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Preemptive Protest

Felix Kolb

On Saturday, October 26, the United States witnessed its largest peace demonstrations since the Vietnam war: more than 150,000 people assembled in Washington, DC, 45,000 in San Francisco and tens of thousands more in other American cities. Unlike the last Gulf War, when the peace movement gained momentum only after warplanes started dropping bombs on Baghdad, this time the protests were early. Yet the corporate media continues to grossly underreport voices critical of Bush's war cry. In Europe it is relatively risk free to be against the war in public, but in the US, speaking out against the war or the president is still considered unpatriotic or even anti-American by a significant part of American society. In light of this, the big turnouts of October should be read as signs of hope that American dissent has finally overcome the paralysis by which it was captured after 9/11.

Signs carried by the protesters demonstrated the variety of reasons for which Americans oppose the war: WAR WON'T MAKE US SAFER; NO BLOOD FOR OIL; U.S. EMPIRE: NOT MY AMERICAN DREAM; START SEEING IRAQI CHILDREN; PEACE IS PATRIOTIC; WAR BREEDS TERROR and REGIME CHANGE BEGINS AT HOME—VOTE.

It might be objected that the midterm elections have already destroyed this hope by increasing the prospects of a pre-emptive war against Iraq. But Bush's claim to a new mandate for war rests on a series of outright lies that have misled many Americans to believe that Iraq is already threatening the US mainland with missiles, is armed with weapons of mass destruction, will have a nuclear bomb very soon, and most importantly, that Saddam Hussein has close links with Al Qaeda—71% of all Americans even think he was personally involved in the 9/11 attacks.¹ The consensus among most European secret services and even the CIA that there is no evidence for a link between Iraq and Al Qaeda hasn't stopped the Bush administration from pretending the opposite. At a forum at the University of Utah, Karl Rove, the Bush administration's chief political strategist, was asked whether the administration was concerned about the possibility that 200,000 innocent Iraqis might die in an American-led invasion. Mr. Rove responded, "I'm more concerned about the 3,000 who died on 9/11."²

In a recent article in the *New Republic* John B. Judis argues that Republicans mobilized their supporters, including swing voters, by turning the normally localized midterms into a national election focused on Bush and his war

against terrorism. Judis concludes that Democrats would not have done better—maybe even worse—if they had taken a clear stand against the war. A different view is expressed in Stephen Zunes' article "How the Democrats Blew It,"³ which points out that Democrats failed to articulate a distinct vision from the Republicans on everything from the war to national security to the economy, and

so were left to fight localized battles against the nationalized GOP agenda. Paul Krugman in a *New York Times* Op-Ed piece offers a similar analysis: "If the Democratic Party takes a clear stand for the middle class and against the plutocracy, it may still lose. But if it doesn't stand for anything, it—and the country—will surely lose."⁴ However, it would be wrong to reject Judis' point of view entirely. It is evi-

dent that many Americans support Bush's war plans, even if on the basis of false information. It is therefore up to the peace movement to convince independents and swing voters that voting for the Republicans' Iraq war won't make the US safer—if anything there are good reasons to assume that the opposite will be true. But, while it is plausible that Democrats would make a difference in domestic politics, the same is not so clear



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Jack Sherman

¹ E. Alterman: Bush Lies, Media Swallows, November 25th, 2002 issue of *The Nation*

² M. Janofsky: Rove Declares Nation Is Tilting to Republicans, November 14th, *New York Times*

³ S. Zunes: How the Democrats Blew It, November 7th, *CommonDreams.org*

⁴ P. Krugman: Into the Wilderness, November 8th, *New York Times*

continued on page 5

The Vanishing Democrat

Elizabeth Sanders

One of the strongest electoral patterns in American politics is midterm loss of congressional seats by the presidential party. Thus the Republican gain of five House and at least two Senate seats on November 5 came as a surprise to pollsters, pundits, and political scientists. In this century, before the Clinton administration, it had happened only once, in 1932. The unusual gain in House and Senate seats by the Democrats in that year served to confirm one of those rare events: party realignment. That the Democrats broke the pattern and gained five seats in the 1998 midterm elections was attributed to public disgust at the Republican impeachment process, a very strong economy, and the unusually large loss of seats by the party in 1994. The 2000 election was certainly not a realignment; the Democratic candidate won the popular vote, signaling either a desire for divided government among some centrist voters, or a growing discontent with the Republican regime inaugurated by Ronald Reagan in the 1980 election. Why, then, did the Republicans do better than predicted in 2002?

First, one must acknowledge that, while the election outcome will have important policy consequences, it was a very narrow victory. The country remains sharply polarized on party lines, with the division in the Senate, House, and state governments still close to a 50-50 split.

The stark red and blue regional divisions of the 2000 electoral map persist as well. The only (three) districts where Republican incumbents were defeated were in the Northeast. On the other hand, the Republican

hold on the South was slightly strengthened with the defeat of Democratic governors in Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina (offset by a win in Tennessee), and the surprising loss of a Georgia Senate seat (the Democrat's defeat of a Republican incumbent in Arkansas was attributed to personal problems of the latter). There were continuing, modest gains in U.S. House and state legislative seats in the South.

In the House, there was a clear Republican gain from redistricting that helped to offset the expected midterm loss. Most of the states that lost seats due to the decennial census-based reapportionment were carried by Gore in 2000; the new seats were in the South and West, in Bush states. Of 12 newly-created districts in Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Nevada, North Carolina, and Texas, nine were won by Republicans, and only three by Democrats. The trend of newer, fast-growing suburban and 'ex-urban' areas in the South and West toward the Republicans is certainly a problem for Democrats, despite the substantial blocks of Hispanic and lower middle-class voters included in the new districts.

Democrats often complain about a GOP advantage in campaign finance. The Republicans typically have significantly more money to spend than the Democrats, and can raise money in larger amounts (with lower costs), because they have the lion's share of business PAC donors and people who can afford to make large individual contributions. According to Federal Election Commission reports in September, Republicans had collected \$516 million, to the Democrats' \$427 million. However, it seems unlikely that a money advantage was the major factor in the GOP victory. In the ten most closely contested Senate races, the Democrats did not appear to be financially disadvantaged at all, spending more than their opponents in seven of those contests. Opensecrets.org has compiled lists of the top money raisers among all House and Senate candidates; seven of the ten biggest House spenders and six of the ten best-financed Senate candidates were Democrats.

The biggest factor in the Republican victory was probably the success of President Bush in reframing American politics, away from domestic social and economic issues, where the Democrats would have been stronger, and toward security issues where the GOP has traditionally had an advantage. Bush won for his party by focusing the election on terrorism and war. This strategy had been developed at least a year ago, as evident in White House political advisor Karl Rove's

speech to GOP officials and activists last December in which he predicted that the war on terror would redound to Republican advantage. It did, despite a weak economy and recent corporate and regulatory agency scandals that, in normal times, might be expected to favor the Democrats.

Unlike his father, who saw his approval ratings plummet in the year after the Persian Gulf war, the younger Bush found a way to keep the war on terror going with a new campaign against Saddam Hussein. The odd, unanticipated appearance of a sniper named Mohammed, who terrorized the very sorts of voters—middle-class people in suburbs—that the Republicans were going after, probably contributed to the security anxiety, the perception of a dangerous world, and a desire not to rock the boat by weakening the president in a time of war. The success in Afghanistan and the continuing terrorist danger made Bush's simple, reassuring message, "We're going to hunt them down and destroy them!" plausible and appealing.

Ironically, the least warlike, most diplomatically-inclined member of the administration's foreign policy team made Bush's war policy more acceptable and less frightening to centrist and independent voters. The late surge toward the GOP (opposite from the usual direction of such pre-election surges) probably happened in the last week, as it became increasingly likely that the UN Security Council would reach a consensus on inspections and the United States would not jump the gun and go to war unilaterally. Opposition to the war in Iraq had been growing, and on the eve of the election only a third of the public favored unilateral war. The ultimate willingness of the administration to act in concert with the UN, to accept something like the two-stage process France, China, Russia and Syria insisted on, and begin to talk more about inspection compliance than regime change made war seem a bit less likely (and, if it occurred, less dangerous).

This diplomatic victory was almost entirely due to the efforts of Colin Powell, in collaboration with the British. Reassurance about the process probably made Americans less afraid of the consequences of strengthening Bush's congressional support, and appearing to give him a mandate. The extreme hawks in the administration may now interpret the November 5 victory as a mandate for unilateral war, but that would be a mistake. The mandate came only as it appeared certain that the U.S. would act in concert with the UN. Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times* has argued that Powell and Blair, in drawing the administration toward multilateral cooperation, played the role abdicated by the Democrats. To Bush's credit, he let Powell win this victory over the ideologues, contradicting the pundits' perceptions that the Secretary was increasingly marginalized and losing the debate with the unilateralist hawks.

Even as Powell was negotiating, Bush was campaigning as hard as any president ever has at midterm, making repeated visits in close states and districts, and talking mostly (in rousing patriotic rhetoric) about the war on terrorism and the pending war against Iraq. The president's public support remains high (about 65%), and is mostly built around

his role as war leader. He played to his strength, and threw the mantle of his own popularity around GOP candidates. Bush had no coattails in 2000. This year he did. Karl Rove is clearly an inspired political strategist.

But there is more at work here than smart political strategy and an ample war chest. The Republican regime, though closely contested, is clearly still vital. Republicans have more energy and zeal than Democrats. Their party is more united, and the Republican National Committee is stronger and better connected to congressional and state activists. The RNC was more successful in recruiting strong candidates to run in close states and districts (presidential pressure and full campaign coffers helped, of course), and it offered them advice and polling and media services, as well as money. Thousands of volunteers were recruited to pound the streets, ring doorbells, make phone calls, get people to the polls. The GOP behaved like a new, lean, aggressive majority party—not the aging, fragmenting majority coalition that one might have expected 22 years after a 'realignment.'

The second major factor was the bankruptcy of the Democratic Party. It is a party that has been at sea since 1994, yet it had an ideal set of economic issues this year. Unemployment was up, and the stock market was sharply lower than in 2000. In October, industrial production experienced its steepest decline since September, 2001, and consumer confidence hit a nine-year low. Tax cuts that greatly favored the wealthy (the richest 1% got 40% of the cuts) have contributed mightily to the recurrence of a big deficit, reversing the surplus of the late Clinton years. And 20 years of deregulation, topped by energetic support for even more dismantling of regulatory structures, produced a greatly weakened SEC that could not stop—or even spot—corporate wrongdoing. Corporate shenanigans cost American workers and investors billions in lost jobs and pensions, while enriching corporate executives; and the crisis of confidence in corporate America was scaring away foreign and domestic investors. Deregulation could even be linked to terrorist advantage. Republicans like Senate Banking Committee chairman Phil Gramm prevented a serious effort to monitor and disrupt international terrorist financial networks because, in their opinion, additional reporting requirements for funds transfers posed unnecessary burdens on the banking industry.

Internationally, the Democrats might have pointed out that hatred of America—perceived as a unilateral, imperialistic bully uninterested in peace, justice, global warming, or disarmament—is at an all-time high and threatens to diminish the international good will and cooperation needed to fight terrorism. Defense budget increases for dubious projects like missile defense and a pre-emptive war in Iraq are starving education and programs for the young and elderly, housing and infrastructure. The Iraq war project also runs a serious risk of undermining the effort to defeat terrorism and to rebuild Afghanistan. The Republican insistence on more oil drilling rather than conser-

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Mythmakers

Carrie Laben

Indeed, it is a wonderful time for fans of fantasy fiction to be alive. By the time you read this article, the second film in the newest fantasy juggernaut, *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, will be on the screen. Fans will also be sweating the days before the imminent arrival of the second installment of *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

The two franchises have invited a lot of media gossip by going almost (but wisely, not quite) head-to-head in the holiday season—two years in a row. This gossip has been framed, generally, in terms of contrast: children's or "family" film vs. action/adventure; classic vs. contemporary; even Christian vs. pagan worldview. But in the viewing public, there has not been the sense of rivalry that one would expect. Instead, anecdotal evidence appears to show that there is a huge overlap in the audience for the two films.

So what are the factors that have made these two stories beloved by such wide audiences? Can we justifiably say that *Harry Potter* is destined to become a "classic" in the same sense as *The Lord of the Rings*? And of the differences, which are superficial and which tell us something meaningful about the evolution of fantastic fiction in our society?

The first key to both works, I suspect, is their use of mythology—and not just in a formulaic, Joseph Campbell-channeled-through-Chris Vogler sense, but in the actual fabric of the stories. Both of the stories draw on enough specific and tangible elements of folklore to give them a sense of weight and history, at least to a British (and by extension, American) audience. Both authors did their research—Tolkien of course was a lifelong scholar of British (pre)history and linguistics, and Rowling has repeatedly drawn both praise and alle-

gations of nefarious occult influence because of her introduction of "real" magical terms, personalities, creatures, and objects.

Despite the copious amount of material in each work that is adapted from traditional sources, both authors are successful world-builders in their own right, creating a detailed and unique setting. They have each invested their fictional universes with sufficient "historical" thickness to keep their sprawling works internally consistent (of course, Tolkien and his executors provided some twenty-odd good-sized volumes while Rowling has so far come up with only two additional books). Evidence of how compelling these worlds are is also provided by the seemingly unbearable compulsion experienced by certain fans to play in these fictional domains—Harry Potter fan fiction (stories written by admirers of the original work that postulate changes or fill in gaps in the original storyline) outnumbers nearly all other fan fiction on the net, and Middle Earth is the setting for a popular role-playing game. Both have also inspired collectible card games for the faithful. (And faithful is a good name for them. Try insulting these diversions, or the original books, and you're likely to spark a debate of grandiose proportions—but, contrary to what you might expect, a debate that is also likely to be articulate and thoughtful.)

If Rowling doesn't have quite the credentials that Tolkien did in the world-building sweepstakes, she seems to have a slight edge over him, at least to modern tastes, in characterization. Tolkien, to be sure, advanced his characters beyond what could have been expected up until that point in an allegorically-tinged epic of such immense proportions. Particularly of note was the fact that he separated the predestined king character (Aragorn) from the character who actually saved the world (Frodo, with the assistance of Sam and Gollum), first by making them different

characters, and then by setting them on different paths throughout *Two Towers* and most of *The Return of the King*. In the sources Tolkien drew upon, of course, the foretold king was by nature the only person capable of saving the world.

Nevertheless, many modern readers are likely to be struck by a certain flatness in much of Tolkien's characterization, particularly by the fact that he puts much stock in the idea that his various "races" have set character traits, to the extent that it becomes difficult to tell one dwarf from another. He also tends to present characters as entirely good or evil, and though characters may cross the line (notably Gollum, who is almost a literal split personality) the line itself is always easy to see. Rowling's characters, though sometimes broadly treated for humor (a quality that, though present in *The Hobbit*, is almost totally lacking in *Lord of the Rings*), have more shades of grey and more complex motivations. Moreover, the line between good and evil is often a bit tricky to see in the Harry Potter universe, especially when the characters are dealing with only partial information—as they often are. Aside from a few who feel that such ambiguity is not appropriate for children, most readers seem to find a world in which even accurate prophecies don't necessarily help you figure out what to do next to be a compelling one.

As much as it pains a fan to admit it, these qualities of background, character, and moral stance have been stereotyped as lacking within the fantasy genre, and often with good reason. Though the genre as a whole has certainly undergone an improvement in the past few decades, it is still generously populated with books and increasingly lengthy series that draw off the surface qualities of Tolkien's work—the elves and dwarves, the quest-type plot structure—but come off as a pale imitation or even unintended parody. Other seminal works in the genre have suffered a similar

fate, and no doubt the saga of Harry Potter will eventually have its turn, because Rowling's work, despite the childish trappings, the excessive marketing, and the naysayers, does, in this reviewer's opinion, have all the ingredients of a lasting classic. And the fact that a fantasy series with all these ingredients is reaching such a wide audience leads me to suspect that not only the core genre audience, but the public at large, is becoming more willing to accept fantastic fiction that mixes higher literary quality with its entertainment value. (Publishers take note.)

Will there be no more fantasy that is elf-riddled tripe? Of course not. But at this point the tripe has been losing ground to quality material for some time, and with the breakout success of both these films and the associated books it is reasonable, I believe, to claim that the genre has earned its wand and deserves to be treated with a certain respect.

— Carrie Laben is a student at Cornell University.

Portrait of the Young Oxonian

Chris Furst

Oxford Days: An Inclination

By Paul West
British American Publishing
269 pp., \$24.95, cloth

Many authors write about their university years, making a tour of inspection of themselves as tyros, but few plunge into their memories and re-imagine that education as deeply as Paul West does in *Oxford Days*. This loving, expressionist memoir of his undergraduate years is fascinating, harrowing, and downright funny. From the gauntlet of his entrance examinations, the anxious wait for a space in one of Oxford's colleges, and his first experience as an undergraduate of the numinous romance of the university's almost mythic place in England's history, West moves on to a series of portraits of famous faculty and future writers among his classmates and an examination of his development as a young artist.

His description of Isaiah Berlin and the eminent scholar's "pobble," the gobbling speech eccentricity that impresses while it conceals profundities, is all by itself worth the price of admission, yet West doesn't rest with sketches of the great. Rectors, nurses, deans, and humble scouts also receive the attention of his generous gaze. Classmates such as Wilfred Sheed, George Steiner, and Donald Hall make their entrances and exits,

and there is an affecting portrait of West's good friend, Graham Bolton, who died soon after graduation. And he brings the chaos of the Commem Ball to life in an extended scene of color and sound.

But just as important as the memoir's comic aspects is the growth of West's thoughts. At Oxford he began to meditate on a theme that he continues to explore: how the universe carves away at human beings.

I was increasingly interested in how literature—the best literature—reintroduced us to death in a different guise, more palatable perhaps, but no less mortifying: death devolving into a motif we barely understand.... So I never figured out why serious literature, so depressing, lured us on, or why ready-made enigmas helped us in the encounter. It was true that trivial literature left something out and thus always seemed a doily. We shied away from it and aimed at Oxford's serious thinkers from another age: Pater, Ruskin, Arnold and Newman.... Theirs was the big league metaphysical discomfort, and their answers somehow had more heft.... It was Oxford's antique affiliation with faith that stirred me to morbidity and set me thinking on yet other lines.... Disease, preliminary to death, I began telling myself, was nature's form of art, mutilating, infesting, aborting, akin to our own movement of expressionism, which stressed

not what was "there" but how you felt about it.... Oxford, the paragon of good will, charm, and piety, the city of dreaming spires, was feeding the metaphysical rebel.

Eventually West came out of what he calls "the cold compress of Oxford piety and convention."

This is one time when it's essential to

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Ecce Homo

Nicholas Nicasro

The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature

By Stephen Pinker

Viking Press

509 pages, \$27.95, cloth

It's been an eventful season in the culture wars. In October, an important re-examination of the data for Franz Boas' 1912 survey of immigrants and their children was published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.¹ Boas' original study supposedly proved environmental effects on human cranial shape to be far more important than heredity, and has been cited for ninety years by sociocultural anthropologists to argue that racial types have no physical basis. But Corey Sparks and Richard Jantz's re-examination of the original data, using modern statistical techniques, shows that Boas got it wrong. Indeed, he may even have "shaded" his analysis to reach the politically palatable conclusion. Boas, of course, was the mentor of Margaret Mead, that key promulgator of cultural determinism whose own ethnographic work has also been critically reconsidered in recent years.² Boas was undoubtedly correct to oppose the explanatory relevance of racial types in *fin de siècle* anthropology. But the new study does prompt the question, as *The New York Times* suggests, whether "...an earlier generation's efforts to play down the role of genetics in fields like behavior and racial variation may not have been carried to extremes."³

The Sparks/Jantz study bears direct implications for the controversial legal case over the so-called Kennewick Man, which was finally decided in August after six long years. In that case, a 9,400 year old skeleton accidentally discovered on the banks of the Columbia River near Kennewick, Washington, was the object of a bitter court fight between several Indian tribes and the U.S. Department of the Interior on one side, and eight physical anthropologists on the other. Citing evidence of extreme antiquity and cranial characteristics that diverge significantly from modern Native Americans, the scientists sued to prevent the Department

of the Interior from handing the skeleton over to the tribes. The tribes, asserting that Kennewick Man was their direct ancestor, wanted the bones reburied without further study. They were abetted in this view by certain currents in sociocultural anthropology, wherein all knowledge claims about the past, from those based on empirical science to tribal oral history, are equally valid expressions of culturally embedded "value orientation." But in his ruling, federal magistrate John Jelderks upheld the scientists' suit and sharply rebuked the Department of the Interior.⁴ Where Interior and the tribes had argued that under current law only the Indian claimants' version of history had standing, the judge ruled that nothing in the law subordinated what actually happened in the past to what certain groups find congenial to believe happened.

Last, and by no means least, we have a new and inevitably best-selling broadside by cognitive psychologist Steven Pinker (*The Language Instinct, How the Mind Works*). Pinker's *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature* is a polemic against what he (among others) calls "the secular religion of modern intellectual life." This doctrine, "...seldom articulated or overtly embraced..." is specifically "...the idea that the human mind has no inherent structure and can be inscribed at will by society or ourselves." Pinker attributes belief in the blank slate to a considerable number of academics in anthropology, cultural studies, certain elements within psychology, gender studies, and an extended cohort of like-minded advocates, activists, critics, and policy-makers.

Of course, nobody would ever admit to believing that the human mind begins as straight pudding. What Pinker seems to be attacking is what might be called a *blank-slate ideology*, which tends to play down explanation due to the traits, affordances, constraints, et al. of our natural endowment (whether from genetic, developmental, or environmental invariants) in favor of socio-cultural factors. It is, moreover, a predisposition to suspect the political motives of anybody who "naturalizes" the study of human beings. In practice, it is often tantamount to a kind of moral exhibitionism, where the hypotheses of evolutionary psychologists are stamped as dangerously immoral, though they may be right, in favor of a "culturalizing" anthropology, which may be wrong but is self-evidently "good."

The thrust of the radical science movement was to moralize the scientific study of the mind and to engage the mentality of taboo. Recall...the indignant outrage, the punishment of heretics, the refusal to consider claims as they were actually stated, and moral cleansing through demonstrations and manifestos and public denunciations. [Radical computer scientist Joseph] Weizenbaum condemned ideas "whose very contemplation ought to give rise to feelings of disgust" and denounced the less-than-human scientists who "can even think of such a thing." But of course it is the job of scientists to think about things, even if only to make it clear why they are wrong.⁵

Against this diverse and somewhat amorphous enemy, Pinker deploys the full range of his knowledge of modern evolutionary theory and cognitive science. Several chapters are devoted to summarizing what psychology since the so-called "cognitive revolution" has taught us about innate or uni-

versal structures of the mind. Against the environment-centered behaviorism that dominated the discipline for decades (and consequently had a significant influence on the humanities and anthropology), modern psychology is predicated on the idea that mental representations and processes are not only accessible to study, but indispensable to understanding behavior. Pinker likewise enlists evolutionary psychology, which sees the mind, like any other living system, as possessing traits that are the products of natural selection.

Though this discussion certainly works to Pinker's strengths as an explicator, the initial chapters of *The Blank Slate* will probably prove the dullest to most readers. Sociocultural anthropologists and their ilk, if they read the book at all, would undoubtedly find discussions of visual perception and comparative genomics irrelevant to their concerns. Psychologists, for their part, already know this stuff, and might even be put off by Pinker's inability to resist sniping at those (mostly West Coast-based) researchers who might wholeheartedly sympathize with his beef against cultural determinism, but remain skeptical about Chomskian universal grammar, Fodorian mental modules, and other notions of innate mental furniture. For these reasons, though the main text comes in at just over 400 pages, many will find this a long-seeming book.

Pinker surveys more interesting territory when he argues that blank-slate ideologies don't really deserve the moral high ground they so frequently claim. Where sociobiologists like E.O. Wilson have been loudly decried as facilitators of crypto-fascist pseudo-science, it was extreme cultural determinism that informed the genocidal ideologies of the Soviet Union, China, and Cambodia. Conversely, the findings of evolutionary psychology and cognitive science have not necessarily been conducive to proponents of the "invisible hand" of unfettered markets. Instead, psychologists have systematically deconstructed the rational chooser at the center of classical economic theories, revealing him or her to be profoundly influenced by self-deception and the cognitive baggage of evolutionary history. While some cultural determinists are convinced that the political implications of evolutionary psychology are odiously right-wing, the truth is not nearly so neat. Important figures in the field, such as Robert Trivers (a one-time supporter of the Black Panthers) and John Maynard Smith (a lapsed Marxist) would hardly qualify as darlings of the *National Review* or the Fox News division.

Pinker predicts that the behavioral sciences will prompt a necessary evolution of the ancient dichotomies of political left and right. Citing Thomas Sowell's notion of opposing "tragic" and "utopian" (or "constrained" vs. "unconstrained") visions of human nature, Pinker grants that evolutionary psychology seems more consonant with the former. That is, where the "tragic" vision (exemplified by the Hobbes-Burke-Smith intellectual tradition) sees human affairs as inevitably a clash of opposing interests, with the best we can hope for a kind of refereed equilibrium, the "utopian" (exemplified by Rousseau, Condorcet, and to some degree Marx) sees history as prologue to a program of culturally-driven social improvement that will one day do away with inequality, war, ignorance, all the old demons. Pinker acknowledges that "...the new sciences of human nature really do vindicate some version of the Tragic Vision and undermine the Utopian outlook..." But this does not necessarily dispose of the goals of the Utopian left. Along with the "selfish" genes, humans have also evolved "a moral sense" in conjunction with "an open-ended combinatorial system, which in principle can increase its mastery over human affairs, just as it has increased its

mastery of the physical and living worlds." Granted the practical reality of what John Alcock has called "the triumph of sociobiology" through most of academia, the stage may finally be set for a radical rethinking of the old ideological contrasts. Pinker observes:

The ideologies of the left and the right took shape before Darwin, before Mendel, before anyone knew what a gene or a neuron or a hormone was. Every student of political science is taught that political ideologies are based on theories of human nature. Why must they be based on theories that are three hundred years out of date?

Pinker's recurrent point is that the finding of biologically based differences between individuals, groups, or genders is not the same as granting license for oppression based on those differences. Human dignity and equality of opportunity are moral ideals that nothing discovered in a lab can ever discredit. What science can weaken, however, are phony, politically motivated models of human nature. Better to pin our convictions on "a realistic, biologically informed humanism" than bad models that might crumble tomorrow.

But as much as Pinker is on the side of the angels in this fight, his book will probably change few minds. After all, cultural determinists rarely deny there is something biological about people. They simply assert that the biology is trivial, obvious, and/or irrelevant to what makes people particularly interesting.

Compared to other treatments of these issues, such as in Donald E. Brown's *Human Universals*, Pinker does a poor job of framing the intellectual history of blank-slate ideology. Brown's book is far shorter, but at least attempts to grapple with the foundational texts of modern sociocultural anthropology (Boas, Bronislaw Malinowski, Mead, Benedict, A.L. Kroeber, et al.). Brown cogently argues that Kroeber's depiction of culture as "superorganic," or dwelling on a plane of causation not reducible to "mere psychology," emerged from the context of a well-meaning reaction against racial science, but has since been pressed to doctrinal extremes not even Kroeber would recognize. For it was Kroeber himself who wrote that modern anthropology put the "protean X of the mind to the rear..." but did "not abolish the X":

...[t]he X, or its relation to the Y of culture, does remain our ultimate problem. This fact...we tend to forget; and probably more than we know, we are bringing up our students and successors in an ultra-behavioristic attitude...If there is a human mind, it has a structure and constitution, and these must enter into its phenomenal products...[I]t is well to remember that we are making a deliberate omission for practical purposes for the time being; and above all we have not yet proved that X equals 0.⁶

Of Kroeber's promissory note, Brown comments "I think it also fair to say that for many anthropologists a very long period of stressing cultural determinants in practice has made them think that biological determinants are out of the question in principle. They may think that Kroeber was one of those who established the principle, but this is not so."⁷

continued on page 10

⁶ quoted in Brown, D.E. (1991) *Human Universals* (New York: McGraw-Hill) p. 58

⁷ *ibid.*, p. 58

¹ Sparks & Jantz (2002)

www.pnas.org/cgi/content/abstract/222389599v1?ijkey=f3uGSmr3wB0r

² Freeman, D. (1983) *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth* (Cambridge: Harvard U. Press)

³ *NY Times*, 10/8/02, p. F3

⁴ www.kennewick-man.com/documents/jelderks083002.pdf

⁵ Pinker, S. (2002) *The Blank Slate* (New York: W.W. Norton) p. 156

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Preemptive Protest

continued from page 1

regarding international affairs. After all, it was the Clinton administration that used the UN weapons inspectors as spies in order to obtain intelligence information which had nothing to do with Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, but everything to do with identifying and locating Iraqi targets for future US attacks. After the inspectors were withdrawn from Iraq, Clinton ordered operation "Desert Fox"—a four-day bombing campaign.

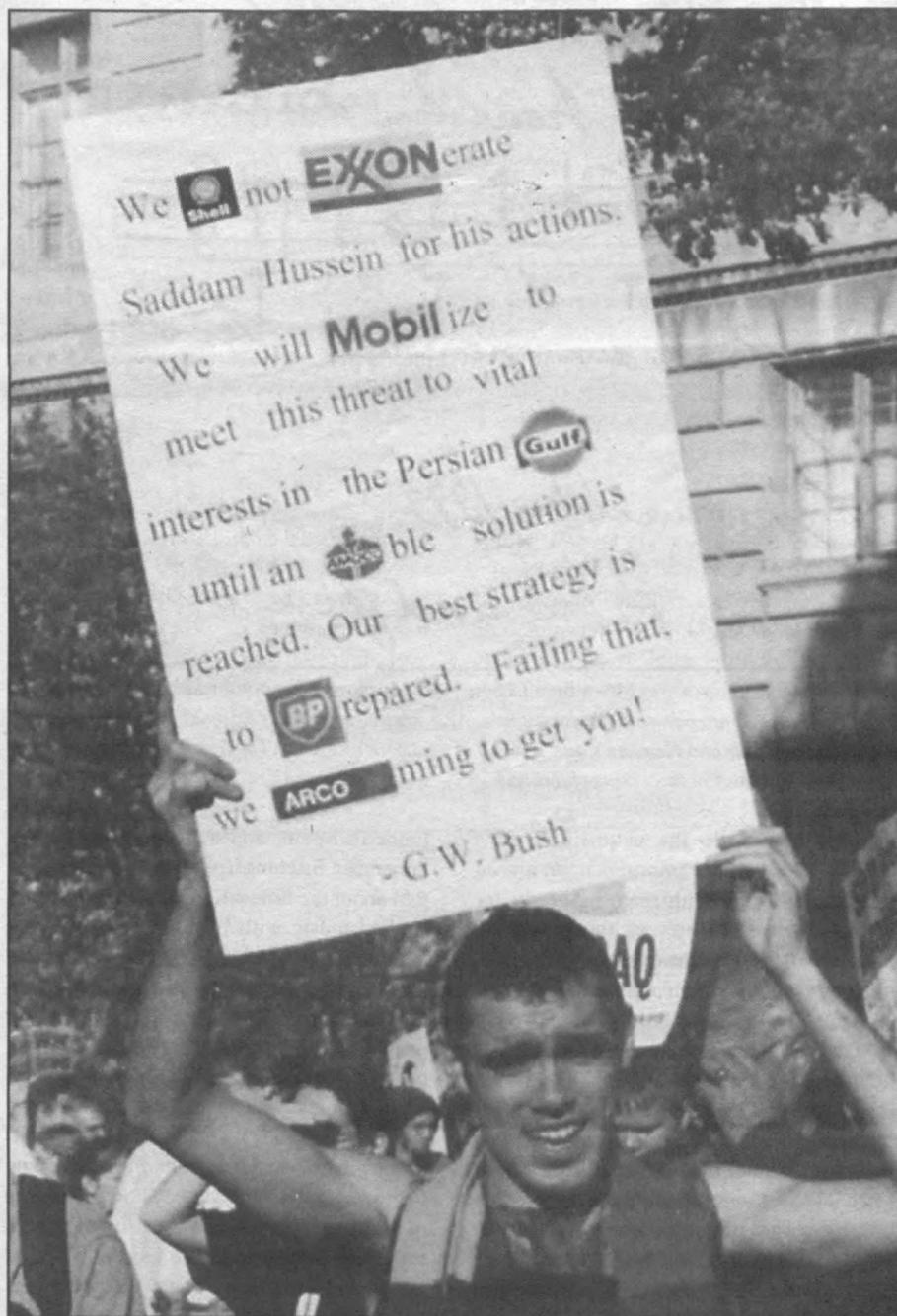
Many of the courageous Democrats who voted against the congressional war resolution did so with reference to the administration's go-it-alone approach, recognizing that an overwhelming majority of Americans is against a unilateral war against Iraq. That is why the Bush administration needed the Security Council resolution it finally got on November 8, only three days after the midterm elections, and despite the fact that it announced again and again that it will attack Iraq without UN support if necessary. Why was the US resolution adopted unanimously, even though many states had opposed it for months? The naive interpretation is that the final text was a real compromise, in which France, Russia and China succeed in preventing "automaticity" by explicitly placing the power to decide what counts as a material breach of the resolution in the hands of the Security Council. However, the language of the resolution actually begs this essential question. Scott Ritter, a former chief UN weapons inspector, claims that the US will try to trigger a war with Iraq by "doing whatever it can to provoke confrontation. There is a big group of people in the US that wants war," he said.⁵ The US continues to insist on its prerogative to unilaterally declare whether Iraq has violated its obligations, leaving the way clear, despite any "consultations" with the Security Council, for Bush to go to war at any time.

What explains the unanimous vote of the Security Council for the resolution? Aside from the five permanent members—the US, Russia, China, France and Great Britain—each with powers of veto, there are also Bulgaria, Cameroon, Colombia, Ireland, Guinea, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway and Syria. Some countries, most likely Bulgaria, Cameroon, Colombia, Guinea, Mauritius and Mexico voted for the resolution simply because they could not afford to vote no.⁶ In 1990, when South Yemen joined Cuba in voting against a US-sponsored resolution, an American diplomat told the Yemenis: "That will be the most expensive no vote you ever cast." Washington proceeded to cut off South Yemen's entire \$70 million US aid package.⁷ Although such considerations might have also played a role for France, China and Russia, the story gets more complex. Those countries bargained with the US over the resolution for a considerable time, but after Bush's success in the midterm elections they recognized that they did not have the politi-

⁵ E. MacAskill and O. Burkeman: Document Leaves Way Clear for War, November 7th 2002, *The Guardian*

⁶ C. Hoyos and A. Beattie: Nations ponder whether they can afford to oppose US stance, November 7th, *Financial Times*

⁷ P. Bennis: The UN, the US and Iraq, November 11, 2002 issue of *The Nation*



Demonstration in Washington DC, October 26.

cal leverage to stop Washington from going to war. For China and Russia, going along with the US means in return not being troubled by the US. The Bush administration has backed off on human rights complaints, the war in Chechnya, the status of Tibet, and supporting Taiwan.⁸ In addition, French and Russian companies have oil contracts with Iraq, and it took some time for them to be reassured that any future pro-American

⁸ N. Berry: Russia and China Coddle U.S., November 11th 2002, *The Moscow Times*

regime in Iraq will respect their interests. After all, Iraq has the second-biggest oil reserves in the world—not even including the oil fields experts suspect exist but which have not yet been discovered.

If an important US motive for going to war involves accessing and controlling cheap oil—and there is good reason to believe this is the case—then Europeans will also benefit.⁹ In a sense the US is going to make war for a

⁹ M. T. Klare: Oiling the Wheels of War, October 7, 2002 issue of *The Nation*

(perverse) public good. And it is in the nature of public goods that it is difficult to reject them. What does that mean for social movements? The environmental movement has to acknowledge that we have already entered the age of resource wars. It has every reason to press even harder for alternative energy sources and it has to become part of the peace movement. Remember that one of the major organizations even has (Green)peace in its name.

The global justice movement also has a role to play by emphasizing that economic injustices caused by neo-liberal globalisation create conditions supportive of war and terrorism. The US Trade Representative, Bob Zoellick, while attending a meeting in Mexico this October, made the connection explicit between Australia's support for war on Iraq and the administration's support for a US-Australia Free Trade Area (FTA), stating:

"Australia has fought with the United States in every war in the 20th century. They've been strong supporters of ours, and to me that matters."¹⁰

There is also good reason to worry that the Iraq war could be followed by another conflict in the Middle East. Remember, Iran has also been described by Bush as part of the "axis of evil." It is much stronger in military and economic terms than Iraq and also has big oil reserves. Ominously, in an interview with the *Times* during his recent visit to Great Britain, Israel's Prime Minister Ariel Sharon insisted that Tehran should be put under pressure "the day after" action against Baghdad ends because of its role as a "centre of world terror."¹¹

The peace movements in the US and Europe, while united in their opposition to war in Iraq, face different challenges. In the US the peace movement must convince the American public that a war against Iraq (and maybe in the near future Iran) is wrong and won't help to protect them from further terrorist attacks. Demonstrations, teach-ins, door-to-door canvassing etc.—the means are all well known. In Europe the majority of the population is already convinced that a war against Iraq would be a terrible mistake. While some European governments like the British and the Italian openly support the US policy, other governments are paying lip service to the peace movement but doing nothing substantial to stop the US war machine. In this situation, more is needed than simply raising public consciousness. Indian novelist Arundhati Roy has urged anti-war campaigners to use civil disobedience to oppose military action against Iraq. Picking up on this idea, in Germany a new campaign by the peace movement will organize peaceful blockades at the major US airbases there. By means of civil disobedience the organizers hope to obstruct the American war machine and its supply of weaponry and personnel. In the coming weeks and months we will face many frightening moments. In such moments it has sometimes helped me to recall what Bertolt Brecht wrote a long time ago: "Who fights can lose. Who doesn't fight has already lost."

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¹⁰ T. Colebatch: Free trade with US a step closer, November 13, 2002, *The Age*

¹¹ S. Farrell, R. Thomson and D. Haas: Attack Iran the Day Iraq War Ends, Demands Israel, November 5, 2002 in the *Times/UK*

Fritz Busch:

Thomas Eisner

I do not have a precise recollection of the date, although it must have been in 1942, and I will never forget my parents' excitement. They had been out the evening before, visiting the home of friends, and had made the acquaintance of someone they had admired for years, someone whose musicianship they had extolled ever since they heard him in concert back in pre-Nazi Germany, and who was now a regular guest conductor in Montevideo, where our family had taken up residence during World War II. During the concert season in Montevideo, Fritz Busch was an imposing presence. His performances were legendary, and my parents were among his most ardent admirers. That evening they had been to a Busch concert, and it was after the performance, at their friends' gathering, that they were to meet the maestro and his wife. Fritz and Grete Busch had been brought along by one of the guests, to the delight of all in attendance. Not surprisingly, given that everyone had been to the concert, the conversation took on a musical flavor, and it was lively from the start.

There was a piano in the room, and on the bench beside it lay some musical scores. Busch had come upon these and as he leafed through them noted that they were pieces for piano four-hands. "Would anyone like to play duets?" Busch asked, raising his voice above the group. My father volunteered and was promptly beckoned by the maestro to come sit to his left on the bench. The choice was Schubert and Mozart, and the two lit right in. Busch set the tempos and controlled the dynamics, but my father had no difficulty keeping pace. A good sight-reader himself, he was an experienced duet player; and Busch sensed it. The two played beautifully, as though they had done so together for years. The experience galvanized my father, and he spoke of little else at breakfast the next morning. I listened intently, regretting only that by being too young—I was thirteen—I had missed being present at the great event. None of us knew then that we would become good friends of the Busches and that I, a few years hence, would have the extraordinary luck of being taken on briefly as a piano student by the master.

The Busches had left Germany in June 1933. Fritz Busch's contempt for the Nazis was well known, and he had been forced by the new regime to relinquish his post as music director of the Dresden Opera. He had already challenged Nazi ideology as early as 1930 by continuing to perform Mendelssohn and refusing to dismiss Jewish musicians and singers. Once in power the Nazis had made every effort to see whether the maestro might not mend his ways—Busch was not Jewish and his defiance of the Nazis was an embarrassment to the regime—but he was unbending even when confronted by Hermann Goering himself. Busch's international popularity was such that he had no difficulty securing bookings in exile. He concertized widely in South America, Scandinavia, and England, and after the war broke out he settled in Buenos Aires in 1940. In 1936, in England, together with Carl Ebert, he had founded the Glyndebourne Opera, under whose auspices he had produced the extraordinarily beautiful Mozart operatic recordings for which he is famous to this day.

We, too, had left Germany in 1933. My father was Jewish, and my parents had little illusion about what was in store under the Nazis. Unwisely, they chose to immigrate to Spain, where three years later civil war broke out. We fled to France and from there in 1937, having reached the conclusion that Europe was finished, departed for South America.

In Uruguay we found a paradise of sorts. The people were friendly and unabashedly anti-Nazi, the government was stable and democratic, and Montevideo was a beautiful town. My father, who had a doctoral degree in chemistry, found a job there with the same pharmaceutical company that had employed him in Barcelona. We managed to rent a comfortable home, and my sister and I were happily enrolled in an English school. We were acutely aware of the war, but aside from the famous Battle of the River Plate, which resulted in the scuttling of the German pocket battleship Graf Spee just off the Montevideo coast, we experienced no part of it.

Our life revolved very much around music, which, according to my parents, was the essence of the soul. My father, who was happier at the piano than the chemical bench, could easily have been a musician, and my mother, herself the daughter of an organist of note, would have been sympathetic had he so chosen. Luck would have it that among the refugees from Hitler in Montevideo there were many who played an instrument. My father sought these out

the fold as I grew to appreciate Brahms, Mahler, and Stravinsky. Our one source of disagreement was over the music that was the backdrop of everyday life in Uruguay. Admittedly, most of the tangos and *milongas* that constituted the "hits" of popular culture were pretty light stuff, but how about the exceptions, I argued—were there not some truly great tangos? Especially when rendered by the likes of a Carlos Gardel? How about *Silencio* or *Por una cabeza* or *Adiós muchachos*? I could never convince my parents that these were in fact nuggets of a special musical culture.

Central to my father's music making was playing piano duets. He had begun to build up a truly marvelous collection of the duet literature, and he was never short of partners. One of these was an older gentleman, a Dr. Goetz, who back in Europe had been one of the last accompanists of the famous operatic tenor Leo Slezak. For a number of years Dr. Goetz was my piano teacher. My father also loved to accompany singers, among whom, on a number of occasions, was the Spanish soprano Concepción ("Conchita") Badia, herself a refugee from

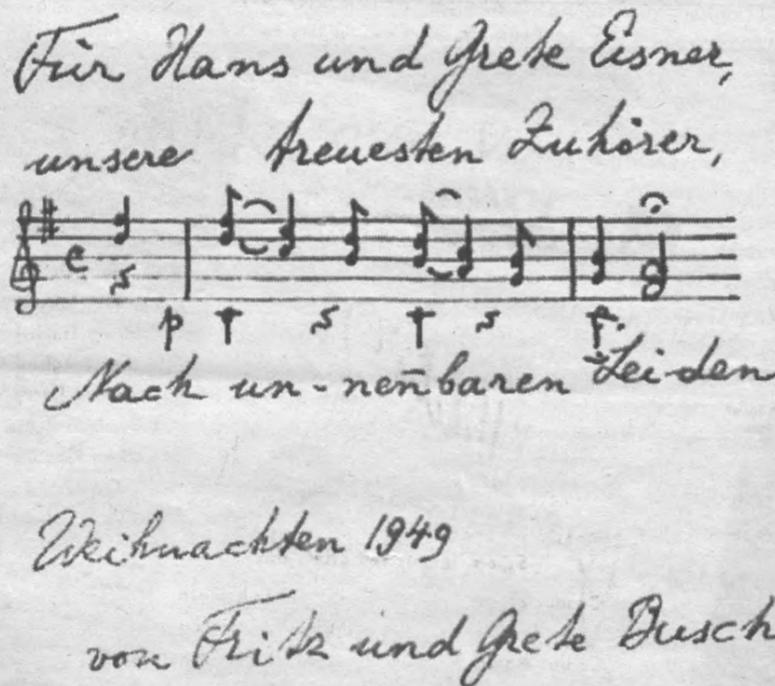
Schumann versus Brahms. Some of my friends were also regular concertgoers, and we were all quite proud of "our" national orchestra. At half a peso a seat in the *galerías*, orchestral performances were a true bargain, especially given the diversity of conductors one had the option of hearing at that time. A second prominent artist in exile, who regularly came over from Buenos Aires to lead the orchestra, was Erich Kleiber.

I do not know when it was that we next saw the Busches, but by the end of 1942 both Fritz and Grete were regular guests in our home. I have vivid recollections of Busch playing duets with my father on these occasions and remember being struck by his awesome musicality and technical mastery. If in the course of a turbulent *allegro vivace* my father was forced to omit some parts, Busch simply filled these in as needed, instantly aware at all times of notes that were missing. And markings were taken literally. Fortissimos pretty well shook the house, and pianissimos were truly *sotto voce*. Busch loved to talk about music and to illustrate at the piano how subtle changes in rendition could totally alter the character of a piece. He could also be playful at times, as when presenting a keyboard imitation of an ill-tuned military band, or when using a hairbrush to execute the violin ornamentations that accompany the theme (beginning in m. 38) of the Tannhäuser overture. Grete Busch was also very much a presence during these evenings, when the conversation revolved so often around events in Europe, the fate of friends, and the memories of pre-Nazi Germany. I was allowed to stay up on these occasions, and on one of them, just before we were to break up, Busch asked that I join him at the keyboard. "We need something to round off the evening," he said, as he called me to the bench. It was to be a Bach chorale prelude, originally set for organ, and he asked that I take the bass part. When we were finished all was quiet. "We will sleep the better for it," he said before we all bid our farewells. But I did not sleep a wink that night.

During summers it could get very hot in Montevideo, so my parents built a vacation home where we could seek refuge. For a site they had picked Atlántida, a quiet, still largely undeveloped seaside resort some sixty kilometers east of the capital. My mother and we children spent the entire summer there, and my father came for vacations and weekends. Buenos Aires could be even more stifling, and the Busches were eager themselves to get away during summers. My parents persuaded the Busches to rent a cottage in Atlántida, and thus it came to be that we spent part of the summers of 1943, 1944, and 1945 together.

I have the fondest recollections of these summers. As a teenager I was beginning to take seriously the activities that were to become the basis of my profession. I had started an insect collection, and natural history had become a passion. I spent countless hours on my own outdoors exploring every conceivable habitat for my beloved bugs, and I brought many of these indoors so I could study them live. My room became a veritable zoo. I had also become a serious fisherman. I would rise at dawn, walk the two kilometers to my favorite fishing site, and with bamboo pole and drop line, extricate our next dinner from the waters. There were *pejerrey*, *burriqueta*, *roncadera*, and the occasional *corvina negra*, all delicious and shared at times with the Busches. Despite the relentlessly oppressive news from Europe, they were happy times.

We had a grand piano in our summerhouse, and it got much use. Duets were constant fare; I used to sit avidly by the instrument as Busch played with my father, hoping that I would be drawn in as a part-



Inscription in the Eisners' copy of *Aus dem Leben eines Musikers* (Zurich: Rascher Verlag, 1949): "For Hans and Grete Eisner, our most faithful listeners. After unspeakable grief, Christmas 1949." The musical quote is from *Lenore and Florestan's duet* in act 2 of Beethoven's *Fidelio*. The "grief" is in reference to the intense effort invested in the writing of this book.

and—having made the acquisition of a piano one of his first priorities upon arrival in Uruguay—met with them regularly for chamber music. Many of these friends, unable to find employment in their original professions, had come upon hard times. Their evenings in our home were a return to a culture they sorely missed, and my mother, with her exquisite cooking, would make sure that the condiments were appropriately evocative. I had favorites among these musicians. One was a flutist, a Mr. Michaelis, if I remember correctly. A lawyer by profession, now owner of a small grocery store, his great love was the baroque. Another was a cellist, an elderly man and former engineer, who himself saw irony in the fact that with a name like *Schläfrig* ("sleepy") he should have found work as a night watchman. I was not always allowed to stay up for the entire evening on these musical occasions, but as I lay in bed into the wee hours I would remain awake, listening intently and hoping always I would hear music I had not heard before. I got to know many a sonata or piano trio in that way. I remember as if it were yesterday being overwhelmed by my first exposure to Bach's B-Minor Flute Sonata.

Happily, my parents and I had almost totally compatible musical tastes. They were both fully understanding of my initial passion for the baroque and welcomed me to

Franco's Spain, and a marvelous voice. I remember listening spellbound as Conchita told about the time when at age nine she had studied music with Enrique Granados. By the time I was twelve, my piano playing had reached the point where I could myself perform creditably as a duet partner. My father made it a point to play with me daily, when he came home from work, and I soon became an enthusiast. I learned to sightread and to stay with it without stopping no matter how hard the passage, and in due course I became good enough to be allowed at times to take the upper two voices of the score even when these were the more difficult. I had reached the point where the piano was pure fun and I no longer had to be forced to practice. There was also ample occasion to learn music from the radio. Montevideo had a municipal radio station, CX6, that owned an astounding record collection and broadcast classical music all day long. For a family that was crazy about music, and our disagreement over tangos notwithstanding, we had certainly immigrated to the right country.

Among my classmates in school were a fair number who loved music. It was by no means unusual to have one's conversation drift to musical topics during recess, and I remember having exhilarating debates about such vital matters as the relative merits of Beethoven's Third or Fifth Symphony, or of

A Friend Remembered

ner. And so I was. A highlight was when Busch asked one day that I play a Brandenburg Concerto with him, which we had in the Max Reger arrangement for four hands. Coincidence would have it that on a later occasion I was to turn pages for Busch when he played the piano part of the Fifth Brandenburg in concert in Montevideo. The date was 22 April 1944, and I still have the program. My mother was terrified, fearing that I might cause the score to drop on Busch's hands.

There was also much singing in our house. Through Busch we had come to know the soprano Editha Fleischer, a veteran of the New York Metropolitan Opera and friend of Arturo Toscanini's, who was also now in Buenos Aires, where her husband, Erich Engel, worked in a managerial capacity at the Teatro Colón. Editha did a great deal of singing accompanied by my father. She had an utterly divine voice and immense personal charm and was to remain a lifelong friend. Also in Atlántida during the summer of 1942 and 1943 was a daughter of the Busches, Eta, who, together with her husband, the French baritone Martial Singher, and young son, Michel—who himself was to become a conductor—had also escaped from Europe. The Singhers had recently had a second son, and I used to babysit for the two boys. I remember well Busch coaching his son-in-law in the rendition of *Die schöne Müllerin* and *Winterreise*. The Singhers as well remained lifelong friends. Martial, who was later to sing at the Met and join the faculty of the Curtis Institute, eventually succeeded Lotte Lehmann as director of the voice department of the Music Academy of the West.

And there were other visitors. One was a talented teenager who greatly impressed Busch with his sight-reading ability. He too was the son of refugees. The father, Josef Gielen, had had a stellar career as a theatrical and operatic stage director in Europe. Young Michael was to become musical director of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and Frankfurt Opera.

Two events of that period remain to me utterly unforgettable—the New Year's Eve that we spent with the Busches in 1943, and a get-together with Busch in Buenos Aires. The New Year's Eve was memorable because of its very special musical flavor. The mood that evening had been a somber one. While overseas the tide had turned in favor of the Allies, there was still considerable uncertainty about the outcome of the war and great concern about the many friends and relatives who had been trapped in Europe. We toasted the future and gave expression to our hope, but it was clear as midnight approached that we were all desperately in need of music. "Let's play something," Busch said, as he picked a volume from the shelves. And facing my father he added, "I will need you at the bench to take the basses." And then the two played. The composer was Bach and the selections were all chorale preludes, pieces that I did not then know but came to love: *O Mensch, bewein' dein' Sünde gross; Christ lag in Todesbänden; Ich ruf' zu Dir, Herr Jesu Christ; Wenn wir in höchsten Nöthen sein, and Das alte Jahr vergangen ist*. The last prelude, intended as a farewell to the old year, was played just before midnight. The effect of its extraordinary ending, as the piece fades in a gradual retard into silence, was stunning. Almost without exception, every year since, I have played these five chorale preludes on New Year's Eve, first with my father while he was still alive, and more recently with my very musical wife.

The visit to Buenos Aires was in 1944. I had accompanied my father there, and we managed to visit the Busches. Unlike my father, I had no other commitments, so when Busch asked that I accompany him to the

Teatro Colón, where he had some matters to take care of, I assented gladly. Once there, noting that I was awestruck by the surroundings, he suddenly proposed that we visit the stage. The great hall was empty, dimly lit by a few safety lights, and utterly still. We walked across the stage, paused briefly, and stepped down to the orchestra. "Follow me," said Busch as he led the way past the chairs and music stands and headed straight for the piano. He took his place by the keyboard and beckoned me to sit beside him. And then he began to play. It was Wagner, and he was intent on explaining the notion of leitmotif to me. From the depth of his soul came theme after theme—largely from *Parsifal*, as I recall—rendered from memory, with a passion and musicality such as I had never experienced. And he would pause to explain, in whispers, how the music fit the action. The experience was unforgettable and it taught me, for the first time in my life, what it meant to truly master a musical score. It also changed forever my appreciation of Wagner.

"We're Not as Bad as We Sound"). I had obtained copies of the instrumental parts from the music department of Indiana University at Bloomington. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. The suite is beautiful and deserving of performance.

During his last summer in Atlántida, Busch had begun to write his memoirs, *Aus dem Leben eines Musikers*, and I remember both Busches coming over to our house in the evenings to read the latest installments and discuss the next sections being contemplated. I recall being particularly taken by the introductory chapters, in which Busch details the outlandishly funny musical adventures (and misadventures) that he had with his three brothers, the violinist Adolf, the cellist Hermann, and the future actor Willi. I vividly retain the memory of Busch glancing at me out of the corner of his eye while he or his wife read these passages, to see whether I smiled in appreciation of the humor. I also remember the serious discussions about the Nazi crackdown on culture, the Busches' confrontation with the Nazis,

selections, for instance, were the Piano Concerto in G Major by Ravel, the Glazunov Violin Concerto, and Verdi's Requiem. Especially notable was a rendition of Beethoven's Fourth Piano Concerto with the young and very beautiful (and still active) Nibya Mariño Bellini. In Buenos Aires at that time Busch conducted the first performance of Bach's *St. Matthew's Passion* ever to be sung in Spanish.

During the concert season of 1946, while Busch was in residence in Montevideo, the maestro, responding no doubt to a request from my parents, took me on as a piano student. I would take the bus once a week to his hotel, and he would do me the honor of coaching me in technique and interpretive skills. I was assigned Bach—the two- and three-part inventions—and was taught how to deal in depth with a composition. I was made aware of subtleties and nuances, of liberties to be taken or not to be taken, and of ways to bring feelings to expression. The experience was overwhelming, and I spent hours at the piano practicing. I worshiped Busch and wanted to do well by him. But it soon became clear that I would never make it as a pianist. Sight-reading, yes, and music for fun, definitely yes—but professional playing, almost certainly not. Busch himself, who was infinitely kind and, unlike most of our German friends, had always treated me as an adult, had dropped hints. "Can your love of insects lead to a profession?" he had asked. "Look at how much enjoyment your scientist father gets from music." For our last session Busch suggested that I bring some piano duet music. I did, and when we finished he said, "*Das hat doch Spass gemacht*." It was fun indeed, and I realized then that it would be for sheer enjoyment, and for no other reason, that I would be playing music for the rest of my life.

The Busches emigrated to the United States shortly thereafter, as did we in the spring of 1947. We did not see each other as frequently after that, but given that we both lived on the outskirts of New York, occasional evenings in our respective homes became a reality. And there were the opportunities to attend Busch's performances at the Met. I had started college and missed out on most of these, but I did attend a memorable performance of *Tristan und Isolde* with Lauritz Melchior and Helen Traubel on 3 January 1948, and a spectacular rendition of *Le nozze di Figaro* with Bidu Sayao as Susanna and Jarmila Novotna as Cherubino on 26 January 1949. In the summer of 1947, we rekindled the spirit of Atlántida by meeting with the Busches and the Singhers at a vacation site in the Adirondacks. It was to be the last occasion that we saw both Busches at leisure for any length of time.

Fritz Busch died in London on 14 September 1951 at age sixty-one, following a heart attack. I was home with my parents when we got the news. It was one of the saddest days of our lives.

Notes

I thank Michel Singher and Eta Singher for providing information and confirmation of some factual points, and Malcolm Bilson, Maria Eisner, Helen Ghiradella, Helmut Hirsch, and Melody Siegler for comments on the manuscript. Eta Singher died on March 16, 2002.

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King Marke	Mihaly Szekely
Isolde	Helen Traubel
Kurvenal	Joel Berglund
Melot	Emery Darcy
Brangaene	Blanche Thebom
A shepherd	Leslie Chebay
The steersman	Philip Kinsman
A sailor's voice	John Garris

Sailors, knights and attendants

Conductor	Fritz Busch
Stage director	Dino Yannopoulos
Chorus master	Kurt Adler

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KNABE PIANO USE EXCLUSIVELY

Program of Metropolitan Opera performance of *Tristan und Isolde*, 3 January 1948.

Busch had a special fondness for Schubert, and he loved to play the original compositions for piano four-hands by that master. In the summer of 1944 Busch decided that he would orchestrate some of these pieces. He chose a set of dances—the *Polonaise* no. 4 (D. 599), the *Ecosaises* (D. 145), and the *Valses nobles* (D. 969)—and put them together in the form of an orchestral suite. The premiere performance was with the Montevideo Symphony Orchestra, but I have no record of whether it was in 1944 or 1945. What I do know is that my sister, who was a gifted calligrapher, helped write out the instrumental parts. The effort was a race against time, given that rehearsals were about to start, and I remember volunteering but being rejected for not being neat enough. Busch had often played the dances on the piano with my father, and he dedicated the orchestral suite to him, in memory "of their friendship and the many lively and gratifying hours spent together playing four-hands." The original score is in my possession. I conducted the suite myself some twenty years ago, at a time when I was affiliated with an amateur orchestra at Cornell by the name of B.R.A.H.M.S. (Biweekly Rehearsal Association of Honorary Musical Scientists—we played under the motto

and the fate of Germany and Europe. The discussions often extended late into the evening, with the result that I would have the hardest time getting up the next morning to fish. I would also at times fall asleep during the reading sessions, to my great embarrassment, since I had a tendency to snore. The book was eventually published in 1949 in Switzerland; it was published in translation as *Pages from a Musician's Life* in England in 1953. To "our most faithful listeners," reads the inscription in my parents' copy, now in my possession. And during winters, until 1946, there were the Busch concerts.

We attended them all. For me the memories are vivid because I heard many a classical composition live for the first time on these occasions, including some of the Beethoven and Brahms symphonies. But Busch's programming included touches of boldness that were not lost on the Montevideo audience. Thus, on 23 June 1945, he conducted the first performance ever for Latin America of Mahler's Second Symphony, and on an earlier occasion his own orchestration of Reger's *Fantasia for Organ*, op. 27. He also gave ample opportunity for performance to local instrumentalists and vocalists. Included among his

Boss Nova in Brazil

William W. Goldsmith,
Abdurazack Karriem, and
Hannah Wittman

This October, nearly 53 million people—more than three of every five Brazilian adults—voted to elect leftist Workers Party candidate Luiz Inácio (Lula) da Silva as President.¹ This extraordinary electoral victory in Brazil, by a former auto worker and union leader who had been defeated in three previous presidential attempts, has been interpreted widely by Brazilians as a positive step in a long contest of common people for dignity, decency, and autonomy. In his victory speech, Lula credited “a vast collective endeavor undertaken by countless democrats, by people who have striven for social justice over many decades,” including many who are no longer alive.

Most Brazilians, always, have been deprived of civil, political, and economic rights. Emerging first from Portuguese colonialism and then late in the 19th century from slavery and the national monarchy, Brazilians have endured decades of tentative steps toward capitalist modernization led by urban industrial elites and some large-scale agricultural interests, but often twisted or resisted by a landed rural oligarchy. After a right-wing military junta seized power in 1964, generals as presidents ruled for 20 years, in a stable dictatorship that pursued national interests and invested heavily in economic development. The generals also ignored due process by arresting, exiling, torturing, and sometimes killing opponents. They suspended constitutional rights, took away the vote, prohibited political parties and assembly, repressed unions, lowered real wages, and further worsened one of the world's most unequal distributions of income.

In the 1970s, Brazilian economist Edmar Bacha wrote a parable about Brazil. He created Belindia as a single country combining the riches and wealth of the small, modern, European country, Belgium, with the staggering poverty and rural exclusion of an underdeveloped, Third World country, India. Others speak of a post-modern economy with a pre-modern labor force. Thirty years later, although many things have changed in Brazil, these divisions hold.

Beginning in the early 1980s, the military government started gradually to return to the barracks and to withdraw anti-democratic restrictions until municipal, state, and federal elections were fully freed from the final remnants of military rule. By 1988 a new constitution was adopted, following years of pressure from unions, church leaders, citizens organizations, street protesters, political parties and, finally, a combative and creative constitutional assembly. In January 1995 President Fernando Henrique Cardoso was inaugurated for his first of two terms. By 2000 left-wing parties had elected numerous governors, federal representatives, and senators, and they, mainly the Workers Party, governed many hundreds of municipalities, including 30 of the 60 largest cities. Lula is now forming the new cabinet and will inaugurate his government in January 2003 for a term of four years. Brazil's laws allow him to run for re-election once.

The election as a break with history

In the first round of voting, although four candidates were taken seriously, Lula nearly won outright with 46.4% of the votes. The government candidate, José Serra, finished second, with 23.2%. For the second round, Lula had the support of the next two candidates, both left of

center. Serra himself had been previously exiled by the military, subsequently worked with Salvador Allende in Chile, and was exiled again by the Pinochet regime after 1973. (Serra later prepared his documents for re-entry to Brazil by living in Ithaca and earning a PhD from Cornell.) Within his left-wing framework, Lula takes care to emphasize the multi-party nature of Brazilian politics and his support from many sides:



Luiz Inácio (Lula) de Silva

In order to achieve yesterday's result, it was of fundamental importance that the Workers' Party, a party of the left, should have understood the need of allying itself with other political parties. The PL (Liberal Party), the PCdoB (Communist Party of Brazil), the PMN (National Mobilization Party) and the PCB (Brazilian Communist Party) lent their inestimable support in the first ballot. They were joined in the second ballot by the PSB (Brazilian Socialist Party), the PPS (Popular Socialist Party), the PDT (Democratic Labor Party), the PV (Green Party), the PTB (Brazilian Labor Party), the PHS (Humanist Solidarity Party), the PSDC (Christian Social Democracy Party), and the PGT (General Workers' Party). We were also able to count on the support of significant sectors in other parties who identified with our program to effect change in Brazil. I should especially like to mention the support afforded by former presidents José Sarney and Itamar Franco and, in the run-off ballot, the valuable help given to me by [1st round candidates] Antonio Garotinho and Ciro Gomes. . . .

“We owe this victory, above all, to thousands, perhaps millions of people who belong to no particular party but who engaged in the cause. It was a victory achieved by the working class, the middle class, by a great number of businessmen, by social organizations and by the trade unions, all of whom understood the need to combat poverty and protect our national interests.”²

The Workers Party (the PT) emphasizes popular democracy, the elimination of deep poverty, the rights of ordinary citizens, and honesty and transparency in government. The PT emerged in the 1980s, as workers organized prohibited labor unions, adherents joined religious “base” communities led by liberation-theology priests, and residents demanded better conditions for their households and services in their neighborhoods. Solidarity among workers, residents, and churches proved a powerful means of countering repression, especially in São Paulo's working-class neighborhoods

² From Lula's 10/28 victory speech, available in full at: <http://www.brazil.org.uk/page.php?cid=1404>

where large numbers of middle-class university students and intellectuals joined in.

In earlier presidential elections, the center and the right, backed by powerful conservative institutions in the media and the economy, had benefited from latent fear of a Communist takeover, various elements of political luck, and sometimes the military. The Cardoso government, in contrast, established a beachhead by building democratic institutions and promoting

respect for the law. Nevertheless, two terms of political stalemate saw President Cardoso ultimately govern together with some of the most reactionary elements of the landed oligarchy, as he undertook mild reforms while repudiating his previous formulation of Marxist dependency theory. At first widely popular because of his success controlling inflation (Cardoso managed the economy in the previous government) and his improved programs in health and education, public opinion turned against him when a stagnant economy led to cutbacks, lower paychecks, and unemployment.

Lula played the campaign adroitly, reassuring businessmen, bankers, and international financiers about national stability. The PT formed a coalition with the PL (an evangelical church-based party), neutralizing some of the most rabid anti-Lula/anti-PT sentiments. Business opposition weakened as Lula chose José Alencar, owner of the largest textile conglomerate in Brazil, as vice presidential running mate. Finally, luck turned to Lula and the PT, as one competing candidate after the other made either a serious misstep or a bad alliance, and as Serra's campaign lacked vitality.

To assure his victory, Lula made compromises, most significantly with two former presidents, Itamar Franco, the governor of the large state of Minas Gerais, and José Sarney, whose daughter Roseana saw her own rapidly ascending candidacy dissolve as her husband was shown on television news sitting in their living room amidst sacks of campaign cash. Lula worked to appease the military, speaking to their strong nationalist tendencies. More generally, he probably gained because of broad antagonism against the neoliberal policies of international powers like the International Monetary Fund, with which the Cardoso government and Serra could be associated.

Struggles inside the PT have always been intense, evident in debates in the many cities the PT has long governed. Now with national power in hand, segments on the leftward side of the PT worry that agreements with conservative forces will dilute the party's leftist project. Although the PT emerged as the largest party in the House of Deputies, it holds only 91 of the total 513 seats. The PT is the third largest party in the Senate, with 14 out of 81 seats. The PT together with the other left-wing parties constitutes less than half the Congress, so in spite of Lula's hold on the presidency, to govern he will have to deal with center and center-right parties.

Rural Brazil

Brazil is a leading agricultural exporter, the world's largest producer of coffee, sugar and cattle, and the second-largest producer of soy. Agricultural output has continued to grow, with farm products earning 40% of the country's export revenue and expected to generate a \$21 billion trade surplus in 2002.³ While Brazilian regions themselves are enormously unequal, from the impoverished Northeast to the rich South and Southeast, internal inequality is even more pronounced. Much of the wealth is enormously concentrated by large landholders and key agricultural exporters. By one measure, just one percent (40,000 proprietors) holds 47% of the arable land, mostly either used for livestock or left unproductive. As the president of the Brazilian Land Reform Association has said, “Slavery ended in 1888, but the plantation land ownership model endured. There was never a rupture with the old agrarian system.”⁴

Of Brazil's 4.8 million landless farmers, more than 850,000 signed up in 2001 for plots with the National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform (INCRA). Many more would resettle if they could from urban slums. These people have high expectations, since Lula called for land reallocation to reduce inequality, promote social justice, promote family farms, increase rural employment, and improve national and regional food security. If they are to have land, farmers might go to the frontier, occupy public lands, or take over underused private holdings.

Settlement in frontier areas, especially in the southern Amazon region, is a particular problem because of isolation from markets, little infrastructure, roads, schools, or health services, and ecological fragility (much land is inappropriate for agriculture). Yet a PPG-7/World Bank report points out that over 62% of current INCRA settlement sites are in the Amazon, accounting for over half of the settled families. Across Brazil, but especially in the Amazon region, agencies provide little or no technical assistance, rural extension, or socio-educational support to those receiving land. INCRA's budget was reduced from \$3 billion reais in 1997 to \$1 billion in 2001, with all but 3% directed solely towards compensation to landholders for expropriated land.

Although the Cardoso government settled about 350,000 families on colonized public lands in eight years, more than any past government, during the same period an estimated 950,000 farmers lost their properties for lack of public investment in small agriculture.⁵ The 1988 Brazilian Constitution established the “social function of land,” in a clause that allows the government to expropriate underutilized private property. Current estimates indicate that over 90 million hectares of unused or illegally titled lands are available for redistribution. In Brazil, 75% of properties over 10,000 hectares have invalid titles.⁶ Eighty-three percent of Brazilians favor land redistribution, and 40% defend land invasions as a legitimate tool to achieve it.⁷

The PT (and Lula) have long been supporters of Latin America's largest social movement, the Landless Workers Movement (MST). Since its inception in 1984, the MST has settled 350,000 families, and in the spring of 2002 over 80,000 families were waiting for land in MST encampments along roadsides. In MST efforts to settle farmers and in political protests, more than a hundred pro-reform activists have been killed in upward of 1,300 skirmishes and attacks involving police and landowners' thugs.

³ Peter Blackburn (Reuters, 10/4/02)

⁴ Pinto, from Hinchberger's 1998 *Nation* article, reprinted at: <http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/brazil/mst/LandOfNoReturn.html>

⁵ MST national coordinator João Paulo Rodrigues.

⁶ de Souza, 2000, *Folha d. São Paulo*.

⁷ Hinchberger, *The Nation*, 1998

The MST did not endorse Lula, maintaining their policy of political independence. Says an MST leader, "The fact that a candidate of the left has been elected president does not mean that there will be no more land invasions. . . . There won't be any truce with the PT."⁸ The MST expresses optimism about future relations with the new president, but MST leader João Pedro Stedile asserted in early October that "on Lula's inauguration day the MST would be invading all the land in Brazil." During the campaign, Lula promised no confiscations of private land. "The law is clear. There will be no confiscation of productive land," said Jose Graziano da Silva, Lula's agricultural advisor. Instead, Lula speaks of a "pacific and negotiated" system of agrarian reform.

The Cities

Complementing its long rural tradition, powerful modern agriculture, giant forest reserves, and collapsing subsistence farms, two-thirds of Brazil's population lives in a network of cities and very large metropolitan areas. Against a long tradition of clientelism, authoritarianism, and recent military dictatorship, over the last 20 years these cities have seen many attempts at new forms of citizenship, participation, and active, redistributive democracy. In municipal elections of the last 15 years, the PT and other left parties have enjoyed remarkable success in cities large and small. The first notable election was of Luiza Erundina, a social worker, as the PT mayor of São Paulo in 1989. São Paulo is one of the world's largest cities, population about 10 million, with a metro area between 15 and 20 million. It is known as the economic engine that pulls the train of Brazil. The current mayor of São Paulo, Martha Suplicy, was also elected by the PT. Governing a city of this size and complexity is extremely difficult under the best of circumstances; with opposition from the state and federal administrations, from the media, and from right-wing parties mired in a history of corrupt practices, governing has been particularly difficult. Still, successes have been notable—with improved services, better tax collections, and wider access to a more open and transparent government.

In addition to well-known examples in the larger cities of Porto Alegre in the south, Belém at the mouth of the Amazon, and Santo André, a large industrial suburb of São Paulo, the most profound gains in municipal governance, however, may have been in the hundreds of smaller and mid-sized cities. Aided by the 1988 Constitution, which transferred significant financial resources to city governments, one finds in these cities the emergence of new notions of citizenship, new arrangements for social services, and much higher levels of citizen involvement. Here, a hierarchy of meetings at community, neighborhood, and regional levels known as Participatory Budgeting permits tens of thousands of citizens to actually vote on the allocation of the larger part of the municipal budget, deciding on the distribution of public works, investment in sanitation, streets, schools, and health clinics, and generally taking control over the governing of their own cities.

Although the brutal social reality for the urban majorities involves a physical deficit in streets and sidewalks, public spaces, sanitation, and housing, a social deficit in health and education, the growing challenge of drugs and violence, and severe household poverty, still these political improvements promise to play a large part in the future. Much of the base of the PT lies precisely in these urban reforms—not only in the electoral strength, but also the resilience and the pressure for continuous social innovation.

The Economy

Brazil is the world's ninth-largest economy, and about two-thirds of Brazilians live in the South and Southeast, where a modern industrial and agricultural economy produces over three-quarters of the national GDP. Brazil exports elegant airplanes—when passengers fly out of Ithaca, they are likely to board a comfortable Embraer jet. Yet most Brazilians are

miserably poor. The economy itself is in deep trouble. Under the Cardoso regime, public debt rose from a third of GDP in 1994 to 49% in 2000, skyrocketing to 64% of GDP (approximately \$240 billion) at the close of September, 2002. The Brazilian currency, the real, has devalued by over 40% this year, further increasing the dollar-denominated debt. The economy is barely growing, at only one or two percent per year between 1998 and 2001. Difficulties include high interest rates that are retarding investment, high and rising unemployment, a global economic recession, a Latin American regional economic crisis, and unknown economic effects, positive or negative, from the turmoil of the "war on terrorism."

To calm the markets, Lula and the PT renounced long-held positions such as defaulting on debt or reversing the privatizations of the Cardoso government. The rightward shift in economic policy was reinforced when the PT, during the election campaign, publicly announced its support for a \$30 billion IMF loan, which commits the incoming government to uphold Cardoso's strict fiscal and monetary policies. The IMF loan was conditional on meeting a very strict annual budget surplus (excluding interest payments), which would constrain public expenditures very tightly, placing severe limits on PT campaign promises of more social spending.

The PT has committed itself to an interventionist agenda, aimed at ensuring that state agencies follow national development priorities. This marks a break with the Cardoso administration's narrow emphasis on cost as a determinant. Lula adopted a nationalist, developmentalist stance throughout the electoral campaign, arguing that neoliberal policies had weakened domestic industry and led to underinvestment in infrastructure and social programs. In a recent interview with the *Washington Post* (March 11, 2002), Lula argued that "The state's role is to plan, stimulate development with incentives and, if necessary, provide funding in partnership with the private sector." Parastatals and state agencies are seen as the key levers through which to promote economic development and generate employment. The PT has criticized the Cardoso government for awarding contracts for the construction of an oil rig for the Brazilian state oil agency, Petrobras, to a Singaporean company. The PT asserts that contracts for two new rigs (worth approximately \$1 billion) will be open to international bids, but will have to be built in Brazil to attract technology, generate employment, and promote important sectors of the national economy, such as the shipbuilding industry.

The PT has challenged the way contracts for air force fighter planes have been handled. Among the American, French, Russian and British/Swedish bidders, only the French offered to transfer technology, to build the Mirage fighter plane in Brazil in a consortium with the national aircraft manufacturer, Embraer. Questions have also been raised about pending privatizations. Arguing that the decision should be left to his incoming government, Lula has asked the outgoing Cardoso administration to cancel the partial privatization of the state-owned Banco do Brasil, Latin America's largest bank. Banco do Brasil is regarded as a key development agency, since it traditionally provides loans with interest charges below market rates. The current government has also been requested to delay proceedings to privatize the state bank of Santa Catarina and the energy utility in the state of Goiás.

The state development agency, the National Economic and Social Development Bank (BNDES), will be a key instrument of the incoming PT government, which has challenged the granting of BNDES soft loans to multinational corporations, arguing that state resources should be utilized to strengthen national industry and promote small and medium enterprises.

Relations with the United States

As the ninth-largest economy in the world, Brazil is an important player in international politics, especially in Third World institutions

such as the Non-Aligned Movement. Brazil is the economic and political powerhouse in South America, a region long under US hegemony. During the election campaign, Lula repeatedly argued that Brazil, commensurate with its political and economic weight, needed to play a more assertive and independent role in regional and international affairs. He also called for strengthening the regional trade grouping, Mercosul; forging stronger political and economic links with Southern countries like China, Russia, South Africa and India; and building stronger political and economic ties with the European Union in an effort to counter US dominance in the region.

President Cardoso, commenting on Lula's forthcoming meeting with George Bush in Washington in December, predicted that the tone of the conversation will be one of affirmation, not the theme of "peace and love," used so effectively by Lula during the elections. "There is nothing I can recommend to him, because he knows what he's going to do. They are the interests of Brazil against unilateralism, there is no doubt about it."⁹

One of the first issues that will test this relationship is negotiation over the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), which the Bush administration wants to conclude by 2005. In

⁹ *O Globo*; 11/15/2002

Lula Who?

Tom Murphy

On Oct 27, 2002, 61% of the 90 million Brazilians who turned out to vote chose Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, a gravel-voiced labor leader with a fifth-grade education, to be their next president.

In historical terms, the vote put Lula, as he is widely known, in a class with FDR and Ronald Reagan.

The man Lula enjoys extraordinary personal popularity, even if his leftist Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*) could manage only 91 seats in the 513-member Chamber of Deputies. But who is Lula really?

Born in rural Pernambuco, the second-largest state of Brazil's impoverished Northeast, Lula came to São Paulo with his family at age seven when his father needed work. The family, including the eight children of Aristides and Euridice da Silva, spent 13 days on a flatbed truck in its journey to the Golden South. What they found there were grimy industrial suburbs and low wages.

Lula developed psychic scars along the way. His father, who became a stevedore in the country's main port of Santos, was an alcoholic and womanizer. Despite an already large family, Aristides took up with a mistress in Santos and fathered eight more children, giving Lula a grand total of 15 brothers, sisters, half brothers and half sisters.

Aristides beat both his wives and all his children. He also shamelessly discriminated against his Pernambuco-born family. By the late 1950s, Donna Euridice had left her husband and moved to the industrial suburbs of São Paulo, Brazil's biggest and, at that time, the world's fastest growing city. In 1978, Aristides died of cirrhosis of the liver. His first wife, the future president's mother, died two years later.

Lula has said that he forgave his father just before the latter's death ("He gave me the gift of life") but his heart is clearly with his mother, whom he has called "heroic" and "saintly."

More tragedy came to Lula as a young man. His wife of only one year, Maria de Lourdes, died in 1970 of hepatitis, taking an unborn infant with her. Lula remarried (First Lady-to-be Marisa Leticia) three years later and now has five children.

Young Luiz Inácio (Lula is the Portuguese nick-name for Luiz) managed to complete only five years of primary school, supplemented by technical training. From the 1950s to the 1970s he earned his living as a shoeshine boy, a green

the US vision, the FTAA trade initiative provides protection for the Florida citrus industry, Midwest soybean producers, and US steel producers, all areas in which Brazil is a leading contender. Lula has said that the FTAA, which would stretch from Alaska in the north to Tierra del Fuego in the south, is nothing but "an annexation of Latin America to the United States." He favors the creation of a South American group to negotiate as a bloc the broad parameters of a future FTAA. Argentina and Venezuela, which have strong economic and political reasons for resisting further trade liberalization, are siding with Lula. With strong backing from national industry, he has made it clear that Brazil will not support the FTAA unless the US drops protectionist measures. His response to a question on how he intended to improve relations with the US: "First," Lula pointed out, "we want to strengthen our ties. Secondly, we want to discuss our trade disagreements, and there are many. I think that Brazil negotiates its interests poorly, not only with the United States, but also with the World Trade Organization. So we will be tough and frank, but also loyal."

—
Goldsmith and Karriem are in City and Regional Planning, and Wittman in Development Sociology, at Cornell University. All have lived and worked in Brazil.

grocer and finally an industrial worker and union officer.

He bears some physical scars of his hard climb toward prominence in a rapidly industrializing society. In a 1963 factory accident, he lost his left pinky. In 1980, he spent 31 days in a São Paulo prison for national security violations. (The charges were so evidently trumped up, however, that local judges threw them out at trial.)

In person, Lula is a paradox. His stage presence is commanding, his delivery fiery and often angry. Backstage, he's a first-rate glad-hander. He doesn't mind hobnobbing with ex-leaders of the military regime he once combated and he maintains personal friendships with the cops who served as his jailers 22 years ago.

As president, Lula has pledged himself to become "the nation's master negotiator." No one doubts his personal qualifications for the role. In the early 1970s, one of Lula's many brothers persuaded him to run for a union post. He won and proved a natural at labor organizing. From 1975 to 1980 Lula led Brazil's largest industrial locals, those of the ABC factory belt in São Paulo, in a series of strikes. He at once defied the military regime then in power and launched the nation's modern industrial-relations model, based on "concrete results" rather than Marxist ideology.

Brazil's 1980s democratization paved the way for the PT. Lula served one term in Congress before launching his first presidential bid in 1989. He lost that one to conservative Alagoas Governor Fernando Collor de Mello, then two more elections in the 1990s to outgoing Brazilian President Fernando Henrique Cardoso.

Lula comes to power in a country whose breadth and resources are as staggering as its social inequalities. In absolute terms, an astonishing 54 million Brazilians, roughly one-third of the nation, are officially classed as poor. Nearly half that total, some 23 million, are officially "indigent," the social service term for utterly penniless. Lula will be tested as never before, this time by market forces, political adversaries and even his putative allies.

Still, Lula's greatest asset, perhaps, is that he has personally experienced almost all of the harsh realities shown so blandly in the statistics. This land is his land, all of it, and in almost every sense.

—
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⁸ MST leader Gilmar Mauro, November, 2002.

Ecce Homo

continued from page 4

It is understandable that Pinker prefers to bombard his adversaries from the safety of his own field than engage them "hand-to-hand." Agonists—especially of the scholarly kind—always prefer to compete on their home fields. Still, it might be useful to consider how Pinker might have taken the argument straight to the opposition.

Cultural anthropologist Tim Ingold has been widely cited by skeptics of evolutionary psychology such as anthropologist Terence Turner (e.g., his discussion of the *Darkness at El Dorado* affair in the *Bookpress* last year and in an Anthropological Association of America [AAA] roundtable forum on that subject in 2001.) Indeed, Turner has specifically named Ingold, along with Richard Lewontin and Stephen Jay Gould, as among those "respected authorities" whose "reasonable arguments...should be engaged, and if possible, refuted after taking due account of their strengths."⁸ Though they aren't cited in *The Blank Slate*, Ingold's comments may be taken as fairly representative of what Pinker is arguing against. (I have discussed Lewontin's work previously in the *Bookpress*, October, 1997; *contra* Turner, criticism of Gould's ideas have been nearly as voluminous as his writings, and are not hard to find.)

In a short essay in the journal *Anthropology Today*, Ingold shares that he is "viscerally angry" at "selectionists" (including "sociobiologists, evolutionary psychologists, gene-culture coevolutionists and memeticists") who attempt to account for cultural behavior without due reference to traditional sociocultural approaches:

Indeed, I have often been taken aback by the strength of my own reaction...Part of the problem, perhaps, lies in the sheer hubris with which selectionists advance their claims...the naivety, ethnocentricity and sheer prejudice of their understanding, at times, beggar belief, but far worse is their refusal to countenance the legitimacy of approaches other than their own. Surely the one thing we should not tolerate, in scholarly debate, is intolerance.⁹

According to Ingold, these nameless selectionists (he makes no reference to anyone in particular) have succeeded in explaining exactly *nothing* of interest to anthropologists. One reason for this is that evolutionary psychology is stuck in yesterday's understandings of what's interesting about culture: "...for me, reading their work is like stepping into a time machine, and going back to the days, long before I was born, when issues of culture traits and their diffusion were all the rage," he declares. Modern sociocultural anthropology apparently sees culture not as an agglomeration of static representations, rules, conventions or practices, but as a *process* (italics in original) of "unfolding relations" among people and between people and their environments:

...what people do is embedded in life-long histories of engagement, as whole beings, with their surroundings, and is not the mechanical output of interaction between pre-replicated instructions (whether genetic or cultural) and prespecified environmental conditions, as selectionists would have us believe.

Indeed, selectionism is "bad science," engaged in "shoddy thinking," because "neo-Darwinists" merely redescribe cultural phenomena in their own particular terms (in terms of gene or meme-selection, one pre-

sumes) and then claim they have explained them. Selectionists legitimate their approach with promises that their hypotheses may be tested, but in fact "testing hypotheses" is merely a cover for using natural selection as a logical device to turn description into explanation." (It is ambiguous whether Ingold means the adjective "logical" in an evaluative sense here, or just as a synonym for "rhetorical".)

Sociocultural anthropologists have been studying and theorizing about cultural behavior for generations, yet selectionists never avail themselves of this literature. Instead, the latter "flaunt their ignorance" as a badge of "intellectual virility." Ingold grants "perhaps we should not get too hot under the collar about this," but then proceeds to fulminate against "[the selectionists'] antediluvian notions of culture and their strip-cartoon sociology in the name of a brave new science."

"Social and cultural anthropologists, I believe, cannot afford to maintain a stance of studied indifference to selectionism," he rounds up "...What is required is a policy not of *appeasement* but of vigorous, principled and public opposition" (emphasis added).

To so-called "selectionists," Ingold's blast seems like a transmission from a bizarre alternate universe, like that twin Earth beloved of science fiction writers that is forever on the far side of the sun and where everything is exactly reversed. Considering the socioculturalists' sanctimonious hostility first to sociobiology, now to evolutionary psychology, Ingold's statement that "surely the one thing we should not tolerate, in scholarly debate, is intolerance" has an ironic ring. For it is the "selectionists" who have been persistently vilified in this debate, typically as contemporary Nazis (note Ingold's choice of the word "appeasement"). As Pinker recounts, it has been people like E.O. Wilson whose public lectures have been shouted down, classrooms invaded by placard and bull-horn toting mobs, persons physically abused, reputations stained by charges of promoting hatred, slavery, sexism, racism, and murder. The University of New Mexico's Kim Hill, who has done much important ethnographic work among the Ache of Paraguay, has written of his own experience as an anthropology graduate student interested in biological influences on social relations:

When I entered graduate school I was forced to transfer out of cultural anthropology and then to another university because faculty and students at my first institution were so openly hostile to sociobiological research. When I applied for research grants I was told by reviewers that my research was immoral, unethical and dangerous. I have been called a Nazi, a fascist, a sexist, a racist, and a mindless reductionist...For years I heard graduate students working with me complain that others in the department (including faculty) openly lectured that research such as mine should not be allowed.¹⁰

Be that as it may, it is reasonable to demand scrutiny of Ingold's particular criticisms. For instance, it may well be granted that some selectionists (his word, but I'll use it for convenience) are not conversant with the latest modes of sociocultural discourse, and are insufficiently versed in latter day "processual" understandings of culture. But what does this mean? If we take *language* as a key example of cultural behavior as even Ingold defines it, then nothing in his argument obviates the relevance of evolutionary biology to culture. Cognitive scientists have illuminated much in recent decades about

how the brain acquires and processes language. Some of what psychologists and linguists have learned bears directly on why we see certain manifestations of language in the ethnographic record, and not others. Neuroscientists have outlined the variations and commonalities, on the individual and group levels, of language function. Aspects of language have been observed or taught to non-human animals, helping to define exactly what is different about the universal human facility. By modeling the exchange of information in evolving virtual communities, quantitative studies of communication have thrown light on why language takes the form it does, with meaningful morphemes built out of meaningless phonemes. (Indeed, our understanding of social cooperation in general has been fostered by such "selectionist" simulations, with obvious implications for anthropology.)¹¹ Twin studies and case histories of individuals and families with genetic abnormalities have suggested the heritability of certain cognitive traits necessary for language (if not for language itself). Like other aspects of culture, language amounts to contextual knowledge in dynamic context, as Ingold insists. Yet empirical approaches that don't presume the wholly "superorganic" nature of culture have already contributed significantly to our knowledge of language. Those empirical approaches, in turn, make little sense beyond the context of the Darwinian synthesis.

Ingold makes much of culture as a continually changing process. We might easily accept this, but still ask what propels the process, what substrate the process works upon, and what the wider consequences of the process might be. Otherwise, his discourse seems to boil down to special pleading, along the lines of insisting that human social behavior merits special status because it's so awfully complicated. There are rumors that people in other sciences work on complicated problems, too.

Ingold argues that selectionism is "bad science" because it confounds description with explanation. In other words, he asserts that claiming a trait exists because of selection is really no explanation at all, presumably because that doesn't explain the immediate motive for the selection. There are at least three possible reasons to dismiss this charge. First, Ingold presents a strawman version of evolutionary psychology that does not accurately reflect the state of the art, where in fact the kind of "just so stories" decried by Gould and Lewontin are commonly greeted with skepticism and even ridicule in the field. Adaptive stories need to do far more than simply evoke selection to cut the mustard. Second, Ingold's own field is vulnerable to a similar charge: taking the sociocultural level as unique and autonomous *sui generis* is all too often the endpoint of discussion of cultural difference among sociocultural anthropologists. As Brown has noted, "...any outrageously different custom or belief can get the same explanation: it's because of their culture."¹² Listening to culturologists talk about their subject, there seems to be a lot of what Clifford Geertz calls "thick description," but not much interest in explanation.

Third, what Ingold calls "mystification" among selectionists may actually reflect his own confusion about levels of analysis. A principle can indeed be an explanation and a description at the same time. For example, at the level of classical mechanics, Newton's laws of gravitation are adequate as explanations for how objects move. Knowledge of physical laws at the relativistic and quantum levels, however, reveals classical mechanics to be valid only as a description of what happens under very limited circumstances. The

ultimate physical explanation shifts to a deeper level as physicists learn more about how the universe works. Yet few seriously dispute the enduring explanatory power of Newton's laws, or charge physicists with "shoddy thinking." What Ingold portrays as confusion really reflects a fundamental *duality* as selectionists grapple with description/explanation at different levels of analysis.

One can't help noticing that Ingold's essay is full of the standard scare-words: "hard-wired," "programmable," "mechanical output." The fear, as usual, is that behavioral scientists want to objectify human social relations as output of some dumb, deterministic machine. Such misapprehensions get perpetuated when, as before the AAA roundtable on the Tierney affair, we hear sociocultural anthropologists make declarations like:

[Selectionism's] ideological character is underlined by its reduction of intrinsically social phenomena to expressions of intrinsically individual properties. It is of course for such reasons that most scientists [sic] (including anthropological social scientists) view sociobiology as a kind of ideology, not as "science."¹³

Statements like this attribute a form of simpleminded determinism to selectionists that no serious authorities, even the arch-reductionist Richard (Selfish Gene) Dawkins, subscribe to. Testing whether genes or physical developmental mechanisms (or, for that matter, culture) influence social behavior is not the same as asserting the full complexity of the latter may be completely explained by such factors. It is worth noting, moreover, that the statement denies the status of science to "sociobiology" here not because of any particular empirical shortcomings, but because it gives truck to a taboo idea—that explanation of social phenomena may be contingent on properties of individuals. In fact, this would seem to be a matter for research to resolve.

Interestingly, even simple deterministic systems aren't thought of the way they used to be. As the science of non-linear dynamics (or "chaos" theory) has shown over the last thirty years, even quite straightforward systems like dripping faucets, pendulums, and spinning tops can show quite complex shifts of behavior based on minute differences in starting conditions. This is even more the case with complex systems like weather or populations of organisms. It is probable, then, that not even the most complete model of the genetic, economic, social and environmental determinants of cultural development would ever yield the kind of predictable "mechanical output" Ingold dreads. Yet this does not mean those factors—including biology—are not important influences on social behavior. In this publication at least, Ingold seems unaware of such developments.

In short, though this particular essay by Ingold has been cited for its "reasonable arguments" against selectionism, it seems more of a forlorn bleat. It shows no particular familiarity with what it criticizes, adduces no examples, and amounts, it seems, to an impassioned assertion that traditional sociocultural anthropology is not irrelevant. On the latter point, I happen to agree with him.

Pinker declines this opportunity to confront voices like Ingold's. A more thoughtful book might have circulated farther beyond the choir screen of the converted. Still, Pinker brings a lot of relevant material together here, and his overall message is the correct one: it is long past due to cash in Kroeber's promissory note.

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⁸ Turner, T. (2001) [www.publicanthropology.org/Journals/Engaging-Ideas/RT\(YANO\)/Turner2.htm](http://www.publicanthropology.org/Journals/Engaging-Ideas/RT(YANO)/Turner2.htm)

⁹ Ingold, T. (2000) "The Poverty of Selectionism," *Anthropology Today*, 16, 3, 1-2

¹⁰ Hill, K. (2001) [www.publicanthropology.org/Journals/Engaging-Ideas/RT\(YANO\)/Hill3.htm](http://www.publicanthropology.org/Journals/Engaging-Ideas/RT(YANO)/Hill3.htm)

¹¹ Frank, S.A. (1998) *Foundations of Social Evolution* (Princeton U. Press, New Jersey)

¹² Brown, p. 88

¹³ Turner, T. (2001)

The Vanishing Democrat

continued from page 2

vation, better fuel technologies, stricter fuel economy standards, and alternative energy sources could have been criticized. It could also be pointed out that the administration has recruited strident ideologues from the Reagan era whose ideas dominate American foreign and regulatory policy but are out of step with public (as well as most expert) opinion.

Yet the Democratic Party leaders in the House and Senate chose to cooperate with the president's war strategy despite growing public anxiety. Earlier this year they joined Tom DeLay in a resolution protesting the administration's mild pressure on Ariel Sharon to enter a peace process with the Palestinians. They also decided not to push hard for corporate reform, following the lead of Connecticut Senators Lieberman and Dodd and opposing the expensing of stock options. Remarkably, on this issue the Democrats lag behind even the *Wall Street Journal* and other finance industry spokesmen concerned about investor confidence.

On the Republicans' tax proposals, they advocated only the possible postponement of some tax cuts. Terry McAuliffe, the chairman of the Democratic National Committee, whose fund-raising skills are his sole *raison d'être*, spends most of his time (when not pressing the rich for money) trying to engineer loopholes in the new McCain-Feingold campaign finance act. All the money he

hopes to continue raising will come with no strings attached, of course.

Virtually the only new social policy initiative of the Democrats has been a very expensive prescription drug benefit for the elderly with no suggestion of how to pay for it. While some Democrats worry about the effect of the new Republican bankruptcy bill on low-income people, and about its failure to close big loopholes favoring the rich, Senators Daschle and Schumer are happy to ignore those aspects if only the bill carries a section increasing financial sanctions for protesters at abortion clinics. There is no message here, no coherent program. This is a minority party that has lost its way.

The few Senators who bucked the conservative tide—like Wellstone, with his up-front, incorruptible populism and principled opposition to an open-ended presidential war resolution—were winning. In fact, by my count, only one of the 126 Democrats who voted no on the Iraq war resolution was defeated in the general election (a few lost primaries on personal issues to other Democrats, who went on to win), and the defeated Democrat had been redistricted into a confrontation with a popular GOP incumbent. Nor were the six Republicans who opposed the resolution punished for it. Only Constance Morella of Maryland lost—to a liberal Democrat.

Defense of Congress's constitutional right to declare war, coupled with demands that the U.S. act *only* in accord with the UN, and

that the unfinished war on terrorism take precedence over a new and expensive war with Iraq could well have improved the Democrats' showing, particularly if combined with an economic populism that pointed out the success of Clinton-era economic policies and the obvious failure of deregulation and tax cuts to strengthen the economy.

There was a good argument to be made for maintaining hard-won civil service protections for workers in Homeland Security, in order to give them the ability to question and report security lapses... but the Democrats did not make it. The Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 gave the president and his political appointees powers that should be sufficient to discipline higher-level civil servants who don't perform their duties satisfactorily. Why was more control needed, unless to impose a political agenda that has little to do with fighting terrorism? There is a parallel in the administration's recent creation of a new, highly politicized intelligence operation in the Pentagon, run by one of the more extreme hawks in the Department. Its mission is to produce "intelligence" that supports the administration's war agenda, to counter the sometimes skeptical CIA. Is this what we want for Homeland Security?

The consequences of the narrow Republican victory on November 5 were predictable and are now unfolding: more tax cuts, including abolition of the estate tax that the GOP has successfully framed as a "death tax," but which in fact is paid only by a tiny

percentage of extremely wealthy taxpayers; more war; higher deficits (and concomitant interest rate hikes); less spending on domestic social and infrastructure needs; more very conservative judges; and a significant step away from a professional civil service, not just in the new Homeland Security Department, but through extensive privatization of traditional government responsibilities like warfare, prisons, schools, and countless other security, research and service functions. Whether the dramatic new privatization effort announced last month will save money is questionable. That it will diminish institutional memory and public scrutiny of publicly-funded programs, even coercive policing activities, is certain.

The bottom line in winning elections is that party matters. Elections have policy consequences that should be discussed in the campaign in a way that informs and calls attention to distinctions and to past experience. Message, unity, and strategy matter. A "me-too" campaign doesn't mobilize voters. President Bush and his party understood that, and the Democrats didn't.

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Portrait of the Young Oxonian

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break the taboo against criticizing wrong-headed book reviewers. In a recent issue of the *Washington Post Book World* (Aug. 11, 2002), Edwin M. Yoder Jr. faulted West for not finding religion at Oxford:

It is the author's antipathy to the spiritual aspect of Oxford... that may explain the book's deficiency.... Oxford memoirists who get their names engraved on the championship cup usually have had one thing in common: Oxford was for them a transformative spiritual experience. What unites Gibbon, John Henry Newman, Matthew Arnold and, in our day, John Betjeman and Evelyn Waugh in the immortals' circle is a definitive grappling with Oxford's religious legacy.... Even Waugh's caustic satirical eye grew a bit misty by the time he wrote about his own conversion in *Brideshead Revisited*.... One may feel, as West apparently does not, that the palimpsest of vanished spirituality is a negligible anachronism in a secular Oxford.... Yet that elusive spirituality remains central to Oxford's style and identity and hence a dangerous force for a memoirist to minimize.

Whose experience are we talking about here? While some writers may find religion a source of inspiration and welcome the discipline of belief, this does not work for all. Yoder, who is, appropriately enough, an honorary fellow of Jesus College, falls into the kind of solemn cant that Nabokov—another Oxbridge memoirist—mocks at the beginning of *Speak, Memory*:

First and last things often tend to have an adolescent note—unless, possibly, they are directed by some venerable and rigid religion.... Imagination, the supreme delight of the immortal and the immature, should be limited. In order to enjoy life, we should not enjoy it too much.... I rebel against this state of affairs.

Yoder would seem to want it his way, admonishing the young exegete to undergo a religious crisis as part of the requirements for the degree. After all, Yoder calls spirituality a "dangerous force." His five exemplars are meant to stand in for every Oxonian for all time.

Oxford's High Street makes for an unsatisfactory road to Damascus, and few are tormented along its cobbles by the hound of heaven. Not everyone genuflects in the direction of the cross. There's more to Oxford's spell than its links to faith. Yoder ignores what West was about in his university years, which was trying out his wings in preparation for future flights of the imagination, swotting up as much about literature as he could from books, tutors and friends. Yoder seems to prefer Pegasus with clipped wings, a heavy pilgrim's saddle across his back, and a Canterbury bit between his teeth. This kind of misreading points out the danger of coming to a book with the blinkered expectations born of nostalgia. Yoder wants to find the comfort of his own footprints; he wants *Oxford Days* to replicate the scene of his own spiritual awakening instead of the engaging description of West's artistic awakening.

There seems to be a disconnect here. If we return to just two of the famous Oxford writers that Yoder mentions in his review, how do we remember Gibbon and Waugh, by their conversions or by their books? In Gibbon's case, by an undergraduate enthusiasm for the Church of Rome or by *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*? In Waugh's case, by his Catholicism or by *A Handful of Dust*, *Put Out More Flags*, *Helena*, and *Decline and Fall*?

Oxford Days is a worthy addition to the growing body of West's autobiographical books. Beginning with the early memoir of his native village, *I, Said the Sparrow*, West uses the same powerful imagination and intellect that drives his fiction to examine the themes of his life. For readers who have yet to experience his other memoirs, here is a list: *I, Said the Sparrow*; *Words for a Deaf Daughter*; *Out of My Depths: A Swimmer in the Universe*; *A Stroke of Genius*; *My Mother's Music*; and *Master Class*. Let's hope that a wise publisher will soon bring all these books together in one volume.

Chris Furst is assistant editor of *Cornell Alumni Magazine*.

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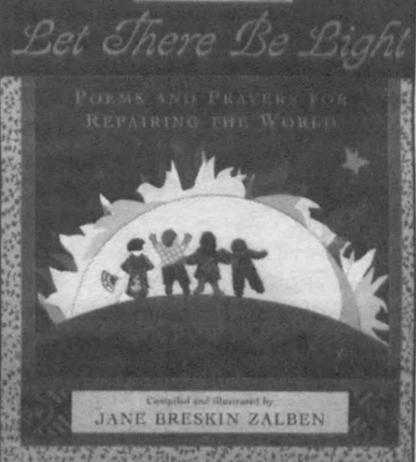
Gregory Frost reading from his upcoming novel, *Fitcher's Brides*. Jan. 26, 2:30pm
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The Cityscape of Memory

David N. DeVries

The apparition of these faces in the crowd; petals on a wet, black bough.

—Ezra Pound, "In a Station of the Metro"

During a recent five-day visit to New York, I walked across the Brooklyn Bridge, now adorned with historic markers attesting to its significance in the development of American engineering and panels describing both its own construction and the layout of lower Manhattan that is so clearly visible from its beautiful wooden walkway. I passed from the crowded hurry of Manhattan and Montague Street through the increasingly sedate blocks of Cobble Hill and Carroll Gardens, sedate at least on Clinton Street where, eventually, the only sounds were the occasional car, the ubiquitous children, the birds. This is a route I took almost daily (weather permitting) for a number of years in the late 1980s and early '90s when my wife and I lived in Carroll Gardens and we both worked at NYU, but it was the first time I've taken this walk since leaving New York City in the summer of 1992.

There continue to be visible reminders of what happened over a year ago—flags continue to hang in windows and storefronts, signs attesting to the unbroken spirit of America are still posted throughout the neighborhoods through which I walked. There is an unobtrusive and yet profoundly moving memorial garden in an open lot beneath the Promenade right on the banks of the river. The garden consists of two large rectangles of marigolds in the shape of the gone Towers and if you stand in just the right spot on the Promenade you sight along those marigolds to the gap in the horizon toward which those flowers gesture both figuratively and literally. There are still posters hung along the railings of the Promenade, gifts and avowals of solidarity and support from across the country. And all of the walkers who were temporary visitors, like me, looked continually back toward the holes in the sky, some pointing to where they thought the Towers had been, some commenting on what the sight must have been like on the day, some wondering about the dust and smoke plumes—all of us entering our visions of the skyline in front of us through our memories of the images that continue to stir and vex our dreams.

But as I walked away from the Promenade, the grip of the catastrophe on my imagination loosened and I found myself drifting back a decade, trying to conjure up specific images from the thousands of steps I walked down these streets in the last century. Some stores have survived intact, many have not. Many buildings remain as I remember them. The small community parks in Cobble Hill and Carroll Gardens are still warrens of chaotic children. The churches have held on.

Our last apartment was on First Place, a door down from Clinton Street. We were on the second floor of a brownstone, that, like all the brownstones in Carroll Gardens, is set back twenty feet or so from the street, allowing for the front gardens from which the neighborhood derives its name. As I rounded the corner of First Place and looked toward 46, our building, I knew that something was different. There was the façade with an air-conditioner in the same window in which we had mounted ours. There were the brass light fixtures on either side of the front door. But there were two things that stood out as markedly different. First, was a sign, Carroll Gardens Psychotherapy, hanging near the front gate. And second

was the openness of the view, the gap in the air through which I was seeing the building as I had never seen it in the years we lived there. It took me a moment to work through to what had happened. It was when I came to the gate and looked at the garden in the front that I realized that there had never been a garden there when we lived in the building because the front plot was completely taken up by a magnificent old maple tree. Rushing back came the hours I spent gazing into that tree: at the leaves, the birds for whom the tree constituted an entire world, the rain glazing the leaves, the limbs, the bole. Snow occasionally plopping on the ground and the lower reaches of the tree off the upper branches. Squirrels zipping around the trunk, up and down, leaping from branch to branch. The endlessly shifting play of shadows cast by the street light's glow through the tree's seasonal changes. The view of the church across the street through the tree. And most compelling for me, the sound of the wind in that tree in the dead of night when there were no other sounds but the massive encompassing relentless growl of the city.

Gone. Another gap in the sky where any number of lives had lived. My walk, I realized, was framed by these two incommensurate losses. Though the tree, of course, was much older than the World Trade Center, its loss is as nothing in the face of the mind-numbing destruction of those buildings in lower Manhattan. Still, both registered their vanishing on the city around them. The missing tree's space on the ground has been taken by a garden and a sign. And yet the city around the gaps on the sky has closed back, like a scab in some ways.

But on a sunny day at noon, the streets around Chambers Street are filled with business people out looking for lunch, chattering on their cell phones, laughing, arguing, flinging their arms in their animated conversations, hurrying, jockeying for position in the broken field running of maneuvering city sidewalks. Tables and stands of hot dogs, pretzels, fresh fruit, bottled water, shish kebob beef, ice cream, bagels, newspapers, contraband consumer goods—watches, hats, sunglasses, cds, books, a table of power tools, tables of religious pamphlets, tables with jugs for contributions to help the homeless, and the tables of pictures of what had been—the Towers brilliant against the sky, the firefighters raising the flag atop the smoking heap that had been the Towers—all for sale to the tourists who were themselves taking photos of the empty site, the skyline like a toothless mouth, the fence around St. Paul's Church that remains covered with the messages that began to appear on 9/11. All this activity, all these signs that the city is absorbing the cataclysm. All of these "objects than which none else is more lasting!"

Whitman enters here because I had sought out his voice prior to my walk across the bridge that was built at the end of his life. Two days before I had ventured even farther back into memory's haunted country with a trip on the Staten Island ferry. I had not been on the ferry since 1984. I was drawn to Staten Island on business and made the return trip later in the afternoon when the sun had burned off the fog and warmed the air considerably and the harbor was resplendently alive before us—the "mast-hemm'd Manhattan" that Whitman saw now hemmed by considerably taller superstructures of massive tankers slumbering in the lower bay and the skittering and scampering legions of ferries and tugs and harbor patrol and power boats and occasionally single- and double- and even triple-masted schooners and yachts of the well-to-do.

As soon as I reached Manhattan I sought out the nearest bookstore and found a copy of Whitman—a new edition by Gary Schmidgall that restores the poems to their original inspirational moments (Schmidgall opts always for the earliest forms of the poems before Whitman's increasingly diluting revisions overwhelm them). Reading

And you that shall cross from shore
to shore years hence, are more
to me, and more in my meditations,
than you might suppose,

sent a thrill through me that was and remains both palpable and inexpressible.

Although Manhattan as it lives around me now is beyond anything Whitman could have imagined in terms of its actual material texture, still his uncanny voice echoes throughout these streets:

It avails not, neither time or place—
distance avails not, I am with you, you
men and women of a generation,
Or ever so many generations hence,
I project myself, also I return—I am
with you, and know how it is.

Whitman's "terrible question of appearances" came to mind as I walked through our old neighborhood where much has changed and much remains the same. Still the old, retired men stand at their gates, leaning on the cross bars, watching the traffic flow by. Still the young professionals walk purposefully from the subways, from their offices, from their cars, toward their tastefully furnished apartments on the second and third and fourth floors of the buildings kept by those old men at the fence, men who grew up and lived all their lives on these blocks, who have seen generations of young professionals come and go while they tend the rose bushes growing up around the statues of Mary and the child. Still the shopkeepers stand in their doorways, or sweep their sidewalks chatting all the time to whoever stops to listen. Still the teenagers (who were infants, some of them, when last I walked these streets) hustle up and down the block on their bicycles or after their footballs and basketballs.

All this is the same and yet it isn't. The men now old were younger, still working, having no time then to lean against their fences when I was the young professional walking purposefully toward our tastefully furnished apartment. The old men I nodded to then are now dead mostly. Some of the teenagers I used to watch and envy in their grace and agility in their pickup games of street hockey or stick ball grew to become stock brokers and day traders and office

workers and probably some of them were in the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, which is why, a year and a month later, there is black crepe draping the rose arbors over the Virgin in some of the gardens in the old neighborhood. So much is familiar walking these streets to which I used to belong. And yet all that is left of my participation in the life of these streets is my memory—no one here now remembers me or Claire or the birth of our first child in the hospital nearby. We are a blank to them, an emptiness more complete even than the emptiness of the air where a tree once stood or a building.

Indeed, the emptiness of the sky where once there was a tree, and once there were the looming monoliths and the thousands of lives that ended with the coming of that emptiness, that emptiness perhaps betokens, as Whitman feared, that all the appearances before us—the solid and well-built and sculptured muscle and flesh and steel and glass and concrete—that all "might prove (as of course they would) naught." And yet the emptiness is paradoxically full with the endless cacophony of the city, now at this hour with dozens of automobiles outside the windows here ten stories below bellowing and squawking and zooming, skidding, darting; and farther afield the lights of the towers around Union Square just visible from the south-facing window and the Empire State from the north...Do it yourself, construct your own catalogue, walk your own versions of Whitman's streets. You'll see how this city, as any city does, survives despite the fact of its being merely the shifting appearances flickering and glistening across the emptiness, like what Whitman saw as he leaned over the railing of the ferry: "the fine centrifugal spokes of light around the shape / of my head in the sunlit water." That, of course, is what we see in the glitter of Manhattan: we see our image lost in the expanding reflections of ten thousand thousand lights on a small slice of land in an elbow of water tucked up in the folds of earth where what we call America meets the world. It is what I saw in the long blocks of brownstones built atop the broken land of glacial moraine, the till of refuse pushed south by a sheet of melted ice now a memory only in the momentary contour of the landscape still discernible for its wink of a geologic eye beneath the cityscape rising and falling and rising and falling.

—
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