition to get people, particularly parents very excited these days. Earlier in the year BBC Woman's Hour issued a 'Concerned Report' about it and Victoria Derbyshire, former Radio 5 Live reporter, made a feature on it for BBC 2.

One distressed mother told Victoria: 'Coming to terms with the fact that your child is probably trans is very hard. We watched a video two years ago. It was an American video of families talking about having transgender children and I thought, 'My gosh, this is what we're facing.'

Wasn't there a time when a mother might have said, 'What baloney. My child is OK and we'll worry about these things when he's grown up.' Or when a parent might have said, 'Show me the hard evidence before you ask me to be concerned.'

Single and gay people here don't have to fear the brutal violence inflicted on them in the developing world but left wing, liberal bullying which on ideological grounds rejects heterosexuality, is equally worrying. Violence in Jamaica and shouting down the Archbishop of Canterbury both have one aim; imposing conformity. One says, no one is a sodomite here, the other says everyone is gay. But as a single person I have been advised not to make a noise about it; as protesting too much can bring its own suspicions.

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Penelope Fawcett Hulme is a social commentator.

Conservative Classic – 59

The Art of Being Ruled Wyndham Lewis

CJ Fox

Although better described as a ‘Classic for Conservatives’ than simply a ‘Conservative Classic’, *The Art of Being Ruled* – Wyndham Lewis’s analysis of the socio-political order taking shape in the Western World of the 1920s bristles with iconoclastic flourishes that will please right of centre readers.

Take his slating of two revered pillars of post-1918 middle-class radicalism, Bernard Shaw and Bertrand Russell. Writing of the approaches to the problems of violence and power in their time, the erstwhile chief of the avant-garde ‘Vorticist’ art movement asserted: ‘There is no vibrancy in their words or universal significance in their gestures.’ Lewis further insisted that ‘their humanitarianism is a poor, prosaic food, meant for a cruder animal existence, and a much easier and more fortunate one, than ours’.

The irreverent writer-painter was exasperated at the constant pinkish patter extolling ‘revolution’ heard in the gilded salons of mid-Twenties London, with labour unrest heralding a General Strike. ‘Everything is correctly, monotonously, dishearteningly “revolutionary”,’ he complained, sounding like a twenty-first-century dissident railing against Political Correctness. But the ‘A of B R’, as Lewis later abbreviated the title of his book, flies far beyond the partisan sphere of Left and Right. T S Eliot, who oddly listed the book among those he considered exemplifying his idea of classicism, would perhaps have called it ‘pre-political’.

It stands as a sort of super-Machiavellian work aimed, unlike *The Prince*, at enlightening the ruled majority in Western society, bewildered by change, rather than the ‘Rulers’. For Lewis, a new era had begun after the Great War, in which power was being exercised by ‘indirect’ government through big new organs of publicity. He sought to get at the life-altering purposes behind even the most innocuous fads, fashions and mind-sets promoted by what now are called the ‘media’. *The Art of Being Ruled* was an elaborate lesson in how to identify and avoid the novel and devious forms of mass manipulation sanctioned

by the controlling authority. Lewis quoted a dictum of the Greek philosopher Permenides: ‘I wish to communicate this view of the world to you exactly as it manifests itself: and so no human opinion will ever be able to get the better of you.’

In Lewis’s view, the First World War, in which he served as a soldier and official front-line ‘war artist’, had generated authentic home-front revolutions which had doomed traditional ways of life in the belligerent countries. Already by the mid-Twenties, Italy had its Fascism and Russia its Communism. A voracious and relentless ‘consumer capitalism’ was taking hold of the democratic countries as in the way that international trusts, a harbinger of today’s globalization. These were underwriting the evolving systems of mass publicity, particularly the popular press and (with TV yet to come) the emerging radio and cinema, which in turn facilitated control of the populace by

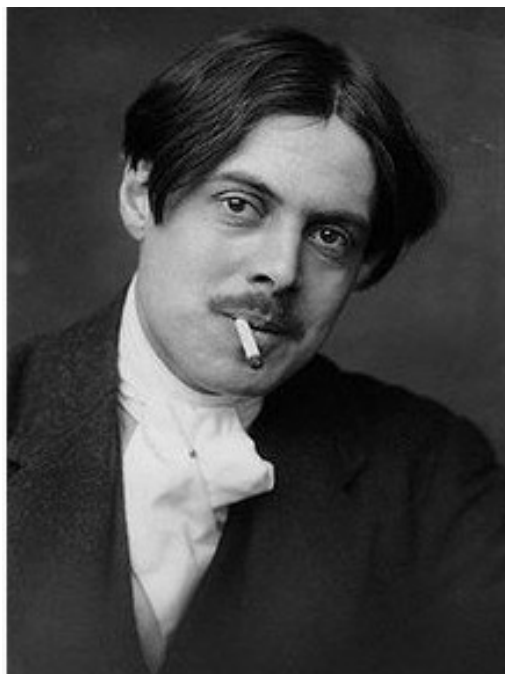
an indirectly-operating or ‘educationalist’ state. With all this in his calculations and with the authoritarian regimes still relying on brutally direct force, Lewis

opted in *The Art of Being Ruled* for the state avoiding physical violence and instead to influence minds as the most effective and humane means of achieving the officially desired conditions of ‘quiescence, obedience, receptivity’.

Lewis must have been among the pioneers of discussion about the socio-political uses of contrived publicity. In America, Sigmund Freud’s nephew Edward Bernays, the so-called Father of Public Relations, spoke blithely of ‘the engineering of consent’, ‘invisible government’ and the reliance of an irrational mass public on seductive stereotypes. Lewis knew nothing of Bernays, but in some of the book, he maintained an attitude of Machiavellian *hauteur* inspired by the steely-eyed Florentine he once called ‘the schoolmaster of manslaughter’. But, as if of two minds, elsewhere in the book he was revolted by ‘the moronic inferno of insipidity and decay’ among the side-effects of mass indoctrination, along with its perpetrators’ contempt for their underlings and sinister talent for vulgarization.

It stands as a sort of super-Machiavellian work aimed, unlike The Prince, at enlightening the ruled majority in Western society, bewildered by change

Lewis was a master satirist – he was soon to savage literary Bloomsbury with his novel *The Apes of God* and had also introduced serio-comic themes into his painting. He gleefully detailed the underhand promotion by society’s new masters of inter-generational friction as a way of shaking up old loyalties, ‘wars’ between the sexes, or the undermining of old concepts of Man and Woman. He found the family, a rival to state power, frequently under attack and indicated little hope for the survival of the traditional working class family since ‘the archetypal worker-husband’ already viewed his home circle as merely a business-like ‘small child-farm’.



This reduction of Holy Matrimony to commonplace terms typifies Lewis’s resort to satiric ploys throughout his book. They embellish his description of the systematic discrediting of the age-old notion of men as solid father figures, in tandem with the much-touted emancipation of women. Then there is the carefree figure of the eternal Child being made a role-model for people of all ages, and children being educated as future crusaders against Tradition. All that coincided with the growing power of big businesses, which was being expanded by the squeezing-out of the ‘small men’.

In the Lewis scheme of things, parliamentary ‘democracy’ was becoming a ‘charade’, anti-intellectualism was encouraged by the mind-abhorring fashion-mongers in the arts and elsewhere. There was a propaganda purpose behind even the idlest media chatter – ‘the soft *drilling*’ ‘of the great and docile public which is the great function of publicity’. The ‘suave malignity of the publicist’ was always at work. Meanwhile ‘the puritanic potentialities of science’ as a new religion were enlarged upon by this ultra-perceptive author.

The use made of homosexuality by the self-appointed moulders of a new society drew close attention in the book together with florid descriptions of the traditional image of Woman, now being superseded. Behind everything sponsored by the protagonists of change lurked the precept that humanity in the mass desired not freedom but ‘submission to a group rhythm’. *The Art of Being Ruled* could be construed

as an enormous conspiracy theory. Just who was responsible for the many-pronged scheme for socio-economic transformation is left unclear – presumably a conglomerate of faceless grandees representing anonymous power.

90 years since the book’s initial publication have seen manic advances in media techniques of wholesale hypnosis and new possibilities in the vast dimension of cyberspace. But Lewis’s demonstration of the methods and impact of power-serving publicity on malleable humans remains hair-raising as well as, at times, uproarious. His sometime ally in post-1918 polemics, Richard Aldington, hesitated over the prodigious prose feast on offer when he reviewed the book. Aldington conceded Lewis’s ‘passion for actualities’ but spoke also of ‘this orgy of theorizing, this vaticination, this sustained crepitation of witty phrases’. C H Sisson frowned on what he saw as Lewis’s intellectual

‘Manicheism’ and his disdain for the workaday world. But in other quarters *The Art of Being Ruled* was ranked with Matthew Arnold’s *Culture and Anarchy*. The media guru Marshall McLuhan, much influenced by Lewis, proclaimed the book as ‘probably the most radical political document since Machiavelli’s *Prince*’.

The Art of Being Ruled did not sell well although it was one of Lewis’s ‘tank-books’, along with *Time and Western Man* – containing his vast fund of ideas. In 1989, with the Chatto and Windus first edition long out of print, an elaborate new edition was published by the enterprising Black Sparrow Press of California. But that too has dropped from print, leaving a sizeable hole in Modernist studies pending a possible re-issue of all Lewis’s books.

Sixty years ago, I felt a definite *frisson* at finding a tattered Chatto copy. Its general unavailability at that time made me tingle as if I, alone, were on to a ‘secret’ or even ‘forbidden’ text which was alive with scintillating revelations. Recently re-reading it – I had the old furtive feeling all over again.

C J Fox is a retired Canadian journalist formerly working in England.

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Reputations - 48

Christopher Lee

Tim Walker

I don't mind telling you that I resent the present trend in British movies', said a clearly exasperated Sir Christopher Lee in a long forgotten interview in 1964. 'Mind you, I haven't actually seen *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* or *A Taste of Honey*, but from what I hear about these so-called realistic films, the men are either thugs or queers and the women look like whores. If I want to know about the boy and girl next door, I can knock on the door. If I want to be sick, I can go to a hospital.'

Working in a world that always professes – at least in public – to be trendily left wing, Lee, who died in June at the age of 93, had a refreshing aversion to political correctness. Some would no doubt attribute this to his wartime service, which, while not perhaps as stuffed with derring-do as he and his obituarists were inclined to make out, was still impressive. He was attached to the SAS and SOE as an RAF liaison officer. This involved him assessing situations coolly and objectively: he never had to waste any time pretending to care.

The Lee that I came to know around the turn of the Millennium over a series of lunches at the Caprice and his club, Buck's, was, I would say, an actor second and a businessman first. He certainly didn't have the love of performing that his old friends Peter Cushing and Vincent Price possessed and he never shared their passion for appearing on stage. As for the camaraderie of his profession, I remember asking him how Cushing, a big star when the then unknown Lee had first worked with him, had reacted when their names started being transposed in the opening credits of the films they made together. 'His wife Helen was not happy when she saw my name come up before his, not happy at all,' Lee said matter-of-factly of something that had clearly been negotiated by his agent. 'Peter never mentioned it.'

Lee's over-riding interest in the latter part of the word show business was manifest in the Seventies when he tried to go it alone by setting up his own film production company called Charlemagne, (from whom he claimed

ancestry), which turned out the thriller *Nothing But the Night*. It was a valiant attempt, but Lee realised soon enough that it was an idea ahead of its time and he had too many vested interests pitted against him. He was not inclined to gamble any more of his own cash on a second attempt.

His disappointment with Hammer Films was that its directors failed to manage the business properly. He recognised that the company had made him a huge international star in the Fifties and Sixties, playing the title roles in their *Frankenstein*, *Dracula* and *Mummy* remakes, but he could see that things were falling apart by the time he was browbeaten into playing Bram Stoker's bloodsucker in *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* and *Dracula AD 1972*. Sensing weakness, he pressed for a share of the proceeds of the films. The company

balked. He was in no mood to be told by one of Hammer's executives, keen for him to lend his name to yet more dismal projects for a derisory fee, that he 'owed' them. 'Not for years,' he replied, menacingly. 'Not for years. You owe me now.'

Tellingly, it had been Lee who around this time managed to persuade Dennis Wheatley, a near neighbour of his in Sloane Square, to give Hammer the rights to his novels *gratis* after the success they had made of the film *The Devil Rides Out* in the Sixties. The company's last but one film was an adaptation of Wheatley's *To The*

Devil A Daughter, in which Lee had appeared with Richard Widmark, but the author had not been happy with the rather vulgar end product which had at best a slight resemblance to his novel.

There was a limit to what Lee could do for Hammer and it was around this time that he decamped to Hollywood, where he appeared in the first of a series of blockbuster franchises, one of the *Airport* films, followed by a *James Bond*. He adeptly switched from being the king of the bloodsuckers to the king of the blockbusters, with the *Star Wars* and the *Lord of the Rings* films adding, too, in time to his considerable personal fortune.



He eschewed parts in television series like *Dynasty* and *Dallas* because he could see that they were to all intents and purposes nursing homes for ageing actors who had been resting rather too much of late. If he had any regrets, it was not accepting the role that was later offered to Leslie Nielsen in the *Airplane* films. He had also been assured he was going to play the Terence Stamp role in the first Superman, but its delayed start meant that he'd had to pull out. Both irked him because there was good money to be made there.

Lee was inevitably an acquired taste in the acting world. I well remember him telling me how he had bumped into the actor Dirk Bogarde in the street shortly after he had moved into a property not far from his own. Lee had appeared in a minor role in *A Tale of Two Cities*, in which Bogarde had in 1958 starred. 'Yes, yes, Christopher, I know, but it was all a very long time ago,' Bogarde had said, without so much as breaking his stride.

Lee was a Conservative with a capital C as well as a small c and numbered among his acquaintances

Michael Gove, the present Lord Chancellor, whom he had first got to know when the future politician had appeared fleetingly with him in the film *A Feast at Midnight* in 1995. Gove was by all accounts instrumental, along with the *Daily Telegraph's* Mandrake column, which had run a long campaign, in securing for Lee a knighthood in 2009. Inevitably, this did not go down well with large sections of the acting profession. 'I mean what has he actually done?' opined Dame Eileen Atkins shortly afterwards. 'Certainly he has shown no interest whatsoever in the stage.'

Sir Christopher did not, of course, care. His greatest boast was that he was a survivor. He was his own business manager and he had run his career very shrewdly indeed. He bit his lip in public, of course, as some of the views he might have freely expressed in the sixties became unfashionable, but in private he remained true to his own lights. And he made a few bob along the way, too, which I would say is what really mattered to him most of all.

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Roy Kerridge

Women in my family are so flamboyant that the men tend to go unnoticed. However, there are men like my father who is still alive aged 96. When asked about my father and his job, I have two answers. Both are true but give a false impression. The most popular answer is that he worked at the McVitie's biscuit factory in Harlesden. This reply confirms people's impression of me – a boy from a working class home who became educated at grammar school. My other reply, that my father was a university professor, does not make nearly as good an impression. People at once imagine tea on the lawn at the Old Rectory, and a kind bumbling old man with spectacles, disappointed obviously at how his son has turned out.

When my father lived with us at home, I did not know what his occupation might be. Apparently he worked for a day at McVities but didn't like it. Later in life he lectured in universities and wrote books. But, I am told, when at home with us he was a student. Having a father who is a mature student is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs. He studied furiously in his bedroom, and every now and again came out swearing and kicking the dog.

To the rest of the family he seemed to be symbolised by the closed bedroom door. It became a door of horror, ominous in its silence, terrifying when opened. Behind

it lurked an uncanny being with a spider-like mind. My mother slept with me until I was nearly eight and my father left home. Then she moved into the room of horror, a room that never lost its bad reputation with me.

It is true that I went to grammar school, but far from helping me, the school ruined me. Grammar schools took boys from working class homes and made them lower middle class. They also took boys from upper middle class homes and made them lower middle class. Very few grammar school pupils went on to university in the nineteen-fifties. Nearly everyone I knew at school became a clerk.

My brother Martin, near to me in age, is another significant man in my life. Although the best of friends, our outlooks on life were very different. I liked animals and folklore, Martin liked cars, planes, trains and buses. In the 1940's I loved to lie in bed and listen to the early morning sounds: birdsong and the cheerful cry of milkmen yodelling 'Milk-oh, oh oh'. Milk carts were pulled by small scraggy horses wearing blinkers. They let you pat them.

As the forties became the fifties, electric milk carts were introduced. Martin was ecstatic, but I was dismayed. No more horses, no more singing. Never since have I heard a milkman yodel 'Milk-oh', though

our dustmen voice a wordless chant as they work, and the stallholders at Walthamstow Market sing their wares in call and response fashion, not to the public but to one another as their stalls are put to bed at night.

Martin grew up to be a transport expert and a maker of roads in far-flung lands. Although we cannot see eye to eye, I realise that the Martin point of view has its merits. He surveyed and supervised the making of a huge road across Africa's Kalahari Desert. Appreciative villagers told him that he had saved their lives, as famine relief lorries could now reach them. However the bad side of good transport is that new ideas can then spread more rapidly. One of the most beautiful villages on Martin's route was ruined when the villagers became modern minded and pulled down their lovely huts of cob and thatch. They replaced them by corrugated iron shanties, dangerous places in a desert thunderstorm.

Anyone who is anti-beauty can prosper in the modern world. My other brother Paul began as a soulful aesthetic artist, who hoped to design elegant stately homes. His drawings were ridiculed at college, and he had to suppress his better self and design ugly buildings.

These are a great success, and enable him to support his family. Something within him has been lost, as without irony he now declares that architecture must never be beautiful.

I used to yearn for marriage, but now I cannot help noticing that every marriage in my family has been unhappy. My grandfather had to conceal the fact that he was Jewish from his wife. When Hitler invaded his native Poland and killed almost all his family, he could not talk about it and tried not to think about it. Perhaps he could have brought them out of Poland to join him in England before the war. Evidently he preferred to please his wife who flew into a rage at the very name 'Jew'. Oddly enough my young brother Paul is in almost exactly the same predicament, and has to conceal his mixed race from his prejudiced wife, and listen unprotestingly to her absurd opinions. Luckily there is no Hitler now, thanks to the menfolk from other families in England, Russia and America. The main criticism against men is that they are warlike, but sometimes a warrior spirit is needed.

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ETERNAL LIFE



When I was Rector of St Michael's, Cornhill, one of the highlights of my year was our Patronal Festival on 29th September.

The title *St Michael* means *he who is like God*. Michael was known to the prophet Daniel in ancient Israel and he has been venerated by all the churches from the beginning. The early Greek Fathers called him *Chief Militant* and *Archistrategos* – literally *the General Officer Commanding*. The Egyptian Christians long ago dedicated the Nile as *St Michael's River*. And when Germany was converted from paganism, all the mountains dedicated to Wotan were re-consecrated to Michael. That's why there are so many chapels to St Michael on mountain peaks in Germany. Wagner ought to have noticed that before he wrote his pagan epic.

Most vividly, St Michael is the Archangel of the Apocalypse: *There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon*. War in heaven? There's a thought for the manufacturers of religious greetings cards. St Michael is not the favourite saint of our bishops and synods who are still urging us to apologise for every military campaign back as far as Trafalgar and even the Crusades, but he is a useful saint today when Christians are suffering Islamic persecution on three continents and when the faith we

take for granted must once again be fought for.

Those who take the cosy view of angels, seeing them as effeminate creatures with embroidered wings, are really away with the fairies. We should remind them of Our Lord's saying that he came not to bring peace but a sword, that he urges us to spiritual warfare, promising that the gates of hell will not prevail. There is a reminder of Christian warfare in the bell tower of St Michael's, a scar on the wall where it is said St Michael attacked the devil who was trying to get in. Sceptics told me over the years: *It wasn't done by St Michael – it was a bolt of lightning*. Where do these people keep their imagination? What do they think St Michael uses? Lightning is the first item in the Archangel's armoury.

We are told about the enemy in the Epistle of Jude, the shortest book in the New Testament which fits on to one page of the Bible. Our Christian warfare is against those who *defile the flesh*. It sounds old fashioned, until you take a look at what is available on the telly and the Internet, or you venture into any of our town centres in the evenings. We inhabit the consumerism of hell where all the sins have been redefined as *lifestyle choices*. The Epistle warns of those who *'despise dominion and speak evil of dignities'*. *'Deference'* is

sneered at as *outdated* by the jobs who run the mass media.' *Brute beasts who corrupt themselves*' – just walk as far as the Tottenham Court Road.

Do not think that angels and devils, St Michael and Satan, are mere metaphors – picture language. Just because they are usually invisible doesn't mean they are not real. They are real and they are at war. The devil creates nothing original because God is the only Creator. The devil can only copy God's actions, befouling them as he goes along. So the devil is called the Ape of God. The devil is hard at work aping God all the time:

He can't give you love; but he can give you a disordered sexual appetite.

He can't give you music; but he can give you the noise that passes for it, the ubiquitous racket of rock and pop.

He can't give you friendship; but he can give you as many social networking sites as you want. On any one of these you can advertise your upcoming act of mass murder.

He can't give you Sabbath rest by Galilee; but he can provide seven day shopping.

The devil can't give you the beauty of holiness; but he can give you the Bad News Bible, doggerel modern services and, just when you are trying to say your prayers, the rowdy interruption called the Peace

The devil can't teach you to pray; but he provides lots of psychoanalysis, counselling and navel-gazing.

He can't show you the glory of the night sky; but he can provide any number of night clubs

But the devil can give you eternal life; the catch is that you have to spend it with him.

Seeing we are beset by the crafts and assaults of the devil, give us, we beseech thee O Lord, the mighty protection of St Michael and all the holy angels that we may resist the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil and serve thee with a quiet mind.

Peter Mullen

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FILM

Uncle Joe's Hollywood Chums Scott Grønmark

Hollywood Traitors: Blacklisted Screenwriters – Agents of Stalin, Allies of Hitler, Allan H Ryskind, Regnery Publishing Inc, 2015, £19.99.

The American film industry has spent decades fostering a myth about the activities of Hollywood Communists in the 1930's and '40s.

According to a rewriting of history as fanciful as a Hollywood script of the period, fanatical right-wing Republicans persecuted decent, ordinary film actors, writers and directors for expressing mildly left-of-centre opinions in support of the victims of America's rapacious capitalist system. The standard narrative opines that many blameless film-makers were hounded out of work by a studio-operated blacklist, just for trying to stand up for the little guy.

At the heart of the myth lie the Hollywood Ten, nine scriptwriters and a director, who were fined and jailed after refusing to answer questions about their membership of the Communist Party, during hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee in Los Angeles in 1947(HUAC). In 1997 the Academy of

Motion Picture Arts and Sciences staged a star-studded 50th anniversary celebration of the Ten in Beverly Hills. One of them, Ring Lardner Jr., was presented with a plaque engraved with the text of the First Amendment, presumably to underline the traditional commitment of Communists to free speech.

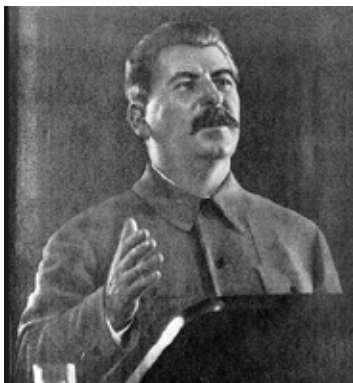
As Allan H Ryskind puts it in this definitive record of the attempted Communist takeover of Hollywood, 'They were not honourable anti-fascists or patriotic Americans, as their defenders argue, but loyal Soviet apparatchiks, a fifth column working for Stalin inside our homeland.' All of the Ten had been or still were members of the American Communist Party (CPUSA), an organisation directly controlled by the Kremlin, and were therefore, agents of a foreign power intent on destroying America's democratic system. Communist party members had campaigned vigorously at the time of the Nazi-Soviet Pact against America entering the war, or sending any aid to Britain, because Britain and Nazi Germany were morally equivalent. As soon as Hitler attacked their spiritual homeland, the USSR, they instantly changed tack and stridently demanded that the US use its military might against Germany, and provide Russia and Britain with everything they needed to defeat fascism.

Even before the war, Ryskind argues, Hollywood writers had been stuffing their scripts with anti-

American and pro-Soviet propaganda. Scriptwriter John Howard Lawson, Hollywood's thuggish party enforcer, realised that films consisting of nothing but Communist propaganda would be unacceptable to the studios. He advised writers: 'Try to get five minutes of the Communist doctrine, five minutes of the party line in every script that you write.' He also told a gathering of young left-wing actors that their duty was to '... further the class struggle by your performance. If you are nothing more than an extra wearing white flannels on a country club veranda do your best to appear decadent, do your best to be a snob ... create class antagonism. If you are an extra in a tenement street, do your best to look downtrodden ... to look a victim of existing society.'

While the studios usually recognised blatant propaganda in films dealing with domestic themes, they allowed several outrageously pro-Stalinist foreign-set films to slip through the net, particularly after the collapse of the Nazi-Soviet Pact. The odious Lillian Hellman wrote *The North Star* (1943), a paean to collective farming in the Ukraine, which had caused the death of up to 7.5 million people in the famine of 1932-33. The liberal critic, Mary McCarthy, dismissed the film as 'a tissue of falsehoods woven of every variety of untruth'. MGM's *Song of Russia* (1943), featuring merry, well-fed Russian villagers and, bizarrely, a popular village priest, was, according to one left-wing US newspaper, so pro-Soviet that it 'left some moviegoers in pain', and painted such a rosy picture of life in the USSR that, according to one Russian film official, 'it made Russians laugh'. An early example of propaganda was *The General Died at Dawn* (1936), which lauded Chinese communist rebels, just as John Howard Lawson's *Blockade* (1938) was an uncritical hymn of praise to Communists in the Spanish Civil War, even as the comrades were torturing and butchering many of the non-Stalinists fighting alongside them.

Why did hard-nosed studio bosses, occasionally liberal but never remotely communist, allow themselves to be manipulated by Stalinists? Partly because, while the USSR remained a US ally, pro-Soviet films were welcomed by a Roosevelt administration which had itself been infiltrated by a mixture of Soviet sympathisers and agents. Jack Warner, the head of Warner Brothers, also explained, it was 'often difficult to prevent the hiring of certain people because they are hired through unions and... guilds, some of which are Communist controlled.' Warners were forced to shut down their Story Analysts department, whose members



Koba the Dread 60 million dead

were providing deliberately atrocious synopses of material by non-Communist writers. Stalinists routinely excluded non-believers from productions, a method of punishing conservatives still used by left-wingers in films and television to this day.

Stalinists also gained control of the powerful Screen Writers Guild, and created a welter of front organisations with the words 'democracy', 'freedom' and 'American' in their titles, in order to influence public opinion and to hoodwink idealistic members of the film industry into joining Uncle Joe's clandestine army.

Hollywood didn't wait until HUAC rolled into town to fight back. In 1939, two emigrée liberals, director Ernst Lubitsch and writer Billy Wilder, produced *Ninotchka*, undoubtedly the wittiest anti-Communist film ever made. ('The last mass trials have been a great success. There are going to be fewer but better Russians.') The Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals (MPA) was launched in 1944. Among its founders were Walt Disney, Sam Wood (who directed *Goodbye, Mr Chips* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*), and liberal playwright Morrie Ryskind, who wrote the early Marx Brothers films, and whose son is the author of this book – his father never wrote another Hollywood script after openly declaring his opposition to Communism. Other prominent anti-Communists included Ronald Reagan, who, despite being a self-described 'haemophilic liberal' at the time, fought the Reds tooth and nail in the Screen Actors Guild, persuading members not to support two Communist-led Conference of Studio Unions strikes designed to bring the studios to heel in 1945 and 1946. Roy Brewer, a tough union leader, almost single-handedly prevented the complete Communist takeover of Hollywood unions in the 1940s. Unlike the Hollywood Ten, only one of whom ever publicly renounced Communism, none of these notable anti-Communists has been honoured for their brave stand; indeed they have been regularly maligned by leftists ever since.

The blacklist effectively ended in 1960 when Kirk Douglas named Dalton Trumbo, a keen supporter of North Korea's Communist regime, as the writer of *Spartacus*. Since then, every Hollywood film dealing with the blacklist (*The Front*, *The Majestic*, *Trumbo*) has painted anti-Communists as fascist villains intent on destroying the lives of democracy-loving free-thinkers. When, two years after its 1997 tribute to the Hollywood Ten, the Academy redressed the balance by awarding an honorary Oscar to Elia Kazan, a

former Communist who ‘named names’, half of the audience of Hollywood luminaries refused to stand or applaud this distinguished director. Heroically, Steven Spielberg applauded, but remained seated. Ingrained political prejudice had obviously rendered the central message of Kazan’s anti-Communist classic, *On the Waterfront*, unpalatable to these posturing refuseniks.

Certainly there were some liberal Hollywood people whose lives were unfairly ruined by the blacklist because, despite being duped by hard-liners into lending their support to Communist front organisations,

they found ‘naming names’ morally unpalatable. Liberal film-makers and writers have spent years trying to convince us there was no other kind of Hollywood liberal, and that there was no concerted effort to turn Hollywood into a propaganda factory for Stalin’s brand of totalitarianism. *Hollywood Traitors* leaves us in no doubt that such a plot existed. Its author, a conservative reporter and editor, is only too willing to name the plotters and to praise those who stood against them. This is a powerful, well-researched book.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Welfarism’s rotten heart

Jane Kelly

The Welfare of Nations, James Bartholomew, Biteback Publishing, 2015, £20.

Many books are written as the result of a trauma but James Bartholomew’s experience perhaps takes the biscuit. In 2006 he was introduced to Baroness Thatcher. Like any good author he told her about his latest book, *The Welfare State We’re In*, in which he’d argued that the British welfare state had done more harm than good. Straight away she demanded to know what, in that case, should be done about it?

He meekly suggested that a modern democracy like ours would never accept the changes needed. ‘No! No! No!’ came the reply and he received a severe hand-bagging as he failed to come up with an acceptable solution.

‘The research would cost a great deal of time and money’ he pleaded, ‘to find any conclusion worth hearing.’

‘You must find a way of communicating it,’ she roared as she beetled off furiously to find someone more effective.

Since then he has tried to do just that. His new tome, *The Welfare of Nations*, in 342 pages and a detailed index, compares a wide range of modern societies, some like the UK struggling to provide for its people through state monopolies like the NHS and social security, others like Singapore and Hong Kong rejecting that formula for something original. He has

travelled to eleven countries, including Australia and Singapore, and visited cities all over the USA, in this ambitious attempt to communicate just how welfare states, through government control of healthcare, social provision, housing and education, often damage diverse civilisations.

He starts with ‘The World Quiz’ testing how much the reader really knows about how the modern world works. ‘Is Sweden really socialist? Is America a free-market nation with barely any social provision? How does Britain compare in treating breast cancer with countries without an NHS?’ I scored ten out of twenty and like most people really need to read this book.

In Washington DC he saw a line of mainly black men waiting to enter a centre for the homeless. ‘Seeing them gave me a strong feeling of how important it is to get welfare as right as we can,’ he says. ‘None of us should insist on his or her political prejudices. We should look at the evidence and try to be honest about it. Too much is at stake to indulge in bar-room views.’

The issues he tackles about how we live now are extremely sensitive and painful, as they are mainly about the failure of long cherished policies. He includes a photo of a gimlet eyed LBJ as he began his ‘unconditional war on poverty’. In a speech at the University of Michigan in May 1964, he coined the phrase, ‘the Great Society’ and began a massive programme of legislation to help the poor.

It’s astonishing to think now, by how much he failed. The book is loaded with painful statistics which show how, as the wealth of America has increased, so has the budget for welfare and the number of those depending on it. In the richest country in the world, forty-six million, one in seven, are now dependent

on food stamps.

Chapter by chapter Bartholomew shows how the best intentioned plans for welfare throughout the developed world have largely backfired. Perhaps his most powerful chapter is on unemployment, which he sees as the rotten heart of welfarism. Those without jobs are more likely to be malnourished, depressed and suicidal than any other group. We have become accustomed to high levels of unemployment, yet it was rare, less than four percent, before 1914. Today it's blamed on globalisation and new technology, but he shows how it varies dramatically across different countries. In Spain unemployment is high, especially among the young, while Switzerland, a country with high wages, has one of the lowest rates. In Zurich he asked how they had managed this.

'It's easy to fire people', came the chilling reply. According to them a company which knows it can fire will be more ready to hire. In the rest of Europe this is not the case. The Swiss also have no national minimum wage, apart from one for workers from the EU. Employers can afford to take on even the low skilled, including the young. Like many European countries they also have an unemployment insurance system. Bartholomew's exploration of insurance systems compared to means testing is one of the most fascinating features of the book.

In Switzerland workers have to contribute and if they lose their jobs they get insurance benefits, 70 per cent of their salary or 80 per cent for those with children, for up to 400 days. But during that time they must accept any offer of suitable work. Another reason for their tiny unemployment rate is their education. More students go to vocational schools than universities. Almost every teenage school child works for a company effectively as an apprentice. A purely academic education is reserved for a minority.

In 2002, after the German government was found massaging the employment figures, Gerhard Schröder hired Dr Peter Hartz, a director at Volkswagen, to help. His reforms ended welfare benefits as an entitlement, introducing 'Help & Hassle', where people were put under pressure to take any job they could, or fully engage in a training programme. Private companies were hired to place people. There was also the creation of mini- and part-time jobs, which were not taxed, and it was made easier to sack employees.

The author is certain that it must always be financially advantageous for the low-paid to work. His book sometimes reads like a template for Tory party policy, but he diverges from them in his interest in morality and human feeling. He wants to know why welfare states in the west have failed to create more

equal, happier people. He fathoms the mystery of how more people have become dependent despite countries becoming richer, and shows how the insidious culture of dependency has affected self-respect, education, behaviour, family loyalties and parenting. He wants reforms which nurture the traditional family, strengthening parental responsibility instead of penalising it.

The cost of child-care is of course a crucial issue in many developed countries, though not all. In a chapter entitled 'In our liberal society, there is a group of staunchly conservative people: children,' he shows how children of all ages have suffered acutely from the facilitation of one parent families. In the US and the UK unmarried women giving birth are now 42 per cent, compared to 2 per cent in Japan. He bravely tackles the effect on small children of being in full-time nurseries. This issue is taboo in many countries including the UK, US and Sweden, 'where anything which might interfere with the independence of women is automatically unconscionable.'

Careers have been wrecked by people suggesting that too much childcare is detrimental to society. He interviews Jay Belsky, a professor of psychology who changed his mind on this issue owing to 'newly emerging evidence' of how damaging it is to separate young children from their mothers. He was immediately accused of misogyny and, in Belsky's words, 'turned into the devil incarnate overnight.' He also quotes Jill Kirby, the former director of the conservative Centre for Policy Studies: 'The growing child is simply viewed as an impediment to work.'

So has he communicated enough solutions to satisfy Lady Thatcher? He ends the book with 'Ten top tips for better welfare states,' and gives an index of the best and worst. His book abounds with solutions, many of which would be considered unthinkable by many in our liberal society, and we would need an extremely strong Tory Prime Minister to bring them about.

For instance: Tip 3: Create compulsory health savings accounts and health insurance provided by competing organisations. Tip 4: Social insurance is preferable to means-tested benefits. Allow private companies and mutual societies to offer it. Tip 6: Minimise benefits or accommodation for lone parents that is not also given to married parents.

Whatever side you take, this book is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand modern life. My only quibbles are use of the historic present, and American English. The photos are mostly too tiny and dingy to be of use, but the book is well laid out and despite being saturated with facts and statistics is a very easy, racy read. [back to contents](#)

Madman's Progress

Anthony Daniels

Madness In Civilization: A Cultural History of Insanity from the Bible to Freud, from the Madhouse to Modern Medicine, Andrew Scull, Thames and Hudson, 2015, £28.00.

I have been to islands in the Pacific where raving madmen were tied to trees and if they failed quickly to reform were floated out into the immensity of the ocean on logs; I have seen a madman in Nigeria who had been chained to a post for years on end; I have seen (and smelt) a British prisoner, stark naked, daub religious slogans on the walls of his cell with his own faeces while he shouted incomprehensible gibberish. Unlike the late Thomas Szasz, for whom I had a high regard both as a man and as a polemicist, I believe that madness actually exists: but where it begins and ends, and what causes it, I do not know.

The absence of indubitable boundaries between sanity and madness, and our ignorance of causes in most cases, has meant that the treatment of the mentally disordered has been peculiarly prey to charlatans and mountebanks, to theories that a few years later seem absurd and to gusts of ill-founded therapeutic enthusiasm.

Andrew Scull, one of the best modern authorities on the history of psychiatry, here gives us a history of madness down the ages, not just how it was treated but what it meant, symbolised or signified for various societies. Although it starts with the ancients and makes a number of references to non-western civilizations, it is overwhelmingly Eurocentric and concentrated on the post-Renaissance era. No doubt this was inevitable, not because madness was confined to Europe (and North America) in the last six or seven hundred years, but because the documentation is so much vaster and richer for that region and era. Professor Scull draws on an impressive range not just of what mad-doctors have written, but on plays and novels and of the memoirs of patients themselves.

It sometimes looks as if he had written a kind of Whig history of the subject in reverse: far from being a record of uninterrupted progress to our present state of enlightenment, the book reads as a tale of how Mankind has staggered from idiocy to idiocy in its attempts to succour or protect itself from the ravages of lunacy. The cure has sometimes been worse than the disease: one of Professor Scull's own series of brilliant monographs, for example, relates the story of Henry Cotton (1876-1933), an American doctor with a brilliant academic

record, who came to the odd conclusion that madness was caused by the toxins of focal sepsis, that is to say pockets of bacterial infection, hiding in various parts of the body. It followed, antibiotics being unknown in those days, that the foci of infection should be eliminated by surgery; and to this end, Dr Cotton pulled out all the teeth and virtually eviscerated many patients, between a third and a half of whom died as a result. Nevertheless, Cotton proclaimed the treatment a great success (I have one of his published lectures) and for a time, happily not very long, he was imitated elsewhere.

This is perhaps only the most extraordinary of the episodes that Professor Scull relates in this handsomely illustrated book. Patients have been ducked in water, whirled around to the point of disorientation, deliberately infected with germs, deprived of all sensation, kept asleep for days and nights on end, had their temperatures reduced to the point of dying from hypothermia, and exhibited like circus animals, all in the hope of a cure. This might seem like just another example of Man's inhumanity to Man, and no doubt some of the people who proposed and carried out the most extreme forms of 'therapy' were indeed sadists, but intractable madmen, in the absence of any effective drugs to tranquillise them, do pose a very difficult problem. Desperate illnesses call forth desperate remedies, and not only where there is madness. George Washington, for example, was probably bled to death by his doctors; an eminent surgeon, Sir Arbuthnot Lane, took out the colons of the rich on the theory of focal sepsis causing all manner of chronic diseases.

The question that any reader of this book is bound to ask is whether psychiatry has made any real progress, unlike other branches of medicine where progress is indisputable. One way of answering this question might be whether, if you were mad, you would rather be treated now than at any previous time in history. I suppose the answer, after hesitation, would be 'Yes.' But this might be not so much because of technical as of moral advance, or at least change. Madmen are at least protected nowadays from the wilder experiments of mad-doctors. This is not to say that we have reached a final state of enlightenment, as the homeless schizophrenics who inhabit our streets or other public places will suffice to persuade anyone.

Professor Scull is rightly scathing of the current methods of psychiatric diagnosis. I think future Professor Sculls (or is it Professors Scull?) will make as much hay of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association* as he does of the wilder shores of past psychiatric therapy, and future generations will be astonished that it could ever have been treated with such superstitious awe as

it is by, for example, British courts. Starting out as an attempt to standardize psychiatric diagnosis, so that when one psychiatrist made a diagnosis another knew exactly what he meant by it, the *DSM* has become an absurd compendium of human comportment, so that almost everyone fulfils the criteria for one ‘disorder’ or another. It is also a corrupt money-spinner for both the Association and the pharmaceutical industry: because, of course, there is a pill for every ill.

As is inevitable with a broad and general history, one can lament both inclusions and omissions. I think Professor Scull is far too lenient, for example, on Freud, the evidence for whose repeated wrongdoings, equivocations, lies and general dishonesty seems to me to be very strong. But such minor criticisms aside, his book is as good and readable an introduction to the history of madness and its treatment – which is, among other things, the history of Mankind’s attempt to understand itself – as we are ever likely to get.

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Life without Love

Merrie Cave

The Disappeared, Roger Scruton, Bloomsbury Reader, 2015, £12.99.

Is a novel an effective way of illuminating social problems and promoting reform? Certainly Dickens’s novels did. *Oliver Twist* exposed the deficiencies of the Poor Law Amendment Act and the inhumane conditions of the workhouses, while *Nicholas Nickleby* showed the terrible lives of unprotected children in Victorian times, but one sometimes wonders whether the lives of our children at the margins of society in the 21st century are much better than the ones that Dickens described.

Unlike many philosophers Roger Scruton engages with the problems of the modern world and challenges its cherished orthodoxies. His support of Ray Honeyford and other rebels ensured the opposition, even hatred, of the academic liberal establishment and the loss of the rewards to which he was entitled. In this novel, which is as gripping as many thrillers, he tells a story of the criminal underworld in a northern town, its victims and the middle class characters who are dragged into it.

Prosecutions for child abuse of gangs from Muslim backgrounds have taken place in Rochdale, Rotherham, Telford, Derby and, somewhat improbably, Oxford. East Oxford is only a few bus stops away from the dreaming spires, but many of its inhabitants were probably unaware of the shocking crimes taking

place there and which may be continuing. The gang in Oxford groomed children from 2004 to 2012 and were convicted in 2013 at the Old Bailey, receiving sentences totalling 95 years for what Judge Peter Rook described as ‘a series of sexual crimes of the utmost depravity’. He told them that ‘you targeted the girls because they were vulnerable, underage and out of control. Each of the six victims had shown enormous courage in giving evidence and knowing they would have to relive their ordeals, knowing that they had not been believed in the past’.

The usual hand wringing from the authorities followed the convictions. Denis McShane, the former MP for Rotherham admitted that he had been ‘guilty of doing too little’. The Police and Crime Commissioner for South Yorkshire who had been a Labour Councillor in charge of child safety at the council was forced to resign. In Oxford a report revealed that more than 300 girls had been sexually exploited by the gang and accused Thames Valley Police of not believing the girls and failing to protect them. The comments from the Imam of the Oxford Islamic Congregation, Dr Hargey, were much more robust: ‘race and religion were inextricably linked to the grooming rings in which Muslim men have targeted under-age white girls and the view of some Islamic preachers towards white women can be appalling’. Hargey blamed the police, social services and the care system who ‘seemed eager to ignore the sickening exploitation that was happening before their eyes’.

All these things are reflected in Scruton’s novel: his fictional town’s (Whinmoor) only positive features are its remaining Victorian architecture next to grim council blocks like Angel Towers where Sharon Williams a ‘pretty, slight, frail schoolgirl’ lives and is abused by two Afghan brothers. Their sister Muhibbah has escaped from a forced marriage but is befriended and loved by the environmentalist Justin Fellowes. Oxford-educated Stephen Haycraft is a naïve *Guardian* reader who has joined the Teach First scheme, but soon falls for the frail little girl in his class who writes promising essays. His wish to protect her eventually leads him to ruin. When a senior teacher, Jim, asks him for information about the child as she is at risk, Stephen tries to evade the issue, fearful of the consequences.

We have to provide any information we can gather, to be put in the file, to back up the general decision to do nothing ... the social workers can say they did what they could, and in any case they are overworked and underfunded and it is all the government’s fault. When were you born for Chrissake?

Why is Sharon Williams at risk? Who is threatening her?'

Who, you mean, apart from the rapists on the eighth floor, the drug addicts on the sixth and the slave dealers in the basement? Could it be, frinstance, mum's latest boyfriend, the knife artist from the defunct Romanian circus that ran out of cash last Wednesday, or the Afghan fathers who are so keen to preserve the virginity of their daughters that they kidnap fatherless girls for their sons to play with. Why don't you ask her?

I'll look into it.

Of course most Muslim men are *not* sexual predators; Scruton introduces an Iraqi family who are devout but also educated and humane. Abdul, the father, abhors the burqa and approves of the French law which bans them. Laura Markham, a young lawyer who was mistaken for Sharon, kidnapped on page 4 and subsequently trafficked and raped, and Iona, the social worker, emerge as heroines in the final denouement. Both these characters are drawn well. Perhaps the plot is overcomplicated and the cast of characters too large. Discussions on the teachings of the Koran, the MacPherson report, wind farms and Heavy Metal sometimes obscure the narrative but the message of the book is clear and dramatic.

The columnist Allison Pearson described the Pakistani Muslim community as 'essentially a Victorian society that has landed like Doctor Who's Tardis on a liberal permissive planet it despises.' Some 'Victorian' reforms and 'Victorian' reformers are badly needed: a police force which must resist the charge of racism and apply the law correctly, a reform of the social services and their unwieldy, unkind bureaucracy, no more reports which report what we already know and above all protection for the unprotected. We must also realize that our sexualisation of children with its immodesty of dress in the young is partly to blame. These issues are even more important than the terrorist threat for they involve more people and ruin lives. The lack of care in children's care homes is shocking; local authorities should give up running them and hand them to the Salvation Army and some of the churches who used to run them successfully with commitment and some love.

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An Artist off the Wall

David Twiston Davies

The Red Earl: the Extraordinary Life of the 16th Earl of Huntingdon, Selina Hastings, Bloomsbury, 2014, £18.99.

Lady Selina Hastings remembers her father first as a distant figure, who benignly patted his young

daughters' heads on the stairs but often lived separately from them. This was not unusual some 60 years ago for members of the aristocracy who were content to see children for an hour in the drawing-room after tea. She also saw nothing unusual in being part of an ancient family. She knew nothing else.

Her father claimed to believe the dubious legend that they were descended from Robin Hood. But a real ancestor was the Lord Hastings executed by King Richard III, whose son was created Earl of Huntingdon by Henry VIII. By the time the family were living in rural Ireland in the late 19th century they had long renounced any possible claim to the throne. Her grandfather had turned down a marquessate because it sounded foreign and he was only interested in hunting; his wife, a wealthy Australian grazier's daughter, longed for a glittering social life, preferably in England.

Born in 1901, their son Jack was quiet and modest, gliding largely unnoticed through Eton and Oxford. His domineering mother made it clear that he must marry a wealthy girl of his own class. Then he met Cristina Casati, the daughter of an Italian marchese, at the Chelsea Arts' Ball. Cristina was all that a future countess should not be: a high-spirited party girl who came from a highly scandalous family and, worse still, was Roman Catholic!

Even by the time their affair was discovered the relationship was starting to fray; but Jack refused to give her up. They married at a register office; *The Times* recording in the Court Circular that it took place 'without the consent, approval or knowledge of his parents or family'.

The couple set off for Australia where the young Viscount Hastings became a public school jackeroo on a New South Wales sheep station. Here he won approval for his horsemanship and learned to throw a boomerang. His wife caused a mild sensation by modelling for a Melbourne dress shop.

When he inherited £3,000, the equivalent of £400,000 today, they headed down to the South Seas to purchase a 12-room house in an idyllic setting, where they enjoyed a blissful period of rare marital peace. Cristina played the ukulele and ran the home while Jack concentrated on developing his painting, surrounded by such friends as the authors Alec Waugh and Zane Grey.

A visit home for the birth of their daughter Moorea did nothing to heal their relationship, which was increasingly rent by Cristina's explosions of rage. Leaving the child with her grandparents, the couple returned to Tahiti, then moved to California, a world of celebrities and ominous over-consumption.

There Jack made the great discovery of his life: Diego Rivera, the Mexican muralist whose work was

lionised as he pilloried American capitalism. Jack recognised that Rivera was drawing on academic tradition, post-impressionism and cubism to produce work ‘whose pure form, colour and line represented a truth appealing to all classes and peoples.’ Burning with enthusiasm, the young Englishman obtained a personal introduction and was taken on to assist with the vast pictures celebrating the intoxicating industrial might of the United States.

Theirs was an unusual friendship. Conversing only in French they shared a passionate commitment to art. They also had considerable reservations about the excesses of capitalism while Cristina and Rivera’s wife the painter Frida Kahlo were no lovers of ‘Gringolandia’. Walking along the street the large effusive Mexican, resembling a frog in a ten-gallon hat, made a striking contrast beside the slim, quietly spoken Englishman and their colourfully dressed wives. One Californian stopped them in the street to ask: ‘What circus are you from?’

For Jack, the chance to work on Rivera’s commission for the San Francisco Stock Exchange, the heart of Mammon, offered a chance to experience the life of artists’ assistants in the Middle Ages, grinding colours, washing brushes, painting skies and carrying out errands. As an exotic outsider himself in American eyes – ‘descended from whatever peer led the Battle of Hastings’ – he had to organise a life run on uncertain Mexican time and to cope with local press infuriated by teasing cameos of Lenin or a worker wearing a red star with a hammer and sickle inserted into the work. Rivera put Jack in a corner of *The Making of a Fresco* then invited him to help with a picture of the Ford car plant in Michigan. In addition Jack picked up his own commissions, such as his admired *History of Bootlegging* which included Al Capone, though Capone would never have approved of the girl shown with him, he was told. Eventually when the Americans were too exasperated by Rivera, Jack and Cristina visited Mexico, where they were enchanted by all they saw, and returned home after four years.

A proposal for a Rivera exhibition at the Tate Gallery fell through, and Jack slipped back into the pale shadows of Society. The couple continued to fight despite their keen interest in the Spanish Civil War. Cristina passionately clung to the marriage, but Jack craved a quiet life, and achieved it after meeting the journalist Margaret Lane. He married her in 1944 and had two daughters, the author and her sister Caroline.

The contentment that followed drove Jack’s first marriage and travels into the long grass of memory, not forgotten but hardly considered worthy of recollection. Always a reluctant and singularly uncommunicative letter writer, he did not often feel the need to reminisce

about his past. While Margaret was busy with her journalism he was producing a mural for the Marx Library in Clerkenwell entitled *The Worker of the Future Clearing away the Chaos of Capitalism*, which was to be covered up for 40 years until after his death in 1990. When Labour came to power after the war his personal knowledge of the Depression and dislike of Soviet Russia led to him being appointed an under-secretary for agriculture as the new Lord Huntingdon. There was not much work but he saw no reason to seek more, according to the party’s future star, George Brown, who served alongside him. After giving up his post to return to art he supported the abolition of capital punishment and nuclear disarmament and moved towards the centre of the party.

The only real excitement of his latter years came when Margaret persuaded him to mount an expedition to find some diamonds buried in Mozambique, using a map he had been given decades earlier. They arrived at what was clearly a sacred burial place, when the drums ominously began to beat and they were told to leave for their own safety. Back home Margaret described their adventure in *A Calabash of Diamonds*, which was well received in 1961, though Harold Nicolson in *The Observer* pointed out that they were engaged in an illegal enterprise. Young Selina remembers little, being used to her parents’ sojourns abroad and more concerned with earning a white girdle for Gym.

It was only gradually that she realised what an extraordinary life her father had lived. Many biographers would have been tempted to delve deeper into the Irish hunting world, the hedonistic social life of London in the 1920s, his parliamentary career and love affairs. But while throwing in some delicious anecdotes about her grandmother’s exasperation with servants she focuses steadfastly on the man himself, so polite and so self-effacing as to be largely invisible to most people. Jack continued to take commissions and to lecture on mural painting at the St Martin’s School of Art in the 1950s, but his first exhibition only impressed one critic, the spy Anthony Blunt, who praised his powers of observation, sense of colour and ‘the superb and not altogether realism of some of the portraits’. The most likely explanation is that he had found his vocation and was not desperate for fame or money.

For a biographer, one suspects, his reticence must have been infuriating. When asked about Cristina’s mother his reply was that she was ‘rather difficult as a mother-in-law’. Selina recalls sitting with him as he painted in his last years, wondering about many things she wanted to know. Perhaps she could have sought more. But her discreet, loving portrait is immensely refreshing in our tawdry age of celebrity culture.

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Customs of the Modern Eskimo Celia Haddon

The Polar North. Ways of Speaking. Ways of Belonging, Stephen Pax Leonard, Francis Boutle Publishers, 2014, £20.

Anthropologists have never shied away from writing popular books. Alfred Cort Haddon, an early anthropologist, spent a year in the Torres Straits in the 1920s and wrote a book with the tabloid title *Head-hunters, Black, White and Brown*. A few years later Margaret Mead visited Samoa and wrote *Coming of Age in Samoa*, a sensation-causing portrait of relaxed promiscuous sex in a South Sea Island. It gained her lifelong status, despite the fact that she was probably misled by her adolescent informants into writing tosh.

Stephen Pax Leonard has made the traditional anthropologist's journey to an exotic location, in his case the remote polar community of the Innuguuit or Polar Eskimos. He stayed a whole year, rather than Margaret Mead's five months, living much of the time in a dilapidated wooden house with a bear-proof handle and a bucket for a toilet, from which a plastic bag full of human waste was collected twice weekly. *The Polar North* is an account of life at the edge of the Greenland wilderness.

'The sense of hunter-gatherer society meets modern consumerism is obvious from a brief glance,' he writes. As late as the 1950s, the Inuit of Qaanaaq, where he is staying, were semi-nomads moving from one camp to another. Now they have settled down in one place most of the time. 'It's not exactly the idyllic lifestyle of noble savages. The houses are surrounded by discarded trash, like the modern Beduin camps I have seen. Animal corpses are hung up outside to be skinned and the inhabitants nowadays depend on the Danish benefit system.'

The transition into modernity has taken its toll. Suicide is common. In one family with 12 members, two decades later there were only four left, eight of them having committed suicide. And in most of these self-inflicted deaths alcohol played a part aided by free access to guns. Foetal alcohol syndrome, recognisable in the faces and low intelligence of those born to alcoholics, was common in Qaanaaq and several of the inhabitants had lost a finger to frostbite after collapsing in the snow dead drunk. The settlement has one of the highest murder rates in the world. Only a few brave souls are teetotal either through a born-again

Free church or Alcoholics Anonymous. They are also addicted to Bingo!

Unlike Margaret Mead, Leonard is aware of his outsider status in the community and aware, also, that he may be being told tall stories. He is overcharged for everything. At first the inhabitants visit more to drink up all his beer than for the pleasure of his company. They ask for absurd money in return for stories or the conversation that he needs for his language research. 'Blank expressions and eyes that saw straight through me' is the response he often gets. They are cynical about the many anthropologists, explorers and travel writers who have reported on their society. Their most common response to a question is *Nalorrhorruga* or 'Don't know!'

Their contempt for visitors has a sound basis. The local people have been 'discovered' and exploited by a series of explorers since 1818. One of the earliest explorers brought back six Inuit and housed them in the American Museum of Natural History as if they were stuffed exhibits. Five of them died of tuberculosis almost immediately. In 1909, both Peary and Matthew Henson, his African-American associate who wrote *A Negro Explorer at the North Pole*, left behind tokens of their visit in children by the local women.

Insensitivity on the part of modern visitors continues. At Pituffik, where the local Inuit were displaced to make way for a US Air base, the military organise a summer golf tournament on the top of Mount Dundas, a sacred place for the local people. And many of the modern 'expeditions' that arrive in the period when the sun reappears are so poorly organised that the members have to be rescued at vast expense by helicopter. Leonard is more sensitive and when husbands offer him their wives for sex, he refuses.

Unfortunately for his research, the locals want to talk about the wrong things – sex or jokes – rather than the intricacies of their language. This baffles Leonard, until he realises that he can use 'an ethnolinguistic framework... by employing an *holistic*, phenomenological approach to language and ... a journey that takes one back to an embodied, experimental conception of language.' At times like this the jargon of modern anthropology, even more baffling than Polar Eskimo, surfaces like a seal at an ice hole in his otherwise well written descriptions of daily life.

Hunting is not a romantic affair of man against beast. It is a necessity to eke out supplies from the single shop. While celebration meals may now include bought food like biscuits or cake, hunks of polar bear, seal, narwhal, musk-oxen or walrus are the main courses, sometimes eaten raw. Delicacies include fermented little auks and dried halibut. Even the dog teams also need meat and

cannot survive on canned.

Theirs is truly a dog's life. By law adult dogs (except for pregnant females) have to be chained. The dogs are often hungry and see a human being on the ground as prey. If you fall over, they might even eat you alive. They will sometimes attack and eat each other. Leonard saw the mother of a dead pup eat it.

The idea that the Inuit are especially close to animals is the sort of utopian myth that Margaret Mead might have fallen for. Yes, they are close to animals but only as hunters have to be in order to have success. Dogs are tools, not pets. Travelling by dog sleigh is exciting but not entirely idyllic. 'All you can really see are a row of dirty anuses pooping every ten minutes or so,' writes Leonard.

Leonard's eye for detail, his refusal to fall for myths about shamanism, and his moving descriptions of weather and landscape make this a great read, as long as you skim past the moments of anthropological jargon. At times he feels a need to explain and justify his choices to fellow anthropologists, which is a pity. Editing these passages out, an index, and a bigger glossary would have made this an even better book.

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Turkey's Final Solution

Penelope Tremayne

A History of the Armenian Genocide, Ronald Grigor Suny, Princeton University Press, 2014, £25.

This book is the product of massive research and makes compelling reading. The tale it tells is nightmarish and more so for its exposure of a human and inhuman urge which we are seeing glimpses of in several countries today: the urge not just for killing but mass annihilation. The leaders who ignite such fire storms aim for total power, and too often achieve it, but not for long. The project described here was set in motion in 1915 by a self appointed government drawn from members of a Turkish revolutionary political group called the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP). This party had been founded in Salonika in 1905 and had by 1909 achieved the dethroning, and three years later the exiling of Sultan Abdul Hamid II and the assumption by themselves of his place as ruler of the Ottoman Empire. Of their vast declared ambitions, one was the creation of 'Armenia without Armenians' (their own words for it). This goal, attempted in 1915, was not quite achieved, but of the numbers actually slaughtered or starved to death conservative estimates range from one to one and a half million – that is, about half the

total population of the area selected for cleansing (the other half being made up of Kurds)

Roger Suny sets out, without hyperbole or comparisons with other historical holocausts, indeed almost without comments, what were the orders issued to both military and civil personnel for this destruction, how they were carried out, and who were in the main responsible for it. Of the ruling CUP the dominant members were Enver Pasha who had assumed the title of Minister of War (portraits of him can still be seen in cafes in Turkey; he was not a good general, but he had a fine moustache); Talat (more usually spelled Talaat) Pasha, Minister of the Interior, who proved fully as sinister as holders of that title have been in other countries; and Celal Bey, Minister for the Navy, who was no less active than the other two, but perhaps more engaged in western than eastern affairs. The orders given by these men were perfectly clear and allowed for no modifications: all Armenians were to be disarmed and then killed, men, women and children, and their houses burned. If there were too many to be killed in one operation the remainder were to be driven far out into the Syrian desert without supplies or equipment of any kind and left there to die. And that is what was done. Readers today may be tempted to ask why other countries did not intervene, but in 1915 the future of Europe still hung on the progress of the long battle of Ypres, where men were dying by the thousand, and the Ottoman Empire was Germany's enthusiastic ally, committed to the seizure of the Suez Canal and the breaking of Britain's hold on Egypt. No-one had men or arms to spare for Asian side-shows. What strikes one today is the copycat quality in Hitler's final solution programme of fifteen years later which used first a building up of hatred not against a nation but a race, adding the pretext of a non-existent religious conflict, and then launching the systematic slaughter not of fighting men but of designated civilians. The Armenians were Christians, but had lived among their Moslem neighbours for centuries with no more trouble than there had been between Christians and Jews in Germany. There had often been minor clashes between Armenians and Kurds, but these were territorial not creedal. As for the Nazi death camps, they served the same purpose as had the Syrian desert to the CUP, though in a more organised way.

Out of this Armageddon how did modern Turkey arise, the saner more prosperous country that looks towards Europe today? Suny does not go into that, rightly sticking to his subject. However he makes it clear that the CUP triumvirate had no hand in the making of the new Turkey, for they were 'compelled to resign' on the 8th of October 1918, the Ottoman state 'withdrawing' from the European war on the

thirtieth, twelve days before the Armistice. Enver, Talat and a few of their party escaped from Istanbul on December 3rd, on a captured Russian destroyer, to Sevastopol and thence to Berlin where they were welcomed and made comfortable for a few years, and later were separately murdered. The new Turkey emerged under a very different leader, Mustafa Kemal, and was formally recognised as the Republic of Turkey at the Treaty of Lausanne in July 1923 with Kemal at its head. He was awarded the sobriquet Atatürk in 1936.

Roger Grigor Suny is an Armenian and he has used whatever advantages this may have given him, not to make a case for anyone or anything, but to make it easier for outsiders to untangle dispassionately a very difficult piece of history. He is an academic, writing for academics, who I hope and think will appreciate the book as it deserves. In spite of its intimidating length it is a masterpiece in its compression of information without losing either the historical thread or the reader's attention. Good luck to it, and to the Turkey which Mustafa Kemal brought to birth and which now faces another complicated relationship with Europe today.

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President Al Kaponski Martin Dewhurst

Red Notice: How I Became Putin's No1 Enemy, Bill Browder, Bantam Books, 2015, £18.99.

In the aftermath of the 1991 coup and counter-coup in Moscow (widely misunderstood as a democratic revolution), large numbers of enterprising, intelligent, but not very perceptive individuals flocked to Russia in the hope of finding rich pickings and thereby making some quick bucks. Who then thought it conceivable that less than ten years later the Russian President would be a nondescript, middle-ranking KGB officer? Bill Browder certainly didn't, and saw through the deceptive surface of Moscow life only after being refused permission to re-enter Russia exactly ten years ago, in November 2005. This is mainly, I think, because, like so many foreign entrepreneurs in Moscow, he then had a poor knowledge and an even poorer understanding both of Russia and of Russian. He may even have thought that being the grandson of a leader of the American Communist Party would offer him some sort of protection. What he, like one of his brilliant Russian lawyers, Sergei Magnitsky, didn't grasp until it was too late was that, as he now writes, 'Russia had no rule of law, it had a rule of men. And those men were crooks'. Unfortunately this is still the case.

This book is a very frank and gripping account of its author's life from childhood up to the present. Brought up and educated (well) in the USA, he took British citizenship (he doesn't explain why) and after working in London and Poland decided to invest in Russia, beginning in Murmansk in 1992 and then opening his own investment firm, Hermitage Capital, in Moscow in the mid-1990s, shortly before Yeltsin's miraculous and probably fraudulent re-election to the Presidency in 1996. Things went well for Browder, and it took him some time to realise that Mikhail Khodorkovsky, some of whose earlier activities were anything but crystal clean, had been arrested in 2003 precisely because he had resolved to cross a red line by 'going straight' – always a reckless decision when many of the top political players (this applies not only to Russia, of course) know that they themselves are vulnerable to accusations of involvement in corrupt and criminal activities. Browder similarly crossed an unwritten red line precisely by trying, for instance, to defend the interests of minority shareholders and later, as a result of his honesty and decency, was banned from Russia and received an Interpol 'red notice', instigated by the Russian authorities.

Browder's life-changing moment came when Magnitsky, who had been incarcerated in some of Moscow's appalling pre-trial isolation facilities, accused of the very offence (a massive tax-rebate fraud) of which his accusers were evidently guilty, was so brutally treated that, in November 2009, he died in excruciating agony. The author's attempts to secure posthumous justice for his lawyer were obviously going to be an uphill struggle, and not only because of the Russian judicial system. President Obama and some of his naive 'experts' on Russia had already decided to reward the Putin-Medvedev 'tandem' for its invasion of Georgia the previous year by offering to 'reset' relations with the Kremlin and the Presidential Administration. This involved 'engagement', the modern (or post-modern) term denoting appeasement, and inevitably led Putin to believe that he would also get away with the illegal annexation of Crimea and the invasion of at least one other part of Ukraine in 2014. Nonetheless, the tenacious Browder managed to persuade the generally reluctant US authorities to sanction several dozen Russians involved in the death of Magnitsky well before stronger sanctions were belatedly introduced as a result of Russian aggression in parts of the former USSR. Alas, most other Western countries have been reluctant to follow the American example and target all those responsible for the death of Magnitsky. But Browder is not going to give up.

This very readable memoir should ideally, I think, be read in conjunction with Nikolai Gogol's surrealistically

realistic *Dead Souls*, whose untrustworthy antihero, Mr Chichikov, an ‘outstanding mediocrity’ engaged in unsavoury business activities, is in some ways very like Mr Putin and Mr Medvedev, two of the greatest confidence tricksters of all time. The latter gentlemen are, of course, much more dangerous than Mr Chichikov, because they and their accomplices and supporters (who include many gullible and/or venal Westerners) are doing all they can to strengthen the world’s second largest nuclear power. Whatever some of the superficial pundits say, Russia is still far from being a ‘normal’ country.

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Into a Sunlit Garden

John Jolliffe

Barbara Pym: A passionate Force, Ann Allestree, Book Guild, 2015, £17.99.

Barbara Pym’s story is the classic case of the ups and downs in the popularity of novelists, echoed by the high and low spirits when their works are accepted or, more often in this case, turned down. But one cannot altogether blame publishers for turning down books which they believe on good evidence to be unsellable – one of the inevitable drawbacks of both writing and publishing.

Her first novel, *Some Tame Gazelle*, was published in 1950 by Cape who had actually turned it down as far back as 1936, even though it was generously reviewed by Pamela Hansford Johnson and Antonia White. After a further period of multiple rejections as being out of date and certainly of no interest to the brash, discordant and sexually insistent decade of the mid 1960s and 70s, things dramatically improved. In 1977 there came a survey in the *Times Literary Supplement* of underrated novelists in which Philip Larkin, a constant admirer of Pym’s work and wonderfully indifferent to passing fashions, commented that ‘as novels, ‘they exhibit no “development”’; the first is as practised as the last, the observation, the social comedy, the interplay of themes equally expert.’ These were indeed the qualities, echoed from Jane Austen, which drew praise from other fastidious critics such as Lord David Cecil and later Francis King, who wrote of her ‘severe and sobering’ best-seller *Quartet in Autumn* that it was ‘like going out of a curtained sickroom into a sunlit garden.’

Anne Allestree’s book is a real biography, not just an account of the fate of Pym’s novels. Her well balanced comments about them never hold up the narrative; and her quiet determination in exploring the often obscure

places where Pym lived is exemplary.

Her early life was spent in and around Oswestry, where her father had a comfortable practice as a country solicitor. Her mother became assistant organist in the parish church, and her sister recalled that ‘young curates often came to supper’. The background included musty church vestries, and the worthy efforts of *Excellent Women* (the title of one novel) to put on church fetes. They recall the immortal lines of Mgr Ronald Knox, who had himself had experience of domestic clerical tasks in his childhood.

*The shouting and the tumult dies,
The Captains and the Kings depart,
And we are left with large supplies
Of cold blancmange and rhubarb tart.*

Had she known them, Pym would certainly have smiled.

Barbara and her sister Hilary seem to have had a happy, uncomplicated childhood, and an intuitive rapport, quite free from rivalry, that made for harmony in the houses and flats they later shared in Pimlico, Barnes, and Queens Park. She was sent to Liverpool College, and then went on to St Hilda’s College, Oxford in 1931. She was popular, at a time when girls were still far outnumbered by men, and could pick and choose from among their admirers. She enjoyed reading English, and she also enjoyed the attentions of men, including the future wartime adventurer and later cabinet minister Julian Amery, who later invited her to his parents’ palatial house in Eaton Square. That she attracted two such wildly different characters as Amery and Larkin says a lot for her.

Her wartime service in the Censorship Division of the Wrens took her in 1944 to Naples, with weekend trips to Amalfi and Positano, which relieved the boredom of the deskwork; then home via Rome. In 1946 she began twenty-eight years of unsensational work in the dingy offices of the International African Institute, which gave her no desire to visit Africa, though her sharp eye for detail often took in good material for novels. It was not ostensibly a rewarding life, but proper recognition eventually and mercifully arrived when she was placed on the short list for the Booker Prize, and her older books were being reissued. She had earlier considered the fashionable (and for a time successful) publisher Tom Maschler responsible for her rejection by Cape, and she took what was sadly only a private revenge by naming a bilious-looking green milk jelly ‘Maschler Pudding’. Later, of course, he greeted her warmly at the Booker Short List Dinner.

Among her favourite novelists, after Jane Austen, was the formidable Ivy Compton Burnett, and after rejections Barbara would quote Ivy’s dictum that ‘Most of the pleasure would go if I felt nobody would share

my book. But I would write for a dozen.’ In 1978, after the boost from Larkin, her latest novel *The Sweet Dove Died* was number three on the Sunday Times Best Sellers List. She spoke on a radio series called *Finding a Voice*, and appeared on Desert Island Discs; if she could only take one of her choices with her, it would have been Christina Rossetti’s ‘In the Bleak Midwinter’, sung by the choir of King’s College, Cambridge. She also became a success in America. But success had only come right at the end. Cancer set in, and she died in January 1980.

In spite of her dedication to her task, Allestree makes no exaggerated claims for Pym, and though tireless in collecting details she is content to let the unsensational story tell itself, without adding superfluous comments. It was a wise decision. Existing fans will revel in the book, and perhaps new converts will be made.

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God’s Music ‘Barchester’

The Book of the People: How to Read the Bible,
A N Wilson, Atlantic Books, 2015, £17.99.

How religious is A N Wilson? When he was a young man, he wrote a fierce denunciation of Christianity but he has certainly rowed back from that extreme position these days. When he was young, he began to train for the Anglican priesthood at St Stephen’s House, Oxford, known as ‘Staggers’ and known also for its smells and bells, with precious young men in frilly cottas and, before David Hope – later to become Archbishop of York – cleaned the place up, more than the whiff of irregular associations. Wilson chose not to finish his course.

So what does he make of Christianity today? I would say he is semi-detached. He is like a man who spends all his life reading exquisite menus until he becomes expert in *haute cuisine* but never actually eats anything. After his early hostility to the faith, he returned to produce significant biographies of eminent Christians, including Milton, Belloc, Betjeman and C S Lewis. He has presented some very attractive and intelligent television documentaries, but his style on TV, as in this book, is stilted and distinctively odd. He comes across as a man for whom behaving naturally involves a great deal of artifice.

His early novels were competent and I recall one of them with a picture of the author on the back in a tweed jacket on a sit-up-and-beg bicycle with a basket on the

front. He was one of the so-called ‘young fogeys’ in those days and the very model of the upmarket C of E curate he never became. He probably said ‘Old boy’ and ‘Good gracious!’ in those days; and I suspect he still does.

The Book of the People is fascinating for its ingenious reversal of the usual phrase ‘the people of the book.’ Wilson is not a person of the book – not, that is to say, a biblical fundamentalist. How much does he believe? I would say about as much as your average modern bishop. But there is more to Wilson, and his book, than that. He can write good English – though he thinks ‘crescendo’ means the pinnacle of sound, rather than an increase in volume. And he knows some theology, but he says the phrase about making the ploughboy knowledgeable about the Bible came from Luther. It didn’t: the words were Tyndale’s. He also says, ‘Judaism was too wedded to literalism’. That is a hard case to make when one thinks of the vivid imagery of the creation story, the flood, the tower of Babel and the psalmist’s, as well as the prophets’, genius with metaphor: ‘the Lord’s my shepherd’.

Good things keep turning up in this book to refresh the reader. Wilson himself is no literalist and he sees that the religion of the Bible is full of mysteries to be experienced; and he likens this experiencing to that of someone who opens the door of a beautiful church to behold the wonders of architecture, decoration and liturgy. In an evocative phrase he says, ‘There is a haunting music.’

And that seems to be Wilson’s relation to religion. It reminds me of Beecham’s remark to the effect that the English don’t know much about music, but they sure like the noise it makes. Wilson does know something about religion and, though he keeps his distance, he is fascinated by its *appearances*. He is an aesthete and certainly believes that the Bible is a living book, because it is the inspiration behind the style, the oratory, and the prophetic cadences of people like Solzhenitsyn and Martin Luther King.

There are some quite excellent passages here, including the best half-page refutation of materialism I’ve ever come across: if my mental processes are determined wholly by the motions of atoms in my brain, I have no reason to suppose that my beliefs are true, and hence I could have no reason for supposing my brain to be composed of atoms.

The book is frequently irritating for its mannered style but, here and there, it is inspired; it is interesting throughout. But, having read it twice, I still find Wilson to be as big a mystery as those mysteries he alludes to in the Bible and in the church. But I think Jesus would say the same words to Wilson as those he spoke to the wise scribe: ‘Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.’

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Murder Goes on Forever

Helen Szamuely

The Golden Age of Murder, The Mystery of the Writers Who Invented the Modern Detective Story, Martin Edwards, HarperCollins, 2015, £20.

The title of the last chapter in Martin Edwards's seminal *The Golden Age of Murder*, is, as so many things in the study of the genre, from Agatha Christie. The last lines of Edwards's book are:

The last word belongs to Christie. In 1940, at the height of the Blitz, when she could not know if she or her family and friends would survive for long, she inscribed a copy of Sad Cypress: 'Wars may come and wars may go, but MURDER goes on forever!'

Despite all predictions to the contrary, traditional murder and detective fiction go on forever. Nothing could prove that more clearly than the popularity of the British Library series of reprints, first of Victorian but more recently of various half-forgotten Golden Age detective novels and collections of short stories, all of which have been immensely popular.

Martin Edwards has published and chosen the books, writing knowledgeable introductions to a number of them, and he has edited collections of short stories. He has also been writing his own books and running a blog about detective fiction that is to be recommended to anyone who is even half-way interested in the subject. His greatest achievement is this massive volume, a history of the Detection Club in the thirties and forties, a collection of biographies of the extraordinary people who were its members and, incidentally, a history of the genre in the period.

Not only is it useful but it is wonderfully well written; the story of the Detection Club, whose headquarters at 31 Gerrard Street in Soho (nowadays known as Chinatown) ought to be commemorated with a blue plaque, unfolds like a collection of interlocking, thrilling short stories. The people who created the Club and the genre, which has not died out, were extraordinary. While many of us know the story of Agatha Christie, her sensational disappearance, divorce and second marriage to Max Mallowan, Dorothy L Sayers and her secret illegitimate son, and the less well-known story of Margery Allingham, we do not necessarily know about John Dickson Carr, John Rhodes/Miles Burton, Henry Wade, Anthony Berkeley, Helen Simpson, Christianna Brand and others. Despite the lazy assumption by people who have written about the subject, there were far more writers than just the

'Four Queens', many of them more popular at the time (though Christie overtook most of her colleagues by the forties) and, whisper who dares, many of them men. Nor were these writers particularly cosy in their approach to the subject or, necessarily, conservative in their attitude though somewhere at the heart of the genre there is a conservative moral stance, which did not mean the same in political and social terms. Many of the writers were good at hiding details of their own existence and Edwards must have enjoyed playing the detective to uncover matters hidden or just forgotten for a long time.

To me the most interesting 'discovery' was the relationship between Anthony Berkeley (real name Anthony Berkeley Cox and also Francis Iles) and the underrated E M Delafield, a very popular novelist of the period who dared to touch difficult subjects in her novels but who is known now for the delightful series of Provincial Lady diaries, and who is often confused with the main character of those books, the Provincial Lady herself. Edwards thinks he has traced a much closer relationship between these two difficult, talented and now half-forgotten writers, than Violet Powell, Delafield's biographer realized. The trail that leads through novels more than letters and reminiscences depends a great deal on hypotheses and assumptions but it may not be too far off the truth. (I do not believe and neither, I think, does Edwards that Delafield's husband was abusive, no matter what Anthony Berkeley implied in his novels.)

I have two minor criticisms. Firstly, is it really not possible for a respectable publisher like HarperCollins to employ a proof-reader? The number of serious errors is outrageous and unnecessary. Secondly, Edwards seems to share the general pessimistic assumptions about the thirties. There were serious economic problems in many parts of the country, especially after the 1929 crash, and there was a great deal of uncertainty, both over employment and in the second half of the decade, when another big war seemed likely. But, at the same time, there was much house building, when the well-known two-down-three-up houses with decent sized gardens grew and many more families could afford to live in their own homes. Council house and housing association estates were also built and these remain much more attractive than those built later on. The popular Morris Minor ensured that more people had cars than just Lord Peter Wimsey while statutory holidays also increased. New publishing houses were created and the audience for new books and periodicals grew, especially when Allen Lane revolutionized publishing with Penguin paperbacks, swelling the number of authors who could live from writing. Both these views are important as we look at

the background to the enormous popularity of detective stories, both bought and borrowed from libraries.

The author says he has constructed this book so as to make it readable from beginning to end as one very complicated but fascinating story, and also as a book one can dip into for detailed information. The list of books is enormous and controversial facts are backed by carefully written notes. All this makes this book indispensable reading for anyone who wants to know about a vital part of English life and literature in the thirties and forties.

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Alas Poor Shakespeare

Ralph Berry

Great Shakespeare Actors: Burbage to Branagh, Stanley Wells, Oxford University Press, 2015, £16.99.

This book is dedicated ‘To all the great Shakespeare actors not included in this book’, a wide but shrewd disclaimer. Those who do not make the Wellsian cut include Richard Burton, Maggie Smith, Peter Ustinov (whose Lear at Stratford, Ontario, was with Scofield’s the greatest I have seen), Helen Mirren, Christopher Plummer, Anthony Hopkins, Peter O’Toole, Alan Howard, and of the recent crop David Tennant and Jude Law. The absentees cast doubt upon the principle of selection here, and pose the obvious question: if they are great Shakespeare actors, why are they not included? What are Wells’s criteria for entry into the Hall of Fame? In any case, his criteria exclude film. ‘I have limited myself to writing about stage performance rather than film, where the actor has less autonomy, though some actors of recent times have shone equally in both media.’ Only full ‘autonomy’ is acceptable? The bounds of ‘greatness’ contract further.

Great Shakespeare Actors comes in two parts. The first is a series of essays on actors of the historic past—Betterton, Garrick, Irving. These are well done and properly informative on the actors’ claims upon posterity. The second part is the post-war era, of which Wells is a witness from 1949 on. Based on Stratford-upon-Avon, he has seen almost all of the major performances there, and not so many elsewhere. The omission of Maggie Smith’s brilliant seasons in Stratford, Ontario in the late 1970s is startling. His essays are not especially personal; they offer a roll call of reviews, and the judgments reflect the collective verdict of the leading theatre critics. Wells eschews anecdotes. Of Peggy Ashcroft, he remarks without elaboration ‘More conventionally beautiful and less

resolutely monogamous than Dame Sybil’, which might be matched with Olivier’s view, as revealed to Robert Stephens (see Gary O’Connor, *The Secret Woman: A Life of Peggy Ashcroft*). Litotes should be made of sterner stuff.

Wells is embedded in the RSC, whose in-house orthodoxies he is not the man to challenge. Of Olivier, ‘A great if politically incorrect Othello in 1964...’ Political correctness was scarcely dry on its birth certificate in 1964, and that stellar performance saw only the birth-pangs. Even as late as 1981, Anthony Hopkins did not face a lynch mob for blacking up as Othello for BBC-TV. The main wave came in much later, and Wells embraces it all: ‘if audiences can accept the unreality of people on stage talking in verse, they may also be able to accept men as women, women as men, black actors as kings of England, and other apparent anomalies.’ ‘Apparent’: what could a ‘real’ anomaly look like? These anomalies being only ‘apparent’, no charge can be preferred against the current RSC *Othello* with its black Iago (a part hitherto regarded as a tribal reservation for white actors, such reservations being now steadily eroded). For reality, the hard currency of drama, the spectator must now turn away from the theatre to the cinema. The camera is the literal witness of truth: ‘There is no shuffling, there the action lies/In his true nature.’ What Wells terms ‘anomalies’ have no place in film, which does not recognise colour-blind casting. My sense is that the trajectories of stage and film have crossed, and Wells’s enthusiasms look increasingly passé. Film, the upstart of a century ago, is now challenging its great parent.

The roll of great actors on the honours board here also raises unanswered questions. Nobody doubts Gielgud and Redgrave, Richardson and Laughton. Nobody would question Richard Burton, Maggie Smith, and Peter Ustinov, were they on the board. The later names here rest at Sher and Branagh, Suzman and Jacobi (there cannot, obviously, be a cut-off point). These are fine actors whose status as ‘great’ is perhaps less assured. We might cast around for reasons, such as the rise of the director and the down-grading of the actor (opera has a similar problem), and the magnets of London, TV, and Hollywood. But a certain dilution of ‘greatness’ does seem to be with us. The sheer attack, individuality, and bravura of Laughton, Wolfit, Sinden and Thorndike have ebbed away. So has great reviewing; there is no successor to Kenneth Tynan, whose anecdote-rich *Profiles* is at the polar extreme to *Great Shakespeare Actors*. Stanley Wells’s view of the English stage offers a report on, and a partial, if implied, explanation of the present scene. The hidden questions stir in the undergrowth.

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IN SHORT

Henry Smith, his life and Legacy, Lucy Lethbridge and Tim Wales: The Henry Smith Charity, 2015, £20.

Four hundred years after its foundation, Henry Smith's Charity now distributes over £25m per annum to a carefully selected but astonishingly widespread range of applicants: temporary accommodation for the rescued victims of trafficking for prostitution; a community centre in an impoverished area of rural Carmarthenshire; a L'Arche home, which houses those with what are tactfully described as 'intellectual disabilities' (including dementia), alongside residents in normal health who befriend them; and a bewildering range of other benefactions to relieve poverty and general need. All this is conducted in a human rather than a bureaucratic fashion, free from laborious state participation.

The career of Henry Smith, who lived from 1549 to 1628, was full of ups and downs, and some of his activities were definitely suspect, as were those of the early trustees after his death, not to speak of their often stormy relations with each other. All this makes a dramatic and thoroughly readable story. Smith himself seems to have been a trader, a usurer and a considerable speculator in property. He himself and his earliest trustees nominated no less than 170 parishes, many of them connected with these extensive property transactions. But he remains a shadowy figure, and our knowledge of him comes from his monument in the local church at his birthplace in Wandsworth and from his thirty-seven page will. The activities of his trustees were mostly concerned with property deals and alliances and debts. Documents concerning these go back to 1631, and early contributions went to the redemption of captives held by Barbary pirates, which strikes a curiously modern note. His legacies to various towns in Surrey and Sussex set up a miniature welfare state for their fortunate inhabitants. The story is told with great skill by the authors, and the ongoing achievement of the Henry Smith Foundation is a triumphant and multifarious success. This short book is sumptuously produced, with many colour illustrations.

John Jolliffe

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Once A Priest, Peter Mullen, Bretwalda Books, 2015, £11.99.

So prolific has Peter Mullen become that a mere

quarterly publication finds it difficult to keep pace with him. This time he has produced a memoir of his early years in the Church.

Books recalling professional careers up north inevitably bring to mind James Herriot and the early chapters here might well be titled 'All Parishioners Great And Small', as they recall life as a curate to a curmudgeonly vicar who dismisses the idea of a Youth Club Dance as 'all sex and broken windows' and would be perfect casting for Robert Hardy. An equally memorable character is the unnamed 'senior curate', a cautionary depiction of the effects of too much education on a brain with no common sense. Had he not existed, he could only have been created by P G Wodehouse.

Between his time as a curate and Mullen's becoming a priest of his own parish there is a fascinating section where the author very nearly commits to a career as a schoolteacher. Finding him in what could be described as a sink school in Bolton, these chapters show how easy it is for the most conscientious of teachers to be stifled by the suffocating culture of low expectations in such schools. However, Mullen soon rejects dumbing down in favour of introducing his charges to the Authorised Version and philosophy, both of which they take to more readily than the educational establishment would believe possible.

The final section of the book finds Mullen as vicar of a Yorkshire parish. Like the first section, it is episodic and you never know whether you will turn the page on to a scene of great sadness or riotous comedy. It shows how a parish priest must accustom himself to extremes of emotion very quickly. You realise that you are never far from a gently mocking description of a parishioner. Some of the hilarious similes with which he describes the more ample females in his parish would not look out of place in a Les Dawson routine.

However, there is nothing gentle in the tone of the author's attack on the idiocies of the charismatic wing of the Church against which he finds himself a reluctant crusader, when he discovers the harm that this self-serving and narcissistic movement achieves. People who have considered this debate within the Church one of aesthetics and form, will now end up sharing Mullen's anger.

The author is not well served by his publisher. The book appears to have been edited by someone with only a slight acquaintance with the rules of punctuation. An attentive editor would also have prevented us having

to read the same joke (albeit a good one about Bernard Shaw) twice.

Brian Eassty

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Generations Betrayed, Chris McGovern, Campaign for an Independent Britain, 2015, £2.

Sellar and Yeatman have much to answer for. Their very enjoyable *1066 And All That* presented our nation's story as if written by someone trying to remember what he learned at the back of a stuffy classroom many years before, while consumed with thoughts of batting averages and the opposite sex. It perhaps amused us so much that it taught us to be too relaxed about historical knowledge as if fearful of spoiling the joke. So when reports began to appear in the press some ten years ago revealing that most school pupils thought that Oliver Cromwell fought at the Battle of Hastings, for example, the tone of such reports was at first one of amused incomprehension rather than shocked outrage.

Only more recently has the realisation dawned that the reason so many children are ignorant of so much history is not that they have not paid attention but that they have not been taught it. As former head teacher and government advisor Chris McGovern reveals in this thoughtful pamphlet, children are now

taught the skills to be good historians rather than any actual history. More surprising are his assertions that the recent reports of a return for a more traditional approach to the teaching of history are mere spin and that Michael Gove was comprehensively defeated by the educational establishment in his efforts to bring that return about.

More amazing still are the passages McGovern quotes from history textbooks and the attitude they take to the great figures of our past. Wellington, it seems, did nothing but oppose the Chartists. Churchill is apparently only remarkable for losing the 1945 election. Where quotes which fit the writers' point of view cannot be found, they are made up and generally portray the British as sneering pantomime villains. McGovern's thinks the point of this is to encourage the notion that Britain as a nation state is out of date. It is hard to see how loyalty to this country can be fostered by making children feel that it would be like supporting Voldemort against Harry Potter.

A final criticism McGovern makes of the curriculum is that it requires teachers to jump about between eras with no regard for chronology. Despite its many deficiencies as a work of historical scholarship, our children might at least learn that from *1066 And All That*.

John King

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HENRY SMITH

His Life & Legacy

Lacy Lethbridge & Tim Wales

