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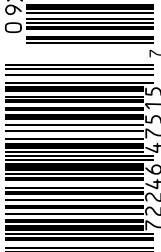
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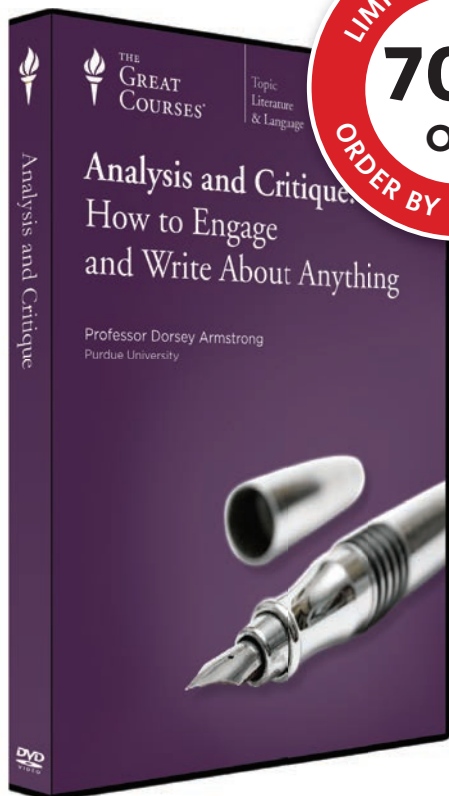


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## Unthinkable, Predictable Disasters

The disintegration of the euro, like America's entitlement bomb, is both unfathomable and inevitable.

YOU'D HAVE TO BE willfully ignorant to be surprised by Greece's potential exit from the common European currency. First the famously misgoverned country failed to meet the initial 1999 fiscal and monetary targets for euro integration: a budget deficit below 3 percent of gross domestic product, a national debt below 60 percent of GDP, inflation within 1.5 percentage points of the lowest euro-member country's rate, and a stable currency for more than two years. Then Greek officials were forced to admit in 2004 that they had lied when they said they *did* meet those targets.

In late 2009 the newly elected Greek government let slip that its annual budget deficit was coming in at double its predecessor's previous forecast, which was already double what was technically allowed. The news was hardly startling, given that in its first eight years within the euro zone (2001–08) Greece averaged annual budget deficits equal to 5 percent of GDP, compared to the other members' average of 2 percent; gorged itself on an extravagant 2004 Summer Olympics; and capped off the party in October 2009 by voting in the Panhellenic Socialist Movement party, which promised to spend even more money.

This reckless behavior was in keeping with Greece's checkered modern history, which includes being the first country to be booted out of the euro's main predecessor, the Latin Monetary Union, back in 1908 and suffering through at least four significant devaluations since World War II. That history was why the single biggest question about the common European currency as it was being established in the late 1990s was whether messy, balkanized Greece could coexist monetarily with disciplined, inflation-phobic Germany. Since October 2009 we have had a conclusive answer.

**Yet European Union officials still refused to** contemplate the inevitable. In January 2010, Joaquin Almunia, the E.U.'s economic and monetary affairs commissioner, insisted that "we have no Plan B" for Greece. Shockingly, some eurocrats were still expressing that attitude as recently as late May of this year. Keeping Greece in the euro zone, European Central Bank (ECB) executive board member Jorg Asmussen said at a conference in Germany, is "Plan A; that's what we're working on." What about the elusive Plan B? "There's already been criticism that there is none," Asmussen acknowledged. "But as soon as you start talking about 'Plan B' or 'Plan C,' then 'Plan A' is automatically thrown out of the window."

You can't plan for disasters by refusing to talk about them. Yet that was the European approach to monetary disintegration until May 6, 2012, when the SYRIZA party won second place in Greece's parliamentary elections after promising to rip up all post-2009 bailout agreements with Brussels. Only at that late date did you begin to hear the first real official war gaming of what a euro-less Greece, and a Greece-less euro, may look like. Unsurprisingly, the last-ditch reality check looked grim.

The National Bank of Greece waited until late May to warn Greeks that exiting the euro would result in a 22 percent reduction in GDP, 30 percent unemployment, 34 percent inflation, a 55 percent loss of income, and a 65 percent devaluation of the new currency. ECB President Mario Draghi, meanwhile, informed the European Parliament on May 31 that the common currency had become "unsustainable unless further steps are undertaken."

**We should not feel too smug as we watch this** fiasco unfold on the other side of the Atlantic.

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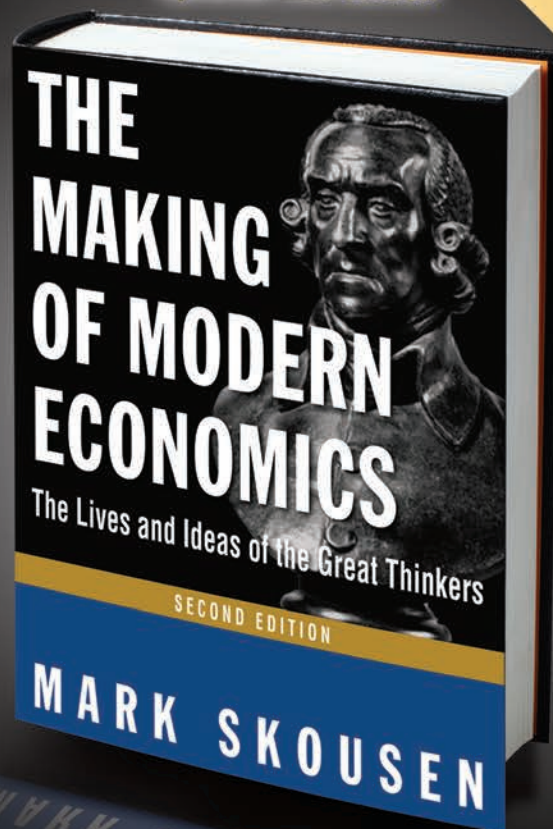
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Americans display similar habits of mind in the way they talk about, and mostly avoid talking about, our own utterly predictable yet practically unfathomable fiscal maladies. On page 24, **reason online** Editor in Chief Nick Gillespie and **reason** Contributing Editor Veronique de Rugy lay out in damning detail what almost every policy thinker knows but almost no politician dares acknowledge: Social Security and Medicare are bankrupting the country and jeopardizing our ability to provide a social safety net. The numbers are daunting: In 1940, Gillespie and De Rugy note, there were 159 workers for each beneficiary in Social Security's pay-as-you-go system; today there are fewer than three. In 2011 Social Security and Medicare accounted for 37 percent of all federal outlays; that share is projected to hit 44 percent in 2020 and 50 percent by 2030.

**If you are not serious about confronting** the time bomb of automatic entitlement payments going out to every retiring baby boomer, you are not serious about public policy. Regrettably, though predictably, the two major-party presidential nominees are not serious about this issue. Democrat Barack Obama claimed in May (falsely) that Republican Mitt Romney would cut individual Social

Security payouts by 40 percent. Romney, meanwhile, has attacked Obama all campaign season for cutting Medicare, and in May he pledged to keep the country's grossly excessive level of military spending at 4 percent of GDP indefinitely. This is how we are debating a debt crisis that is every bit as inevitable as the Greek withdrawal from the euro.

Washington does not even have the excuse of trying to avoid a bank run, which is surely contributing to European bankers' reticence to discuss disaster planning. Instead, American lawmakers have mostly **You can't plan for disasters by refusing to talk about them. Yet that was the European approach to monetary disintegration until May.**

concluded that confronting our demographic demons is a one-way ticket out of power.

But that's not the only reason the inevitable feels so unthinkable. Some of it, I suspect, is the same reason that Southern Californians keep building houses in the fire- and mudslide-prone foothills, that New Orleans was woefully underprepared for Hurricane Katrina (for more on that, read Tate Watkins' "After the Storm," page 36), and that even the most skeptical investors keep betting on ever-inflating bubbles: We lack the imaginative scope to comprehend the potential devastation, and life is more fun when you believe in the fantasy.

**This psychological tendency has** produced a damaging political truism: If you promise voters free goodies and no consequences, you win; if you bum people out by say-

ing the party's over, you lose. This helps explain why, as Veronique de Rugy points out in her column on the "Student Loan Scam" (page 20), both major-party presidential candidates support subsidizing federal student loans at below-market rates. For similar reasons, President Barack Obama's cut in employee-side payroll tax contributions, which has made Social Security even more insolvent, retained a bipartisan support even after a Tea Party-influenced Republican majority took over the House of Representatives in 2010.

We don't know which brave political souls—outside of libertarian stalwarts such as Rep. Ron Paul (R-Texas) and Libertarian Party nominee Gary Johnson, both discussed in comic artist Peter Bagge's reportage "Shenanigans!" on page 46—will dare utter the truth about the punishing costs of guaranteeing massive payouts based on birth certificates. But in a sense, that doesn't matter. America will soon face what Europe finally began to confront in May: a reality so brutal that all the usual incentives for kicking the can down the road no longer apply. When that day of reckoning arrives, the best that we can hope for is that enough people will have prepared for it by mapping out how we can convert a disorderly retreat into a sensible withdrawal. ■

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*Editor in Chief Matt Welch (matt.welch@reason.com) is co-author, with Nick Gillespie, of *The Declaration of Independents: How Libertarian Politics Can Fix What's Wrong with America* (PublicAffairs).*

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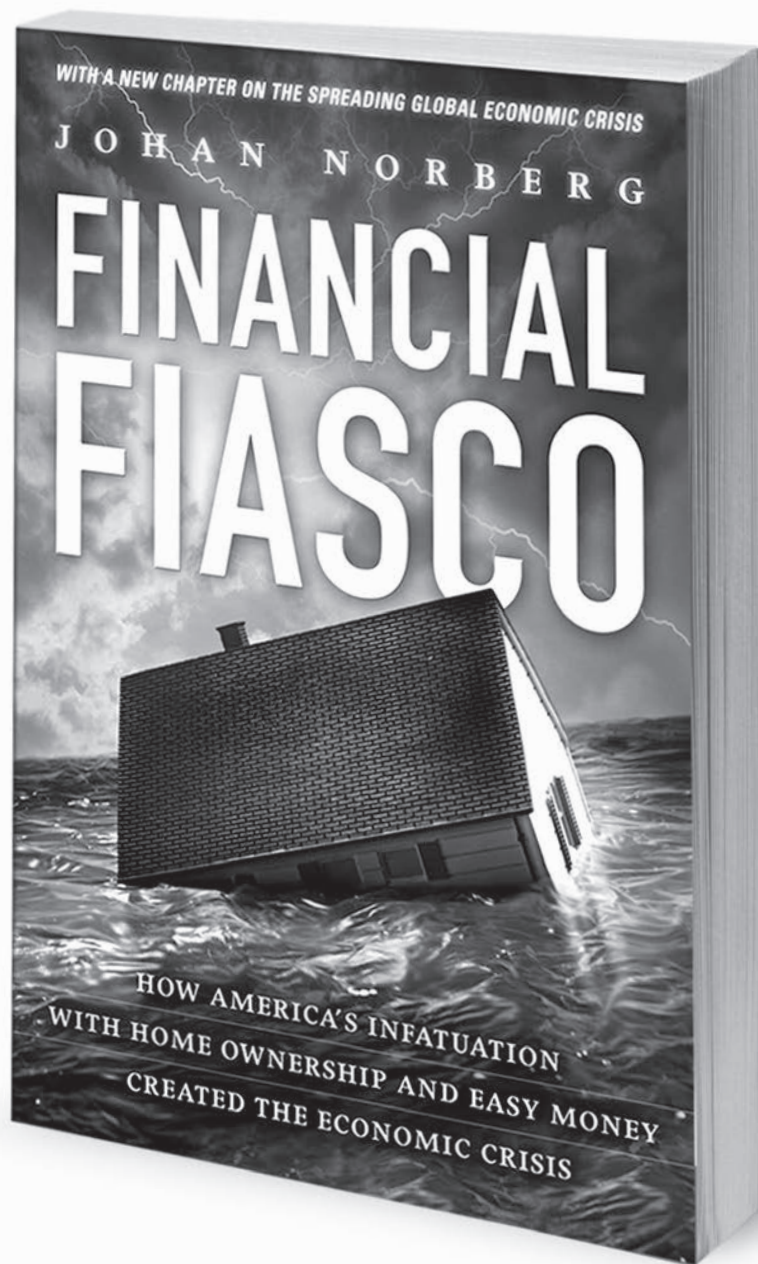
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Ed Krayewski

In “Latter-Day Acceptance” (page 50), Senior Editor **JESSE WALKER** looks at America’s increasing tolerance of Mormonism. Once considered dangerous and bizarre, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is now the spiritual home of the presumptive Republican candidate for president. Walker, 41, coordinates **reason’s** book coverage and is working on a book-length history of American political paranoia for HarperCollins. In his book, he chronicles conspiracy theories both silly (are manholes really designed to kidnap pedestrians?) and serious: “The Senate’s post-Watergate report on the CIA, the FBI, and other Executive Branch agencies,” says Walker, “is full of demonstrably true stories about conspiracies.” Walker, a graduate of the University of Michigan, lives in Baltimore.

**J.D. TUCCILLE** is managing editor of 24/7, **reason online’s** news aggregation project, which will be launched this summer. Tuccille, 46, lives in rural Arizona and was born in New York City. Libertarianism “came naturally,” he says, since there were issues of **reason** lying around the house growing up and he had freewheeling family history such as a “great-grandfather [who] owned a high-profile speakeasy in the Bronx that was said to be the then-police commissioner’s watering hole of choice.” Tuccille has a B.A. in economics from Clark University. Some previous jobs include stints at *The New York Daily News’s* website and Freemarket.net. He’s also the author of the 2011 comic novel *High Desert Barbecue* (CreateShip).

Associate Editor **ED KRAYEWSKI** previously worked as an associate producer for *Freedom-Watch* with Andrew Napolitano on Fox Business Network. Krayewski, 27, has an M.S. in journalism from Columbia University and a B.S. and an M.A. in international relations from Seton Hall University. He currently resides in Newark, New Jersey, where he was born. Before working in cable news, Krayewski taught seventh grade social studies and language arts. Krayewski will be working on **reason online’s** 24/7 news aggregation project. He is also adapting his father’s novel, *Skyliner*, which Krayewski says he “previously translated into English, into comic book form, with my father doing the art.”





### Born This Way?

While Jonathan Haidt's research is interesting, he missed the core of the problem ("Born This Way?" May). "The most basic of all ideological questions" is not "should we preserve the present order or change it?" Rather it is: How much force will we initiate to shape government, society, and the world to fit our own personal wills?

Haidt gets close to this issue when he observes, "Morality binds us into ideological teams that fight each other as though the fate of the world depended on our side winning each battle." More important, the fate of every individual can be seriously altered by these battles. Government achieves essentially unfettered power to initiate force, injuring or destroying some to benefit others. It's the natural course of democracy, which will get nastier and bloodier every day—unless and until we stop initiating political force.

*Bradford L. Warren  
Indianapolis, IN*

### Fixing the Unbroken Internet

"Fixing the Unbroken Internet" (May) properly points out that under (voided) 1996 legislation, "a minor could buy [Howard] Stern's book, *Miss America*, in a store, but "if that same youngster reads a profanity-laced quote from the book on the Internet [the person who posted it] could go to the slammer." But the piece then attempts to extend the concept invalidly, describing 2011 congressional bills as renewed efforts to give "the government broad power to censor the Internet." No mention is made of legitimate concerns that gave rise to the bills.

If a boatload of unauthorized DVDs of movies currently in first-run theatrical release arrived at an American port, U.S. Customs could seize them as contraband. The Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and PROTECT IP Act (PIPA) bills were intended to parallel this function in the virtual world, so that foreign-origin Internet packets could be stopped at the U.S. border. SOPA and PIPA were troublesome not in aim but in overkill.

*David P. Hayes  
Washington, DC*

CORRECTION: Dirty Harry's weapon of choice was a .44 Magnum, not a .357 Magnum ("The Gun Explosion," May).

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[Haidt] is not a libertarian, but a liberal who has come to appreciate some aspects of libertarian thought. I think his theory could use a bit of work, but the fact that he is actually trying to understand is worth encouraging. The old political divisions are being altered, and a lot of liberals are going to be looking for a new home—perhaps it would be good to help them understand alternative views.

—**reason online** commenter "Alan" in response to "Born This Way?" (May)

As far as I can tell, there are three options for approaches to civic life:

1. Live and let live
2. All for one and one for all
3. In God we trust

It really is that simple.

—**reason online** commenter "KPres" in response to "Born This Way?"

Matt Welch has a nice essay, "Why Big Government Is Offensive" (May). It is not a new point, but is well-made and deserves to be reiterated often: the more government does, the more it offends basic values; words to keep in mind as we head into the election season.

—*Georgetown University law professor Randy Barnett, writing at the Volokh Conspiracy blog*



## Obama Says 'I Do' to Gay Marriage

The president changes his mind on gay unions. Again.

AFTER PRESIDENT Barack Obama finally gave his explicit support to gay marriage in May, *The New York Times* claimed it was the culmination of “a wrenching personal transformation on the issue.” If so, Obama changed back into the person he was in 1996, when he was a political novice running for the Illinois Senate. “I favor legalizing same-sex marriages,” he told a gay newspaper back then, “and would fight efforts to prohibit such marriages.”

Running for re-election two years later, Obama already had learned the value of reticence regarding touchy social issues. “Do you believe that the Illinois government should recognize same-sex marriages?” a questionnaire asked. Obama’s response: “Undecided.”

Evidently the wrenching decision Obama had to make was not whether he thought gay couples should have a right to marry but whether he should say so out loud. The fact that it took 16 years reflects the gradual evolution of public opinion on the question, which ultimately made it thinkable for him to tell ABC News “it is important for me to go ahead and affirm that I think same-sex couples should be able to get married.”

The immediate impetus for that affirmation was the fallout from Vice President Joseph Biden’s unguarded comments about gay marriage three days earlier, which drew unwelcome attention to Obama’s studied ambiguity on the subject. “I am absolutely

comfortable with the fact that men marrying men, women marrying women, and heterosexual men and women marrying [each other] are entitled to the same exact rights, all the civil rights, all the civil liberties,” Biden said on *Meet the Press*. “And quite frankly, I don’t see much of a distinction beyond that.”

Obama did—or at least, he was aware that many voters did, which is why he had been careful to avoid endorsing “gay marriage” as such. Instead he advocated a “strong version” of “civil unions,” one that would give gay couples “all the rights” of straight couples, except the right to call their relationship a marriage.

Obama understood that the name really does matter to some opponents, mainly because they conflate civil marriage—the legal arrangement recognized by the state—with “the sacred institution of marriage” (as Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney calls it), which is defined by religious traditions that date back a lot further than marriage licenses. As Obama put it in a 2007 presidential debate, “We should try to disentangle what has historically been the issue of the word *marriage*, which has religious connotations to some people, from the civil rights that are given to couples.”

The leery people Obama had in mind included not only older swing voters but also crucial parts of his base: Seven out of 10 black voters supported California’s ban on gay

marriage in 2008, as did most Latinos. At the same time, Obama did not want to alienate gay donors or young voters, who overwhelmingly support gay marriage. Hence his “evolving” views on the issue, which seemed to be driven by polling data.

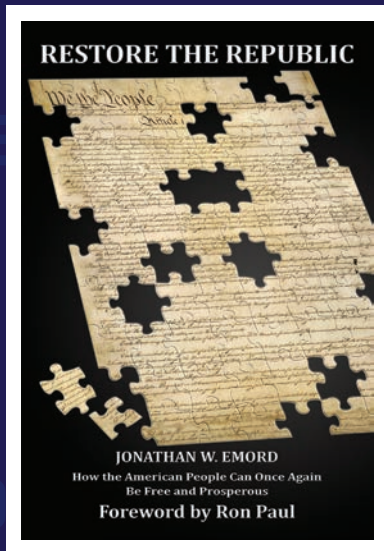
While recent polls asking for a simple yes or no find support for gay marriage as high as 53 percent, surveys that give people additional options suggest opinions are more complex. In a February *New York Times*/CBS News poll, 40 percent of respondents supported “legal marriage” for gay couples, up from 22 percent in 2004. An additional 23 percent favored “civil unions,” while 31 percent said there should be “no legal recognition at all.” An August 2010 Fox News poll had similar results.

Obama’s support for “strong” civil unions straddled two positions that together account for more than 60 percent of voters (and an even bigger majority among people apt to vote for him). By contrast, “no legal recognition” for same-sex couples clearly has become a minority position—a fact that Mitt Romney, who talks a lot about protecting marriage but very little about fair treatment of gay couples, may have to contend with as he repositions himself for the general election. ■

Senior Editor Jacob Sullum ([jsullum@reason.com](mailto:jsullum@reason.com)) is a nationally syndicated columnist.

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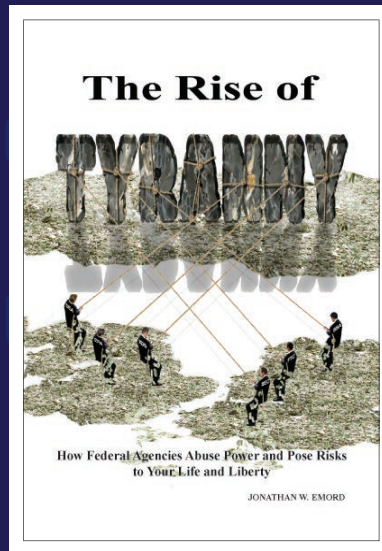


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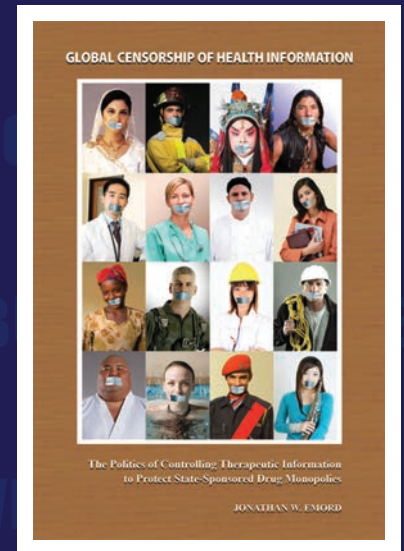


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100-mile search exemption; *Silent Spring's* shoddy science; rent control reigns; no border crisis; mobile snacking crackdown; cellphone tracking

*Strip search approval*

**Spread 'Em**

Jacob Sullum

IN 2001 the Supreme Court said the Fourth Amendment does not preclude “a warrantless arrest for a minor criminal offense, such as a misdemeanor seatbelt violation punishable only by a fine.” The other shoe dropped in April, when the Court said the Fourth Amendment allows strip searches of “every detainee who will be admitted to the general population” of a jail, no matter how minor his offense.



The strip search case was brought by Albert W. Florence, a New Jersey man who was arrested during a traffic stop because a database erroneously showed that he had failed to pay a criminal fine. Florence was

held for a week in two different jails and strip-searched twice before the matter was cleared up.

The five justices in the majority, in an opinion by Anthony Kennedy, deferred to the judgment of correctional officials concerning which policies are appropriate to prevent weapons and other contraband from entering jails, noting that the hazard does not necessarily hinge on the seriousness of a prisoner’s crime. The four dissenting justices argued that the Fourth Amendment’s ban on “unreasonable searches” requires an exception to the general strip search rule when a prisoner is charged with “a minor offense that does not involve drugs or violence,” unless there is a “reasonable suspicion” that he is carrying contraband.”

The strip search decision not only magnifies the potential humiliation associated with the arrests for trivial offenses that the Court approved in 2001; it also enhances the already considerable power that police officers have to conduct searches during routine traffic stops. It states that give police discretion to arrest people for minor offenses such as failing to buckle

a seat belt, officers can present drivers with a choice: a search of your car now or a search of your bodily orifices later. ■

*War on chicken cutlets*

**Breast Man**

Katherine Mangu-Ward

“WOULD THIS happen if I were dressed as Britney Spears?” drag star Derrick Barry asked a reporter for the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* in April. Barry, a featured player in the Divas Las Vegas show at the Imperial Palace, was delayed by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) when he attempted to board a plane with a carry-on bag containing tools of his trade: silicone breast enhancers, known as chicken cutlets.

Apparently Barry’s enhancements were sizable; they exceeded the TSA’s 3.4-ounce-per-container limit on liquids and gels. According to the TSA’s website, the list of permitted objects includes “items used to augment the body for medical or cosmetic reasons such as mastectomy products, prosthetic breasts, bras or shells containing gels, saline solution, or other

Lawyer: © Veeff/Inphdesignstudio  
Ronald Reagan, © Bettman/Corbis/AP Images

**25 years ago in reason**



“The Fourth Amendment might as well be torn up as far as financial privacy is concerned. The IRS, for example, audits millions of tax returns every year without any probable cause or evidence of wrongdoing. The filing of the return itself is a violation of your right to privacy in your personal papers. The IRS requires you to divulge all sorts of private details about your monetary affairs and, upon audit, demands disclosure of anything related to a tax issue—all without a court warrant.”

—Mark Skousen, “Snooping Sam”

“The great achievement of Ronald Reagan, in fact, was in making ideology once again respectable in American politics. He talked about liberty, about individual rights, about how the Founders established certain principles that need to be followed to maintain a free and prosperous society. And Americans responded with enthusiasm.”

—Edward H. Crane, “Max Headroom For President”

—August/September 1987

liquids.” Furthermore, “If you decide to bring your prosthe-  
sis or mastectomy bra in your  
accessible property rather than  
wearing it, it will be allowed  
through the checkpoint after it is  
screened.”

The latter guidance is aimed  
at breast cancer survivors, how-  
ever. It remains unclear whether  
being not a girl and not yet a  
woman is a qualifying condition.  
After being held for more than  
an hour while TSA officials tried  
to figure out what to do with  
him, Barry narrowly managed to  
catch his flight to Tampa, falsies  
in tow. ■

*Medical marijuana*

**Pot School's Out**

Brian Doherty

IN APRIL dozens of federal  
agents, including representa-  
tives of the Internal Revenue  
Service and the Drug Enforce-  
ment Administration, raided  
Oaksterdam University, a trade  
school for the burgeoning medi-  
cal marijuana industry. They also  
raided the home of its founder,  
Richard Lee, and a dispensary he  
operated.

The federal agencies did not  
specify what they were looking  
for at the three Oakland, Cali-  
fornia, locations, and they made  
no arrests. The businesses were  
legal under California regula-  
tions, and Lee's dispensary had  
a permit from the city. Lee—the  
moneymen behind Proposition  
19, the failed 2010 initiative to  
fully legalize adult marijuana  
possession in California—  
stepped down from running his  
businesses, fearing he might face  
federal drug charges.

As the *San Francisco Chronicle*  
reported, California's U.S. attor-  
neys “said in October that they  
would aggressively prosecute  
many marijuana dispensaries as  
profit-making criminal enter-  
prises. Since then, three dispen-  
saries in San Francisco, one in  
Marin County and 50 in the city  
of Sacramento have closed under  
pressure, along with about 150  
others throughout California.”

Oaksterdam is still operating,  
but in a weakened state. Dale  
Sky Jones, the school's executive  
chancellor, told KTVU, a local TV  
station, that the raids “knocked  
the wind out of us,” since the  
feds “seized all of our computers,  
curriculum, files and records,  
which we desperately need in  
order to operate the school.” ■

*100-mile search exemption*

**Checkpoint Zone**

J.D. Tuccille

FOR TRAVELERS in the American  
Southwest, brief Border Patrol  
interrogations at highway check-  
points are a familiar experience,  
courtesy of the “border search  
exception” to the Fourth Amend-  
ment.

Omar Ruiz-Perez was  
stopped along Interstate 19,  
south of Tucson, on January 19,  
2011. Using guidelines specifi-  
cally developed to identify trucks  
smuggling illegal drugs, Border  
Patrol agents directed the defen-  
dant to a secondary inspection  
area where X-rays of the vehicle  
revealed a hidden compartment  
full of narcotics. They did not  
suspect him of carrying illegal  
immigrants.

As the Supreme Court put it  
in the 1985 case *United States v.*  
*Montoya de Hernandez*, “automot-  
ive travelers may be stopped at  
fixed checkpoints near the bor-  
der without individualized suspi-  
cion” for the sake of immigration  
control. But in the 2000 decision  
*Indianapolis v. Edmond*, the Court  
cautioned that “we cannot sanc-  
tion stops justified only by the  
generalized and ever-present  
possibility that interrogation and  
inspection may reveal that any  
given motorist has committed  
some crime.”

In April U.S. District Judge  
Jennifer G. Zipp's nevertheless  
approved the Tucson search,  
writing that “agents could have  
objectively believed that Defen-  
dant's truck, based on its size,  
contained evidence of alien  
smuggling.” Since the federal  
government applies the border  
search exception anywhere  
within 100 miles of an inter-  
national boundary, the logic of  
this ruling potentially subjects  
two-thirds of the U.S. population  
to roadblocks aimed at revealing  
violations of any law, as long as  
law enforcement officials invoke  
immigration. ■

*Himalayas: still icy*

**Glacier Scare**

Ronald Bailey

THE DEMISE of the Himalayan  
glaciers is happening more  
glacially than expected—and in  
some cases may not be happen-  
ing at all.

In 2007 the U.N. Intergovern-  
mental Panel on Climate Change  
(IPCC) projected that the mas-  
sive Himalayan ice sheets would  
melt away by 2035, dramatically  
reducing the amount of water  
in rivers on which hundreds of  
millions of Indians and Chinese  
depend. Two years later, gov-  
ernment-sponsored research by  
Indian glaciologists found such  
predictions to be wildly off the  
mark. India's environment min-  
ister at the time, Jairam Ramesh,  
said “there is no conclusive  
scientific evidence to link global  
warming with what is happening  
in the Himalayan glaciers.”

IPCC head Rajendra Pachauri  
dismissed the glacier-melt skep-  
ticism as “school boy science,”  
but embarrassingly, it turned  
out that the IPCC's own glacier  
guesstimate was based on a  
popular science magazine's 1999  
misquotation of a researcher.

Now new research is lend-  
ing further support to the  
“school boy science.” A study  
published in the April 20 issue  
of *Science* bluntly concludes “the  
statement that most [Himalayan]  
glaciers will likely disappear by  
2035 is wrong.” In fact, the study  
reports that some glaciers in

“Politics is weird. And  
creepy. And now I know  
lacks even the loosest  
attachment to anything like  
reality.” ■

—Fox News anchor Shepard  
Smith on Mitt Romney's  
statement that he was  
“look[ing] forward to work-  
ing with” Newt Gingrich  
after Gingrich dropped out  
of the presidential race,  
May 2

“I reject her philosophy.  
It's an atheist philosophy.  
It reduces human interac-  
tions down to mere con-  
tracts, and it is antithetical  
to my worldview.” ■

—Rep. Paul Ryan (R-Wis.),  
denying allegations that  
he is an Ayn Rand fan,  
despite having gone on the  
record many times praising  
her work, *National Review*  
*Online*, April 26

“Seniors love getting junk  
mail. It's sometimes their  
only way of communicating  
or feeling like they're part  
of the real world. Elderly  
Americans, more than  
anyone in America, rely on  
the United States Postal  
Service.” ■

—Senate Majority Leader  
Harry Reid (D-Nev.), arguing  
on the Senate floor for a  
postal reform bill, *The Hill*,  
April 18

Medical marijuana. © Veer/ davehgo



## Silent Spring's Shoddy Science

The 1962 environmentalist classic *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson helped build the foundation of the green movement. Roger Meiners, a professor of economics and law at the University of Texas at Arlington, is the editor of a new book, *Silent Spring at 50: The False Crises of Rachel Carson* (Cato). **reason** asked him to list Carson's three most egregious scientific errors.



Roger Meiners

### 1 She exaggerated cancer rates.

Carson asserted that one person in four in the United States would die of cancer and that cancer was becoming epidemic in children, despite public health data to the contrary. The cancer rate was increasing, but chiefly because far fewer Americans were dying of other diseases. This meant they lived long enough to die of cancer, the incidence of which rises with age. Carson also ignored the evidence linking tobacco smoking to cancer.

**2 She ignored the upsides of pesticides.** *Silent Spring's* reporting on the effects of pesticides is entirely negative. Carson ignored the public health benefits of DDT and other pest controls that saved millions of lives worldwide by controlling malaria, typhus, dysentery, dengue fever, and other diseases that had previously been common.

**3 She promoted the myth of the balance of nature.** Rachel Carson's belief in the still-common concept of a "balance of nature" is a misunderstanding of how ecosystems really work. There is no "equilibrium" in nature. Her presentation of the environment is teleological or mystical rather than scientific.

▶ the region appear to be growing rather than shrinking and that in any case they will persist beyond 2100. Furthermore, since most of the water in affected Asian rivers comes from monsoon rains, any glacial melting due to climate change will have only a minor effect on those rivers. ■

*Not so patriotic*

### FBI Fakers

Ed Krayewski

NEWLY RELEASED documents reveal that the Federal Bureau of Investigation infiltrated various right-wing and anti-government movements in the early 1990s, crossing paths with Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh and participating in the infamous 1992 raid at Ruby Ridge in Idaho.

In 1991 the FBI created a fake

right-wing extremist group in Texas dubbed the Veterans Aryan Movement (VAM), according to documents released in response to a Freedom of Information Act request by *Foreign Policy* magazine. VAM was a three-member team led by an agent with a background in narcotics working under the alias Dave Rossi. The operation, codenamed PATCON (short for Patriot-conspiracy), lasted two years. During that time, the FBI used VAM to track a wide range of radical and fringe groups associated with the so-called patriot movement.

The documents reveal an institutional reluctance to pursue investigations based merely on suspects' beliefs. In April 1993 an FBI review committee warned agents to focus on criminal conduct, rather than constitutionally protected speech. By July 1993, the Bureau shut the investigation

down, citing "insufficient justification." ■

*No Supreme Court review*

### Rent Control Reigns

Damon Root

IN APRIL the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear a constitutional challenge to New York City's rent stabilization law. Landlords James and Jeanne Harmon argued that the law violates the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment: "nor shall private property be taken for public use without just compensation." Although this clause is typically associated with eminent domain cases, the Supreme Court has held that "it is a taking when a state regulation forces a property owner to submit to a permanent physical occupation."

New York's rent regulations seem to fit the bill. The Harmons' rent-regulated tenants pay government-set rates that are 59 percent below market, and they get to occupy their apartments for life. They can even name their own relatives as lease successors (who must live in the apartment for two years to qualify). Furthermore, the Harmons' Upper West Side brownstone has been designated a landmark, meaning they may not tear it down, and the land is zoned for residential uses, so they are forbidden to start over with a grocery store or some other business. For all practical purposes, the Harmons face "a permanent physical occupation."

Because the Harmons previously lost at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2nd Circuit, which upheld the law as a legitimate exercise of state regulatory power, New York's rent stabilization scheme remains in place. ■

*Helping a man to death*

### Deadly LifeAid

Jacob Sullum

EARLY ON the morning of November 19, Kenneth Chamberlain, a 68-year-old former Marine and retired correctional officer with a heart condition, accidentally set off his LifeAid

medical alert pendant while sleeping in his White Plains, New York, apartment. Unable to contact Chamberlain via its two-way audio box, LifeAid called the White Plains Department of Public Safety. Police officers arrived to help Chamberlain 17 minutes later. Instead they ended up killing him.

When a bleary and annoyed Chamberlain, speaking through his door, told the officers he was fine, they insisted on coming in anyway. According to the official police report, officers "heard loud noises inside and thought someone else might be in danger."

According to Chamberlain's son and the family's lawyers, police camera footage shows that when the cops finally forced their way in, about an hour after they arrived, Chamberlain was standing, unarmed, in his boxer shorts. Yet the cops immediately Tasered the man with a heart condition they had come to help, and later Officer Anthony Carelli shot him in the chest—a moment the cameras missed. An autopsy showed that the bullet entered through Chamberlain's upper right arm and lodged in his right lung, where it caused the internal bleeding that killed him.

Police said Chamberlain threatened them with a knife, and White Plains Public Safety Commissioner David Chong deemed the shooting a "war-ranted use of deadly force." In April, after months of complaints from Chamberlain's relatives and their supporters, Westchester County District Attorney Janet DiFiore announced that she would present the case to a grand jury. A month later, DiFiore said the grand jury had found insufficient basis for criminal charges against any of the officers. ■

*No border crisis*

### Fewer Migrants

Brian Doherty

AS THE OBAMA administration deports record numbers of immigrants (400,000 last year) and the Supreme Court consid-

ers whether Arizona's tough law aimed at illegal immigrants is constitutional, the supposed crisis that such policies are meant to solve is going away on its own. Fewer illegal immigrants are coming to America these days.

Douglas Massey, who runs Princeton University's Mexican Migration Project, reports that in the wake of the recession, net illegal migration from Mexico has reached zero. The number of illegal immigrants living in the United States dropped from 12 million to 11 million or so toward the end of the last decade, and no new influx has followed.

What's more, Massey argues, the number of illegal immigrants within our borders probably would be *lower* if we had a less strict border control regime. The traditional pattern was for Mexicans to come and work, then return to home and family. But when getting back into the United States became much more difficult, workers tended to stay put. Massey estimates that if we weren't spending nearly \$12 billion a year on border enforcement, those natural patterns of return would mean 2 million fewer illegal immigrants living north of the border. ■

### Cyberbullying suspensions

#### Troll Patrol

J.D. Tuccille

HAS CYBERBULLYING become the disorderly conduct of the online world—an all-purpose legal bludgeon with which to thump innocent people when the authorities don't like what they're doing? That might be the takeaway from an incident in San Francisco, where three high school seniors were suspended for saying mean things about their teachers in online postings. They were reinstated only after civil liberties groups intervened.

In March, after students at George Washington High School used their home computers to post parodies and nasty comments about teachers and school administrators on Tumblr, the principal interrogated them and decided to suspend them



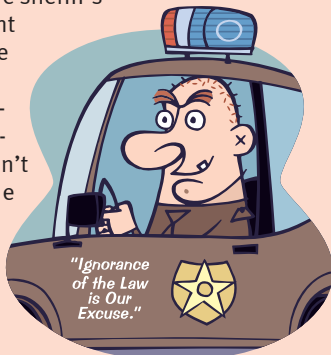
Illustrations by Terry Colon



Parents of some students at California's Albert Einstein Middle School are upset that Sacramento County sheriff's detectives pulled their children out of class, interviewed them, and took DNA samples without parental permission as part of a murder investigation.

The state of Nevada and the city of Henderson have agreed to pay a total of \$292,500 to Adam Greene and his wife to settle a lawsuit the couple brought after police officers and state troopers beat him during a traffic stop. Officers pulled Greene over when they saw him weaving. They thought he was drunk, but he was actually suffering a diabetic shock. Dashboard cameras taped the officers as they repeatedly kicked the unresponsive Greene while shouting at him to stop resisting.

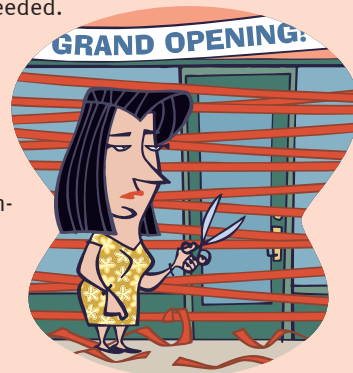
In an effort to lobby against laws allowing citizens to openly carry firearms, an Orange County, Florida, sheriff's captain sent out photos of eight individuals he claimed were outlaw bikers who had concealed carry permits. That violated a state law against identifying those with concealed carry permits as well as a law barring the release of driver's license photos. The sheriff's department cleared the captain of any wrongdoing, saying he hadn't realized the photos were driver's license photos or that it was



against the law to release information about people with weapon permits.

Juliet Pries wanted to open an ice cream store in San Francisco's Cole Valley neighborhood. She eventually succeeded.

But Pries said it took her two years and tens of thousands of dollars just to get all of the permits and complete the paperwork required by the various bureaucracies she had to deal with.



Louie Castro received a less-than-honorable discharge from the U.S. Army back in 2002. What he didn't realize was that the thick file of papers he got from the Army when he left didn't contain a DD-214, an official release from active duty. He found that out almost a decade later when returning from a trip to Europe. When he went through Miami International Airport in January, computers flagged him as AWOL. He spent 12 days in jail before the Army agreed to release him. But officials still wanted him to fly to Fort Carson in Colorado to officially process him out of the Army. After local media outlets picked up the story, the Army decided it didn't need Castro in Colorado to complete the paperwork.

Victoria Baca called the New Mexico State Police to report that she had been victimized by an Internet scam. Officials told her they couldn't immediately send an officer, so she asked them to call before coming.

Instead an officer came by without calling while Baca and her family were gone. The officer jumped a fence with a "Beware of Dog" sign and shot and killed one of the family's dogs. State police officials say the officer was acting in self-defense and no action will be taken against him



Charles Oliver

## Gray Markets Forever!

Katherine Mangu-Ward

In November 1993, Contributing Editor Glenn Garvin introduced *reason* readers to Marta, an immigrant from Ocotlán, Mexico. Marta came to the United States legally in 1971 as the wife of an American citizen. But she quickly joined the “informal” economy of Los Angeles, the gray and black markets that help meet demand for cheap, off-the-books services of all kinds.

In “America’s Economic Refugees,” Garvin explained that Marta started work in a garment factory but, like so many immigrants before her, soon realized she would rather be in business for herself. She sold her jewelry and used the \$50 she netted to buy her first batch of ingredients for tamales, a cornhusk-wrapped savory treat from home. Soon she was so busy she had to bring a niece from Mexico to help her keep up with the demand.

Life in the gray market isn’t all pork sausage and roses, though. “You have to watch out for the police,” Marta told Garvin. “They don’t always make trouble for us. But sometimes they do. One day I bought a \$125 urn so that I could branch out a little bit, offer my customers a chocolate drink. I bought it on Friday. On Saturday the police took it. I was sad, but what can you do?”

Not much has changed. Today the Los Angeles Department of Public Health routinely confiscates the inventory and propane-powered mini-carts of unlicensed folks selling bacon-wrapped hot dogs or other taste treats deemed dangerous by the government. Cart owners who fail to dodge the authorities must pay a fine of up to \$1,000 or serve up to six months in jail.

A 2011 report from the Institute for Justice, the



Washington, D.C., libertarian law firm, found that of the nation’s 50 major cities, 20 ban legitimate mobile vendors from setting up near their brick-and-mortar competitors, while 19 allow vendors to stay in one spot for only a short amount of time, leaving much of the vending arena to the unlicensed. The Los Angeles proposal under consideration when Garvin wrote his article was virtually identical to the restrictions in place today: To go legit, a vendor must procure nearly \$1,000 worth of permits, plus a cart that costs between \$1,000 and \$2,000—figures that are out of reach for entrepreneurs like Marta.

the locations where food trucks were no longer welcome to offer their cupcakes, Vietnamese noodles, or traditional tacos and hot dogs.

Vendors are banned from selling within a 200-foot radius of any stationary restaurant in the downtown area. Other types of established food vendors enjoy a similar bubble of protection, as do the convention center and the city’s two sports venues. Food truck owners were also reminded to stay away from hydrants and bus stops. The result: precious few areas where food trucks can legally operate.

“We have done our best to work with all food vendors downtown,” Kara Bowlin, a spokeswoman for the mayor’s office, told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. “It is our hope that this map will make it easier for food trucks to find an allowed parking spot and will alleviate the issues between trucks and restaurants during the busy summer months.”

Adding insult to injury, the message instructed food truck operators to keep a copy of the new map in their vehicles, putting the onus on honest entrepreneurs “to show to any police officers or license-collector representatives that you are in an allowed spot.”



### Cellphone tracking

#### Pocket Rat

Jacob Sullum

IN JANUARY the Supreme Court said tracking a car by attaching a GPS device to it is a “search” under the Fourth Amendment. But because the decision hinged on the physical

▶ for three days, accusing them of bullying and disrupting school activities. The students also were barred from their prom and graduation ceremonies.

The disciplinary measures ran afoul of the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in *Tinker v. Des Moines*. In that 1969 case, the Court held that “a prohibition against expression of opinion, without any evidence that the rule is necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or the rights of others, is not permissible under the

First and Fourteenth Amendments.”

With the law clear, school officials quickly backed down after they were contacted by the American Civil Liberties Union of Northern California and the Asian Law Caucus. “We absolutely recognize and value our students’ right to free speech,” Gentle Blythe, spokeswoman for the San Francisco Unified School District, assured the investigative journalism website *California Watch*.

While the students’ disciplin-

ary records have been expunged, they still lost three days of school. And California’s law empowering school officials to penalize cyberbullying remains on the books.

### Mobile snacking crackdown

#### Truck-Free Zones

Katherine Mangu-Ward

ON APRIL 19, food truck owners in St. Louis woke up to an unwelcome email message from city officials, featuring a map of



intrusion required by that technique, it left unclear what limits the Constitution imposes on surveillance that does not involve touching the target's property, such as cellphone tracking. In the absence of clear guidance, a recent report from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) suggests, law enforcement agencies are making up the rules as they go along.

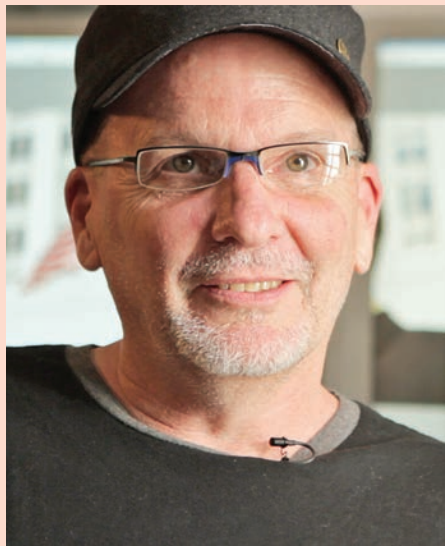
The ACLU asked 383 agencies about their policies for obtaining location information from cellphone providers and received about 200 responses. "Law enforcement agencies' tracking policies are in a state of chaos," the organization reported. Some police departments do warrantless tracking only in life-threatening emergencies, but many do it routinely, while others let cellphone carriers decide how much legal authorization is necessary.

As examples of permissive policies, the ACLU cited Lincoln, Nebraska, where police "obtain even GPS location data (which is more precise than cell tower location information) without demonstrating probable cause," and Wilson County, North Carolina, where police "obtain historical cell tracking data where it is 'relevant' to an ongoing investigation—a standard lower than probable cause." By contrast, police in Hawaii County, Wichita, and Lexington, Kentucky, have a general policy of obtaining a warrant based on probable cause before tracking a cellphone.

Attitudes about the privacy of cellphone location data vary along with the policies, as reflected in documents quoted by *The New York Times*. While training notes from the California District Attorneys Association enthused that "subtler and more far-reaching means of invading privacy have become available to the government" thanks to modern technology, a Nevada training manual emphasized that warrantless cellphone tracking "IS ONLY AUTHORIZED FOR LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCIES" and warned that "continued misuse by law enforcement agencies will undoubtedly backfire." ■

## Lynching Charlie Lynch

Interview by Alex Manning



Rick Ray

Charlie Lynch, operator of a medical marijuana dispensary in Morro Bay, California, was arrested in 2007 for violating federal drug laws. The following year, **reason** commissioned filmmaker Rick Ray, best known for his 2006 film *10 Questions for the Dalai Lama*, to put together a short film on the case. He was so inspired by Lynch's story that he wound up spending four years on a full-length documentary, *Lynching Charlie Lynch*, released on April 20, chronicles this politicized prosecution. Although Lynch strove to comply with state law and was careful to get the approval of local officials, he is now in the process of appealing a one-year sentence in federal prison. **reason.tv** producer Alex Manning interviewed Ray in April. Check out the rest of the interview at **reason.tv**.

**Q:** Did Charlie Lynch deserve to go to jail?

**A:** Charlie Lynch is a man who was determined to open a dispensary the right way. California allowed medical marijuana dispensaries. He wanted to open one in San Luis Obispo, where there wasn't one [for] 100 miles in any direction. And he got permission to open his dispensary. The city attorney wrote an opinion authorizing it. The mayor blessed it; they had a Chamber of Commerce opening ceremony and ribbon cutting. On some level, because

he tried to do this the right way, he ran into trouble. The federal government wanted to make an example of him, to show that there is no right way to do medical marijuana in the United States.

**Q:** What does this say about the drug war? It's one man's story, but does it apply to the rest of the country?

**A:** I became interested in the film because **reason.tv** hired me to do a short piece about Charlie Lynch. I went up, and the producer said we're going to be meeting someone who runs a medical marijuana dispensary. So in my mind I thought, OK, he's a bit of a stoner, probably; he's kind of a hippie, maybe sort of a free spirit. And Charlie Lynch was a completely different kind of man: the kind of person you would trust babysitting your kids, who looks just like an ordinary businessman. And [he] essentially acts very much like a regular pharmacist, simply wanting to dispense medicine to patients and do it the right way, and do it legally. And so the disconnect was huge. I went into the interview and thought, "Wait a minute, this is Charlie Lynch? He's never had a traffic ticket, he's never violated any law, and here he is about to go to federal prison?"

Charlie Lynch's plight is a small example of the great chasm between the federal government and state law that exists today, especially as regards medical marijuana. The federal government considers this to be a Schedule I substance, the equivalent of heroin and PCP and other serious drugs. There's almost zero tolerance of it being sold or distributed in any sort of storefront or dispensary environment. [But] California has laws that have legitimized marijuana as a medicine. And so for an ordinary businessman like Charlie Lynch, to step into this divide put him at great risk. Anyone who is trying to do this right can easily fall into the chasm between state and federal law.

**Q:** What is the current state of medical marijuana?

**A:** A lot of us had hope that the Obama administration would come in and the persecution and prosecution of dispensaries in California would be relaxed. In fact, Eric Holder, the attorney general, said that as long as dispensaries were in compliance with state law they would not be harassed by the federal government. But the reality has been that dispensaries continue to be raided. So the current state of medical marijuana is that it is still in that dangerous limbo between state and federal prosecution or permission.



## Eating Bugs

The search for new food frontiers in an era of population growth

By 2050, the U.N. predicts, our planet will be inhabited by 2 billion more humans. If income and body mass continue their current upward trends, those billions will be richer and fatter than we are. That means they'll want meat, not grain. They'll also want seconds. But will 2050's concentrated agricultural feeding operations—much less its free-range heritage pig farms—be able to produce enough livestock to meet the demand?

A growing number of optimistic soothsayers say yes. But only if we expand our definition of livestock to include such underutilized food sources as mealworms, grasshoppers, and Sago grubs. In January 2012, 37 international experts met at the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) in Rome to discuss “the potential benefits of using insects for food and feed as part of a broader strategy to achieve global food security.”

Insects, their advocates enthuse, are high in protein and other nutrients: A 100-gram portion of grasshopper meat contains 20.6 grams of protein, just 7 grams less than an equivalent portion of beef. In addition, insect farming requires less water, less feed, and less land per calorie than traditional livestock farming, and it produces much lower greenhouse gas emissions. All in all, 2050's squirrels and housecats appear to be in luck: When worldwide beef supplies get tight, we'll have other options.

**To get a taste of the future, I recently visited a** tequila bar called Mosto in San Francisco's Mission District, where a local chef named Monica Martinez had been operating her Don Bugito snack bar on Monday nights throughout the spring. Martinez favors gradualism over shock value in her efforts to introduce people to the virtues of entomophagy, or insect eating. Her

Crispy Mix appetizer pairs wax moth larvae with thin, inch-long slivers of potato cooked in duck fat and sprinkled with agave worm salt. Side by side in a tiny square serving dish, the golden-brown insects and stem tubers look like brothers from another mother.

As it turns out, wax moth larvae don't taste all that different from potatoes either. They're a little salty, a little smoky. Mostly, though, the insect fetuses are light and airy, not exactly stick-to-your-ribs food. It seems such fare will deliver future food security only if at least 80 percent of 2050's extra humans are supermodels.

Restaurants around the world are showcasing insects in similarly artful ways. At Vij's, an Indian eatery in Vancouver, the flatbread is made out of roasted crickets. At Typhoon, a pan-Asian restaurant in Santa Monica, you can get silkworm larvae stir-fried in soy, sugar, and white pepper. London's Archipelago serves pan-fried locusts and crickets as a starter and chocolate-covered scorpions or baby bee brûlée for dessert.

**Such dishes suggest the fundamental irony that** informs contemporary entomophagy. While insect evangelists champion bugs as a potential solution to looming food shortages for the masses, we eat them today largely because food for the comparatively well-off is so boringly abundant. For millions of people, food is no longer just a form of sustenance, comfort, or sensual pleasure; it's a medium for exploration, discovery, and self-expression. Like a roiling army of ants clear-cutting their way through the Amazon jungle, today's foodies devour everything in their path on the hunt for new flavor combinations to taste and new textures to tweet. Having exhausted the possibilities of

## ***There is one aspect of life that unites, controls, and affects all people.***

That one aspect is life's natural laws. They *unite*, *control* and *affect* people no matter what their race, gender, creed, or where on this planet they live.

If you are a new reader of this subject matter, be prepared for a pleasant shock.

Whoever or whatever is the creator revealed *nature's law of right action* to the mind of Richard W. Wetherill decades ago. *The law calls for people to be rational and honest not only regarding laws of physics but also in their thinking and behavior toward one another.*

Wetherill also cautioned that the law, itself, is the final arbiter of right action. It states: *Right action gets right results* whether it relates to laws of physics or to the law of behavior.

Ordinarily people unknowingly have been conducting their relationships to satisfy *their* purposes; not the purposes of the creator of natural laws. Such behavior explains why the earth's population has never been peacefully *united* and *controlled* nor favorably *affected*.

Do people intentionally refuse to meet the requirements of laws of physics: gravity for instance? No, they try their best to keep their balance or safely recover it whenever necessary.

Scriptures record the first wrong action of the created beings was their disobedience. It ended the perfect situation that had existed and resulted in the predicted penalties. More shockingly the admonition to obey ended with the creator's words, "or you will surely die." Whether that account is actual or symbolic, it describes ancient people's misbehavior still continuing today.

*Obeying nature's law of right action unites people, giving them the benefits that then control and favorably affect their lives, nullifying that final admonition, "or you will surely die."*

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seaweed ice cream and frog-ovary soup, they turn their restless palates to boiled cockroaches.

But what will it take for such fare to cross the chasm from novelty to staple? Couple the artisanal cachet provided by talented chefs like Monica Martinez with insect husbandry's tiny environmental footprint, and it's easy to depict the whole cuisine as a utopian endeavor, a radically out-of-the-box solution to the corporate industrial food system and all the plagues it has unleashed upon the world.

Yet who is best positioned to make the green, sustainable, cruelty-free promise of large-scale insect farming a reality? To augment 2050's food supply in a significant way, to have a real impact on greenhouse gas emissions, an industry that essentially doesn't exist today will need to figure out how to produce hundreds of billions of pounds of insect meat per year in just three and a half decades.

**Today's insect farms primarily serve** the pet food and bait markets. In the U.S., they produce enough food to keep approximately 13.6 million pet frogs, toads, and lizards satisfied, but humans tend to have bigger appetites, and there are a lot more of us. In the future, we will not only need far more insect farms; we will need bigger, more productive farms as well.

Regulation of the industry is likely to get more stringent when people replace tarantulas as the target consumer. As insects inch their way toward the food pyramid, disease management capabilities will need to improve. (In the last few years, for example, cricket paralysis densovirus, which is harmless to

humans and other creatures but fatal to *Acheta domesticus*, the common brown house cricket, has wreaked havoc on the commercial cricket industry in the U.S.)

There will also be a great demand for processing—increasing shelf life, ensuring product safety and consistency, and, most of all, making mealworms and crickets look and feel and taste a little less like mealworms and crickets. While many people may never eat insects even after they've been beheaded, declawed, and dewinged, they might eat insect flour or sports bars fortified with insect protein.

Especially if these products taste good, come in attractive packages, and are aggressively advertised. A shot of tequila does wonders for the palatability of a roasted grasshopper, but entomophagy isn't going to hit the big time on tequila bars alone. It will take experimentation in state-of-the-art R&D kitchens, consumer testing, alluring packaging design, massive advertising campaigns, and probably some help from Shrek and SpongeBob SquarePants. Indeed, given that adults are more likely than children to harbor longstanding, hard-to-change biases, it makes more sense to target kids, positioning insect gobbling as a fun, rewarding activity.

#### **Will Big Food accept the challenge?**

Corporate behemoths like Archer Daniels Midland, Tyson, and Cargill have more experience killing insects than cultivating them, but they also have the expertise it will take to create a robust insect farming sector in just a few decades. As do companies such as Kraft Foods, General Mills, Walmart, and McDonald's.

So far these food giants haven't

expressed much interest in bugs. But given their reputations for relentless cost cutting, it's only a matter of time before they discover the profit-boosting efficacies of grub nuggets and mealworm burgers.

Even with such powerful companies on board, it will be difficult to grow a business from zero to, say, one-third the size of the current livestock industry by 2050. To establish insect farming as a significant enterprise so quickly, its practitioners will have to innovate in radical ways. Is it possible, for example, to grow a grasshopper the size of a humming-

**A shot of tequila does wonders for the palatability of a roasted grasshopper, but entomophagy isn't going to hit the big time on tequila bars alone.**

bird using growth hormones? Will we need new laws that require TV networks to air commercials promoting the benefits of entomophagy during shows aimed at children?

For those who have been envisioning the future of insect farming as a local, small-scale, farm-to-fork endeavor, a way to exterminate the corporate food system once and for all, the idea of using free collectible figurines to help sell genetically modified grub nuggets may be as hard to swallow as a cockroach sandwich. Yet unless 2050 has many more tequila bars than we have now, it seems unlikely that entomophagy will catch without Big Food at the table. ■

*Contributing Editor Greg Beato (gbeato@soundbitten.com) writes from San Francisco.*

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## Student Loan Scam

Why are today's poor subsidizing tomorrow's rich?

THE INTEREST RATE for the main federal student loan program was set to double on July 1, from 3.4 percent to 6.8 percent. Even in this contentious election year, there was one thing everyone in Washington could agree on: The rate hike should be avoided at all costs. The only disagreement was where to extract the \$6 billion annually that would be needed to make up the difference.

But extending the lower rate, which was instituted by the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007, is foolhardy. By keeping student loan rates artificially low, the federal government is contributing to the rapid increase in college tuition and forcing today's workers to subsidize the educational choices of tomorrow's big earners.

According to the latest data available from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, 39 percent of all undergraduates at four-year colleges had student loans in 2007-08. For full-time undergraduates the number was 53 percent. The overwhelming majority—93 percent—of these loans are subsidized by the federal government. And even the 6.8 percent rate that Democrats and Republicans were determined to avoid would still represent a significant subsidy; the rate on similar loans that students obtain in the private market is about 12 percent.

**There are many other ways to help pay for a college education:** You can work through college, choose to attend a cheaper state school, or take time off to earn money before or during school. So the decision to take on student debt is a personal choice, and the reward from getting a college degree is also personal. People making this choice have a responsibility to understand the costs and risks.

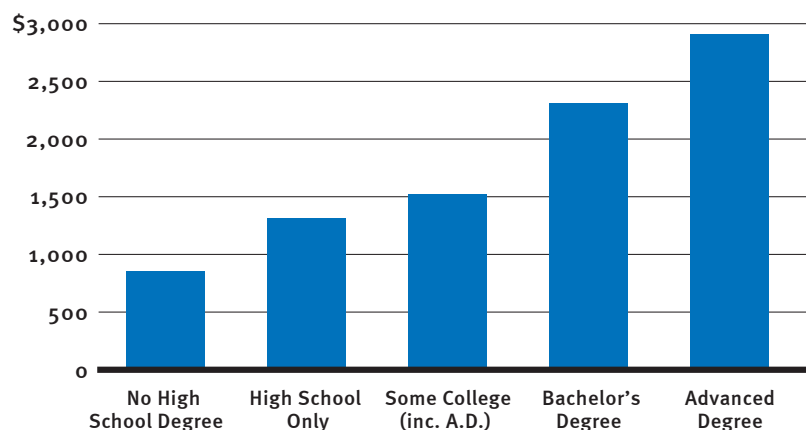
While aggregate student debt has reached \$829 billion, which is higher than the country's collective credit card debt, the burden faced by individual students coming out of college is relatively small. According to the Department of Education, the typical college graduate who borrows money for attendance ends up owing about \$22,000. The standard repayment period is 10 years, but terms can be renegotiated if needed, especially by people who choose to go into public service or teaching. According to the repayment calculator at Mapping Your Future, an online resource sponsored by student loan guaranty agencies, it would cost \$253 a month over 10 years to repay \$22,000 in principal at a rate of 6.8 percent.

Everyone wants to borrow money at the lowest rate possible. But it is important to keep in mind that today's student loan recipients are tomorrow's big earners. Using the most recent data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), the editors of the economics policy website *e21* compared the earnings of the most successful college graduates with those of the most successful high school graduates. A worker in the top 10 percent of bachelor's degree holders earns an average of \$2,310 a week. That's 1.8 times as much as the \$1,316 earned by the average worker in the top 10 percent of high school degree holders.

**The gap between typical workers in those education categories is even more significant.** BLS data show that the weekly earnings of the median worker with a bachelor's degree is \$1,051, compared to \$450 for the median high school graduate.

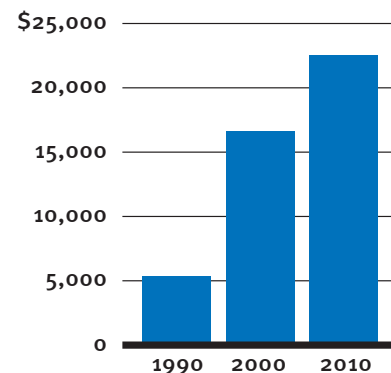
That means federal student loans force lower-income taxpayers to subsidize the education of future U.S. elites. Why should a grocery

### Average Weekly Earnings of the Top 10 Percent by Educational Attainment



Source: economics21.org

### Cumulative Federal Student Loan Debt (average per person when entering repayment)



Source: U.S. Department of Education, FY 2013 budget

store clerk pay taxes to help the store's owner send his kids to a selective out-of-state school?

This burden is not trivial. As *e21* noted, “since 2008 the Federal Government has effectively socialized the student loan market by enacting laws to eliminate private lender participation in administering Federal loans.” As a result, *e21* notes, the amount of outstanding student loans owned by the federal government has grown from \$111 billion at the end of 2008 to \$425 billion in 2011, a compound annualized growth rate of 56 percent.

**Unfortunately, taxpayers probably** will have to pay a significant share of those outstanding loans. In a September 12, 2011, press release, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced that the share of federal student loan borrowers who default within the first two years of repayment is 8.8 percent. The overall default rate for those receiving a federal student loan is 23 percent. That's huge. To put this number in perspective, at the peak of the housing crisis in May 2009, first-mortgage default rates reached 5.7 percent; the default

rate for second mortgages reached its high-water mark two months earlier at 4.7 percent.

There is another reason to look twice at the massive subsidies for education loans. As it did in the housing market, free or reduced-priced money has artificially inflated the price of a college education.

Federal student aid, whether in the form of grants or loans, is the main factor behind the runaway cost of higher education. As Cato Institute economist Neal McCluskey explained in an April 2012 article for *U.S. World & News Report*: “The basic problem is simple: Give everyone \$100 to pay for higher education and colleges will raise their prices by \$100, negating the value of the aid. And inflation-adjusted aid—most of it federal—has certainly gone up, ballooning from \$4,602 per undergraduate in 1990–91 to \$12,455 in 2010–11.”

**Thus begins a classic upward price spiral** caused by government intervention: Subsidies raise prices, leading to higher subsidies, which raise prices even more. Yet this higher

education bubble, like the housing bubble before it, will eventually pop. Meanwhile, large numbers of students will graduate with more debt than they would have in an unsubsidized market. More important, taxpayers face two equally bad outcomes: They are subsidizing millions of dollars in interest for student loans that they shouldn't have to shoulder, and they likely will pick up the tab for underpaid student loans.

Given that President Barack Obama and his presumptive opponent, Mitt Romney, agree that the student loan rate should not rise, it is unlikely that Congress will let the rate float back up. But the whole enterprise of federally subsidized college loans is dysfunctional and should be ended. American taxpayers—especially today's working poor—should not have to subsidize tomorrow's big earners while pricing themselves out of a better education. ■

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## Generational Warfare

Old-age entitlements vs. the safety net

*Nick Gillespie and Veronique de Rugy*

IN 1964 A YOUNG Bob Dylan released “The Times They Are a-Changin’,” an anthem that defined what would shortly become known as “the generation gap.” With a mix of sympathy and sneer—“Come mothers and fathers / Throughout the land / And don’t criticize / What you can’t understand / Your sons and your daughters / Are beyond your command / Your old road is / Rapidly agin’”—Dylan described an unbridgeable gulf in values, styles, and aspirations between the rising baby boomers, born between 1946 and 1964, and their elders, who had managed to survive the depredations of the Great Depression, World War II, and the swiveling hips of Elvis Presley.

Flash forward half a century, and the boomers who once sang along with Dylan have become the reactionary elders, clinging to their power and perks at the literal expense of everyone younger. There’s a new generation gap opening up, one that threatens to tear apart the country every bit as much as past confrontations over war, free love, drugs, and sitar music. This fight is about old-age entitlements and whether the Me Generation will do what’s right for the country and stop sucking up more and more money from their children and grandchildren.



Terry Colon



In 1984, reports the Pew Research Center, households headed by people 65 or older had 10 times the wealth of households headed by people under 35. By 2005 the gap had increased to 22 times, and by 2009 it was 47 times.

Social Security and Medicare, which provide retirement and health insurance benefits for senior Americans, generally without regard to need, are funded by taxes on the relatively meager wages of younger Americans who will never enjoy anything close to the same benefits. From any serious fiscal or moral viewpoint, and particularly for the sake of helping those truly in need, Social Security and Medicare should be ended.

The demographic math is irrefutable: Entitlements are killing the safety net. They should be replaced with social welfare programs that cover all citizens, regardless of age, but only those who are too poor or incapacitated to take care of themselves. Focusing on those truly in need instead of automatically shoveling out larger and larger amounts to well-off senior citizens is the best way to avert looming fiscal catastrophe and restore some morality to an indefensible system.

### **Gourmet Cat Food**

The entitlement state, whatever its intentions and past successes, is like a starter home that has been expanded and renovated so many times that it has no architectural coherence or structural integrity. The country has grown much wealthier and much grayer since the starter home was built. Whether the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (a.k.a. ObamaCare) supersedes Medicare or simply adds to its costs, publicly funded spending on retirement and elder care will skyrocket as baby boomers start retiring en masse.

But why should we spend increasing amounts of money—as a proportion of GDP, in absolute dollars, or as a percentage of government spending—on a group of people simply because of their age? To hear elected officials and representatives of the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) tell it, Social Security and Medicare are the only reasons older Americans don't have to eat cat food or choose between prescription drugs and heating their homes.

“Without Social Security,” Vice President Joe Biden asserted to a Florida crowd in March, “nearly half of American seniors...would be struggling in poverty.” Biden was merely channeling Lyndon Johnson’s remarks at the original press event announcing the passage of Medicare. “No longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine,” LBJ said as he handed former President Harry Truman the very first Medicare card (Truman had “planted the seeds of compassion” during his unsuccessful attempt while president to create nationalized health care).

Johnson was equally quick to pitch the benefits of entitlements to the younger generation, whose anger over Vietnam would stop him from running for re-election in 1968: “No longer will young families see their own incomes, and their own hopes, eaten away simply because they are carrying out their deep moral obligations to their parents, and to their uncles, and their aunts.” Getting kids off the hook remains an alleged selling point to this day. “Retirement is multigenerational,” Biden said in his speech. “It matters to your children if you have a decent retirement. Every one of you—it matters to your children. Because if you don’t, your children feel obliged to step up.”

In a 1999 address to the National Education Association’s Women’s Equality Summit, then-First Lady Hillary Clinton was even more explicit in celebrating her own generation’s freedom from the burdens of traditional caretaking responsibilities. “Were it not for Social Security, many of us would be supporting our parents,” intoned the author of *It Takes a Village*.

“We would take them in; we would do what we needed to do to try to provide the resources they required to stay above poverty, to live as comfortably as we could afford. And that would cause a lot of difficult decisions in our lives, wouldn’t it?”

This rhetoric about entitlements freeing the young ignores the fact that they are hit with the cost of supporting their elders in every paycheck. Furthermore, when repurposing lines first uttered a half-century ago, today’s politicians are also ignoring some very good news: The oldest among us are in remarkably good shape compared to graybeards of previous generations.

Using consumption data, economists Bruce Meyer of the University of Chicago and James X. Sullivan of the University of Notre Dame have shown that people 65 and older have much lower poverty rates than most other demographic groups and that these rates have fallen sharply over the past 50 years. Writing for the *New York Times* website in November 2011, Meyer reminded us that “even over the past 10 years, those 65 and older with the lowest income are now living in bigger houses that are much more likely to be air conditioned and have appliances like a dishwasher and clothes dryer.” Eighty-three percent of elderly households own a home, and 86 percent own a car.

Seniors have more stuff and more wealth. According to 2010 combined data from 15 federal agencies on population trends, economics, and health issues, seniors’ average net worth as of

2007 had increased almost 80 percent during the previous 20 years. The same sort of improvement has not spread to all age groups. In fact, the data show that younger Americans are losing ground.

In 1984, reports the Pew Research Center, households headed by people 65 or older had 10 times the wealth of households headed by people under 35. By 2005—before the Great Recession hit—the gap had increased to 22 times, and by 2009 it was 47 times. In 2010, 11 percent of households headed by people 65 or older were officially under the poverty line. For households headed by someone under 35 years of age, the figure was 22 percent. The last time younger households were less likely to be poor than elderly ones was back in 1983. Conditions for older Americans have improved remarkably since Social Security and Medicare were established.

That older households are wealthier than younger ones is not surprising, and it is no cause for concern in itself. Elderly Americans have had a lifetime to amass savings and assets and to earn money from interest and investments. By the time they reach 65, most Americans also have lower living expenses. The kids are out of the house, and the house is more likely to be paid off (or to cost less due to inflation). In their new book *The Clash of Generations*, economists Lawrence Kotlikoff and Scott Burns show the cost of living for households of different sizes and ages varies dramatically. The cost of living for a married couple with children ages 6 to 17 is at least twice the cost for a retired couple. And these numbers underestimate the gap between retirees and married parents since they don’t include expenses such as saving for college, orthodontic treatment, and vacation time.

This is not to say that some seniors aren’t seriously

### Median Net Worth by Age of Householder (2010 dollars)

AGE	1984	1995	2002	2009	CHANGE (1984–2009)
All	\$ 65,293	\$ 57,511	\$ 71,400	\$ 71,635	10%
35 and Younger	11,521	10,627	7,925	3,662	-68
35 to 44	71,118	45,338	49,928	39,601	-44
45 to 54	113,511	87,622	99,921	101,651	-10
55 to 64	147,236	130,658	160,727	162,065	10
65 and Older	120,457	132,187	158,182	170,494	42

Sources: Pew Research Center, U.S. Census Bureau

## When Social Security first started cutting checks, America was still in the throes of the Great Depression. Retirement was a rare and wonderful thing, as most people worked pretty much until the day they died.

struggling. But to assert that younger Americans benefit from having the government take money from their current wages and give it to their parents obfuscates obvious points about where that largess comes from—and whether it will exist when today’s 50-, 40-, or 30-year-olds retire.

### Entitlements Forever

Given their failure to successfully pass a run-of-the-mill annual budget for the last three years, it’s not surprising that Congress and the president lack the courage to confront the apocalyptic structural problems of old-age entitlement programs. Social Security and Medicare together represented about 37 percent of total federal outlays in fiscal year 2011, according to the Congressional Budget Office. In 2020, absent the sort of changes routinely dismissed by members of both parties as grotesquely inhumane and politically impossible, that figure will jump to 44 percent. Based on current trends, the two old-age entitlements will account for half of all federal outlays by 2030.

Social Security’s various trust funds, according to its own trustees, will be depleted of all reserves by 2033 and won’t be able to take in anywhere near enough cash to pay its obligations. Medicare’s major trust fund, which covers hospital benefits, is scheduled to run dry in 2024. In addition, both programs already contribute to the deficit due to massive borrowing that will only get bigger and more expensive. Contrary to common belief, the various trust funds for Social Security and Medicare aren’t filled with gold coins or even the money collected from taxpayers over the years. Instead, they are filled with IOUs or promises by the government to pay back whatever has been taken. By law, the trillions of dollars in taxes collected above what was needed to pay for benefits has been invested since the ’80s in interest-bearing government securities. Of course, the federal government doesn’t have that money anymore because it’s been spent on defense, stimulus, education, green jobs,

and more. Yet the trust funds are not purely an accounting fiction, as is widely claimed; they are actual assets that the government has borrowed against and, as such, represent liabilities.

These programs, then, are the very definition of *unsustainable*. They pay out more than they take in and cannot exist without constant tweaks, fixes, and adjustments—all of which point toward a future of higher taxes for workers and smaller or nonexistent benefits for retirees.

Yet when leading politicians deign to mention Social Security and Medicare, it’s never to seriously confront their disastrous trajectories, but rather to guarantee the programs’ survival while impugning the barbarous motives of their electoral rivals. Presumptive GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney—routinely assailed by Democrats as a heartless plutocrat who will turn old people out in the streets—stresses that Medicare is sacrosanct and blasts President Barack Obama for “taking a series of steps that end Medicare as we know it.”

Social Security was created in 1935 as a way of supporting Americans in their old age. The first checks were cut in 1939. The program is widely regarded as the signature achievement of the New Deal. Conservatives such as Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan groused about Social Security throughout the 1950s and early ’60s. During his famous 1964 nominating speech for Goldwater, Reagan asked, “Can’t we introduce voluntary features that would permit a citizen to do better on his own?...We are against forcing all citizens, regardless of need, into a compulsory government program.”

Yet by the 1980s, President Reagan called

preserving “the integrity of the Social Security system” the “highest priority of my administration.” In an era of bitter partisanship and division, “one point that has won universal agreement,” Reagan declared, was that the entitlement “must be preserved.” He tweaked the system by increasing payroll taxes and slightly increasing the age at which benefits would kick in for people currently paying into the system. He left the benefits of current retirees untouched.

Medicare, which subsidizes health care for the elderly, joined Social Security in 1966 as the nation’s other entitlement specifically for seniors. Both programs have changed substantially over the decades, covering ever more types of people and conditions and expanding in cost and scope beyond the wildest imagination of their initial backers. When Medicare started, its supporters estimated that the program would cost \$12 billion in inflation-adjusted dollars in 1990. The actual inflation-adjusted price tag came to \$107 billion.

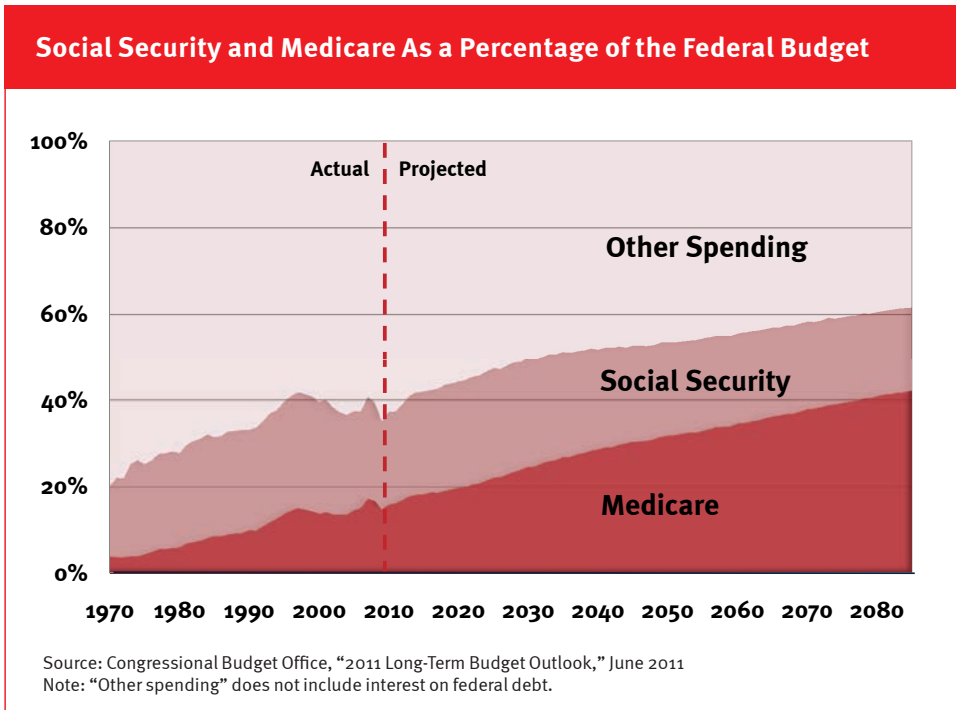
The two programs share a technical problem: There is no way to reliably pay for them as they currently exist. The taxes—and the people who will generate those taxes—aren’t there now, and there is no reason to believe they will magically appear anytime during the next half-century. Social Security is already in cash-flow deficit, meaning current taxes are not enough to cover current payouts. Each month the accounting surplus built up over years past, held as government securities, is drained a bit more. The payroll taxes earmarked for Medicare (1.45 percent of wages collected on both the employee and employer side), together with the premiums and state transfers, never fully

covered the program’s costs even before the massive, unfunded expansion to cover prescription drugs enacted in 2003 under President George W. Bush.

But as serious as the two programs’ fiscal flaws may be, the more basic problem is ethical. When Reagan negotiated what he called “a new lease on life” for Social Security in the early 1980s, he said the reforms would guarantee nothing less than the “present and future well-being of every man, woman, and child in America, and generations yet unborn.” That’s not only gross political overstatement. It fudged all questions about whether living children and “generations yet unborn” should during their leanest years as workers be forced to pay for a system that Reagan himself had assailed just two decades earlier.

### The Myth of Mandatory Spending

Social Security and Medicare are part of what’s called “mandatory spending,” or federal spending that is automatically continued under current law without the need for annual reauthorization. Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, which provides health insurance for the poor, comprise by far the largest portion of mandatory spending in the budget; other items in the mandatory category include federal retirement funds, food stamps, veterans’ benefits, and the earned income and child tax credits. The other major category in the federal budget, known as “discretionary spending,” includes items such as homeland security, most military spending, farm subsidies, and aid



“The term *Ponzi scheme* is over the top, unnecessary, and frightening to many people,” Mitt Romney said. That may be true, but it doesn’t change the reality that current workers are paying for current retirees, not for their future selves.

to schools. Discretionary spending is what gets haggled over in annual budget negotiations. In 2011, mandatory spending accounted for 56 percent of total outlays while discretionary spending accounted for about 37 percent. The remaining 7 percent of outlays is mostly net interest.

But the terms *mandatory* and *discretionary* are misleading at best and mendacious at worst, as all spending is open to negotiation, to increases and cuts. If President Obama is at all serious when he repeatedly describes the government’s fiscal trajectory as “unsustainable,” addressing old-age entitlements must be part of any attempt to reduce expenditures.

In 2011, according to the Congressional Budget Office, the country spent \$725 billion on Social Security, the single largest spending item of the year. The Social Security Administration says it will give checks to over 56 million Americans in 2012. While recipients include some dependent children and disabled workers, the largest bloc (36 million) is retirees. Retirees receive an average of \$1,229 per month, with a maximum benefit of \$2,500.

Medicare is health insurance for all people who are 65 years or older, along with a subset of younger people who suffer from dialysis-requiring kidney failure and a few other disabilities. The program costs \$560 billion a year and serves around 49 million people. Medicare benefits break down into four distinct parts.

Part A, “hospital insurance,” covers in-patient stays in medical facilities (including nursing homes and some home care) and generally does not require any sort of premium payment from beneficiaries. Part B is “medical insurance,” designed to replace coverage that seniors used to get through their jobs. Recipients pay a premium that ranges from \$99 a month for individuals with adjusted gross incomes under \$85,000 (95 percent of all recipients) to \$320 for those pulling in \$214,000 or more. Part C is a voluntary program, also known as Medicare Advantage, in which beneficiaries

enroll with government-certified private insurers who in exchange for a flat monthly fee from the feds provide the same coverage as Parts A and B, typically throwing in extras not covered by standard Medicare, such as vision, hearing, and dental programs. Depending on various factors (such as whether the operator runs a health maintenance organization or a preferred provider organization, whether the insured wants drug coverage or no deductibles, etc.), Medicare Advantage may charge fees on top of the basic premium. Finally, Medicare Part D, which took effect in 2006 under legislation passed as part of the Medicare Modernization Act in 2003, covers prescription drugs. Premiums for drug coverage, which has a mandated annual deductible of \$320, start around \$25 a month and vary based on the patient’s income, needs, and preferences regarding deductibles vs. co-payments.

When Social Security first started cutting checks, America was still in the throes of the Great Depression. Retirement was a rare and wonderful thing, as most people worked pretty much until the day they died (the average life expectancy at birth was 47.3 years in 1900; 68.2 years in 1950s; and 78.5 years in 2009). When Medicare was created, seniors were more likely than the average American to be poor. Although neither of those things is true anymore, spending as a percentage of federal outlays on both programs continues to grow and shows no signs of slowing down.

Because it is on automatic pilot, spending on entitlements can grow without political consequence or fiscal conscience. Between 1975 and 2000, spending on all entitlements grew



at an average annual rate of 3.96 percent, while annual GDP growth was 3.27 percent. Then the ratio really started to deteriorate: Between 2000 and 2010, entitlement spending grew 5.3 percent a year while the economy managed just 1.81 percent. The Great Recession has added a bit to that disparity (Medicaid rolls tend to swell during downturns), but it's far from the whole story. The aging of the population and the expansion of Medicare to include prescription drug coverage—at a cost of \$338 billion from 2006 through the end of 2011—are the major reasons entitlements grow faster than the economy. And given that the oldest baby boomers are turning just 66 this year, we haven't seen anything yet.

### Who Pays?

Social Security and Medicare are paid for through a combination of specifically earmarked payroll taxes, general tax revenue, and borrowing. Under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA), most workers pay 6.2 percent of their earned income in taxes earmarked for Social Security payouts to current beneficiaries (a rate that has been temporarily reduced to 4.2 percent as a means of “stimulating” the economy). Employers kick in another 6.2 percent to the same fund. Over the years, the amount of gross wages subject to the Social Security tax has been adjusted upward; in 2012 it maxes out at \$110,100. FICA also levies a tax of 2.9 percent (split equally between employee and employer) to cover a portion of Medicare. The Medicare tax is not subject to a regular compensation limit and is applied to every dollar of wages.

Theoretically, total contributions to Social Security are designed to cover the full cost of the program. That is, the usual amount of 12.4 percent in payroll taxes paid by workers and employers should provide enough revenue to pay for current and future outlays. Historically, Social Security has had far more people paying into the system than drawing funds from it, so the program amassed a surplus in its trust funds that since 1983 has been automatically invested in a mix of short-term and long-term government securities. But those favorable demographics have changed dramatically.

In 1940 there were 159 workers for each beneficiary. Today there are fewer than three. Last fall Mitt Romney, whom the Obama administration accuses of wanting to “dismantle” old-age entitlements, attacked Texas Gov. Rick Perry during a Republican presidential debate for calling Social Security “a Ponzi scheme,” a scam in which current investors are paid profits from new investors, not out of actual returns. “The term *Ponzi scheme* is over the top, unnecessary, and frightening to many people,” Romney said. That may all be true, but it doesn't change the reality that current workers are indeed paying for current retirees, not for their future selves, which means that as the number of contributors falls, payouts cannot continue at the same rate. The only options are to reduce benefits, increase contributions, or some combination of both.

While life spans have increased and birth rates have decreased, Social Security's revenue has not been able to keep pace. In 2010 Social Security entered into a permanent cash-flow deficit, meaning annual payroll tax revenue is no longer sufficient to cover annual benefits. (The last time this occurred was in the early 1980s, when Congress responded by gradually raising payroll taxes and the eligibility age.) For now, benefits therefore must be partially covered by interest income from the assets in the trust funds. After 2021, Social Security will have to cash in the trust fund assets—currently around \$2.7 trillion—to pay full benefits until the trust fund is exhausted.

In 2011, according to the most recent report from the Social Security trustees, released in April, Social Security raised \$691 billion from payroll taxes and general revenue while paying out \$736 billion in retirement benefits. The \$45 billion shortfall was covered by money in the plan's various trust funds. The Trustees' Report projects that at current tax rates and benefits levels the trust funds will be completely exhausted by 2033. That's three years earlier than the projections made in 2011 and seven years earlier than projections from 2006. The day of financial reckoning is approaching with accelerating speed. And that situation hasn't been helped by the temporary two-percentage-point cut in payroll taxes Congress enacted in December 2010 to let Americans keep more of their money during the economic downturn, since Congress refused to offset the reduced revenue with benefit cuts.

Current law holds that when the trust funds are depleted, benefits must be cut to the level of payroll tax revenue. As it stands, that would amount to a 25 percent haircut or, in current dollars, \$307 off the average retirement check of \$1,229. Compounding the problem is that the govern-

ment has already spent the Social Security surpluses to pay for other expenses. Absent tax increases or benefit cuts, all operating deficits will not actually be covered by past savings but by new borrowing.

Medicare's finances are in even worse shape. Costs are rising more quickly, and, unlike the Social Security levy, the Medicare payroll tax was never designed to fully cover benefits. Currently only one-third or so of Medicare costs are covered by payroll taxes, a fraction that will get smaller over time. All told, payroll taxes, along with dedicated funding sources such as premium payments, state transfers, and taxes on benefits, cover around half of all Medicare costs. The rest comes from general tax revenue and borrowing.

Looking down the road, the picture is bleaker still. According to the most recent trustees' report, the Medicare hospital insurance (H.I.) trust fund will run out of assets in 2024. As with the Social Security trust funds, if the H.I. fund is depleted, Medicare will by law be able to pay out in benefits only what the program collects in taxes.

Even though payroll taxes aren't enough to fund Medicare and Social Security, they impose a major burden on workers, especially younger workers, who are likely to make less money and thus pay a higher percentage of their income to support retirees who are already as a group more affluent.

### Underfunding the Future

In 1994 the youth advocacy group Third Millennium com-

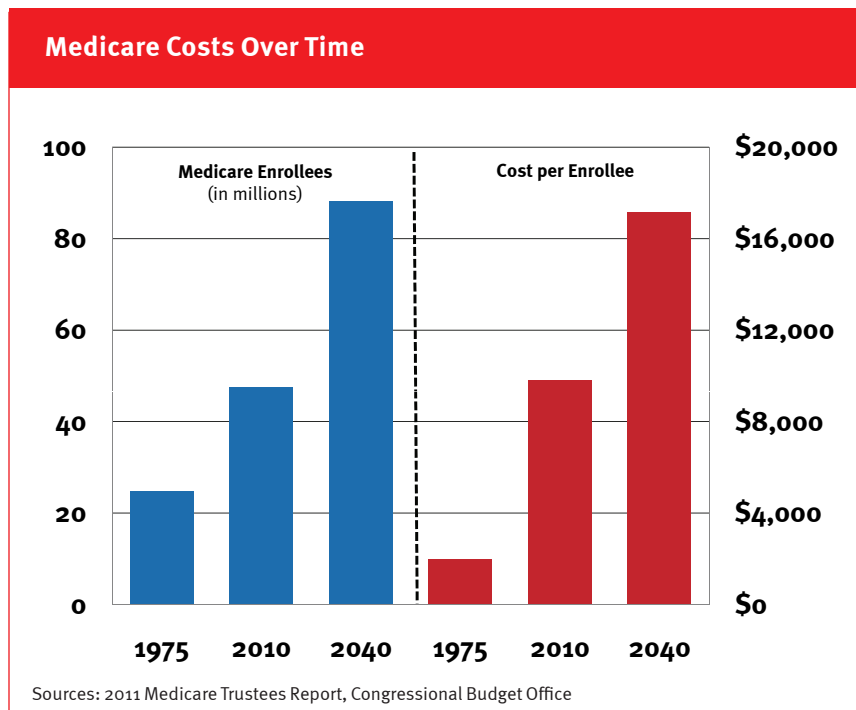
missioned a poll that is still widely quoted. One of the questions found that more members of Generation X (ages 18 to 34 at the time) believed in UFOs (46 percent) than thought that Social Security (9 percent) would be solvent when they started to retire around 2030. But even if Social Security is around when Gen Xers finally stop working, they will discover that they have put far more into the system than they will be taking out.

Last year C. Eugene Steuerle and Stephanie Rennae, researchers at the liberal Urban Institute, calculated what Americans at various levels of income (high, average, and low) and in various types of households (single or married) can expect to pay into and receive from Social Security and Medicare over the course of their lifetimes. For Social Security, the calculations assumed that individuals retire at the age when full benefits kick in (originally 65 but rising past 67 under current law) and that Medicare payments start at 65. The main findings are both highly informative and deeply dispiriting.

Consider the Social Security numbers first. A single man earning the average wage (\$43,500 in 2011) who retired in 1980 would have paid a total of \$96,000 in Social Security taxes and received lifetime benefits of \$203,000, or about 211 percent of contributions.

A single man earning the average wage but retiring in 2010 faces a vastly different situation: He would have paid \$294,000 in taxes to receive benefits of just \$265,000, or about 90 percent of contributions. For the same person retiring in 2030, taxes of \$398,000 yield \$336,000 in benefits, or just 84 percent of contributions. (Because they tend to live longer, women fare slightly better than men, but single women earning the average wage and retiring in 2010 and 2030 also face negative returns on their lifetime tax contributions to Social Security.)

The calculations for Medi-



## In 1940 there were 159 workers for each Social Security beneficiary. Today there are fewer than three.

care underline the point that everybody is getting more out of the program than they are paying in. Consider a single woman earning the average wage who turned 65 in 1980. She has paid in \$8,000 but will take out \$81,000 in benefits, or more than 10 times her contribution. The same woman turning 65 in 2010 will have paid \$58,000 in taxes to receive \$185,000 in benefits, or a threefold return. A single woman retiring in 2030 will have paid \$87,000 to get \$275,000.

Medicare is notoriously ineffective at containing costs. Champions of the program like to note that it has lower administrative costs as a percentage than most private insurance plans, but they routinely ignore at least two other points that explain why overall costs continue to spiral upward. First, Medicare wastes a lot of money on procedures that have no impact on patients. As a 2009 report by President Obama's Council of Economic Advisers, then chaired by Christina Romer, put it, "Nearly 30 percent of Medicare's costs could be saved without adverse health consequences." Second, Medicare reimbursement rates to providers have proven politically impossible to cut. In 1997 Congress created "the sustainable growth rate," which tied what the government would pay for particular procedures to rates of inflation. The reimbursements went up steadily for several years until 2002, when the rate of increase in rates slowed slightly—not an actual cut, mind you, merely a decrease in the rate of increase. Since then, doctors have managed to muscle through what has become known as the "doc fix": ongoing "temporary" increases in reimbursement rates. No one seriously thinks

that reimbursement rates will be trimmed anytime soon.

Social Security and Medicare thus present twin horns of a dilemma. The retirement entitlement offers nothing but negative returns for future beneficiaries, whose taxes in the meantime will need to be raised to cover current beneficiaries. And the health entitlement's costs have proven resistant to all forms of price control, meaning the system will either chew up a larger share of federal spending at the expense of other outlays, go bust, or rely on larger and larger tax levies on today's younger workers.

### Old vs. Young

Social Security and Medicare were created in a very different America as a response to very different circumstances. The old-age entitlements were designed to alleviate problems related to an economy still in transition from rural agriculture to urban manufacturing and post-industrial services. Private pensions and retirement savings were relative rarities, and the communitarian dream of multiple generations living under the same roof—invoked as an ideal by some of the very people, such as Joe Biden and Hillary Clinton, who champion old-age entitlements as a means of "independence" for seniors—was a routine necessity.

That's no longer the case in a country where most retirees are wealthier than the younger people paying for their benefits. According to 2010 data (the latest available) from the Bureau of Labor Statistic's Consumer Expenditure Data, the typical American 65 or older had a pretax income of about \$41,000 and annual expenses of about \$37,000, including \$4,800 for all medical care costs they bear under the current regime (insurance, prescription drugs, doctor's visits, etc.). Those who can pay for their needs out of their own pockets should do so, not only in the name of fiscal sanity and generational fairness but because the U.S. health care system suffers mightily from a lack of pricing signals and consumer self-control.

## Social Security and Expected Medicare Benefits vs. Taxes

### Single man earning the average wage (\$43,500 in 2011 dollars)

If you turn 65 in...	Annual Social Security benefits	Lifetime Social Security benefits	Lifetime Medicare benefits	Total benefits received over a lifetime	Lifetime Social Security (OASDI) taxes	Lifetime Medicare taxes	Total Social Security & Medicare taxes paid
<b>1960</b>	\$9,300	\$113,000	\$15,000	<b>\$128,000</b>	\$18,000	\$0	<b>\$18,000</b>
<b>1980</b>	\$15,100	\$203,000	\$62,000	<b>\$265,000</b>	\$96,000	\$8,000	<b>\$104,000</b>
<b>2010</b>	\$17,500	\$265,000	\$167,000	<b>\$432,000</b>	\$294,000	\$58,000	<b>\$352,000</b>
<b>2030</b>	\$20,500	\$336,000	\$251,000	<b>\$587,000</b>	\$398,000	\$87,000	<b>\$485,000</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>\$17,500</b>	<b>\$266,000</b>	<b>\$170,000</b>	<b>\$436,000</b>	<b>\$299,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$359,000</b>

### Single woman earning the average wage (\$43,500 in 2011 dollars)

If you turn 65 in...	Annual Social Security benefits	Lifetime Social Security benefits	Lifetime Medicare benefits	Total benefits received over a lifetime	Lifetime Social Security (OASDI) taxes	Lifetime Medicare taxes	Total Social Security & Medicare taxes paid
<b>1960</b>	\$9,300	\$146,000	\$23,000	<b>\$169,000</b>	\$18,000	\$0	<b>\$18,000</b>
<b>1980</b>	\$15,100	\$249,000	\$81,000	<b>\$330,000</b>	\$96,000	\$8,000	<b>\$104,000</b>
<b>2010</b>	\$17,500	\$290,000	\$185,000	<b>\$475,000</b>	\$294,000	\$58,000	<b>\$352,000</b>
<b>2030</b>	\$20,500	\$363,000	\$275,000	<b>\$638,000</b>	\$398,000	\$87,000	<b>\$485,000</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>\$17,500</b>	<b>\$290,000</b>	<b>\$188,000</b>	<b>\$478,000</b>	<b>\$299,000</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	<b>\$359,000</b>

Source: C. Eugene Steuerle and Stephanie Rennae, "Social Security and Medicare Taxes and Benefits Over a Lifetime," Urban Institute, June 2011

We must reform the current system, starting now. The most obvious, effective, and just approach is to end Social Security and Medicare and replace them with a true safety net that would help poor Americans regardless of age. To the extent that seniors qualify for income supplements, food stamps, and other transfer programs, they should be added to those rolls. They can also be added to Medicaid rolls (currently about 9 million seniors are so-called double-dippers, receiving benefits from both Medicaid and Medicare). There is no reason to have separate programs for the elderly and the poor when the real distinction should be not age but ability to pay. Payroll taxes, the most regressive

taxes on income, should be scrapped, freeing up huge amounts of money for Americans of all ages to spend and save as they see fit. As Americans start to think seriously about saving for their retirements, long-term investment will boom, and so will insurance planning; generations will be forced to recognize that they are connected not via impersonal and punitive payroll taxes but through shared assets and household expenses.

The popular counter-argument—that current and future beneficiaries have paid into these systems and are thus “entitled” to Social

A single man earning the average wage who retired in 1980 would have paid \$96,000 in Social Security taxes and received lifetime benefits of \$203,000. A single man earning the average wage but retiring in 2010 would have paid \$294,000 in taxes to receive benefits of just \$265,000.

Security and Medicare—holds no legal or moral water. In the 1960 case *Flemming v. Nestor*, the Supreme Court ruled that, contrary to the rhetoric surrounding Social Security, the program is not an actual retirement system in which participants maintain legal claims to the contributions they've made or the assets they've accrued. While it is terrifying for all of us to consider losing the money we've paid into Social Security, the fact is that we already have. It makes no moral sense to string along a program that winds up screwing even recent beneficiaries as measured by money in vs. benefits out. And as for Medicare, there is something wrong with perpetuating a system that doles out scarce tax dollars to recipients regardless of need. Old-age entitlements aren't a problem to be adjusted; they are a blot to be thoroughly mopped up.

The technical details and transition times for a post-entitlement country are less important than a basic principle that should appeal to conservatives, liberals, and even many libertarians: Federal aid programs should be means-tested. The welfare reforms of the 1990s provide a model. Rather than create and oversee expansive projects from afar, the federal government started sending nonmatching block grants to the states, which were given more freedom to set their own requirements and more flexibility to try out approaches tailored to their specific needs and circumstances. When the federal government gives matching grants, it creates an incentive for states to increase spending on programs regardless of effectiveness (as happens currently with Medicaid, where Washington pays about 60 cents out of every dollar

spent on the program as spending rages out of control).

It is hard to know which is more depressing: the punishing and sure-to-rise price that younger Americans are forced to pay for a system that steals from the relatively poor to give to the relatively rich, or the smugness with which champions of this patently unfair system insist on its righteousness. In his March speech in Florida, Vice President Biden told stories of building a new house that included living quarters for his parents, who refused to move in. Biden explained that his parents and other seniors value their “independence” and “dignity” more than anything. His mother, he said, was representative of seniors in that she wanted to be able to pay her own way at check ups with her doctor. “She didn't want to ask her kids.”

In Biden's strange moral universe, his mom should be admired for wanting to get medical care on the dime of strangers rather than from her own family. The vice president was trying to defend old-age entitlements, but his example is the quintessence of what is wrong with the current system: It gives to those who already have much by taking from those who have little.

Back in 1964, the last year of the baby boom, Bob Dylan warned: “There's a battle outside / And it is ragin' / It'll soon shake your windows / And rattle your walls.” Born in 1941, Dylan has been receiving Social Security and Medicare—both programs have mandatory enrollment—for at least four years now. In 1964 he was singing to a very different America with very different concerns. But his song of generational war, so prophetic in its day, may well prove prescient again. ■

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# After the Storm

How Joplin, Missouri, rebuilt following a devastating tornado by circumventing bureaucracy

*Tate Watkins*



ON MAY 22, 2011, a tornado ripped through the town of Joplin, Missouri. The multi-vortex storm cut an eerily straight west-east line through Joplin's downtown street grid, growing to three quarters of a mile wide at its peak. In the end, the Category 5 twister physically picked up and slammed down about one-quarter of the town, creating 3 million cubic yards of debris. It flattened big-box stores such as Home Depot and Walmart and left a desert of concrete foundation slabs covering a six-mile stretch of destruction. The storm killed 161 people, displaced 9,000 more, and completely wiped out more than 4,000 structures while damaging another 3,000. It was the deadliest tornado since modern recordkeeping began in 1950, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

But as the one-year anniversary of the storm approached, Joplin found itself in startlingly good shape. Local officials estimate that insurance claims will total \$2 billion, yet the town's business tax revenues are actually up for the year. School enrollment is 95 percent of what it was before the tornado, and the vast majority of displaced residents have secured lodging in or near the area.

Joplin's recovery contrasts with the fitful, fraught response to the destruction wrought by Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, 700 miles to the south, in 2005. The two storms, like the two cities, were different in nature and scale. But there were also disparities in the official and unofficial responses after the initial damage. While the people of Joplin largely took matters into their own hands, pushing aside burdensome rules and refusing help when it came with too

many strings attached, New Orleans and the surrounding area to this day remains hamstrung by federal, state, and local bureaucracy. Joplin's experience offers a powerful lesson in self-sufficiency and knowing when to say "no thanks" to government.

### 'This Isn't the FEMA of Katrina'

When I flew to Joplin in the fall of 2011 on one of the two daily flights serving the city, residents were still struggling to fathom their losses. But they were certain about one thing. Over and over, locals told me, "This isn't the FEMA of Katrina." Which was good, because after Hurricane Katrina the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) stalled the recovery and rebuilding for millions of Gulf Coast residents. In the months and years after the hurricane and resulting floods, media outlets, congressional investigations, and government reports excoriated the agency for its inept response. Indecision at local, state, and federal levels of government, as well as rigid regulations concerning everything from occupational licensing to debris removal, delayed or hindered Gulf Coast rebuilding efforts. FEMA's own internal investigation admitted that the "widespread criticism for a slow and ineffective response" was well deserved.

One reason the FEMA of 2011 did not perform like the FEMA of 2005 was that Joplin residents were determined not to let that happen. Founded by lead and zinc miners in the 19th century, this small southwestern Missouri town has a long history of self-reliance in a state that ranks fifth in overall freedom from burdensome government regulations, according to a 2011 study by the free market Mercatus Center (which sponsored my trip to Joplin as part of a broader tornado recovery research project for which I handled logistics). The community has the close-knit feel you'd expect of a small Midwestern town, with a network of active voluntary organizations and church groups that col-

**"A lot of the residents are staying here," Assistant City Manager Sam Anselm tells me. It's "a testament to the spirit, the way the community responded to this."**

Previous page: People go through what is left of their home in Joplin, Missouri, on May 24, 2011. Tom Uhlbrock/JR/Newscom





laborate regularly. And as Beloit College economist Emily Chamlee-Wright concluded after leading more than 400 interviews with Katrina survivors, the best approach once emergency gives way to recovery is to reduce government involvement and devolve power to disaster victims, who know their own situations best. “In order to minimize signal noise that inhibits the response from markets and civil society,” Chamlee-Wright writes in her 2010 book *The Cultural and Political Economy of Recovery*, “government at all levels should scale back its efforts as soon as possible to make room for markets and voluntary organizations to provide basic supplies, food, clean-up, and construction services.”

Despite its small size, Joplin, home of St. John’s Regional Medical Center and battery manufacturer EaglePicher, is a regional hub for commerce, providing jobs and connections to residents of nearby Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Kansas. “Joplin’s a town of 50,000 people at night but a city of a quarter-million during the day,” goes the local refrain. The recovery benefited from these trade routes. After the tornado, emergency response teams from around the state streamed into town. Four hundred and thirty police, fire, and public works departments helped with search and rescue, cleanup, and debris removal. Doctors and nurses, many of whom worked at one of Joplin’s two hospitals or in the medical services sector clustered around them, came from around the four-state area. A handful of warehouses around the city are full to this day

with donated material such as tarps, clothing, and food.

Most displaced people found refuge with nearby family or friends; the city estimates that 95 percent of people displaced by the storm stayed within 25 miles of town. “A lot of the residents are staying here,” Assistant City Manager Sam Anselm tells me. It’s “a testament to the spirit, the way the community responded to this.”

The city registered 130,000 volunteers from around the country and estimates that at least that many helped and weren’t counted. One even came from Japan and stayed two weeks, citing the way Americans donated to his country after the earthquake and tsunami of March 2011. (Someone found the Japanese volunteer a bicycle that he rode 12 miles each day to and from his cleanup site.) In October, ABC’s *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* rolled into town and built seven homes in seven days. Habitat for Humanity built 10 the next month.

The tornado sucked nine-story St. John’s a few inches off its foundation before setting it back down. The medical center erected temporary structures in open space next door, complete with an emergency room, and managed to keep nearly all of its 2,200 employees on payroll. Along with medical jobs, Joplin is home to a

handful of big businesses, such as building materials company TAMKO, a PotashCorp animal feed plant, and a General Mills factory.

Joplin Schools Superintendent C.J. Huff didn't want what he dubbed the "Hurricane Katrina effect" of people fleeing the area permanently, so the school district established a program for volunteers to "adopt" students and provide them with school supplies. Private donations poured in; the United Arab Emirates gave \$1 million, enough to issue a MacBook to every high school student. TAMKO donated \$500,000. Other sources, from Lions Club International to singer Sheryl Crow (who auctioned off a Mercedes) to a 9-year-old Nevadan who raised \$360 with a car wash, combined to contribute \$3.5 million of private money to the district by September 2011.

### **'Better to Ask Forgiveness Than Permission'**

Two days after the tornado, when 4,200 kids had nowhere to go to school, Superintendent Huff stood up at a staff meeting and said, "We're going to start school in 84 days." On August 17, they did just that. The tornado had destroyed the town's only public high school and 50 percent of the school district's property, inflicting \$150 million worth of damage. When school re-opened as scheduled in the fall, enrollment hit 95 percent.

How did they do it? "Sometimes," Huff explains, "it's better to ask for forgiveness than permission." A day after the storm, once Huff had canceled the remainder of the school year, the Joplin school board granted him emergency authority to circumvent usual bureaucratic procedures in order to deal directly with the disaster. "We knew that to keep things moving at a rapid

pace, we needed to give our superintendent authority to make decisions as quickly as possible," says Joplin Board of Education President Ashley Micklethwaite. "The worst thing we can do as a board is get down into the weeds and worry about minute details. We had to look at the big picture, and the big picture was getting our schools back up and running."

Huff's new powers included the ability to make emergency procurement decisions instead of, for example, adhering to a mandatory two-week minimum for posting bids. The superintendent also successfully lobbied Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon, who signed a handful of executive orders granting the district emergency permission to speed up the contracting process faster than state regulations usually allow. Huff gathered a team of architects and contractors he had used for previous district jobs and began planning temporary construction for the approaching school year. Within a few days, he says, they were able to choose which subcontractors and building materials to use, a process that would normally take up to one month. City Hall also responded to the needs of the school district and its builders, agreeing to receive and approve plans and blueprints piecemeal rather than requiring the usual single master set. A process that would typically take months took only a few weeks.

The school system now houses most of its students in temporary structures or leased space. Joplin High School's juniors and seniors attend class in a decade-vacant Shopko store in a mall that has been refurbished with modern classrooms, a spiffy computer and video lab, and Joplin Eagles artwork on the walls.

Getting students in classes improved community morale and has been among the most consequential steps in Joplin's recovery. It would not have happened if Huff and his team did not have the flexibility to innovate around bureaucracy as usual.

Two days after the tornado, when 4,200 kids had nowhere to go to school, Superintendent C.J. Huff stood up at a staff meeting and said, "We're going to start school in 84 days." On August 17, they did just that.



### **'A Different Set of Rules'**

East Middle School is a less happy story than Joplin High. Having opened only in 2009, the school was declared a “total loss” after the tornado. Because reconstruction has involved the federal government, the project initially was delayed for months. “We’re having to follow a different set of rules,” Huff says, “because federal dollars are involved.”

Most taxpayers appreciate government procurement and contracting regulations designed to limit waste, fraud, and abuse. But those safeguards can exasperate locals who are racing against the clock to make important decisions in the wake of catastrophe. “For us to be able to tap into those federal funds that we’ll need to rebuild,” Board of Education President Micklethwaite says, “we have to follow their procedures, which are quite frankly slower than what we—even in a normal situation—would have to do in the state of Missouri.”

“According to the state and how we have to bid architects, it’s much more open,” Micklethwaite explains. “But when you bring the federal government and FEMA into it, they have very specific requirements, for architectural bids or anything else.” Micklethwaite recalls sitting around a table with fellow school board members and FEMA representatives after the tornado. “There’s this giant book,” she says, “that’s like three inches thick with tiny, tiny print, and it’s all the rules and regulations about federal emergency management. And they’re flipping through the book and looking at very specific statutes and rules that we have to follow, and at that point I really thought, ‘OK, this is going to be challenging.’”

Micklethwaite is quick to add that FEMA

has been helpful, providing among other things “temporary modular classrooms” for seven schools damaged by the storm, as well as 600 trailers for displaced residents. But the feds are by nature bureaucratic.

“It’d sure be nice,” says Superintendent Huff, “if there were federal procurement policies that allowed for expedited processes in emergency events, and that’s not the case. So we’re wading through paperwork.” He says that, “hypothetically,” the district could have broken ground on a new East Middle School in late summer of 2011. “That would be a building,” Huff says, “that we could have online next fall for our kids, and now it’s probably looking more like next Christmas at best.” Huff’s “at best” turned out to be ambitious, if not unrealistic. The school board has since approved a reconstruction schedule that predicts an East Middle School ribbon-cutting ceremony in December 2013.

### ‘Get the Hell Out of the Way’

Owners of houses that were declared a total loss faced a daunting obstacle to rebuilding: The city government would not let them build even a temporary structure to protect their property from the rain, for fear that it would obstruct debris-removal efforts. Joplin faced a hard August 7 deadline from FEMA to have the wreckage cleared in order to get 90 percent of cleanup costs reimbursed from Washington.

On June 20, 2011, after contentious debate, the Joplin City Council voted 7 to 2 for a 60-day moratorium on new construction. City Councilman Bill Scearce, an insurance salesman, was one of the votes against, fearing displaced residents would simply settle somewhere else, as many Gulf Coast homeowners did after Katrina. “If you’ve got somebody that wants to build a house on site and protect their property,” Scearce says, “I mean, who are we to tell them they can’t do that?... We need to put up ways that people can get things done instead of making them jump through hoops.” City employees, he says, should do their jobs and then “just get the hell out of the way.”

In the end, the moratorium itself got out of the way: The council lifted the ban more than

three weeks ahead of schedule once all but 300 lots had been cleared.

David Glenn, a local commercial real estate broker, said the city’s flexible building department also smoothed reconstruction efforts. “There’s some building jurisdictions that feel like they’re the Gestapo,” Glenn says. “‘You’re going to do it our way, or you’re not going to do it all.’ But Joplin doesn’t have that attitude.” City administrators brought in extra inspectors to deal with the massive demand for building and repair permits. Meanwhile, Glenn says, most local businesses turned down the \$10 million in rebuilding loans offered by the federal Small Business Administration, because they deemed the lower interest rates not worth the red tape that comes with a government-backed loan.

### ‘We Just Keep Moving Forward’

Much of Joplin’s recovery success to date is thanks to assertive local leaders and coordination between government and voluntary organizations. Hurricane Katrina wrought devastation on a much greater scale, but even accounting for that difference, stories of red tape and bureaucratic inertia are much rarer in Joplin. Freedom and discretion to rebuild have been the default setting for locals.

Mistakes after Katrina caused much delay, despair, and suffering. They also revealed lessons that have improved FEMA’s disaster response. Joplin provides more learning material. If successful disaster recovery relies upon having good people in power, many if not most municipalities will fare much worse in the event of a catastrophe than Joplin has so far. We have a government of laws, not men. The good men and women of Joplin have pushed those laws to promote recovery, but in the absence of such people, and especially in the absence of improved laws, victims of future disasters are more likely to be saddled with something closer to the Katrina recovery.

Micklethwaite went through the tornado not just as president of Joplin’s school board but also as a resident of her hometown, to which she returned 20 years ago. She describes her neighborhood as “closed” before the tornado; after the storm, she did laundry in a neighbor’s house while hers was being repaired, and people on her street held group meetings in the cul-de-sac to discuss rebuilding. “We joke about it being group therapy,” she says. “We just keep moving forward.” ■

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*Tate Watkins (tate.m.watkins@gmail.com) is a 2012 Phillips Foundation fellow and a former reason intern. He lives in Port-au-Prince.*

# Libertopia



# 2012

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## Resetting Your Biological Clock

Egg freezing opens up new frontiers in gender equality.

MORE AND MORE American women are waiting until they are older to have children. Why? Because they are building their careers and waiting for Mr. Right. But what if Mr. Right fails to come along before they turn 35?

As the biological clock ticks along, the chances of having biologically related children diminish steeply, especially as women pass their mid-30s. So some women are now taking out “fertility insurance” by having clinics retrieve and freeze their youthful eggs.

In May *The New York Times* devoted some front-page real estate to a new twist on this practice: would-be grandparents subsidizing the freezing of their daughters’ eggs. Fertility specialist Daniel Shapiro, medical director of Reproductive Biology Associates in Atlanta, told the *Times* his egg-freezing patients often say, “My parents want me to have this as a gift.”

### While many women put off childbearing as

their careers develop, others are stuck waiting for their relationships to reach the next level, thanks to the fecklessness of modern men. Many women in their late 20s and early 30s are in long-term relationships with men whom they think will eventually father their children. Occasionally, the relationships don’t work out, and the women find themselves in their mid-30s or later without a promising partner.

Things have been trending this way for a while. The average age of mothers at first birth has increased from 21.4 in 1970 to 25.2 in 2009, according to the most recent vital statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In 2009, the CDC reports, the “rate of 39.1 births per 1,000 women aged 15–19 was the lowest ever reported in the nearly seven decades for which a consistent series of rates is available.” By contrast, the rate for women

aged 35–39 was 46.5 births per 1,000 women. In fact, more children are now being born to women over age 35 than to women under 20.

Every advance in assisted reproduction comes with ethical questions, and this one is no different. First, should eggs be set aside at all? In her 2009 *Bioethics* article, “Egg Freezing: A Breakthrough for Reproductive Autonomy,” North Carolina State University philosopher Karey Harwood notes that infertility occurs when a normal biological process is impeded by disease or defect. Thus assisted reproduction techniques are used to treat the illness of infertility.

### But women who decide to have their eggs

frozen are not infertile. They are making an “elective” or “social” choice to take advantage of a new technology. Does this make any ethical difference? No, argues Harwood. She points out that contraception and nontherapeutic abortion are both “elective” and do not treat an illness. “The analogy to a contraceptive pill is apt because both egg freezing and the pill can effectuate delayed reproduction,” writes Harwood. “Because egg freezing may be reasonably interpreted as another form of family planning, it can be considered a legitimate exercise in reproductive autonomy.”

One ethical upside to freezing eggs is that it gets around moral concerns about whether frozen embryos are persons, since uninseminated eggs do not have two sets of genes derived from parents. That issue is apt to come up eventually, however, if the frozen eggs are later used to create embryos via in vitro fertilization (IVF) techniques for implantation into a woman’s womb. Standard IVF techniques often involve producing extra embryos that are frozen as backups to be used if those initially introduced

into a woman's womb fail to implant or if patients later want additional children. Consequently, there are often frozen embryos left over once IVF treatments have been completed. Clinics could avoid the issue of what to do with spare embryos by freezing eggs and sperm separately.

### The biological clock is relentless.

A woman's fertility, defined as her probability of getting pregnant during a year, falls from 86 percent at age 20 to 52 percent at age 35. Thereafter it drops ever more steeply to 36 percent by age 40 and 5 percent by age 45.

Ethicists fret that egg freezing as "fertility insurance" engenders false hopes, in part because women may overestimate the real chances of having a baby using this technique. If the relevant standard is the success rate of other IVF techniques, recent data from several clinics indicate that the rate of live births using frozen eggs is comparable, with about one in three cycles resulting in a live birth.

Another concern is that women who hear of the technique will wait too long before taking advantage of it. Clinical evidence strongly suggests that the chances of having a baby are greater for women who choose to freeze their eggs before age 35. Eggs frozen after that age do not grow and implant as readily. Older eggs are far more likely to have flaws that prevent them from developing into babies than younger eggs do.

Another ethical concern is that children born from fro-

zen eggs might be disproportionately at risk of various physical and mental harms. Already some 2,000 children may have been born using frozen eggs. Preliminary evidence indicates that the rate of birth defects among such children is comparable to that among children born by means of conventional IVF techniques. For example, a 2009 study looked at 936 live births from frozen eggs and reported, "Compared with congenital anomalies occurring in naturally conceived infants, no difference was noted."

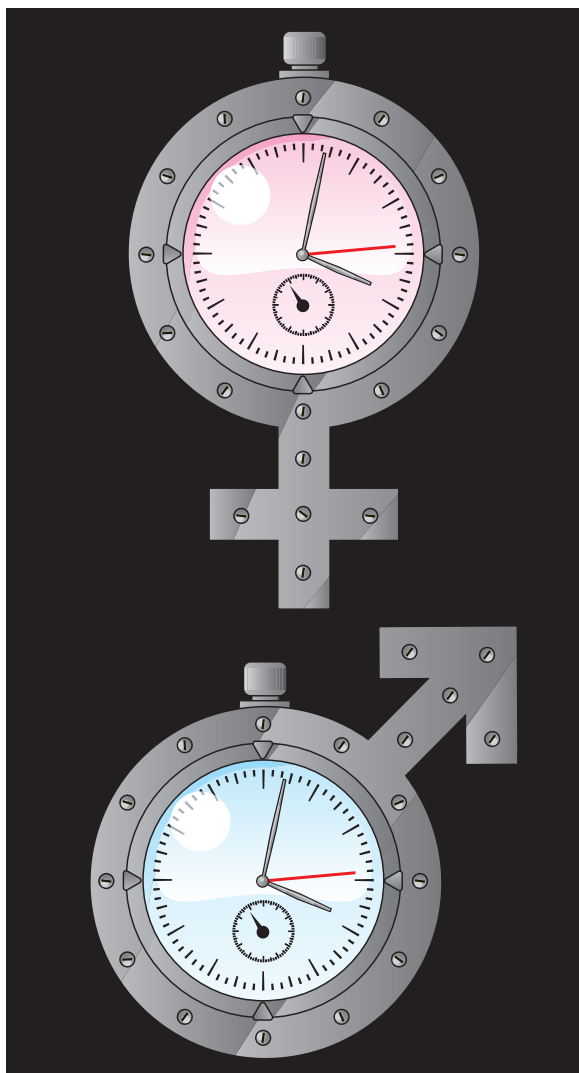
**Some ethicists argue that egg freezing amounts to an illegitimate tech-**

nological fix for persistent problems of sexual inequality. They argue that the ethical thing to do is to change workplaces so there is less conflict between bearing children and having a career. They also say public policy should encourage women to avoid the problem of age-related infertility by having children at younger ages.

The case of France suggests that attempts to shift public policy in directions friendly to childbearing and rearing may have limits. In pronatalist France, the average age for first childbirth is 29.9 years (vs. 25.2 in the U.S.), and despite all sorts of social programs aimed at easing the burdens of child rearing, French women have a lower labor force participation rate than American women.

Furthermore, egg freezing actually promotes equality between the sexes. In a 2009 paper for the journal *Bioethics*, Oxford University philosophers Imogen Goold and Julian Savulescu note: "Men already enjoy the choice of when they have children. Women should have the opportunity to enjoy the same choices as men, if we can provide them, unless there are good reasons not to." Instead of dismissing egg freezing as a mere biomedical work-around, we should celebrate it as another way in which technological progress is reducing and ameliorating inequalities between men and women. ■

*Science Correspondent Ronald Bailey (rbailey@reason.com) is the author of Liberation Biology (Prometheus).*



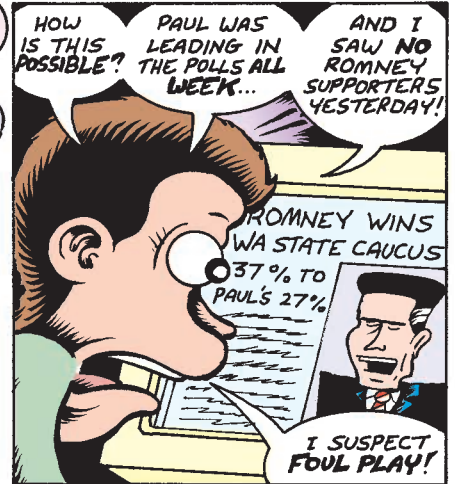
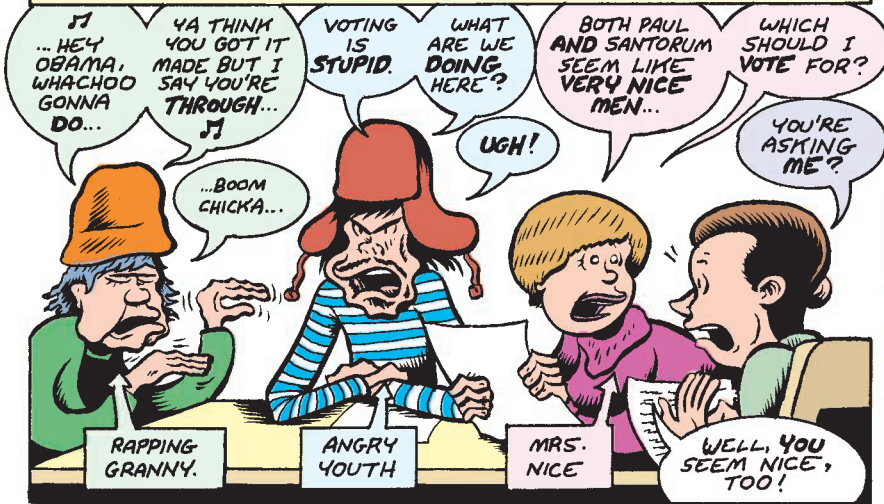
# SHENANIGANS!

A WORM'S-EYE VIEW OF WHAT IT TAKES TO GET SOMEONE I CAN STAND ELECTED PRESIDENT, by P. BAGGE



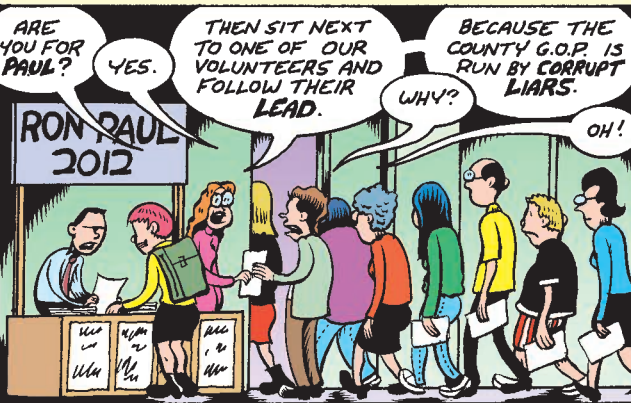
MOST OF THE TABLES WERE MADE UP OF PREPARED GROUPS OF PAUL SUPPORTERS, WHILE MINE WAS MORE LIKE THE ISLAND OF MISFIT VOTERS...

THE NEXT DAY I LEARNED THAT ROMNEY NOT ONLY WON THE STATE; HE ALSO WON MY OWN DISTRICT!



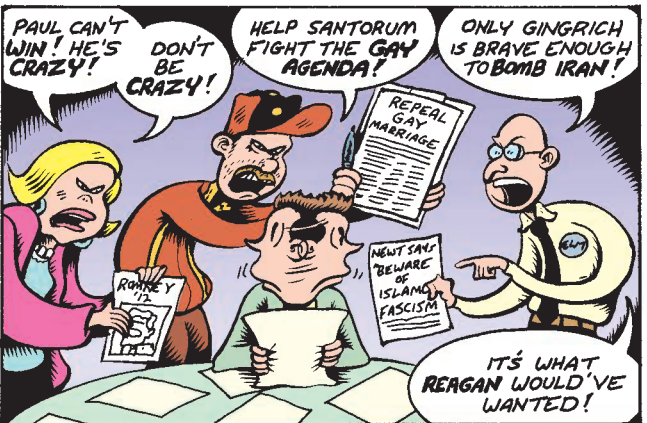


**MARCH 17: MY DISTRICT HELD YET ANOTHER CAUCUS — THIS ONE TO CHOOSE WHICH DELEGATES WILL ATTEND THE STATE CONVENTION IN MAY...**



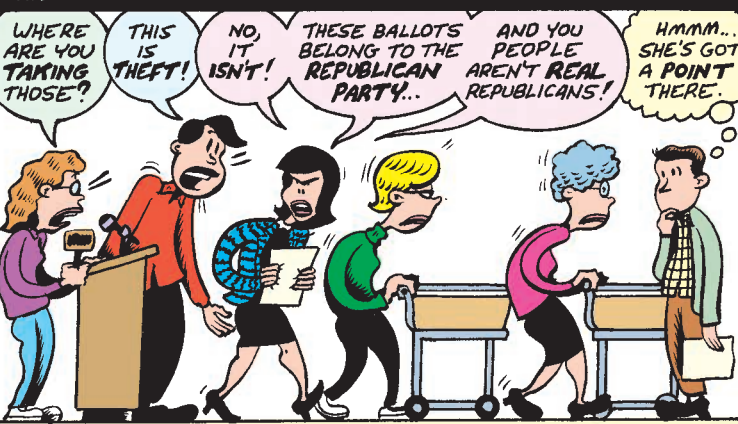
**ONCE AGAIN, LEGIONS OF PAUL SUPPORTERS WERE THERE, ARMED WITH THEIR OWN SLATE OF DELEGATES AND DETERMINED NOT TO GET RAILROADED BY THE PARTY'S REPRESENTATIVES.**

**FEARING A PAUL SWEEP, ROMNEY, GINGRICH, AND SANTORUM'S SUPPORTERS POOLED THEIR DELEGATES ON ONE "UNITY" SLATE, HOPING TO GET AT LEAST A FEW OF THEM ELECTED.**



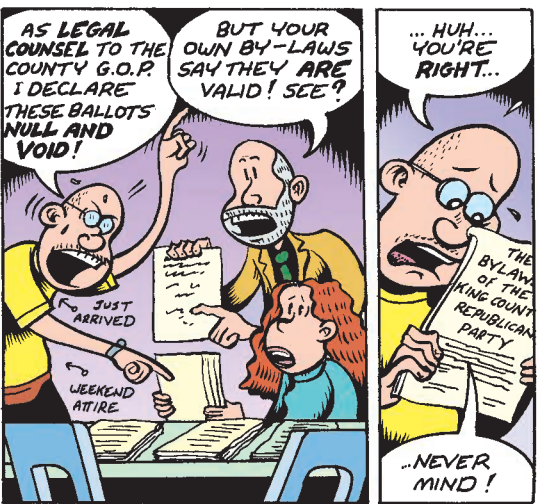
**IT DIDN'T WORK. EVERY DELEGATE ELECTED, INCLUDING ALTERNATES, WAS A RON PAUL SUPPORTER.**

**YET THAT DIDN'T STOP THE G.O.P. STAFFERS FROM PULLING EVERY STUNT IN THE BOOK TO "TAINT" THE RESULTS: FIRST BY REMOVING THE BALLOTS AND BALLOT SCANNERS BEFORE THE VOTE WAS EVEN HELD...**



**A ROMNEY-ITE THEN MOVED TO HAVE THE CHAIRWOMAN (A PAUL SUPPORTER) REPLACED—FOR NOT HAVING BALLOTS READY!**

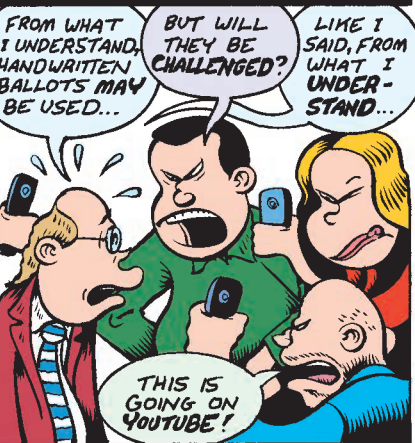
**NEXT, THE VALIDITY OF THE HANDWRITTEN BALLOTS WAS CHALLENGED, BUT THE PAULITES WERE PREPARED...**



**MEANWHILE, ROMNEY'S SUPPORTERS MADE LITTLE ATTEMPT TO HIDE THEIR CONTEMPT FOR THE PAUL PEOPLE...**



**WHILE THE DISTRICT G.O.P. CHAIRMAN ACTED WAFFLY AND VAGUE...**



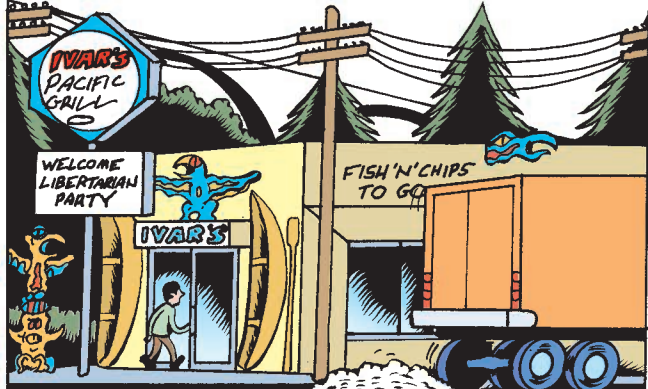
**"PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY" SEEMED TO BE WHAT HE WAS LAMELY TRYING TO GO FOR.**

**ODDLY, THIS SAME PERSON OPENED THE CAUCUS WELCOMING THE PAULITES WITH OPEN ARMS...**



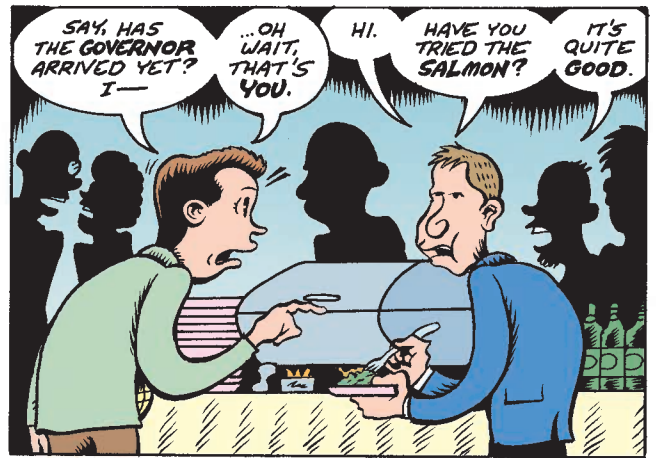
**BUT FROM THAT POINT ON HE STOOD IDLY BY AS HIS PARTY TRIED TO SCREW THEM AT EVERY TURN. GO FIGURE!**

**T**HE DAY BEFORE, I ATTENDED A MEET 'N' GREET FOR THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE GARY JOHNSON...



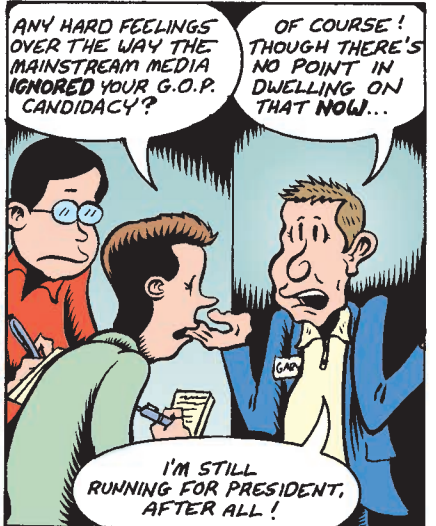
**I** WAS EAGER TO MEET THE FORMER GOVERNOR, WHOSE POSITIONS ARE EVEN MORE TO MY LIKING THAN RON PAUL'S ARE.

**H**OW IRONIC, THEN, THAT I DIDN'T EVEN RECOGNIZE HIM AT FIRST. HE'S NOT EXACTLY AN IMPOSING FIGURE!



SAY, HAS THE GOVERNOR ARRIVED YET?  
I—  
...OH WAIT, THAT'S YOU.  
HI.  
HAVE YOU TRIED THE SALMON?  
IT'S QUITE GOOD.

**A**FTER A SHORT SPEECH, JOHNSON TOOK QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS CORPS (I.E.: ME AND SOMEONE FROM "THE STRANGER")...



ANY HARD FEELINGS OVER THE WAY THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA IGNORED YOUR G.O.P. CANDIDACY?  
OF COURSE! THOUGH THERE'S NO POINT IN DWELLING ON THAT NOW...  
I'M STILL RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT, AFTER ALL!

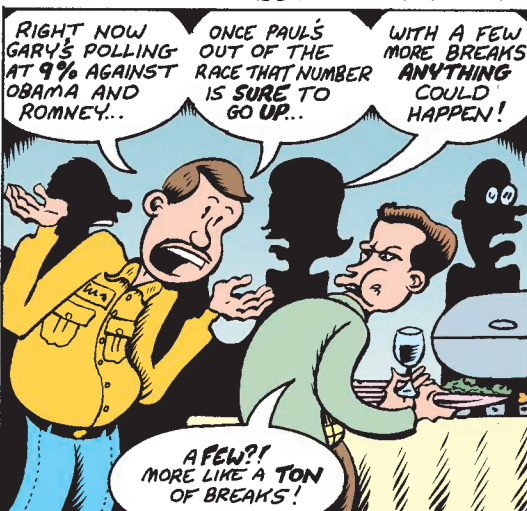


DO YOU FEEL YOU HAVE THE LIB PARTY'S NOMINATION SEWN UP?  
I'D SAY IT'S MINE TO LOSE...  
THERE ARE THIRTY-FIVE CANDIDATES CURRENTLY RUNNING AGAINST ME...  
THOUGH I'D BE HARD-PRESSED TO NAME MORE THAN A FEW OF THEM.



WOULD YOU SAY YOU GOVERNED NEW MEXICO IN A "LIBERTARIAN" FASHION?  
I SURE TRIED! THOUGH I HAVE A FEW REGRETS...  
LIKE THIS NEEDLESS INDIAN AFFAIRS BUREAU I HAD FOISTED ON ME...  
I WAS TOLD IT WOULDN'T BE FUNDED BY TAXPAYERS...  
ONLY NOW IT HAS A \$10 MILLION BUDGET, PAID FOR BY THE STATE...  
YOU CAN'T WIN!

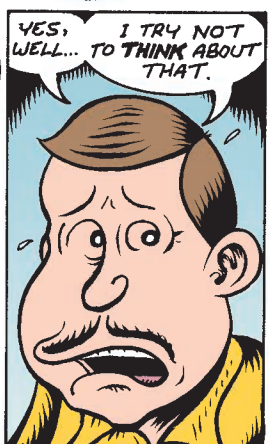
**L**ATER ONE OF THE PARTY'S FAITHFUL DID SOME OVERLY OPTIMISTIC NUMBER CRUNCHING FOR ME...



RIGHT NOW GARY'S POLLING AT 9% AGAINST OBAMA AND ROMNEY...  
ONCE PAUL'S OUT OF THE RACE THAT NUMBER IS SURE TO GO UP...  
WITH A FEW MORE BREAKS ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN!  
A FEW?! MORE LIKE A TON OF BREAKS!



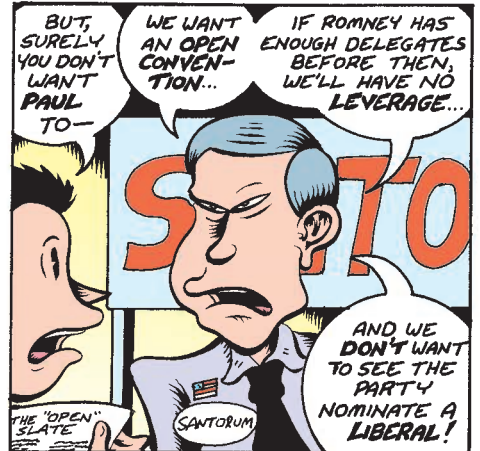
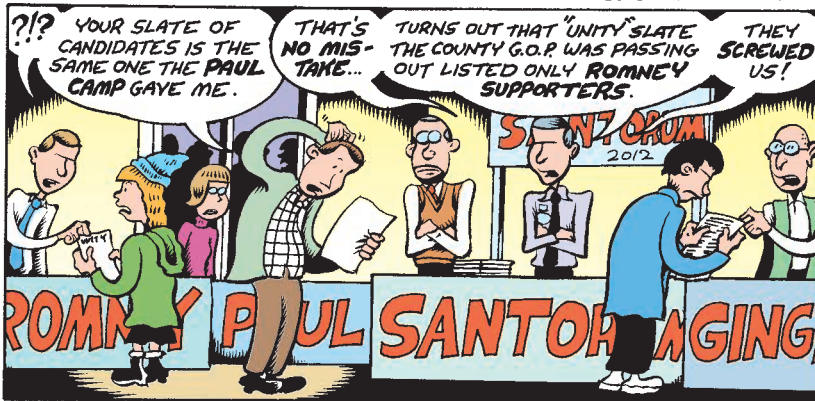
JOHNSON'S LEGIT! A TWO-TIME GOVERNOR! A HIGH OFFICE HOLDER!  
SO WAS YOUR LAST NOMINEE, REPRESENTATIVE BOB BARR...  
WHO NOW IS BACKING THAT TURD NEWT GINGRICH!



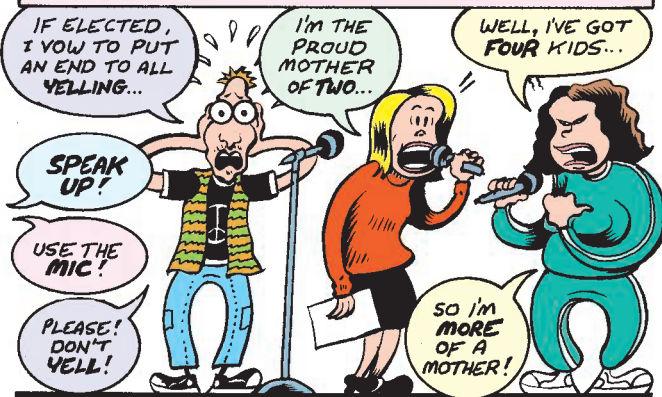
YES, WELL... I TRY NOT TO THINK ABOUT THAT.

**I** OFTEN WIND UP RAINING ON THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY'S PARADE, MAINLY TO PROTECT MYSELF FROM SOUL-CRUSHING DISAPPOINTMENT.

HUNGRY FOR MORE HIJINKS, I ATTENDED YET ANOTHER CAUCUS IN A NEIGHBORING DISTRICT. IN THE INTERIM, I FOUND AN UNLIKELY REALIGNMENT HAD OCCURRED...

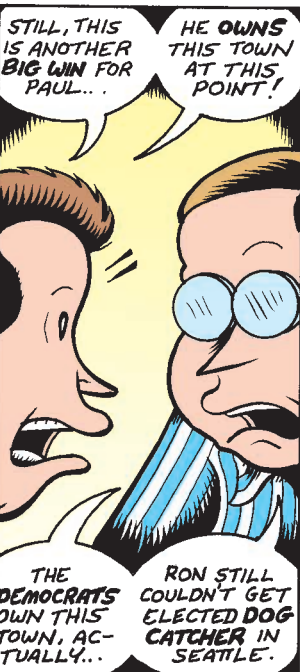
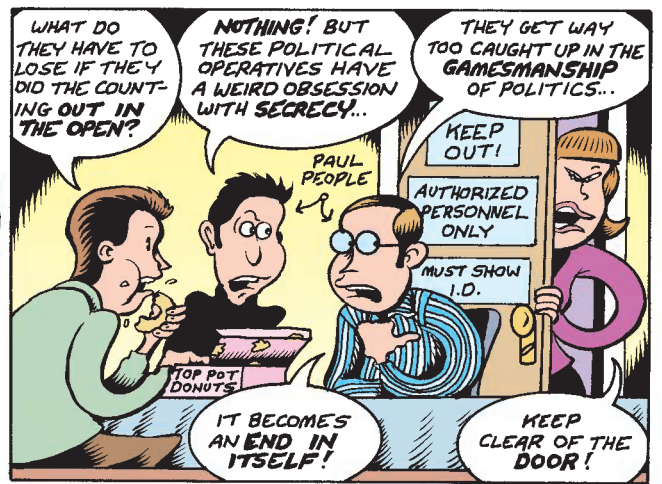


UNLIKE THE CONTENTIOUS CAUCUSES TAKING PLACE ELSEWHERE, THIS ONE RAN SMOOTHLY. THE PEOPLE IN CHARGE DECIDED TO ACT LIKE ADULTS FOR A CHANGE...



THE ONLY ENTERTAINMENT TO BE HAD WAS LISTENING TO THE POTENTIAL DELEGATES MAKE THEIR ONE-MINUTE STUMP SPEECHES. THEIR MOMENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT!

THE PAULITES SWEEPED HERE AS WELL, YET AGAINST ALL LOGIC THE REPUBLICAN PARTY'S REPS STILL INSISTED ON DOING THE BALLOT COUNTING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS...



END?



### A Beautiful Oil Spill

Pathetic birds with crude-coated wings are the usual foul photographic emblems of oil spills. Seattle-based photographer Daniel Beltrá complicates the story implied by those sad news photos in his gallery show “SPILL.”

Beltrá spent two months photographing the 2010 Deepwater Horizon blowout from high up in the air over the Gulf of Mexico. The exhibition, which ran in March and April at the Catherine Edelman Gallery in Chicago, consisted chiefly of gorgeous large-format photos emphasizing the luminous colors of oil spread abstractly across the sea’s surface. (Images from the show can be seen online at [edelmangallery.com](http://edelmangallery.com).) Working boats lost in the vast windrows of crude reveal the scale of the incident. Beltrá, a conservationist, hopes to provoke outrage, but he attenuates that goal with the seductive sublimity of his photographs. —*Ronald Bailey*

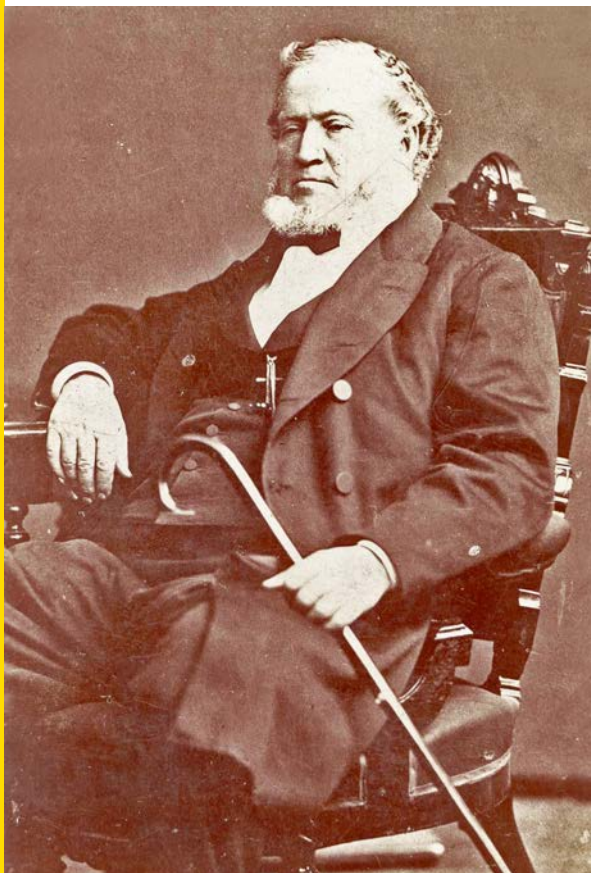
### Latter-Day Acceptance

Mitt Romney may inspire anti-Mormon paranoia, but it’s nothing compared to the fears his forefathers faced.

*Jesse Walker*

FOR MANY AMERICANS Mormons are scary, or weird, or at least not the sort of folk you’d want marrying your first lady. Last year a Gallup poll found that 22 percent of the country would not support a Mormon candidate for president. MSNBC host Lawrence O’Donnell claimed in early April that Mormonism “was created by a guy in upstate New York in 1830 when he got caught having sex with the maid and explained to his wife that God told him to do it.” Jacob Weisberg, generally a reliable barometer of center-left conventional wisdom, wrote during the run-up to the last presidential campaign that he “wouldn’t vote for someone who truly believed in the founding whoppers of Mormonism.”

Anti-Mormonism haunted this cycle’s



Republican primaries. Newt Gingrich had to fire his Iowa political director for describing rival candidate Mitt Romney’s religion as “the cult of Mormon.” Texas Gov. Rick Perry had to do some public squirming when a prominent Baptist backer, the Dallas pastor Robert Jeffress, announced that Romney is “not a Christian” and that Mormonism “has always been considered a cult by the mainstream of Christianity.” My inbox overflows with press releases from the ex-Mormon activist Tricia Erickson, who warns that electing “this horrendous Romney Manchurian Candidate” would mean the Elders Near Zion “will most assuredly be pulling the strings behind the scenes.” Bill Keller, the self-proclaimed “world’s leading Internet Evangelist,” manages to outdo Erickson with mass emails carrying headlines like “Why Would Christians Vote for Romney and Listen to [Glenn] Beck, Both Cult Members?”

All of which obscures something important: By historical standards, Mormonism enjoys an amazing level of acceptance in America today. The Republican Party, an organization whose first presidential platform denounced Mormon polygamy as a “relic of barbarism” comparable to slavery, is about to nominate a Mormon bishop as its presidential candidate. Mitt Romney’s chances of prevailing in November have very little to do with his religious beliefs and almost everything to do with how the unemployment numbers look come fall.

That shift reflects some substantial changes in Mormonism itself, which has given up the polygamist and separatist ways that alienated so many Americans in the church’s early decades. But it also reflects the

fact that non-Mormon Americans—*gentiles*, as the Latter-day Saints sometimes call us—have gotten used to having Mormons around. You can still hear strange conspiracy theories about the church today, but we are a long way from the 19th century, when the popular perception of Joseph Smith's faith featured a wild mélange of mind control, assassinations, secret sexual lodges, and plots to subvert the republic.

### 'To Yield Themselves Entirely'

Our story starts in the early 19th century, a spiritually rambunctious period now known the Second Great Awakening. Big camp meetings drew thousands of Americans to multiday festivals of prayer, with worshippers falling into trances and speaking in tongues. Traditional religious leaders were often alarmed at the delirious varieties of worship on display. Some of them denounced the revival preachers as puppet masters engaged in a sort of mass hypnosis. On the outskirts of the excitement, unusual creeds attracted new followers: Shakers, Adventists, Oneida Perfectionists.

It was in this atmosphere that Joseph Smith reported a series of religious visions in the 1820s and founded the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in 1830. The new faith, contra Lawrence O'Donnell, had nothing to do with the family maid. (Polygamy would not become a Mormon doctrine until several years later.) Smith, a part-time treasure hunter, claimed to have found a holy book engraved on golden plates. The plates contained a host of revelations, he reported, including the old idea that the American Indians were descended from the Israelites and the new idea that Christ

had visited their ancient American civilization.

As Smith attracted followers, he moved his church's base from upstate New York to Ohio and then to the Missouri frontier, where its adherents faced heavy harassment from their neighbors. The church tried to establish a town of its own in Illinois, and it was in that state that an angry mob killed Smith while the prophet was confined to a jail. Control of the movement shifted to a Vermont-born tradesman named Brigham Young, who led the Mormons west to establish a kingdom in the desert.

The opponents of Mormonism, like the opponents of other new reli-

**Dozens of lurid novels depicted Danite assassinations, church-sanctioned white slavery, and other alleged LDS crimes.**

gions, took old anti-Catholic themes and updated them for a younger faith: Smith and then Young were imagined as the all-powerful popes of a cult, their followers as docile sheep. Those followers' allegiance, furthermore, was allegedly achieved through a sort of mind control, not unlike the mass hypnosis purportedly on display at revivals.

The latter idea lies at the core of the best-selling *Female Life Among the Mormons* (1855), which presents itself as the memoir of a woman hypnotized into marrying a church elder. (A more accurate description was offered by the historian David Brion Davis, who called the book a "ridiculous fantasy.") At one point in the narrative the author asks another ex-Mormon how Joseph Smith managed to master Franz Mesmer's mind-con-

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## Shakespeare Security Theater

Ralph Fiennes' film adaptation of *Coriolanus*, now out on DVD, marries Shakespeare's dialogue to a 21st-century setting to retell the story of the Roman general Caius Marcius, nicknamed Coriolanus for his valor during a siege of the city of Corioli. Fiennes' Roman Republic is thoroughly contemporary. Troops are equipped with high-tech accoutrements, senators are strikingly Washingtonian, and protesters are drawn from stock Hollywood movie tropes of the last decade.

Still, *Coriolanus* remains a quintessentially Roman story and figure. The Volscian campaigns in which Coriolanus made his name were not the same as the easily recognizable imperial follies that followed. It's tricky to transplant to the modern day the story of a general spurned by his government who allies with a national enemy to seek revenge; such things don't happen much these days. But depictions of political ineptitude and national security theater are unfortunately timeless.

—Ed Krayewski

trol method—Mesmerism—before “its general circulation throughout the country.” Her informant replies that “Smith obtained his information, and learned all the strokes, and passes, and manipulations, from a German peddler, who, notwithstanding his reduced circumstances, was a man of distinguished intellect and extensive erudition. Smith paid him handsomely, and the German promised to keep the secret.” What's more, “You, madam, were subjected to its influence. So have ten thousand others been, who never dreamed of it. Those most expert in it, are generally sent out to preach among unbelievers.”

The church started promoting polygamy privately in 1843, and it acknowledged the practice to the outside world in 1852. This heightened the sexual dimension of stories like *Female Life Among the Mormons*: In the popular imagination, Mormon men were out to add gentile women to their harems, by hypnotic seduction if possible and by force if necessary. Plural marriage was perceived as a threat to the traditional family, and the anxieties it inspired unleashed a flood of fantasies about other sorts of sexual nonconformity that the Latter-day Saints might be up to.

The excommunicated Mormon John C. Bennett spread stories of a “secret lodge of women” who serviced church officials, going into great detail about the orders found within the lodge and the duties and depravations identified with each. The Consecrates of the Cloister, for example, were a degree “composed of females, whether married or unmarried, who, by an express grant and gift of God, through his Prophet the Holy Joe, are set apart and consecrated to the use and benefit of particular individuals, as *secret, spiritual wives*,” Bennett wrote in 1842. “They are the *Saints of the Black Veil*, and are accounted the special favorites of Heaven.”

A lot of projection was at work here. In Davis' words, readers “took pleasure in imagining the variety of sexual experiences supposedly available to their enemies. By picturing themselves exposed to similar temptations, they assumed they could know how priests and Mormons actually sinned.” Bennett, he adds, had

been “expelled from the Church as a result of his flagrant sexual immorality.”

## 'Grim, Hidden, Secret Power'

When Mormons clustered in a single location, the fear that they might steal Christian bodies and souls through kidnapping and conversion was joined by another anxiety: the fear that they would steal American institutions by voting en masse, installing a government that would replace the republic with a theocracy. And since you couldn't expect such a subversive menace to limit its efforts to the ballot box, another story began to take hold as well: that the church commanded an army of assassins, dubbed the Danites, to inflict its will by force.

The historical Danites were a vigilante group created in 1838 to compel dissenting Mormons to exit the area and, subsequently, to protect Missouri Mormons from their neighbors' attacks. It has never been proven that the organization lasted longer than a year, but it became a central part of anti-Mormon rhetoric for decades afterward, its reputation growing ever more fearsome with time. When Brigham Young set up a group of minutemen in Utah, saying that they were to battle rustlers and hostile Indians and the like, the group was quickly nicknamed the Destroying Angels, conflated with the old Danites, and feared as a secret squad of hit men. In 1859 the frontiersman John Young Nelson could casually (and inaccurately) assume, upon meeting a Mormon painted like an Indian, that the latter was one of the church's “fanatical renegade-destroying angels, whose mission was to kill every white man not belonging to the sect, and particularly those who were apostates.”

Those whose fears of the Danites were grounded in more than mere rumors could point to a memoir written by the outlaw Wild Bill Hickman after he was arrested for murder in 1871. Hickman, who had been excommunicated from the Latter-day Saints a few years earlier, claimed to have carried out several murders on Young's orders. There's no consensus on how much of what he wrote was accurate and how much was blame-shifting or braggadocio, but all of it was incorporated into anti-Mormon lore.

To see the hold that lore had on the American imagination, read Mark Twain's 1872 account of an evening supposedly spent with a Mormon assassin, a tale calculated to puncture the minutemen's image as a sinister elite. "Destroying Angels, as I understand it, are Latter-day Saints who are set apart by the Church to conduct permanent disappearances of obnoxious citizens," Twain wrote in *Roughing It*. "I had heard a deal about these Mormon Destroying Angels and the dark and bloody deeds they had done, and when I entered this one's house I had my shudder all ready. But alas for all our romances, he was nothing but a loud, profane, offensive old black-guard! He was murderous enough, possibly, to fill the bill of a Destroyer, but would you have *any* kind of an Angel devoid of dignity? Could you abide an Angel in an unclean shirt and no suspenders?"

By this time Mormon conspiracies were a staple of popular culture. Dozens of lurid novels depicted Danite assassinations, church-sanctioned white slavery, and other alleged LDS crimes. On the other side of the Atlantic, the first Sherlock Holmes story, Arthur Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), featured a

Danite plot to force a woman into an unwanted marriage. The most famous American yarn about Mormon conspirators is probably Zane Grey's *Riders of the Purple Sage* (1912), a book often credited with setting the mold of the formula western.

Grey's story is set in the wild country of Utah in 1871. Jane Withersteen, one of the book's protagonists, has been enmeshed in Mormon society since birth. In theory, she occupies a high place in the community: Her father founded the settlement, and she is one of the town's wealthiest citizens. But she refuses to marry an elder who wants her, and the consequences of that decision demonstrate just how little autonomy she has. "Above her," Grey writes, "hovered the shadow of grim, hidden, secret power."

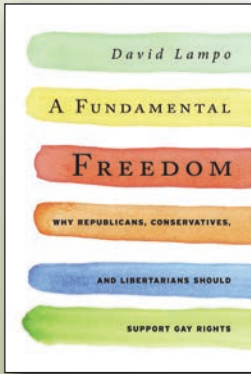
The conspiracy, we soon learn, doesn't just lurk *above* her. Withersteen finds traces of the secret power at every level of the social hierarchy; it isn't an authority bearing down on her so much as an all-enveloping system that is almost impossible to escape. Her friends inform on her, and her ranch is haunted by spies and assassins. Anyone is a potential betrayer. Withersteen's servant women "spied and listened; they received and sent secret messengers; and they stole Jane's books and records, and finally the papers that were deeds of her possessions. Through it all they were silent, rapt in a kind of trance." Even apparently empty spaces are haunted. "There's no single move of yours, except when you're hid in your house, that ain't seen by sharp eyes," a gentile friend warns Withersteen. "The cottonwood grove's full of creepin', crawlin' men. Like Indians in the grass. When you rode...the sage was full of sneakin'

men. At night they crawl under your windows into the court, an' I reckon into the house."

### 'Jesus Isn't on the Ballot This Year'

In some places a fear took hold that Mormon ideas—and Mormon weapons—might find their way to the local Indians. Meanwhile, in the face of constant harassment, the Mormons had started to identify with the Native Americans themselves. This had its limits, though, as one group of natives learned on September 11, 1857.

It was the middle of the conflict called the Utah War. The federal government thought the Latter-day Saints were plotting a rebellion. The Mormons thought the feds, who had dispatched more than 2,500 troops to the region, were plotting to eliminate them. In that tense atmosphere of mutual distrust, a group of



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### Nurse's Little Helper

The fourth season of *Nurse Jackie*, the Showtime TV series starring Edie Falco as a super-competent emergency-room nurse with a fondness for pain pills, begins with her character in rehab. It is a thoroughly predictable outcome for a TV addict, except that Jackie Peyton's drug-related problems stem almost entirely from the fact that the drugs she favors are legal only for doctor-approved medical use.

Jackie is very good at her job, which never seems to be compromised by her drug use except to the extent that she lies and cheats to get painkillers (along with the occasional stimulant) and to cover up her habit. Hence she invents injuries, deceives friends, swipes medication, and starts an ill-advised extramarital affair with the hospital pharmacist.

If Jackie could simply walk into a store and buy the oxycodone, hydrocodone, and amphetamine that help get her through the day, those problems would disappear. Which raises the question: Does Jackie have a drug problem or a prohibition problem?

—Jacob Sullum

Mormons—it is not known whether they were following Brigham Young's wishes or acting on their own—combined forces with a group of Paiute Indians and slaughtered around 120 unarmed migrants passing through Mountain Meadows, Utah, including about 50 children. Afterward the Mormon hierarchy tried to scapegoat the natives, claiming the assault had been committed by the Paiute acting alone. Evidently, a church that identified with the persecuted red man wasn't above appealing to anti-Indian prejudice.

It was an awful act, and it shows that some Mormons deserved a portion of the outrage and fear that they inspired. But most of the conspiring in Mormon country was open and basically benign: a concerted effort to construct a community from the ground up. Mormons built schools, temples, courts of arbitration, an elaborate private welfare system, and a network of cooperatives. These were the sort of voluntary organizations that Americans often celebrate, but they appeared to be entwined with civil government in predominantly Mormon areas out west, with the same figures dominating both church and state. Sometimes they were more influential than the formal government.

This situation stoked still more fears of subversion, and it led to some stunning restrictions on the Saints' civil liberties. In 1884 the Idaho territory made it illegal for Latter-day Saints to vote, hold office, or serve on a jury. Legislators invoked the standard anti-Mormon conspiracy theories, but lurking behind those exotic charges were more ordinary resentments: opposition to plural marriage, jealousy of the Mormon co-ops' economic clout, and, above all, Republicans' eagerness to disenfranchise a group that in Idaho voted overwhelmingly for the Democrats.

The church's road to respectability began in 1890, when it renounced polygamy. During the next couple of years its leaders dissolved the People's Party, a specifically Mormon political group in Utah, and they pledged not to vote as a unit in Idaho, which helped persuade the authorities there to restore Mormon liberties. Conventional Christians continued to regard

the church with suspicion, but in the culture wars of the late 20th century they often found themselves fighting alongside the Latter-day Saints. "These people had never been in the same room before," the anti-feminist activist Phyllis Schlafly told Richard Viguerie and David Franke in their 2004 book *America's Right Turn*. "I'd say, 'Now, the person sitting next to you might not be "saved," but we're all going to work together to stop [the Equal Rights Amendment].' Getting the Baptists and the Catholics to work together, and getting *them* all to work with the Mormons—this was something!" But work together they did, because a socially conservative Catholic or Protestant ultimately had more in common with a socially conservative Mormon than either did with the secular world or with the religious left.

Today, 128 years after Idaho barred Mormons from holding office, a Mormon bishop has a substantial chance of becoming the next president of the United States. And while his candidacy has dragged the anti-Mormons out of the woodwork, their angry rhetoric may be a sign of frustrated impotence, not power.

Just look at Robert Jeffress, who in April endorsed the Romney campaign. The pastor explained his decision by quoting a friend: "Jesus isn't on the ballot this year, so we have to make choices." That's the same Robert Jeffress who embarrassed Rick Perry last year by describing Romney's faith as a "cult." Evidently he can overlook a little cultism when the alternative is another four years of Barack Obama. ■

Senior Editor Jesse Walker ([jwalker@reason.com](mailto:jwalker@reason.com)) is writing a history of American political paranoia for HarperCollins.



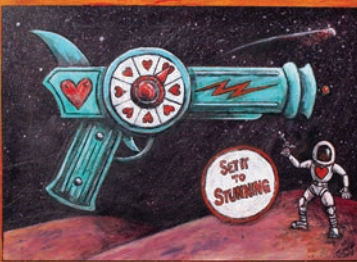
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## THE LOVE GUN



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### The Past of the Future of Space

“Elevator to the Moon: Retro-Future Visions of Space” is a petite, uneven show hiding in a back hallway at the massive, quirky bar-and-art venue Artisphere in Arlington, Virginia. The exhibit offers 15 artists the chance to “create work that celebrates beautifully flawed ideas” from the 20th century about what the 21st would be like.

The quality of the work varies tremendously. Dana Ellyn’s acrylic-on-canvas depiction of jetpack-equipped astronauts zooming toward a glowing Space Jesus in *Rapture Rocketeers*, for example, is a crime against kitsch.

But intrepid artonauts will be rewarded by Steve Strawn’s three *Space Invaders*-inspired photo prints, where familiar bit-map Atari aliens become sinister shadows glimpsed through a haze of battle smoke and rain. Other highlights include a travel poster in which a friendly robot cruise ship captain bids “Aloha” from Mare Tranquillitatis, the moon’s waterless Sea of Tranquility.

—Katherine Mangu-Ward

## Frederick Douglass, Classical Liberal

A fresh look at the political evolution of a great American

Damon W. Root

*The Political Thought of Frederick Douglass: In Pursuit of American Liberty*, by Nicholas Buccola, New York University Press, 225 pages, \$49

IN APRIL 1865, as the Civil War was reaching its bloody climax, the abolitionist leader and escaped former slave Frederick Douglass stood before the Massachusetts Antislavery Society and delivered a rousing speech entitled “What the Black Man Wants.” “The American people have always been anxious to know what they shall do with us,” Douglass told the crowd. “I have had but one answer from the beginning. Do nothing with us! Your doing with us has already played the mischief.” In fact, he continued, “if the Negro cannot stand on his own legs, let him fall.... All I ask is, give him a chance to stand on his own legs! Let him alone!”

To modern ears, statements like “let him alone” and “do nothing” may sound suspiciously libertarian. Frederick Douglass has long been accused of harboring certain libertarian tendencies. University of Virginia historian Waldo Martin, for example, charged that Douglass’ “do nothing” rhetoric revealed an unfortunate “procapitalist bias” in his otherwise commendable thinking. Yale University historian David Blight, meanwhile, has criticized Douglass for preaching “a laissez-faire individualism that echoed the reigning Social Darwinism of the day.”

It’s true that Frederick Douglass simultaneously championed both civil rights and economic liberty. But the proper term for that combination isn’t Social Darwinism; it’s classical liberalism. The central component of Douglass’ worldview was the principle of self-ownership, which he understood to include both racial equality and the right to enjoy the fruits of one’s labor.

Consider the remarkable 1848 letter Doug-

lass wrote to his old master, the slaveholder Thomas Auld. It rings out repeatedly with the tenets of classical liberalism. “You are a man and so am I,” Douglass declared. “In leaving you, I took nothing but what belonged to me, and in no way lessened your means for obtaining an honest living.” Escaping from slavery wasn’t just an act of self-preservation, Douglass maintained; it was an affirmation of his unalienable natural rights. “Your faculties remained yours,” he wrote, “and mine became useful to their rightful owner.”

Douglass struck a similar note in his powerful 1852 speech “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?” Evoking John Locke’s famous description of private property emerging from man mixing his labor with the natural world, Douglass pointed to slaves “plowing, planting and reaping, using all kinds of mechanical tools, erecting houses” as proof that they too deserved the full range of natural rights. “Would you have me argue that man is entitled to liberty? That he is the rightful owner of his own body?” Douglass asked his mostly white audience. “There is not a man beneath the canopy of heaven, that does not know that slavery is wrong for him.”

“Douglass’s arguments against slavery are, in a very important sense, arguments for liberalism,” writes Linfield College political scientist Nicholas Buccola in *The Political Thought of Frederick Douglass*, his engaging new study of the great abolitionist. Taking seriously Douglass’ dual commitment to both a “robust conception of mutual responsibility” and “the ideas of universal self-ownership, natural rights, limited government, and an ethos of self-reliance,”

Buccola offers a nuanced portrait that illuminates both Douglass and his place in American intellectual history.

Born in February 1818 in Tuckahoe, Maryland, to a slave mother and a white, likely slaveholding father, Frederick Douglass escaped from bondage at the age of 20, making his way first to New York City, where he got married, and then to the whaling port of New Bedford, Massachusetts, where he changed his last name (he had been known as Frederick Bailey until then) and found a job loading ships. “I was now my own master—a tremendous fact,” he later wrote.

**As far as Douglass was concerned, the former slaves had been robbed, not just of the fruits of their labor but of their very minds and bodies.**

“The thoughts—‘I can work!...I have no Master Hugh to rob me of my earnings’—placed me in a state of independence.”

Within a year he was attending abolitionist lectures and subscribing to *The Liberator*, the abolitionist weekly edited by William Lloyd Garrison, the country’s most famous antislavery leader, who became a friend and early mentor. Encouraged to share his own remarkable story, Douglass soon became a fixture on the abolitionist lecture circuit, captivating audiences with his gripping account of the outrages he suffered and witnessed under the peculiar institution.

**Yet as Douglass later explained in *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), the second of his three autobiographies, it didn’t take long before he started**

chafing under the paternalistic guidance of Garrison and other allies. “Give us the facts,” one abolitionist leader told him. “We will take care of the philosophy.” But as Douglass explained, “I could not always obey, for I was now reading and thinking. It did not entirely satisfy me to narrate wrongs; I felt like denouncing them.”

It wouldn’t be the last time Douglass disregarded the misguided views of his fellow activists. As Buccola notes, “throughout his development as a political thinker, Douglass was presented with a series of ideological alternatives,” including the pacifist anarchism of Garrison, who said the only government he recognized was the “government of God,” and the utopian socialism of John A. Collins, general director of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society, who believed “that private property was the root of all evil.” Douglass, Buccola observes, “consistently rejected these in favor of liberalism.”

**S**ocialism was then becoming particularly attractive to many New England reformers. Yet Douglass rejected the socialist case against private land ownership, saying “it is [man’s] duty to possess it—and to possess it in that way in which its energies and properties can be made most useful to the human family.” He routinely preached the virtues of property rights. “So far from being a sin to accumulate property, it is the plain duty of every man to lay up something for the future,” he told a black crowd in Rochester, New York in 1885. “I am for making the best of both worlds and making the best of this world first, because it comes first.” As Douglass’ glowing description of his first paying job indicated,

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## Water Wrongs

*Last Call at the Oasis* is a slickly produced but conventionally liberal documentary about the world's ongoing "water crisis." The movie spends considerable time and effort trying to convince viewers that water access is a problem, across the globe but also in the United States.

Proposed solutions, however, are in short supply. Pacific Institute hydroclimatologist Peter Gleick argues that it's wrong for California to pursue fixes that might harm a common fish but fails to explain why. Any solutions that do not come directly from the standard progressive playbook are summarily rejected.

Where property rights and privatization are mentioned, it's only to dismiss them. Market pricing for water—traditionally a very useful way to ration valuable things we don't want to waste—goes unmentioned, as do decades of labyrinthine state-level distribution rules, waste-encouraging subsidies, and pricing controls that have contributed to water shortages in the American West.

—Peter Suderman

he also considered economic liberty an essential aspect of human freedom.

Nor was Douglass a fan of organized labor. Since most labor unions at the time excluded blacks from their ranks, while lobbying the government for exclusive privileges, Douglass justifiably saw unions as yet another racist obstacle to black economic independence. As he argued in his 1874 essay "The Folly, Tyranny, and Wick- edness of Labor Unions," there was "abundant proof almost every day of their mischievous influence upon every industrial interest in the country."

As for Garrison's pacifism and anarchism, Douglass thought them preposterous in the face of the state-sanctioned outrages perpetrated under the slave system and later under the South's incipient Jim Crow regime. "Yes, let us have peace, but let us have liberty, law, and justice first," he declared on Memorial Day, 1878. "Let us have the Constitution, with its thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amend- ments, fairly interpreted, faithfully executed, and cheerfully obeyed."

## A highlight of *The Political Thought of*

*Frederick Douglass* is Buccola's sharp analysis of how Douglass' belief in "social responsibility" shaped and informed his political judgments. "Douglass's hope," Buccola writes, "was that men could be so devoted to freedom—the value he identified as the center of the northern social system—that they would be moved to action on behalf of their neighbors." Unfortunately for both Douglass and the country, things didn't always work out that way, and his optimism diminished as he aged.

Buccola is slightly less persuasive when it comes to Douglass' complicated relationship to government power. Douglass "had a reform liberal's sensitivity to the ways in which social and economic inequality can undermine the promise of liberty," Buccola argues. "As such, he defended an active role for the state to combat inequality and promote fairness."

Douglass did defend an active role for the federal government, including subsidized land grants by the Freedmen's Bureau and universal

public education for African Ameri- cans. But there is an important dis- tinction between his justifications for these programs and the arguments made today by advocates of welfare- state liberalism.

As far as Douglass was concerned, the former slaves had been robbed, not just of the fruits of their labor but of their very minds and bodies. They were therefore entitled to some serious compensation from the fed- eral and state governments that had aided, abetted, and profited from those crimes. So he wasn't talking about redistribution; he was talking about restitution—paid directly to the victims.

**D**ouglass also immediately recog- nized that the end of slavery did not mean the end of racist govern- ment abuse. In the aftermath of the Civil War, the former Confederate states began passing a series of laws, regulations, and ordinances aimed at restricting or even eliminating the new political, civil, and economic rights enjoyed by African Americans,



*Last Call at the Oasis*  
*The Political Thought of Frederick Douglass* (cover detail)

including their right to vote, earn a living, and defend themselves from attack. Mississippi's Black Code, for example, declared "that no freedman, free Negro, or mulatto...shall keep or carry firearms of any kind," while Louisiana's Black Code decreed that "every negro is required to be in the regular service of some white person, or former owner, who shall be responsible for the conduct of said negro."

These laws were enacted and enforced in blatant violation of the freedmen's rights, although as Douglass acidly remarked in 1872, "The trouble never was in the Constitution, but in the administration of the Constitution." Douglass repeatedly urged the government, including the federal courts, to fulfill its basic constitutional responsibility to safeguard the life, liberty, and property of all citizens. Tragically, he met with very limited success.

Which brings us back to Douglass' famous statement that the government should "do nothing" with black Americans. Obviously he didn't mean do absolutely nothing. After all, he favored the aggressive enforcement of federal civil rights legislation. So what did he mean?

Consider the way he phrased that statement on a different occasion. "Give the Negro fair play," Douglass declared in 1893, "and let him alone." That 1893 statement is Douglass' entire agenda in a nutshell, a perfect distillation of Douglass' classical liberal approach: protect individual rights, pay restitution for past crimes, and let black Americans get on with the business of seeking happiness as they see fit. ■

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## 1776, All Over Again

A 1969 musical about the Declaration of Independence is back

Katherine Mangu-Ward

1776 DEBUTED on Broadway in 1969, just as Richard Nixon was taking up residence in the White House. The show won a Tony for Best Musical that year, beating out the naked hippie romp *Hair*, despite two astonishing facts: 1) there is a 30-minute stretch in the first act where no one sings a note, and 2) it is a musical about the Declaration of Independence.

These Broadway versions of the Founders, plucked from their solemn poses in John Trumbull's famous portrait and forced to tread the boards, are fractious ideologues floundering in a fudged timeline as they squabble their way through the summer of 1776 at Philadelphia's Continental Congress. The crusading John Adams, Sherman Edwards's lyrics remind us over and over, is "obnoxious and disliked." A gloomy Gen. George Washington sends dispatches from the front, whining (in rhyme!), "Is anybody there? / Does anybody care?" Accusations of treason swarm like the flies John Hancock can't shut up about, and everyone complains about the heat. (How many musicals could possibly have lyrics that revolve around the word *humid*?) The final vote for independence is an act of cowardice, not bravery, by a composite character who simply doesn't want to be remembered as the guy who put the kibosh on American freedom from British rule.

The idea that a bunch of vain, self-obsessed, and frequently racist jerks could manage to forge a

great nation grounded in a sincere shared belief in liberty must have been appealing to an American public stunned in the aftermath of the 1968 election, in which Alabama segregationist George Wallace took 13.5 percent of the vote while Nixon squeaked into office with 43.4 percent. Such a message might seem eternal, but the show's positive reception has yet to be duplicated in the post-Watergate era.

The most famous song in a show full of decidedly non-famous tunes is "Egg," in which John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin squabble over the appropriate avian emblem of the nation-to-be. They settle on Adams' choice: the eagle. But not until Franklin has put up a staunch case for the turkey, and Jefferson a weak one for the dove. ("We're waiting for the chirp, chirp, chirp / Of an eaglet being born," they sing in unison. "On this humid Monday morning in this / congressional incubator.")

But the best song is actually "Cool, Cool, Considerate Men," a quasi-minuet in which the conservative faction vows to dance only "to the right, ever to the right / Never to the left, forever to the right." The whole thing is horrifyingly anachronistic; the political usages of left and right have their origin in the National Assembly of the French Revolution of 1789, which took place many years after the events depicted in the show. But it wasn't out of concern for historical accuracy that the song was cut by the time the show was made into a movie in 1972.

The film's producer, Jack L. Warner, was a friend of Nixon and had testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee in



1947, naming a dozen screenwriters as Communists. After the musical hit the big time, the White House requested a special showing, only to demand the removal of that right-wing minuet, as well as the touching "Momma Look Sharp," sung by a dying soldier. (As the Founders became increasingly human and complex, common soldiers are reduced to noble stereotypes.) Those



White House demands resurfaced when the film was in post-production and Warner killed the song. It was restored in later laserdisc, VHS, and DVD releases.

But by the time the movie came out, America was in no mood for a lighthearted romp through American history. *Burr*, Gore Vidal's 1973 runaway bestseller, offered a vision of Jefferson, Adams, Hamilton, and their

ilk as hypocritical schemers, more in line with the mood of a nation about to face up to the realities of Watergate. The show that took the Tony three years before couldn't even manage a Golden Globe, losing to *Cabaret*.

**Now 1776 is back on tour. This spring** it came to the historic Ford's Theater in Washington, D.C., where the house was packed with tourists, not

locals. But who can say what drew them there, or what resonates more with the current climate: the musical spectacle of enemies coming together to forge a new nation, or the bunting-draped box where Abraham Lincoln was shot? ▣

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*Katherine Mangu-Ward (kmw@reason.com) is managing editor of reason.*



## How Rail Screws the Poor

As Los Angeles spends billions on light rail, transit use declines.

THE DIRTY SECRET of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is that it provides some of the finest public transit service in the country. With a network stretching over 1,513 square miles, the MTA runs a fleet of 2,723 buses every weekday, operates trains over 87 miles of track, and carries more than 1 million passengers a day.

The authority's newest service, the long-aborning light-rail Expo Line from downtown L.A. to Culver City, rides like a dream along its eight-mile route. Shortly after the Expo Line opened in late April, my colleague Scott Shackford and I found Expo Line riders unanimously enthusiastic about the train.

Unfortunately, we also found very few riders. Based on our counts and calculations, we estimated total daily ridership could not exceed 13,000 people. A few days after we rode the rails, Los Angeles County Supervi-

sor Zev Yaroslavsky came up with an even smaller figure of 9,000 daily riders.

Here you begin to see how the MTA is simultaneously increasing operating costs, reducing operating revenue, cutting service for working-class and poor customers, and dismantling a functioning mass transit system, all in the service of a fantasy that was pushed on an unwilling L.A. by wealthy liberals.

Since 2009 the MTA has added eight miles of train service, at a capital cost of about \$2 billion. These new trains, the Expo Line and an extension of the east-county Gold Line, carry a total of about 39,000 people a day.

In the meantime, the cash-strapped authority radically reduced bus service twice: It cut bus lines by 4 percent in 2010 and 12 percent in 2011. These cuts were made even though buses move more than four times as many Angelenos as trains do. In 2009 MTA buses carried about 1.2 million riders a day. Multiplying that by 16 percent, we can estimate more than 180,000 people had their service canceled while fewer than 40,000 had service introduced.

Not surprisingly, the result is that fewer people are using mass transit overall in Los Angeles than in 2009 (about 5 percent fewer, according to MTA statistics). This is a continuation of a long-term trend. Since the MTA began rail construction in 1985, more than 80 miles of railroads have been built, but mass transit ridership as a percentage of county population is lower than it was in 1985.

Bus riders get screwed in another important way: We have to pay for a ride, while train riders don't. Every

MTA bus has an enforcer, a driver who collects the standard fare of \$1.50. Trains operate on an "honor system" in which fares are not collected. Although the MTA claims to conduct occasional spot checks and lay heavy fines on fare cheats, its rail revenue numbers suggest very few train riders pay. (The MTA is planning to add gating at rail platforms later this year.)

Why would a public transit authority want to reduce its number of paying customers while adding costly, inflexible capacity that is destined to be severely underused? Part of the answer lies in the nation's light rail obsession. New trains are being added or planned in Austin, Cincinnati, Minneapolis, and other cities around the country. But L.A. train buffs have a special complex rooted in the legend of the Pacific Electric rail system.

According to Bradford C. Snell's 1974 Senate Antitrust Committee report *A Proposal for Restructuring the Automobile, Truck, Bus & Rail Industries*, the evolution of modern car-friendly Los Angeles was not a matter of consumer choice or technological improvement but a plot by General Motors and Standard Oil to transform L.A. from a "beautiful city of lush palm trees, fragrant orange groves and ocean-clean air" into an "ecological wasteland" with "palm trees...dying from petrochemical smog" and air quality equal to that of "a septic tank." This remarkably popular if historically dubious anti-rail conspiracy theory informed the plot of the 1988 movie *Who Framed Roger Rabbit?*

Using transit policy to right alleged historical wrongs salves the consciences of well-heeled liberals,



provides plenty of room for doling out political pork, and pleases planning utopians (including Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa) who want to remake Angelenos into hub-centered, vertically living New Yorkers. But L.A.'s further left recognizes something the Democratic donor

### Why would a public transit authority want to reduce its number of paying customers while adding costly, inflexible capacity that is destined to be severely underused?

base does not: Poor people get the short end of these grand schemes.

Bus riders are overwhelmingly poor and working class. As a regular rider I can attest that often the only English spoken on an L.A. bus is the robotic voice that announces upcoming

stops. In 1996 a coalition led by the left-wing Bus Riders Union successfully sued the MTA, alleging discrimination in transit decision making. The action was based on the questionable idea that subsidized public transit is a human right, but it had a good effect: Under a 10-year consent decree, the authority beefed up its bus service and saw ridership increase. That ended in 2006, and bus service since then has been declining. So has overall use of mass transit.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in April ordered the MTA to review its recent service cuts to find “unjustified disparate impacts, or justified disparate impacts that may be mitigated through an alternative.” Bus Riders Union co-founder Eric Mann says the FTA instead should have ordered L.A. to undo its service

cuts, adding that his group is launching “a national campaign to get President Obama to overturn the FTA and restore 1 million hours of bus service.”

I wish the Bus Riders Union well, but this civil rights bean counting wouldn't be necessary if the MTA were even minimally responsive to market stimuli. To spend billions on infrastructure and end up with fewer people using mass transit is an absurd result on its face. Light rail does not reduce smog, fight global warming, or serve the taxpayers. It does not, as rail buffs claim, “get people out of their cars.” It is just another perverse dream from the ivory tower, one that vanishes when it hits the street. ■

*Tim Cavanaugh (tcavanaugh@reason.com) is managing editor of reason online.*

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Scale model of the Abbottabad, Pakistan, compound where Osama bin Laden was killed. AP Photo/National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency

## Bin Laden's Doll House

*Peter Suderman*

IMAGINE PLAYING with your toy soldiers in this: a 1/84th scale miniature model of Osama bin Laden's Abbottabad, Pakistan, compound made by a team of staff model makers at the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency.

The table-sized model, which measures one inch for every seven feet of real-world compound, was built over six weeks to help train U.S. forces in preparation for the May

2011 raid that killed the terrorist leader. (Special Forces also reportedly practiced operations in a full-scale mock-up of the compound.)

Made of clay, Styrofoam, and other materials, it was constructed based on satellite imagery gathered by U.S. intelligence agencies. It features a wealth of tiny details, including a Hot Wheels-sized red moving van parked out front and true-to-life foliage in the compound's inner courtyard.

The model, which is only one of several copies, has been declassified

since at least last October. It was put on display in the Pentagon in May of this year.

"It really puts it into perspective how large the compound actually is, or was, sorry, because it no longer exists," Pentagon spokesperson Erica Fouche told the Agence France-Presse news service. The compound was destroyed by Pakistani authorities after the raid. **■**

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From *Reason* Magazine Senior Editor  
Brian Doherty

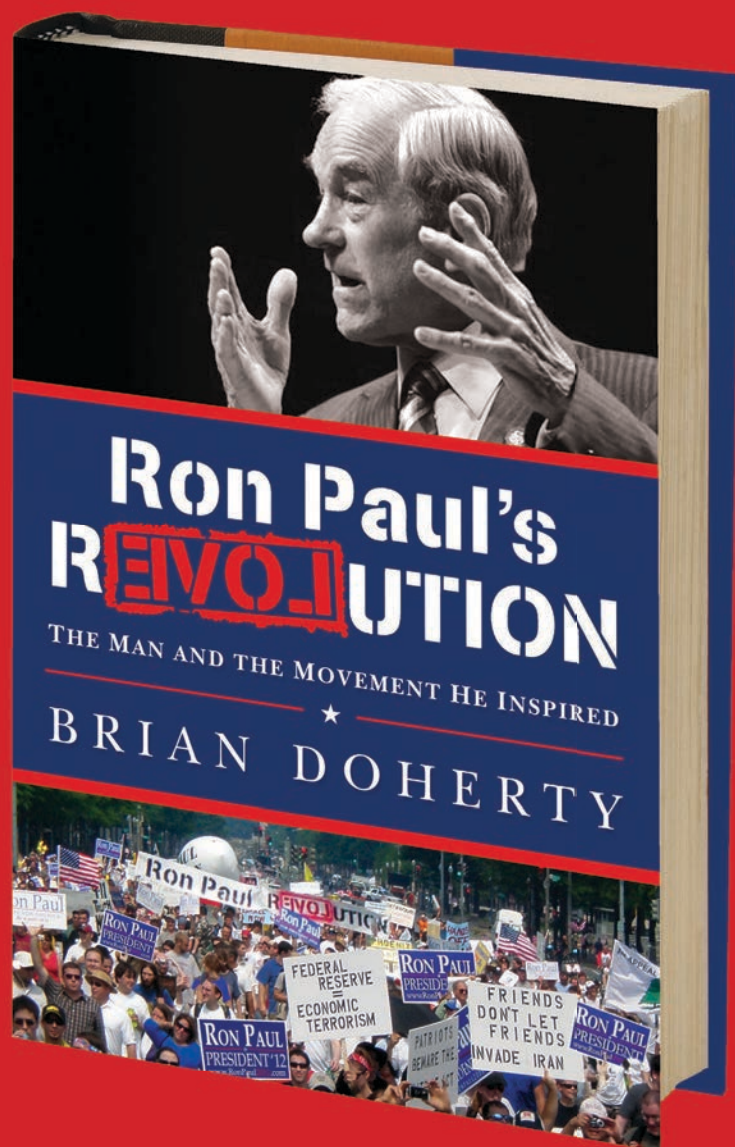


# WHO IS RON PAUL?

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*I am IJ.*



*Russ Caswell  
Tewksbury, Mass.*