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SAMPLER

**A WAR
PRESIDENCY**

Fred Barnes • Jeffrey Bell • Terry Eastland
Reuel Marc Gerecht • Robert Kagan & William Kristol
Gary Schmitt & Tom Donnelly • David Tell



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Casual

COUNTING CROWES

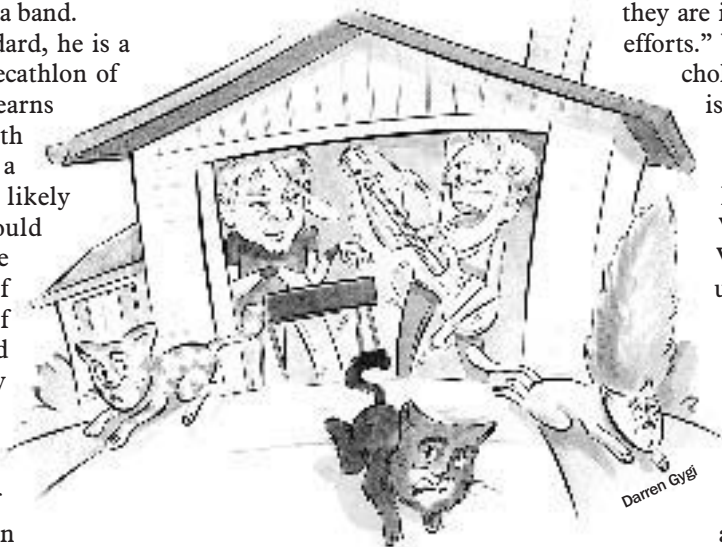
I was surprised to read in the newspaper the other day that the movie star Russell Crowe has just concluded a month-long tour with his rock 'n' roll band, a group of Australians called "30 Odd Foot of Grunts." I was surprised for reasons that had nothing to do with the stupid name. I didn't know Russell Crowe was on tour, for one thing; and I didn't know Russell Crowe had a band. I wouldn't have thought it necessary for him to have a band.

By any objective standard, he is a man who has won the decathlon of human existence. He earns more money in a month than you or I will earn in a lifetime, and he has likely banked more than he could ever spend. He enjoys the adulation of millions of strangers, the respect of his peers, and the awed deference of the creepy movie moguls who would technically be considered his bosses if they weren't so afraid of ticking him off. He has, in short, satisfied all the ambitions that might vex a normal fellow in twenty-first century America. Cars, houses, boats, power tools—he has everything a man could want. He has Meg Ryan's phone number.

He has everything, apparently, but the essential thing: He isn't a rock star. Clearly this is a source of some annoyance for him, as it is for most men. Crowe's aspiration—along with that of other matinee idols with vanity bands, such as Bruce Willis and Keanu Reeves and Dennis Quaid and many others—reflects the general consensus among men that being a rock star is more than a job, more than a career, more indeed than a way of life. Being a rock star is the summit of cool, a kind of apotheosis, the prop-

er end and final cause, in Aristotelian terms, of masculinity. (Aristotle used to play bass for the Funkadelics.) Movie stars routinely strive to be rock stars, you'll notice, but it seldom works the other way round. Rock stars don't want the demotion.

The rock 'n' roll ambition settles in early. As a contagion it moves from teen to teen, erupting first in that auspicious moment when, in the privacy of his bedroom with the



stereo blaring, the youngster feels his fingers twitch over the imaginary fretboard of an air guitar. It continues, for some of us, into late adolescence and beyond, often culminating in garage bands that terrorize the neighborhood cats with calamitous cover versions of "Johnny B. Goode" or (more recently) "Smells Like Teen Spirit." And in many cases—maybe most cases—it never goes into remission. The next time you're at a stop light, cast a glance at the car next to you. That guy in the Camry with the baby seat in back may look like he's singing along to the radio. But in the private precincts of his heart he's really Jim Morrison, before Jim got all puffy and moved to Paris and fell face first in

the bath. In our dreams we are all rockers in their prime.

For the average baby-boomer schlub, the durability of the dream is easy to explain. Sex is at the heart of the matter, as it usually is. A rock star in *Almost Famous*, last year's rose-tinted movie about 1970s rock, pompously tells an interviewer why he pursues his art: "It's a voice inside you, man, and it says, 'Here I am and f—you if you can't understand me!'" After a pause he adds: "Plus the chicks are great." Making the obvious seem as obscure as possible, as they so often do, evolutionary psychologists have even conducted studies proving—to quote one textbook—that "most pop music is produced by men aged between 20 and 40, the very age when they are investing heavily in mating efforts." What an evolutionary psychologist can't explain, though, is the particular men who have enjoyed all these mating opportunities. From Buddy Holly to Charlie Watts, Ringo to Barry White—this is a line-up of unlikely sex objects. The alchemy of rock stardom performs miracles. It even transformed Rod Stewart into an object of desire. There really is a rock 'n' roll heaven.

But still: How to account for the ambition of Russell Crowe and Bruce Willis and their colleagues in movie stardom, for whom, demonstrably, the "chicks" are already "great"? I did some digging and found, on his band's website, the lyrics to many of Crowe's songs, and reading them I saw the explanation. He says he has a "hunger for self-expression," ventilated in lyrics like these to his "High Horse Honey": "You can't live your life on the fact you're pretty / Hold it up like you're head of the class / Cause the good lord above who parted the waters / Will soon start spreading your ass / All over the couch." Some truths, beyond the reach of the filmic art, can only be approached in song.

ANDREW FERGUSON

A War to Win

The first thing that must be said is this: The nation has reacted magnificently to the horrific events of September 11. True, there has been some of the usual hand-wringing, on editorial pages and in Congress. To listen to some commentators, you'd think the Bush administration was about to embark on a mad orgy of international bloodletting, spraying bombs in all directions without rhyme or reason, save the lust for vengeance. Retired general Charles G. Boyd, for example, expressed his concern that the desire to "strike out in revenge" could "put us on the same moral footing" as the men who killed several thousand Americans this past Tuesday. Some in Congress were reluctant this week to give President Bush full authority for the use of force, lest he abuse the privilege and do something unthinkable.

In fact, such fears are entirely misplaced. The danger that the United States will lose its soul in the coming fight against terrorism is virtually nonexistent. But there is another, far more real danger: that we will return to complacency, that with the passage of time, and perhaps after a few, bloody skirmishes in this new war, the nation and its political leaders will gradually lose interest.

This may seem inconceivable at the moment. Right now, Americans and their political leaders seem prepared for the difficult struggle ahead. The administration appears to be embarking on a long, intensive, and purposeful offensive against terrorism. As Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz emphasized this past week, the administration is planning "a campaign, not a single action." The campaign will consist of "removing the sanctuaries, removing the support systems, ending states who sponsor terrorism." That will mean diplomatic pressure, and military action, against states found to be supporting terrorism—and perhaps sooner rather than later.

All this is encouraging. Right now, the United States appears to be girding itself for a protracted, dangerous, costly, but unavoidable conflict. But what about a month from now, when the networks have gone back to regular programming, the baseball playoff season begins, and the inevitable and appropriate partisanship returns? What about if some part of a military action goes wrong? What about a year from now? One of the great things about Americans is precisely how resilient we are. In time we will pick up the pieces and try to resume life as normal, and so we should. But the danger is that in returning to our nor-

mal lives, we may gradually forget this week's horrible lesson. Today Americans know we are at war. The question is, will we still remember why we must be at war—and why we must accept the price of war—tomorrow?

We raise this concern not because we believe America's present determination to make war on international terrorism must inevitably fade. The American people have in the past proven themselves capable of a sustained commitment. But the key to sustaining their commitment will be clear, steady, and vigorous political leadership, the kind provided by Franklin D. Roosevelt during World War II, by Harry Truman and Ronald Reagan during the difficult years of the Cold War, and by George Herbert Walker Bush during the Gulf War and, perhaps more important, during the long, difficult months leading up to the launching of Desert Storm. We trust George W. Bush will rise to the occasion. But he shouldn't have to do it alone. Members of Congress have a job to do, too. Whether they remain intently focused on the new war against terror will send a clear signal to the American people—not to mention America's bloody-minded enemies—of how serious we are about sustaining this war, and about paying the price for it.

The price will be substantial—not just in dollars, of course, but to start with, in dollars. If the administration intends seriously to pursue the strategy outlined this past week, we may soon find ourselves at war in one or more parts of the world. The possibility of engaging in some form of conflict in Afghanistan is now fairly high. Should evidence reveal some Iraqi, Iranian, Syrian, or other state support for last week's attack, the president will be confronted with the choice of taking military action or backing down. And if he does decide to go to war in the Middle East, he will still have to preserve American interests and defend American allies in Asia. Remember the two-war strategy the Pentagon just abandoned? Now it looks rather more realistic.

Given the serious shortfalls that are already plaguing our armed services, what this all adds up to is that we need to increase defense spending very substantially. Last week's \$40 billion (about half of which appears to be for defense) is a start—but only a start. Failure to boost the defense budget by the necessary amount—and to make the case for the additional tens of billions that will be needed—will unacceptably limit the president's military options in the months and years to come. It will be a sign

that we are not really serious about fighting this war.

There are other steps that should be taken immediately—some to prepare for the coming conflict, others to guard against any future attention-deficit syndrome. They require acting soon, while the national determination to respond is at its peak. And they require determined presidential and congressional leadership, not just at this moment of acute crisis but for the long term.

This brings us to a final point, about President Bush. He is not an inspirational leader, at least not yet. But contrary to what his political handlers seem to believe, this is not a fatal flaw. The nation is already inspired. The presi-

dent can lead by doing. What he needs to convey to the American people, he can convey by how he wields his command.

The American people know and respect the fact that the president has surrounded himself with impressive, confidence-inspiring individuals, men like Dick Cheney, Colin Powell and Don Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Armitage. Bush should unleash them and let them help in the important task of leading the American people over the coming months and years. His has now become a war presidency; what matters is to win the war.

—Robert Kagan and William Kristol

A Nation Mobilized

There was much talk in Washington last week of the need for the government to reassure the nation. But it is not just reassurance the American public seeks from its leaders. To talk to people on the street, to listen to friends and relatives across the nation, is to hear something not heard in this country since Pearl Harbor. It sounds at times like the ancient pagan vengeance that would gladly slaughter its enemies and sow salt among their ruins. But that is, at last, only a weak and confused attempt to say something else—something we lack a vocabulary to express naturally these days. It has to do with honor, and it has to do with will. It is a national resolution to alter, redirect, and even surrender our lives to ensure that such evil should never again come against us.

Real war always has this effect. We have been called out of our trivial concerns. We have resigned our parts in the casual comedy of everyday existence. We live, for the first time since World War II, with a horizon once again. If only President Bush would issue the call, the recruiting offices of the armed services would be filled tomorrow. If only he would issue *some* call commensurate with our willingness, Americans would give freely—"The awful daring of a moment's surrender" of ourselves to a purpose, as T.S. Eliot described it, "Which an age of prudence can never retract."

No one imagines that the United States will do nothing. But a campaign merely of long-range attacks on terrorist camps and international sanctions—a campaign of missiles and lawyers—means the end of the America we love. Not only will it aggravate, as the truncated Gulf War aggravated, the evil it is meant to eliminate, but it will fritter away, perhaps forever, the potential of Americans to join in common purpose—the potential that is the definition of a nation.

There is a task to which President Bush should call us. It is the long, expensive, and arduous war to replace the government of each nation on earth that allows terrorists to live and operate within its borders.

The origin of the attacks on Washington and New York lies in the shadow world of men seemingly without countries. When members of the Irish Republican Army are discovered in Colombia advising a Communist revolutionary group after aiding Basque separatists trained in the camps of Islamic militants, we have mostly left behind a world of nation-states and intelligible geopolitics.

But we have not entirely left it behind, for this shadow world is finally parasitic on the real world of nations. Unwilling to attack their enemies directly, certain countries gain by allowing—and simultaneously denying responsibility for—independent forces striking from within their borders. It has been this way before. For two centuries, the Ottoman Empire let pirates sail from its North African ports to harass Europe's Mediterranean cities. Elizabeth I used English and Dutch privateers in much the same way against the Spanish. And, in every case, the removal of the base—a change in the country from which these men without countries operate—was the only solution that could be attempted.

That solution, a war to topple and replace the governments that allow terrorism, is once again the only solution. It will prove long and difficult. American soldiers will lose their lives in the course of it, and American civilians will suffer hardships. But that, too, is what real war looks like. And in the days since the first plane smashed into the World Trade Center the American people have shown their willingness to fight it—if only our leaders will lead us there.

—J. Bottum, for the Editors

The Great Stem Cell Hoax

The research promises results—about a half century from now. **BY CHARLES KRAUTHAMMER**

SANITY AND PRUDENCE combined to produce a great victory on July 31 when the House of Representatives overwhelmingly defeated—the margin was over 100 votes—the legalization of early human embryonic cloning. But the fight is not over. The Senate needs to act as well.

Before it does, however, it is worth preparing oneself for the gale-force hype that Senate advocates will unleash in defense of the indefensible. One has only to look at the debate on the floor of the House to see the extraordinary lengths to which the biotech industry and its allies in Congress will go to sell the deliberate creation of embryo factories for the sole purpose of exploiting and then destroying them.

While the media have been snooping under Gary Condit's bed, they have missed the real scandal of the season, the unconscionable deployment of fantasy and false hopes by advocates of "therapeutic" cloning for the production of stem cells. The basic premise—cure of the incurable—was stated by a *Newsweek* cover a month ago: "There's Hope for Alzheimer's, Heart Disease, Parkinson's and Diabetes. But Will Bush Cut Off the Money?" The theme has been echoed and reechoed nowhere more than in Congress.

The cosponsor of a permissive cloning bill, Peter Deutsch (D-FL), said this about the opposing bill totally banning cloning: "No one knows who is going to get Alzheimer's or Parkinson's or cancer. . . . What this

legislation would do would be to stop the research . . . so that you could survive, so that someone who is a quadriplegic could walk, so that someone who has Alzheimer's . . ." He trailed away. You get the drift. The lion will lie down with the lamb.

Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), with characteristic subtlety: "Mr. Speaker, the National Institutes of Health and Science hold the biblical power of a cure for us."

Zoe Lofgren (D-CA): "If your religious beliefs will not let you accept a cure for your child's cancer, so be it. But do not expect the rest of America to let their loved ones suffer without cure."

Jerrold Nadler (D-NY): "We must not say to millions of sick or injured human beings, 'go ahead and die, stay paralyzed, because we believe the blastocyst, the clump of cells, is more important than you are.' . . . It is a sentence of death to millions of Americans."

Anna Eshoo (D-CA): "As we stand on the brink of finding the cures to diseases that have plagued so many millions of Americans, unfortunately, the Congress today in my view is on the brink of prohibiting this critical research."

Eshoo gets the prize. The brink? The claim that cloning, and the stem cells it might produce, is on the verge of bringing a cure to your sick father with Alzheimer's or your debilitated mother with Parkinson's is a scandal. It is a cruel deception perpetrated by cynical scientists and ignorant politicians. Its purpose is clear: to exploit the desperation of the sick to garner political support for ethically problematic biotechnology.

The brink? Cloning animals, let alone humans, is so imperfect and difficult that it took 277 attempts before Dolly the sheep was cloned. Scientists estimate that the overall failure rate for cloning farm animals is 95 percent or greater. New experiments with cloned mice have shown gross deformities. And here is the worst part. We have no idea why. We understand little about how reprogrammed genes work. Scientists don't even know how to screen with any test for epigenetic abnormality.

In other words: Even if you could grow embryonic stem cells out of grandma's skin cells, we have no idea yet how to regulate and control these cells in a way to effect a cure. Just growing them in tissue culture is difficult enough. Then you have to tweak them to make precisely the kind of cells grandma needs. Then you have to inject them and hope to God that you don't kill her.

We have already had one such experience, a human stem cell experiment in China. Embryonic stem cells were injected into a suffering Parkinson's patient. The results were horrific. Because we don't yet know how to control stem cells, they grew wildly and developed into one of the most primitive and terrifying cancers, a "teratoma." When finally autopsied—the cure killed the poor soul—they found at the brain site of the injection a tumor full of hair, bone and skin.

Let's have a little honesty in both the cloning and stem cell debates. Stem cell research does hold promise for clinical cures in the far future. But right now we're at the stage of basic science: We don't understand how these cells work, and we don't know how to control them. Because their power is so extraordinary, they are very dangerous. Elementary considerations of safety make the prospect of real clinical application distant.

Stem cells are the cure of the mid 21st century. Stem cell research deserves support because the basic research needs to be done and we might as well get started now. But the cure is for future generations. The cynical appeal to curing grandma is

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raw exploitation of misery. Nothing of the sort is about to happen. Those who claim it ought to be ashamed.

But rather than exhibit shame, the scientific community is rallying—in the name of retaining their autonomy from the ignorant dictates of lay society—to sugarcoat the news. Most notorious is the case of the research article on embryonic stem cells published in July in the journal *Science*, one of the most respected scientific publications in the world. The research showed that embryonic stem cells of mice are genetically unstable. Yes, you can make them grow over and over again, but we don't know how or why some genes are turned on and off. You can make a million copies of a stem cell. They may be genetically identical. But if different genes are turned on in the various cells, the results—the properties of the tissue or organism they develop into—can be wildly different.

Now the really bad news. The authors of that study initially had a sentence at the end of the paper stating the obvious conclusion that this research might put in question the clinical applicability of stem cell research.

But that cannot be said publicly. In a highly unusual move, the authors withdrew the phrase that the genetic instability of stem cells “might limit their use in clinical applications” just a few days before publication. They instead emphasized that this mouse study ought not hold back stem cell research.

This change in text represents a corruption of science that mirrors the corruption of language in the congressional debate. It is corrupting because this study might have helped to undermine the extravagant claims made by stem cell advocates that a cure for Parkinson's or spinal cord injury or Alzheimer's is in the laboratory and just around the corner, if only those right-wing, antiabortion nuts would let it go forward.

In reviewing a book on Parkinson's disease, Nina King, associate editor of *Washington Post Book World*, noted that when she was diagnosed with the

disease 15 years ago, she was told that a cure was 5 or 10 years away. She has heard that ever since. A cure in 5 to 10 years “is like a mirage on the horizon, glowing with promise but ever receding.”

The other scandalous myth being perpetrated, besides imminence, is inevitability. It goes like this:

The march of science will go on. Legislators can try to contain the growth of knowledge, but it is futile. Somebody somewhere will work on stem cells or cloning. So let us at least take it out of the closet and keep it in the public eye.

What this mantra does not take into account is the radical effect a ban on anything in science has on the quality and quantity of people working on it. Cloning has not even been banned, but because it is societally disapproved of, it is generally shunned by serious researchers. Look at the cloning conference called by the National Academy of Sciences on August 7 in Washington. A vast majority of researchers there view with horror the cloning of a human child—except for three researchers who declared their determination to do it. Three in the whole world.

One looked less stable than the other. Dr. Boisselier recently closed her “Clonaid” laboratory in the United States and is supposedly opening one offshore. When she spoke to the gathered about the right to do what one wants with one's genes, she did not inspire great confidence, possibly because she is a member of the Raelian sect, a cult founded by a former French race car driver after being visited by aliens in 1973. Seeing how marginalized cloning researchers are today even before a legal ban, one can imagine how much more marginalized they will be after one.

A ban works by robbing outlawed research of the best and the brightest. They are not going to devote their lives to a career where they must work in the shadows, ostracized, and under threat of arrest. That ought to encourage legislators to believe that society can indeed influence the direction of science.

Yes, in the very long run some science will break through. But one must not underestimate the efficacy of political restraint. If you can restrain for decades something that promises a cure, imagine how many other, less morally repulsive, substitute cures will present themselves in the meantime. You cannot stop evil science, but you can delay it, and thus possibly supplant it.

That is why the House action banning all cloning was so important. The Senate must demonstrate its seriousness, too. Now that the president has permitted only research from existing stem cell lines, the Democratic Senate is sure to try to loosen that standard and permit stem cell research from discarded fertility clinic embryos as well. But until Congress has demonstrated its seriousness about preventing the creation of embryo factories for exploitation by banning cloning completely, it cannot be trusted on any question regarding human manufacture. ♦

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The Impresario

Karl Rove, Orchestrator of the Bush White House

BY FRED BARNES

In late July, Bill Bennett, the former education secretary and drug czar, got a telephone call from the White House. Would he be interested in serving as special presidential envoy on Sudan, where Christians are persecuted and slavery thrives? The caller wasn't Clay Johnson, President Bush's personnel director, or a State Department official. It was Karl Rove, senior counselor to Bush and political adviser. Bennett thought about the offer, then said no.

Weeks earlier, a senior Republican congressman recommended to the White House a nominee to serve on the part-time oversight board of a quasi-governmental corporation. The job paid \$20,000. Johnson said there would be no problem. But the nomination never came about, and the congressman later discovered what had happened. Rove had substituted another choice for the post.

That Rove plays a major role in staffing the Bush administration—every appointment, even the most insignificant, crosses his desk—is startling enough. He's a campaign consultant by trade, and his line authority at the White House is limited to political operations, strategic planning, and public liaison. What's more startling is that personnel matters and his official duties are only a tiny part of what Rove does.

Cocksure, decisive, feared in Washington and inside the national political community, Rove is first among supposed equals in advising Bush, cabinet members included. His ideas animate the Bush presidency. His political maneuvering propels Bush's agenda. Rarely has a president's success depended so much on the skill of a single adviser. It's only a slight exaggeration to say: As Rove goes, so goes Bush.

Rove is the conceptualizer of Bush as a "different kind of Republican," whose presidency transforms the GOP into a majority party by adding new constituencies (Latinos, Catholics, wired workers) to a conservative base. Rove charts the long-term (90-day) White House schedule, including which issues Bush will stress. This, in effect, makes him both Bush's chief congressional strate-

gist and the man behind Bush's message. For the fall, Rove's scheme calls for Bush to play up his "compassionate conservative" side, emphasizing education and conservative values. The aim is to counteract Bush's image as a conventional Republican, which Rove believes was created by the president's stress on tax cuts during his first six months in the White House.

There's still more, much more, to Rove's vast portfolio. He's both policy adviser and policy implementer. He took over the simmering issue of U.S. Navy bombing practice on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques and engineered the decision to terminate it (against the Navy's wishes). He became the leading White House expert on stem cell research and arranged for a stream of outsiders to meet with Bush, including Leon Kass, the University of Chicago professor whom the president tapped last week to head his council on the ethics of biomedical research. When Bush's faith-based initiative stalled this spring, Rove stepped in at the president's behest and, along with faith-based director John DiIulio, rejuvenated the effort and won House approval. He's a major force behind the president's plan to reform Social Security with personal investment accounts. He lobbied critical Republican House members from New Jersey to back Bush on a patients' bill of rights (most did).

Then there are Rove's more mundane political chores. He picks out prospective Republican candidates and encourages them to run. "That's my job," Rove says. The latest: congressman John Thune of South Dakota, who now appears likely to challenge Democratic senator Tim Johnson. When Tom Davis, head of the House GOP campaign committee, told Rove that Randy Forbes, not the candidate favored by governor Jim Gilmore, offered the best chance to pick up a Democratic House seat in a special election in Virginia in June, Rove responded, "I know." Rove dispatched a spate of Bush administration officials to stump for Forbes, who won.

A balding 50-year-old with glasses, Rove has become the hottest speaker on the Republican circuit. When he addressed the Midwest Republican Leadership Conference in Minneapolis in July, he drew a

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more enthusiastic response than Vice President Dick Cheney. "He's a hero to Republicans," says former congressman Vin Weber, who attended the conference. That same weekend he spoke at a fund-raiser for Kentucky representative Ann Northup in Louisville and a Republican National Committee event in San Francisco. In Virginia in June, he addressed both the state party convention and a gathering of well-heeled Republican donors hosted by Gilmore. Rove, by the way, negotiated the selection of Gilmore as RNC chairman last winter with the governor's chief of staff, Boyd Marcus. Gilmore had balked at being "general chairman" with little authority. He got the full chairman's job, but Rove assigned Bush loyalist Jack Oliver to the committee in the newly created post of deputy chairman.

Rove assigned himself one of the most important tasks at the White House: keeping the Republican party's conservative base solidly behind Bush. This is virtually a full-time job. He stays in almost daily contact, by phone or e-mail, with important conservative players in Washington, like National Rifle Association lobbyist Chuck Cunningham. He meets regularly with a group of conservative intellectuals in Washington, listening to their ideas and saying little himself. He talks to conservative journalists. He attends conservative gatherings. When attorney general John Ashcroft balked at addressing the Conservative Political Action Conference last February, Rove volunteered, though his family was moving from Austin to Washington that weekend. On August 1, he briefed the weekly meeting of Washington activists hosted by Grover Norquist of Americans for Tax Reform on congressional reapportionment. As Rove spoke, House GOP whip Tom DeLay entered the meeting, and Rove gently poked fun at him. Rove's appearance was warmly received.

All this activity, plus Rove's long and trusting relationship with Bush, has made him not only the most influential adviser to Bush, but one of the most powerful presidential aides since the advent of the modern White House under President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The media, however, tend to treat Rove as a top adviser whose duties are purely about gaining popularity and winning elections. As reporters see it, to use an analogy from the Clinton era, it's as if campaign consultant James Carville had joined the president's top staff and begun to throw his weight around. When Rove gets involved substantively in an issue, reporters treat that as proof the issue has become tainted with politics. But in truth,

Rove is not Bush's Carville. He has always advised Bush on substance—while Bush was governor, during the campaign, and now. It was Rove who organized the teams of policy advisers who prepped Bush in the campaign and now fill high-level jobs in his administration. "Rove's a generalist," says Weber. "He's one of those rare people who operate at the intersection of policy and politics. When you get someone who's really good at both, that's the indispensable person."

Rove's official title is "senior counselor," but he refuses to spell out all that entails. David Keene of the American Conservative Union says Rove is the "central point" in an otherwise compartmentalized White House. Norquist calls him the "Grand Central Station where everything switches through." Marshall Wittmann of the Hudson Institute, an ally of senator John McCain and critic of Bush, says Rove is "perceived as the nerve center of the administration." Roy Blunt of Missouri, the deputy GOP whip and Rove's chief contact in the

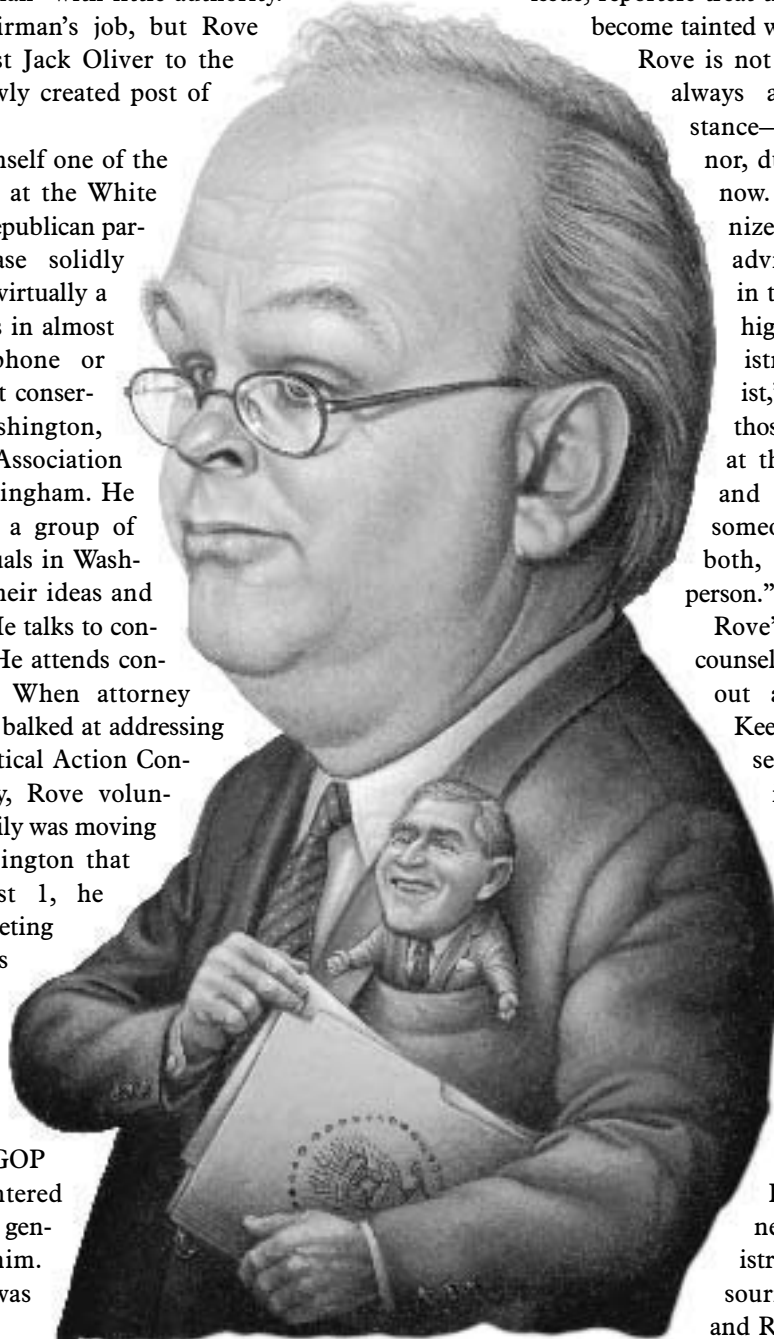


Illustration by Joseph Salina

House, says of him: "He's everywhere."

The aides from earlier White Houses who rivaled Rove in influence had a distinct advantage: They served as chiefs of staff. But neither John Sununu in Bush's father's White House nor James Baker in Ronald Reagan's had the long personal relationship with the president that Rove has with Bush. And neither had devised the themes and masterminded the campaign of the president he served, as Rove has. "We're used to a White House that's not built on a long-term relationship," says Blunt. One like Clinton's or Richard Nixon's. In the Nixon White House, only the combination of H.R. Haldeman, the chief of staff, and domestic adviser John Ehrlichman matched Rove's clout. Perhaps Harry Hopkins in FDR's White House was more influential. And Sherman Adams, Dwight Eisenhower's chief, probably was.

The case of Adams is instructive. He exemplifies the peril of being a highly visible White House aide in a partisan environment. With Eisenhower immune from attacks as a war hero, Adams became the target for political foes and reporters and was forced to resign for improperly accepting gifts. And now Rove is under attack from Democrats and the media. "It's dawned on people he's the leading conservative in the administration and he's the leading policy adviser to Bush," says Republican consultant Jeffrey Bell. "The press and the non-

Republican institutions in this town have found out how important he is to Bush's success," says Charles Black, a Washington lobbyist and Bush campaign adviser. That alone makes him subject to scrutiny, and he's all the more a target because criticism of Bush as a lightweight or a radical conservative hasn't caught on. Since foes of Bush view Rove as the president's brain, their strategy is decapitation: Cut off the head (Rove) to kill the body (Bush).

From all appearances, Rove doesn't take the attacks very seriously. Some he shouldn't, such as the barbs of Democratic national chairman Terry McAuliffe, who routinely zings Rove in his speeches and TV interviews. At a Los Angeles fund-raiser in July, he indicated that Rove was getting away with unethical conduct and that Democrats would increasingly go after him. He cited a meeting Rove had at the White House with corporate officials of Intel, who were seeking approval of the merger of a supplier and a Dutch company. "Isn't it a shame that's come to

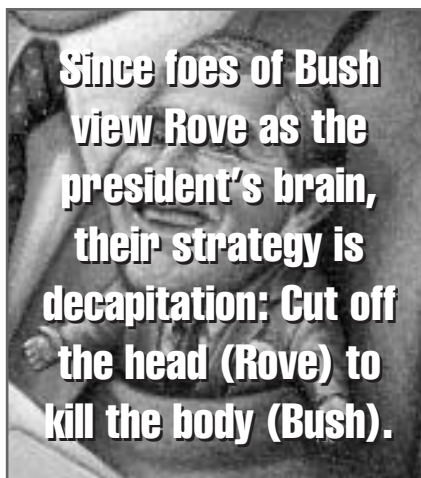
light," McAuliffe said sarcastically.

McAuliffe has no credibility, especially on ethical issues, but Henry Waxman, ranking Democrat on the House Government Reform Committee, does. Waxman is a fierce partisan, but he's also smart, relentless, and taken seriously by the press. On the basis of media accounts of Rove's meetings at the White House with executives of companies in which Rove owned stock, Waxman has sought a congressional inquiry. White House counsel Alberto Gonzales informed Waxman that conflict-of-interest rules don't apply to those meetings. Waxman responded that even if there's merely an appearance of conflict, the question must be turned over to the Justice Department for investigation.

There the matter stands, but only for now. Waxman has been stymied by the White House in seeking related documents and a full list of those with whom Rove has conferred. And Dan Burton, the Republican who chairs the House Government Reform Committee, has refused to conduct an investigation. Waxman, however, does not give up easily. His recourse is the Senate, controlled by Democrats. Majority leader Tom Daschle has said he doesn't favor a Rove probe. But Waxman aides insist, after talking to Daschle's office, that he was referring only to an investigation to retaliate against Republicans for badgering the Clinton White House, not a legitimate inquiry into Rove's dealings.

Should the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, headed by Joe Lieberman, take up the matter, that could be trouble for Rove. He could be interviewed under oath by committee investigators, forced to turn over documents, and pressed into testifying at a public hearing. All that may sound far-fetched, but it's not implausible. Democrats have always been good at "oversight" hearings that turn into gotcha sessions with a partisan payoff. And for the moment, Rove is the biggest game in town.

The outside advisers who talk to Rove every other week—Washington veterans Weber, Black, Ed Gillespie, Haley Barbour, and Bill Paxon—are worried about the attacks. Rove, who says the attacks are "part of the political game" in Washington, may be more concerned than he lets on. He says he's finicky on ethical matters. He told me he walked out of a session with New York governor George Pataki when the topic of dredging the Hudson River came up. That issue specifically involved General Electric, another company in which he held stock. The



other meetings, including several with John Chambers, the CEO of Cisco Systems, consisted only of general policy discussions or friendly chats, not matters that directly affected any company. Thus, he and Gonzales insist no conflict of interest arose.

Rove has not been accused of exploiting his office to boost his stocks. In a June 15 letter to Rove, Waxman said: "I am writing not to make accusations about your conduct but to seek more information about your involvement in policy matters that may involve your holdings." In fact, Rove sacrificed millions in earnings by selling his political consulting firm and joining the Bush campaign in 1999 and now the White House staff. (Carville *made* millions by *not* joining Clinton's staff.) As an outside adviser, he could have collected lucrative fees for placing Bush campaign ads. With Bush as president, he could have signed a consulting contract with the RNC and worked for other clients, political and corporate, as well. Instead, Rove makes \$140,000 a year as a government employee.

Absent White House dawdling, the trouble over Rove's stock would have been avoided. Rove says he offered to sell all his stock (worth \$1.6 million at the time) before joining the administration but was told to wait for a certificate of divestiture to be issued by the counsel's office. He badgered White House lawyers, Rove says, but they didn't produce the document until June 6. He sold his stock the next day. In the interim, he'd met with Intel and other corporate executives. The delay in selling his stock proved costly to Rove. A Bloomberg News analysis found his stocks dropped 8.6 percent from January 20 to June 6, a loss of roughly \$138,000.

Besides Democrats, Rove has the press gunning for him. When James Jeffords of Vermont quit the GOP in May and Democrats took control of the Senate, Rove was widely criticized for heavy-handedness in dealing with Jeffords. Howard Fineman of *Newsweek* said Bush would have to "rein in Rove" to recover politically. Actually, Rove had little to do with Jeffords's defection. Rove's attachment to conservatives is particularly annoying to the Washington press corps, which believes Bush must move to the center ideologically. Meanwhile, the *Washington Post* has gotten on Rove's case, hyping his minimal role in a bid by the Salvation Army for an exemption from anti-discrimination laws, then reporting

he'd become the focus of critical attention.

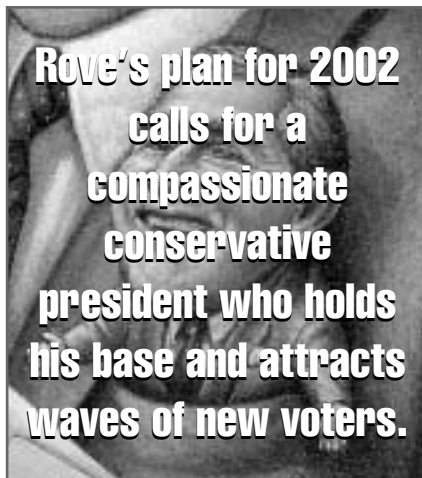
There's another potential trouble spot for Rove: the White House staff. Rove says he was leery of signing up because internal feuds are chronic in Washington. "I'm not good at internecine warfare," he says. As things have turned out, Bush's staff is famously collegial. But the organizational structure is a recipe for competition, envy, and backbiting. At the top are four generalists—chief of staff Andy Card, deputy Josh Bolten, communications chief Karen Hughes, and Rove—plus an active vice president. Rove dwarfs Card in influence. He and Hughes worked together for Bush in Texas and during the presidential campaign, and are close. But they also compete for Bush's favor—with a lot at stake. Rove urged Bush to vow to veto a liberal patients' bill of rights. Hughes argued against the use of the word "veto." She lost and Rove was vindicated, as the veto threat aided Bush in getting a patients' bill

more to his liking through the House. Rove and Hughes also disagreed on embryonic stem cell research. She was for it. He made sure that Bush heard the concerns of pro-lifers and social conservatives. In the end, the compromise Bush announced last week was one Rove had floated months before.

On the Navy's bombing of Vieques, Rove took control of an issue that initially had been under Card's supervision. A binding referendum loomed, in which Vieques residents were likely to bar the Navy. Bush was already irritated at protests over the bombing. Rove persuaded him to call

a halt to bombing runs. Rove has insisted he didn't force the Navy to go along, but what a participant in Vieques deliberations calls the "ultimate-decision meeting" was held in his office. Rove, of course, has as a top priority luring Latino voters. Bombing a Puerto Rican island wasn't helping.

Rove didn't have to grab the faith-based initiative. Bush handed it to him—and not to Card or Bolten or a White House aide with less on his plate. The president had chatted with Michael Joyce, the ex-president of the Bradley Foundation, about it during a White House ceremony in May. Bush was fearful the issue was languishing. He called Rove, instructed him to talk to Joyce, and told him to get the issue moving again. Joyce, on his own, was ready to start an outside lobbying effort to assist John DiIulio, the college professor who runs the program. Rove helped energize GOP leaders in Congress. The initiative, watered down, defied expectations and passed the House



in July, beginning a winning streak for Bush proposals.

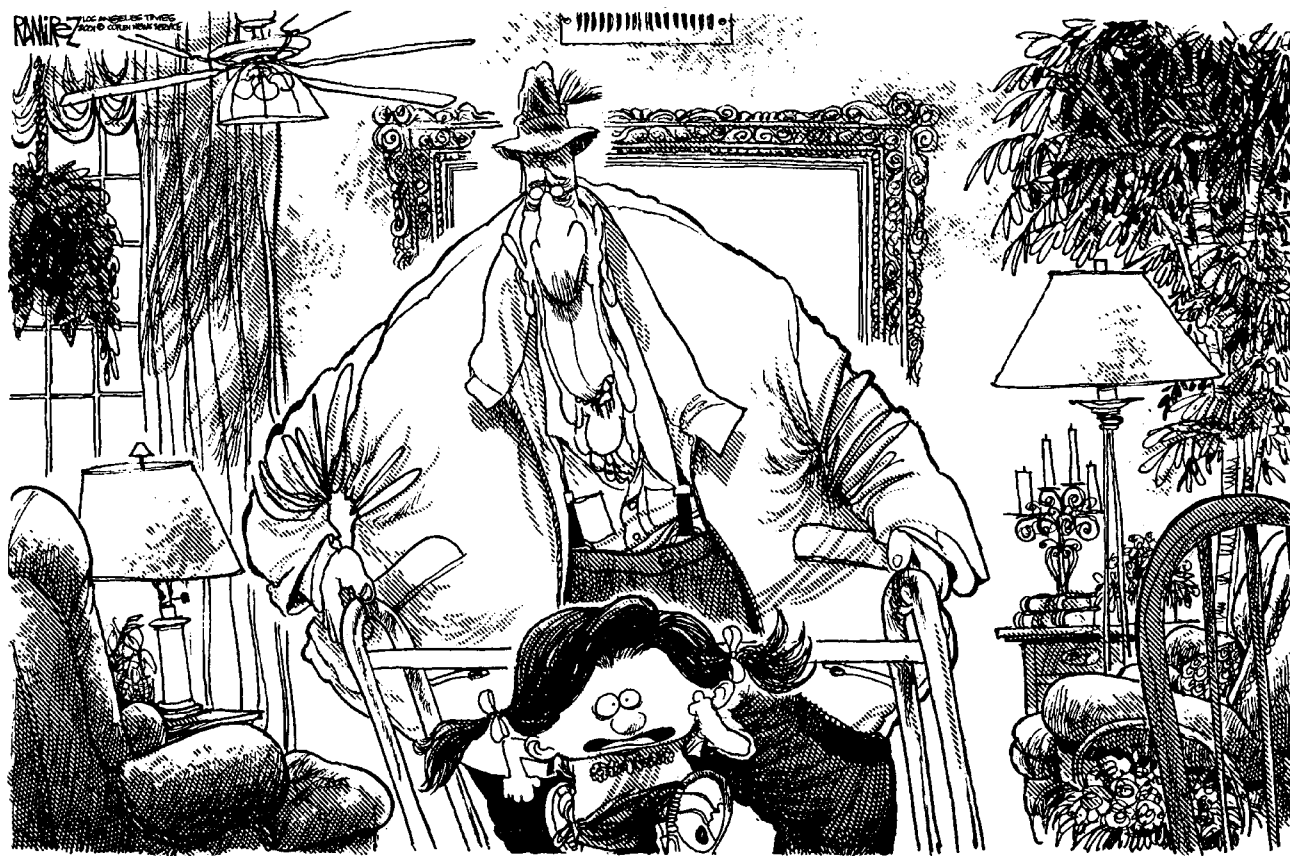
So what's the problem in all this? Nothing yet, and maybe nothing ever. But Rove's remarkable ascendancy in Washington brings expectations. If they aren't met, Rove will be held accountable inside the administration, on Capitol Hill, and by the media. White House aides won't blame the president. They'll finger Rove. Some congressional Republicans are squeamish about Bush's insistence on pressing ahead with Social Security reform. Rove thinks the issue is no longer an effective club for beating up Republican candidates. Tom Davis, the House campaign chief, isn't so sure. Young voters like the idea of investment accounts funded by payroll taxes, Davis says, but "the intensity is with older voters." If the issue polarizes seniors against Republicans, "it kills us." Davis frets this could occur in congressional elections next year.

The 2002 race is the next big test of Rove's skill. He is the man with the plan. It calls for a "compassionate conservative" president who holds his conservative base while attracting a wave of new voters to his party. One of Rove's specific duties is outreach—to Latinos, new economy workers, Catholics, suburban women, union households,

and what he dubs "resource dependent communities," where coal mining or farming is dominant. His goal is to reproduce what President William McKinley and his adviser Mark Hanna achieved at the turn of the 20th century, namely a broadly based, majority party.

It's a dazzling vision, more appealing and perhaps more realistic than anyone else's. The first test was whether Bush could emerge as a successful president. He has. Another is to shape Bush's image to woo non-traditional Republicans. "I think he is viewed as being more conventionally conservative than he is," says Rove. So Bush will now stress education and values, not taxes and defense, and hope to be seen as an unconventional conservative. If Republicans hold their own in the 2002 elections, Rove will deserve at least a small measure of credit. If they suffer badly, he'll face cries for his ouster.

Finally, there's the reelection test in 2004. Never before have a president and a party had so much riding on a single person whose name won't be on any ballot. Rove could wind up as one of the greatest political strategists in the past century. But it's a risky business and there's little margin for error. ♦



"MOMMY, MOMMY,... GRANDPA IS TRYING TO GET MY STEM CELLS!"

Michael Ramirez



Everett Collection

The New Army

Be whatever you want to be

BY MATT LABASH

Columbus, Georgia

The strip that runs outside Ft. Benning, Home of the Infantry, is called “Victory Drive.” The soldiers call it “V.D. Drive,” a reminder of what one stands to catch from spending too much time off-post. Among the chicken’n’shrimp shacks and no-tell motels, you see tomorrow’s warfighters, or, as they’re now called, peacekeepers, frequenting Tattoo Tommy’s and Ranger Rags military surplus and, on weekends, dropping into the Lucky 7 Lounge to enjoy the dance stylings of Brandi and Flame and Raven. Amidst all the low-rent squalor is a strip mall that houses Army, Navy, and Air Force recruiting stations. Their

offices are scattered among a Jazzy Girlz exotic dancewear retailer and a plus-size lingerie shop. At first, the juxtaposition seems a sad joke. But on second thought, the strip-mall occupants seem to have plenty in common: They’re not afraid to abase themselves with cheap sales pitches, and they’re desperate to appear sexy.

Of all the services, the Army is the most desperate. Recruiting has not been easy in recent years, and though there are any number of plausible explanations—from the end of the Cold War and declining defense spending, to the soaring economy of the 1990s—the deeper one, everyone seems to agree, is that the Army is suffering from an identity crisis. In true bureaucratic fashion, the Army seems to have concluded that it is simultaneously too tough and too soft.

Matt Labash is a staff writer for THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

What to do? Reinvent yourself. In the new Army, training is easier and friendlier, but they pretend everyone is a warrior. Thus the decision of the Army chief of staff, Gen. Eric Shinseki, to appropriate the black beret of the elite Army Rangers in order to share it with the rest of the troops, even the “desk molesters” in Ranger-speak. Thus the new slogan and recruiting campaign, the colossally unpopular “Army of One.” And thus the invention of programs like the one I traveled down to Ft. Benning to witness, in which non-combat lieutenants, men and women, are being rotated through infantry officer training, ostensibly to inject them with warrior spirit.

Anyone who subscribes to Elaine Donnelly’s Center for Military Readiness newsletter can give you a convincing disquisition on how the last decade saw Bill Clinton and his civilian appointees turn the Army into a Nerf version of its former self. From the assistant secretary Sara Lister, who was run out of town for calling Marines “extremist,” to former Army secretary Togo West, who launched programs like COO (“Consideration of Others Training”), the leadership saw to it that troops were sensitized as often as they got haircuts. And as recruiting got harder (the Army missed its goal three out of the last five years), the culture grew softer. Even former defense secretary William Cohen—whose military career consisted of one day in ROTC—admitted that coed basic training lacked rigor. Meanwhile, after downsizing from 18 to 10 divisions, money is still scarce. As one angry Ranger tells me, “Because you have no money, you can’t train, can’t go on deployments, can’t even afford to buy bullets. But because you have no money, you have plenty of time to do more Consideration of Others Training—because we’ve got to feel good about things. Hey, you know something?” he thunders. “The time for feeling good is over. We’ve got problems.”

It’s enough to make you pity Army recruiters, who despite resorting to \$20,000 enlistment bonuses and free Pentium laptops have been experiencing what marketing types call brand erosion. This is why departed Army secretary Louis Caldera, as his last official act in January, unveiled the new recruiting campaign “An Army of One.” Though the Army’s 20-year-old self-actualizing paean “Be All That You Can Be” was ranked by *Advertising Age* as the second most memorable jingle of the century (less popular than McDonald’s “You deserve a break

today,” more popular than Brylcreem’s “A little dab’ll do ya”), the slogan had long ago stopped attracting new recruits.

Two years ago, when Caldera first expressed his intent to cashier the old slogan, he criticized “Be All That You Can Be” for being “about you personally, as opposed to serving your country.” His was a spot-on critique of a pervasive military recruiting bias. Save for the few and proud Marines, who, even in a bullish economy, have met their recruiting goals for 56 straight months by selling courage and fierceness (Marine recruiting stations feature chin-up bars on which recruits can test themselves), the services have skimped on the duty-honor-country sales pitch in order to push everything from 30-day vacations to discount shopping at the commissary.

Ironically, Caldera’s solution seems to compound the old slogan’s selfishness quotient, without retaining much of its gung-ho élan. Caldera, of course, had plenty of help. The “Army of One” campaign is the product of a spate of research, everything from an Army-commissioned RAND Corporation study to focus groups conducted by the service’s new blue-chip advertising firm, Leo Burnett, which interviewed over 500 youths to find out their perceptions of Army life.

After coaxing and cataloging the Ritalin generation’s perceptions, the prognosis wasn’t good. The researchers, said Caldera, “told us we didn’t have an Army brand.” Sure, the Army had won two World Wars, solidifying our country’s status as a superpower and insuring an era of unprecedented prosperity—but what has it done for us lately? The 18-24-year-old target demographic, which bears close resemblance to viewers of the WB network (where the Army of One now advertises), thought of the Army as a cold, faceless institution, filled with barking drill sergeants and other authoritarians who, like, tell you to wake up early and stuff. Worse still, the Army doesn’t allow you to express your individuality. It is, in the words of the Leo Burnett gurus, seen as something that “depowers” rather than “empowers.”

As a result of such research, faster than you could say “*Yo soy el Army*” (or “I am the Army,” the Spanish-language version of the ads), Caldera became the caricature he had once criticized. At the January 10 roll-out, he was no longer singing the song of selfless service, but telling reporters that kids “want to know, ‘How does the Army benefit me as an individual today?’”

With a budget of \$150 million, the Army’s new ad cam-

As recruiting got harder (the Army missed its goal three out of the last five years), the culture grew softer.

campaign has received unprecedented exposure. When George Orwell noted that “We sleep safe in our beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do us harm,” he probably had no inkling that such ruffians could be rounded up with ads run in the likes of *Seventeen* magazine. But there are, as the campaign reminds us, “212 ways to be a soldier”—aside from the dreary business of killing people and breaking things. The new Army of One is, in fact, an Army of Fun. As Elaine Donnelly noted, while the Marines website expresses traditional militaristic sentiments such as “One must first be stripped clean. Freed of all false notions of self,” the Army’s website has a “cool stuff” link, where you can paint tanks, missiles, and other cool stuff in your choice of festive colors.

While there are several television spots, the most visible shows a corporal Richard Lovett, slogging all by his lonesome through the desert with flashing dog tags (an excellent way to attract sniper fire) as his troops head in the opposite direction. It’s not clear if he’s going AWOL or about to make a kamikaze charge. But the voiceover intones “Even though there are 1,045,690 soldiers just like me, I am my own force. . . . And I’ll be the first to tell you, the might of the U.S. Army doesn’t lie in numbers. It lies in me.”

Active-duty soldiers have decried the new campaign as being antithetical to everything they’ve had instilled in them since basic training: cohesion, teamwork, subordination of selfish interests to accomplishing the mission. In *Army Times* forums, soldiers almost universally pan the new campaign, going so far as to suggest replacement slogans like “Be a Man, Join the Marines!” Meanwhile, an *Army Times* focus group with Virginia teenagers found they largely “got” the new campaign, though one sophomore grew skittish watching Lovett haul his heavy rucksack across the desert: “I just think it’s way too physical,” he said.

Army brass brush aside such criticism, saying they’re not trying to appeal to active-duty soldiers. As a measure of their success, they point to the exponential spike in traffic to their *goarmy.com* website, where curious prospects can watch “webisodes” of “real” people going through “real” basic training at Ft. Jackson, S.C. (coed training that has reputedly gone so soft that critics now call it “Camp Jackson”). The webisodes, it turns out, are sillier than the ads. Trainees are informed the only way they’ll flunk the run is if they walk; they are coddled while awaiting inoculations. A drill sergeant, hoping to allay the fears of recruits who’ve endured too many *Full Metal Jacket* viewings, tells the cam-

era, “We believe that it’s okay for soldiers to have fun.”

But while the website’s traffic has surged, there’s no evidence of an influx of recruits. When I call Col. Kevin Kelley of the recruiting command at Ft. Knox, Kentucky, he admits that this year, compared to the same three-month time period last year, has actually seen 200 fewer recruits. Maybe this is attributable in part to critics, both liberal and conservative, who have savaged the campaign for selling recruits a bill of goods—that the Army will reshape its ethos to conform to lax contemporary mores. These critics, however, have it exactly backwards. The campaign is scandalous not because the Army is falsely indicating that it will change, but because it is truthfully advertising that it already has.

No better evidence of this exists than a recruiting tape I secured from Ft. Jackson, which predates the Army of One campaign. The tape is intended to disabuse recruits of the notion that drill sergeants are bellicose, authoritarian figures. One two-star major general featured in the video says the Army’s old message was (sternly crossing his arms), “Prove to us that you’re good enough to be a soldier and we’ll let you in our Army.” The new message, apparently, is we want you in our Army even if you have no business being here. The video features people that look a bit like drill sergeants (they still wear the Smokey Bear campaign hats), but not like any you’ve seen in

If the Ft. Jackson video is any guide, we’d better hope that tomorrow’s enemy is more nurturing than the North Vietnamese.

the movies. One doughy, Ranger-Rick looking fellow wears thick glasses and is about 15 pounds overweight. He tells us that “the days of overbearing abusive drill sergeants are long gone,” as drill sergeants are now “committed to [recruits’] success.” Sounding like a bad telemarketer, he adds, “Basic combat training is a positive experience that I am proud to be associated with.”

In another scene, a muscled, barking drill sergeant is following a frail recruit through the obstacle course (now called the “confidence course”). In the old Army, basic training was intended not only to transform civilians into soldiers, but to replicate, on a diminished scale, the stresses of combat. Those stresses were channeled in the form of the vociferous, semi-abusive drill sergeant. But if the Ft. Jackson video is any indication, we’d better hope that tomorrow’s enemy is more nurturing than the Nazis or North Vietnamese. Because on the confidence course, the steaming, spitting wall of menace wearing the Smokey hat is no longer screaming epithets or reprimands. Instead, he yells at the recruit, “I’m gonna take care of you! If you don’t give up on yourself, I won’t give up on you!”

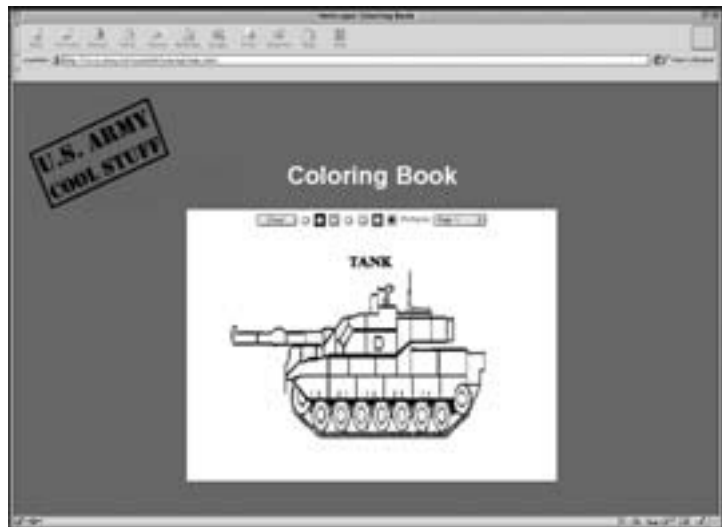
Like most Army inanity, this strain can be traced to a black-and-white directive. As Stephanie Gutmann shows in her recent book *The Kinder, Gentler Military*, TRADOC 350-6 (the Training and Doctrine Command's policy for initial entry training) is a recipe for handcuffing drill sergeants. Not only must every soldier be treated with "dignity and respect" (trainees must now be called soldier), but any activity that is "humiliating, oppressive, demeaning or harmful" is banned. Hemingway once said, "War is a crime. Ask the infantry and ask the dead." TRADOC says, "stress should be positive and oriented toward attainable goals."

It's enough to rankle the likes of John Hillen, a defense analyst who took leave of the Army around the time the Army started taking leave of its senses. "In their clumsy, hackneyed way," he says, the Army continually "falls all over themselves to show they're just like IBM in different uniforms." After a decade or so of leadership that came of age in post-Vietnam America—the scorned-puppy era of soldiering—Hillen says, "There's very few [leaders left who] will say, 'Hell, yeah, I'm different, and if you can't cut it, you can't serve your nation and work for me.' That's the message the Marines get. But the Army message is 'Gosh, I'm sure there's a convenient meeting point halfway. We're not gonna stress you out too much, but it's gonna be a little different from high school—we'll pay you for instance!'"

Even other services have taken to ridiculing the Army. When I visited the Navy recruiting station off V.D. Drive, a burly recruiter giggled until his shoulders shook. "Army of one what?" he asked. "Those who are in it for honor and killing people join the Marines. If you wanna see the world, and have a sense of adventure, you join the Navy." And who's joining the Army? The recruiter grins, referring me to a recent announcement that the Army might start recruiting high school dropouts. "The people the Air Force and Navy won't take," he says.

On a sleepy, sunny morning out in the pine barrens of Ft. Benning, I am standing in a hangar among men any service would be honored to claim. The Army's 4th Ranger Training Battalion is producing some of the military's fiercest warfighters, who possess the strut that comes from internalizing the Ranger creed: "A more elite soldier who arrives at the cutting edge of battle, by land, sea, or air. . . . My country expects me to move farther, faster and fight harder than any other soldier."

As they strap on their jump gear and apply their warpaint, there is little whooping or showboating. Instead the Rangers go about their business with quiet confidence,



"Cool stuff" from the Army website, www.army.mil/coolstuff/coloring/index.html

as if every workadaddy in America spends his Saturday morning waking up, downing coffee, then stepping off a C-140 to drop 1,300 feet onto the Alabama side of the Chattahoochee River. Since the mid-1970s, the Rangers' distinguishing symbol when in garrison has been the black beret. While Airborne wore maroon berets and Special Forces green, the black beret for three decades has been the Rangers' alone.

To those outside the brotherhood, it may seem a silly hat. But it is part of the reward system that is the coin of the realm in what author and former Navy secretary James Webb calls "the socialist meritocracy" that is the military. Hillen explains it like this: "Your average Ranger makes about one-third what a dental assistant makes, under a lot worse conditions. But for that sacrifice, you're supposed to get the berets, the ribbons, the greater glory, and the nation's profound gratitude. We don't shower accolades on the REMFs [rear echelon m— f—]. That's how you get paid; your lid is your payment. But if everybody gets one—what the hell? I might as well be a dental assistant and sleep in a bed every night. This is the bargain, the contract, the covenant between you and your country. And now, with the dumbing down of martial qualities in the military, the covenant is being violated."

In no instance more so than with Army chief of staff Eric Shinseki's announcement last October. To boost morale and to signify the transformation of the Army into a lighter, more lethal fighting force, the entire Army—even the desk molesters, he decided—were now going to wear the black beret. To add insult, Shinseki's deadline of June 14 (the anniversary of the Army's founding) meant that American manufacturers couldn't meet demand, so the berets would be manufactured in part by factories in China.

The blowback was fierce. Retired Rangers marched to

Washington and filled the Internet with flame. A bipartisan outcry went up on the Hill; Dan Burton promised hearings into the Chinese connection; George W. Bush threw chin music to Shinseki, indicating he should rethink his decision. But hardly a peep was heard from active-duty Rangers—partly because a gag order was issued by their commanders, partly because they are good soldiers. As one told me: “If the chief of staff told me to wear a clown hat, that’s what I’m gonna wear.”

The matter seems to have been settled in March when their regimental commander, Col. P.K. Keen, announced that the Rangers would gladly switch from their traditional black to a new, tan beret. Says a civilian source with knowledge of the delicate negotiations, “The Army called and begged Keen to save their butts. He could’ve stayed out of it and let them get decapitated. Or he could do what Rangers do, step in front of a bullet intended for Shinseki.”

As a result, Sgt. Major Jack Tilley, the highest-ranking enlisted man in the Army, has announced that new battalions of black beret wearers, instead of possessing near heroic warfighting capabilities, or enduring grueling, year-long training regimens, will merely have to pass a “rites of passage” test. What the test entails isn’t clear. When I called Tilley’s spokesman, Master Sgt. David Schad, he said it will include a written test on the history of the Army and “likely more,” though he’s not exactly sure what. When asked what will happen if soldiers don’t pass the test, he says, “They’ll be re-tested.” And if they don’t pass the re-test? “We’re not talking about graduate-school level sorts of things,” he says.

Talking to the Rangers at the Saturday morning jump, with a public affairs shadow on my arm, I hear mostly affected nonchalance over the beret controversy. “We’ll be proud as always,” shrugs Raphael Colondres, Command Sgt. Major of the 4th Ranger Training Battalion. “It’s not in a piece of cloth,” he says, pounding his chest. “It’s what’s in here.” But given the cover of anonymity (“Don’t use my name, they’ll send me to Korea”), other Rangers seethe.

While Shinseki is willing to spend \$26.6 million on feel-good hats, the Army is coming off at the wheels. As the *Washington Times*’s Rowan Scarborough discovered in a leaked memo, 12 of the Army’s 20 combat schools were graded as being at the lowest possible readiness levels. Ft. Benning, like most bases, is a wheezing ghost of its former self. In the base’s shabby Infantry Hall, tiles periodically pop off the ceiling, and employees bring in vacuums from home because they can’t afford the janitorial service enjoyed by third-tier elementary schools. Even the elite Rangers get enlisted into self-help construction projects for which they use their own tools. For their troubles, they’re rewarded at “excellence ceremonies”—with commemorative coasters. “Quite honestly,” says one, “we’re broke.”

Another active-duty Ranger, who meets me off-base, resembles Orwell’s fabled rough men, a cinder block on legs with a high-and-tight haircut. Like many Rangers, he is upset over the berets. “You don’t stick hats and badges and all this crap on people. The way you make people better is you force them to become better. You put them in situations that are hard and tough.” While the Rangers haven’t engaged in public debate, the source says of his buddies, “They earned this thing. They fought for it on the beaches of Normandy, through the jungles of Burma, and here we’re ready to give it . . . to Joe E. Bagofdonuts. That hat means lives.” Shinseki’s beret directive, says the Ranger, is symptomatic of a larger breakdown of the warrior culture. Call it warrior-norming, where tip-of-the-spear soldiers are devalued, and their lessers are elevated to equal status. “We get these kids now that say, Sergeant, you can’t do this, it’s against my rights. . . . This garbage has got to stop. You take a hood ornament off a Cadillac and put it on a Pinto, it’s still a Pinto.”

Though the “Army of One” and beret flaps have caused great consternation, a quieter, more alarming experiment is being conducted at Ft. Benning’s infantry officer training. The Infantry Officer Basic Course (IOBC) is one of the Army’s most important, training lieutenants with little experience to lead platoons in combat. (Not for nothing do seasoned platoon sergeants say, “There’s nothing more dangerous than a 2nd Lieutenant.”) Ft. Benning, which is also the home of Airborne and Ranger schools, provides what’s generally considered the most rigorous training in the Army. Benning’s combat-arms status means women, prohibited from serving in the infantry, aren’t around to prompt the relaxing of standards that the rest of the Army has seen since basic training went coed in 1993.

But the Army’s Training and Doctrine Command has nonetheless selected Ft. Benning for the incubation of another hare-brained scheme. At first blush, it seems harmless. TRADOC has decided to carve out the first 7 weeks of the 17-week Infantry Officer Basic Course and call it the Basic Officer Leader Course. In this “pilot program” (which one high-placed source assures is “not just a test, it’s the future”), non-infantry soldiers, everyone from quartermasters to finance officers, including women, will mix it up with infantry officers. After seven weeks, non-infantry types will take off to their other military occupational specialty schools, with infantry officers resuming IOBC. In the meantime, the non-groundpounders will supposedly pick up leadership qualities, get shot full of hooah, and happily develop into the new “Army of One.”

It could be argued that it’s not a bad thing for combat-

support types to be introduced to those they're supporting, in the hopes that the warrior ethos will rub off before they return to molesting desks. But that neglects a more important consideration: Does learning to play with others for 7 weeks in an already packed 17-week schedule compromise the training of future combat leaders?

There was an early indication that the answer is yes even in the planning stage of my visit. I arranged to drop in during the middle of the seven-week course to witness some of the more dynamic exercises, such as the bayonet assault and water confidence courses. But the night before I left, my assigned public affairs officer (PAO) informed me that the training cadre had cancelled both events. "Why?" I asked. "Because of rain," she said. (Both days ended up cloud-free.)

Entering the Infantry Officer Basic Course headquarters, my PAO in tow, I meet the man in charge, Lt. Col. John Carothers, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 11th Infantry Regiment. Carothers asks me to join him at his office conference table, and immediately he proves likeable, with a lopey, laconic gait that belies his slightly menacing George C. Scott-ish mien. His office walls are decorated not only with the Infantry Leader's Prayer, but with sabers and machetes and other instruments of death, picked up in far-flung places like Panama, where Carothers also picked up a Bronze Star during Operation Just Cause.

A career infantryman who sports a Ranger tab, Carothers has been in command for a little over a month, and he's been tasked with executing TRADOC's pilot program (scheduled to be fully operational next year). If he's not 100 percent supportive of the program, he sure does a masterful impression—an impression most officers are adept at when conducting interviews with public affairs officers weighing their every statement. In fact, with all the blinking and awkward pauses, the entire exercise can make the interviewer feel as if he's dropped into an interactive hostage video. When I ask the colonel if there's a danger of training being softened to accommodate non-infantry officers, my PAO interjects before Carothers can answer. The first seven weeks "are more elementary skills," she says. "It was explained to me as crawl, walk, run." Carothers grins: "We'll definitely be crawling," he says. "That doesn't mean a standard's being diminished," she helpfully offers. Sure

doesn't, agrees Carothers. But when asked what those standards are, he concedes, "We're experimenting with what the standards are going to be. For this test, we're not gonna fail anybody."

Carothers admits Army training involves a bit more hand-holding these days. "When I came in" in 1983, he says, "my leaders told me, you take one in the chest, you're gone tomorrow, there'll be somebody to replace you. I accepted that. I'm a professional fighting man." Carothers, in fact, seems almost nostalgic for his Ranger school trainers, who woke him up at 4 A.M., turned over wall lockers, and made him file outside undressed as they kicked rocks and screamed at him. "It tickled the heck out of me," he says, offering that though the Army does decidedly less of this today ("We're getting smarter"), he had wanted it tough. "I think that's what the kids want. And sometimes

we turn them off with some of the what-do-you-want, do you want an Army of One?"

For a moment, Carothers seems to be careening toward the electrified perimeter of the Army reservation, but he makes a nice recovery. "I think [this program] is gonna pull the Army together—Army of One, all wearing the same hats, see how it comes together," he says with hostage-video timing. "I honestly believe this program is gonna be awesome."

Perhaps so, but what I observe over the next few days would be enough to give any hardened combat leader pause. For one, a high-placed source tells me that the Army Research Institute is monitoring the program at TRADOC's behest and will make recommendations to "make the course more beneficial" to non-infantry officers. This can only mean less training critical to infantry platoon leaders and more generic "leadership" training. For another, women, who've historically been forbidden to serve in the infantry, are present not only as students (13 in this cycle) but as instructors who by definition have no infantry experience.

The result is a PAO's nightmare. At the base pool one evening, the newly gender-integrated Charlie Company lieutenants who have failed the combat water survival test (a series of swimming exercises done in full gear) have turned out for remedial swimming. Soldiers are required to show up in their swimtrunks, before taking up floaties and kickboards and whatever else they need to help them stay above water. The trainers of Charlie Company, who



An Army of One? Infantry officers training at Fort Benning

include Capt. Elizabeth Smith (on loan from Ft. Bliss), are horsing around. One flirtatious male sergeant questions Smith's choice of blue toenail polish. "They match my shorts," she exclaims.

As the cadre play verbal footsie, students arrive late, as casually as if they'd only missed the cucumber sandwiches at a ladies' tea. But there is no yelling and no demand for push-ups. After all, as I'm repeatedly told, this is an officer's course, a "gentleman's course." As the non-swimmers file into the shallow end of the pool, a male cadre member explains that female trainers are here to help male infantry trainers understand the fairer sex. "For example," Capt. Smith joins in, "issues may arise. Last week, we held guys up under their bodies to try to get them to swim. It may be an awkward situation for a guy to do that to a female or for a female having a guy do that to her. So they just bring us in and make it a little bit easier."

Such situations are commonplace in a coed platoon, which is why Carothers won't even entertain the notion that Army brass may be experimenting with an incremental approach to working women into the infantry. "I just can't believe there's a conspiracy out there to emasculate the infantry," Carothers says dismissively. "It's too important, what we do."

After Capt. Smith has explained the new leadership dynamic, another uncomfortable situation arises poolside. A female lieutenant announces she is having her period, and is unsure if she should participate in remedial swimming. One of the lifeguards approaches a knot of cadre, saying, "If a female is on her period, she can't get in the water, right?" "Why not?" I ask. "Because of bleeding and AIDS?" he offers, asking as much as informing. "I want her in the pool," says Smith, who possesses a robust big-sister femininity, no-nonsense enough to make her male counterparts like her, feline enough to make them think she's a hottie.

Lifeguards and cadre go scrambling for a black binder filled with OSHA regulations. They hash out the possible downsides of blood in the water. They consult the unhelpful, six-inch thick book of regs. Smith finally wins the argument, and the lieutenant gets in the pool. The lifeguards seem confused. The lieutenant seems disappointed. The cadre seem unconcerned, as one male sergeant ambles up to Smith, noting the low-cut back of her swimsuit. "Is that a tan line?" he inquires. "It's none of your business," she exclaims brusquely. "Why do you ask?" she says, this time more gently.

Approaching another male cadre member, I ask him to give me his take on the good order and discipline of the mixed-specialties Charlie Company. "Be politically correct," one of his fellow trainers warn. When asked his name, he says, "I don't have a name sir, I'm a ghost." I ask

him what differences he sees in this new form of infantry officer training. "We're not chewing their asses," he says. "There's a lot of people holding back, trying to lay off the cuss words and not say something that might get us in trouble." Is this a unifying, morale-building exercise? "The soft skills pretty much know right now that no matter what they do, they're gonna pass the course. But for [infantry officers], there's a standard. When we say, 'Soft skills, there's no standard for you, but infantry has to pass with this,' morale is let down."

A few days later during morning PT (physical training), 3rd platoon has taken the field in their knit hats and sweatsuits for rigorous intervals of timed push-ups that Capt. Smith calls "Bulgarian bursts." "Did she say ovarian bursts?" asks one female lieutenant. As the troops do push-ups in rapid 30-second cycles, one of the females has called it quits. She lies flat on her belly, barely nodding her head. "These are modified push-ups," she explains, employing the verbiage of the Army's PT double standards. "Yeah," says a disgusted infantryman, "it's called 'not doing them.'"

A little later, the lieutenants are lined up to do sprints. When one soldier jumps the gun, platoon Sgt. Jim Litchford explodes, "Get your a—" but he doesn't finish his thought. A 15-year veteran, Litchford is called "Old Army" by some students, but he offers a feeble "Get back there" to the stray lieutenant. "Give me a push-up," he says for good measure.

"A push-up?" I later ask Litchford, incredulous. I tell him that, though I'm no triathlete, I've had tougher football coaches. In fact, I've had tougher tennis coaches. The clearly agitated staff sergeant's jaw muscles pulsate, as if to suggest I don't know the half of it. But he explains how the new system works: "I think a lot of cadre feel like they're walking on eggshells, trying to keep from hurting [trainees'] feelings." Litchford says the only tool he's permitted to use to get trainees' attention, even when they engage in eye-rolling insubordination, is "counseling."

After PT, Lt. LaToya Porter, serving a two-day rotation as a student platoon leader, is stressed to her gills. Looking confused and asking questions of cadre in hushed tones, she has forgotten to inform her platoon of the packing list for an extended bivouac, for which they are supposed to leave in just two hours. It's a fairly significant lapse, and as the platoon falls out of formation, a prior-service lieutenant who served in Special Forces calls the platoon together for a profanity-laced group ass-chewing that the cadre, walking away resignedly, seems unable to give. Sensing he may have gone overboard, he tempers his tongue-lashing with, "I don't mean to step on anyone's dick—or whatever you got out there." "Hey!" says one female lieutenant in protest.

As the platoon heads back to their barracks to collect their gear for the three-day deployment, I make the acquaintance of Lt. John Prine, who spent 10 years as an enlisted man before going to Officer Candidate School and whose experience extends back to Desert Storm. Prine has an idea of what infantry training should look like. And as I follow him back to his room, where he offers a breakfast-choice of Pepsi One or Busch beer while taking a pinch of Copenhagen and medicating his socks with Gold Bond powder, Prine eviscerates the new program.

The course, thus far, he says, has been what Snuffy Joes like him call a “C.F.” (cluster f—). When he went through enlisted basic a decade ago, he thought the strap on his helmet was “just for the drill sergeant to grab. Now, they can’t even curse at you. It’s too laid back, there’s not a consequence behind screwing up.” Prine’s platoon-mate, Lt. Michael Trujillo, who also has prior service, adds, “As an infantry officer, you’ve got to be pretty tough, pretty bad-ass. It’s a challenging job, and if somebody’s gonna die, you’re gonna be responsible.”

Both men catalog a litany of exceptions that wouldn’t be tolerated in regular infantry officers’ training—they hope: bringing the troops in from bivouacs because of rain; allowing them to bring extra possessions to stash in a group duffel bag instead of limiting them to what they can haul in their ruck; timid cadre delegating disciplinary authority to assertive students; nearly non-existent PT (“I’m in worse shape than before I came here,” says Prine).

“It’s hurting the infantry soldiers. It’s taking seven weeks out of our training,” Prine adds, echoing sentiments I hear repeatedly from students and cadre who say that most infantry skills touched upon in the seven weeks will have to be revisited. “The cadre’s hands are tied,” says Prine, defending the one-push-up demands of Sgt. Litchford. “They don’t want too many bad after-action reviews [in which the students offer written comments about trainers]. These people bitch about stupid shit. They write ‘Sgt. Litchford hurt my feelings when he yelled at me.’”

Consequently, says Prine, “Every time we do something, we have one of the cadre explaining why they acted a certain way, did they get on us at all, if so, they’re sorry, take it as constructive—all this touchy-feely, stroke-your-feathers, making-you-feel-worthwhile. We had an after-action review Tuesday night, and I said, ‘I really don’t give a damn why you’re doing this. I’m here to be trained. You chew my ass, I screwed up, I’m not going to do it again.

You stroke my feathers, and it’s not that big of an ordeal. F—all this wasting time . . . telling me where you’re coming from. I don’t give a damn. Train me! Let’s go—we just wasted two hours talking about it.’”

I remind Prine that this is supposed to be a “gentleman’s course.” “If I wanted a gentleman’s course,” says Prine, “I would’ve accepted a medical commission and been out on the golf course by noon everyday.” Just then, his phone rings. It’s Lt. Porter, still stressed from that morning’s meltdown. Prine sounds as if he’s talking her off a ledge: “You’re doing good. . . . You’re not ate up. . . . Got a long day. . . . Take a shower. Relax. Put your hair up.” Prine suggests we move out to the next formation. We’re already five minutes late, but he asks me to count how many of his 33-member platoon I see assembled. Thirteen, I reply. “Pretty scary, huh?” he says.

The sergeant offers a feeble “Get back there” to the stray lieutenant. “Give me a push-up,” he says for good measure.

By the time I leave Benning, I have worked Lt. Col. Carothers over for hours, but haven’t moved him off his willfully naive statement of faith, “I believe the Army line.” As we tear down the base’s red clay trails in his Jeep, off to a grenade range not unlike one where he once caught shrapnel in his knee, Carothers flawlessly applies camo-paint to his face without benefit of a mirror. The discussion we’ve taken up is general Army readiness, which by

all accounts is at record lows. After getting pushed a little more, Carothers finally breaks character. Perhaps he is tired of not speaking his mind, or perhaps he is fatigued by a creampuff civilian reporter trying to sound like some high priest of hooah. Whatever the case, his eyes grow fiery, his back stiffens, and his words come out with a steely evenness, at once comforting and unnerving:

“I know what right looks like, and right now ain’t right. Historically, the American people are ready to pay for non-readiness with the blood of their children. They aren’t willing to fork out the bucks for a large standing Army that’ll do the things they want us to do, and that’s gonna cost them their sons and daughters. But that’s okay. If that’s what they want, there’s guys like me. I will go stand on the Bataan peninsula and fight. I’ll stand in the Pusan perimeter without good weapons or squat for support. Guys like me, we’re gonna stand, and we will not let the infantry erode. My philosophy is the men we train are gonna some day take my sons to an unfair fight.”

No need to take them anywhere, Colonel. In the new Army, they’re already in one. ♦

The Quirks of History

The month the Civil War ended

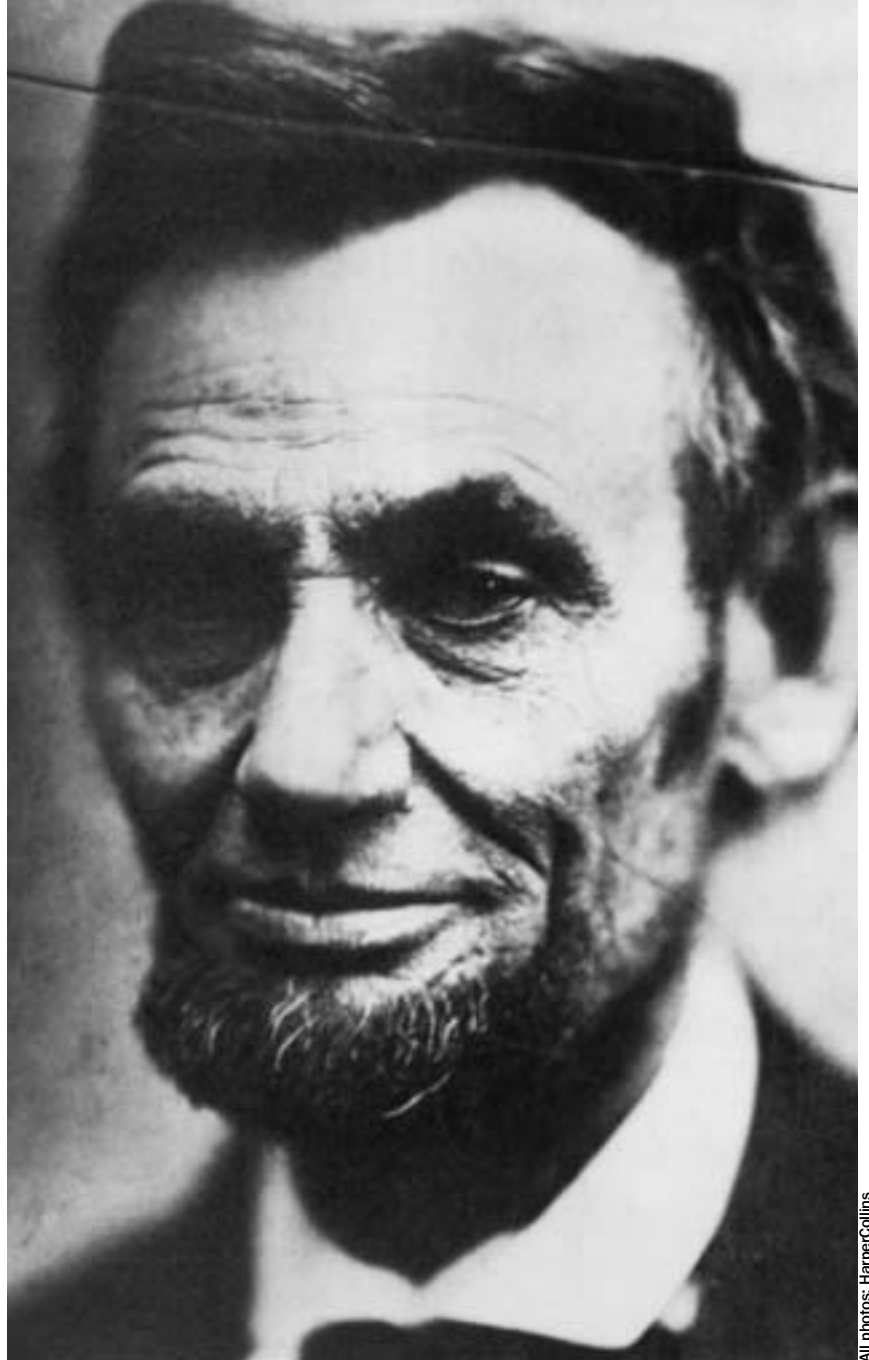
By TERRY EASTLAND

The struggle at Gettysburg—where, over three days at the beginning of July 1863, the Union army turned back Robert E. Lee’s invasion of Pennsylvania—remains the best-known battle of the Civil War. But Gettysburg didn’t end things. The Civil War continued for two more years, and it is April 1865, the last month of real fighting, that Jay Winik contends is the most important month in American history. That was the month Richmond, the Confederate capital, was evacuated and burned; the month the major Southern armies surrendered, the month President Lincoln was assassinated, and the month the task of reuniting the riven country fell to a new president, Andrew Johnson.

A pretty big news month, you could say, and Winik’s *April 1865* captures it in such detail and with so much context as to seem, at times, like an overbuilt house. Even so, Winik’s command of the war makes the book compelling: an engrossing narrative history, a valuable refresher on how the war ended.

Yet Winik’s book is more than that. The passage of time—and we are now 136 years from April 1865—tends to confer on big events like the end of the Civil War a kind of inevitability, as

Terry Eastland’s most recent book is Freedom of Expression in the Supreme Court: The Defining Cases (Rowman & Littlefield).



All photos: HarperCollins

though they could not have turned out any way other than they did. By making clear the contingencies of a momentous chapter in our history, Winik’s book

April 1865
The Month That Saved America
by Jay Winik
HarperCollins, 496 pp., \$32.50

teaches the uncertainties of history. Consider, for example, the fate of Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia. Unable to defend Richmond any longer, Lee decided to retreat forty miles west to Amelia Court House, where his hungry troops would eat, before turning south

to Danville and then into North Carolina where he would meet up with Joe Johnston and his army, and open a new phase of the war. Lee’s plan turned on the delivery by train of 350,000 rations at Amelia Court House. But upon arrival there he found the boxcars loaded not with food but ammunition.

“Wars,” Winik writes, “can turn on such seemingly minor things” as the “mere administrative mix-up” that Lee clearly understood “threatened to do him in.” We know, of course, what happened: Lee’s ravenous, weakening army got only as far as Appomattox Court House, where Lee surrendered. But Winik pauses in his account of these

events to think about those ammunition-filled boxcars: “What if Lee had found an abundance of food at Amelia Court House—and safely made his way south to link up with Joe Johnston?”

Likewise, Winik has a keen eye for the choices men on both sides made. He breaks down events to make clear the paths not taken. A choice available to Lee, one urged by the Confederate president, Jefferson Davis, was to head west to the mountains and organize a guerrilla resistance throughout the South, which could have persisted for years. Imagine, as Winik does, the Union trying to occupy the entire Confederacy: America in time might have “come to resemble a Swiss cheese, with Union cities here, pockets of Confederate resistance lurking there, ambiguous areas of no-man’s-land in between.”

Winik’s emphasis on such contingencies is essential to the book’s central argument that April 1865 was the month that saved America. Most civil wars end badly, begetting a “vicious circle of more civil war and more violence, death, and instability.” It was not inevitable that our Civil War should end as it did, or that it would end at all well. “What emerges from the panorama of April 1865 is that the whole of our national history could have been altered but for a few decisions, a quirk of fate, a sudden shift of luck.”

The bad ending was avoided, however, not so much by fate or luck, as by a “few decisions” made by Union as well as Confederate leaders. Northern generals—Grant and Sherman notably—showed magnanimity toward the defeated Confederate soldiers, and Southern generals, with Lee leading the way, showed good judgment in laying down their arms.

The America thus saved was able to become a single nation after its civil war. Winik reminds us that though a central government was established by the Constitution, the country was not really a nation before the Civil War. Indeed, words like “nation” and “national” were rarely used in political discourse, as Americans were more attached to states and even regions. Sectional tensions broke out early: There was the Whiskey



Rebellion in 1794, and New England states opposed to the War of 1812 actually were the first to flirt with secession. Slavery proved the issue that cracked the underpinnings of the fragile union. The Civil War settled the issue of whether a state may secede, and, in doing so, established a “nation” (a word Lincoln used no fewer than five times in the Gettysburg Address). Tellingly, as Winik points out, there was a shift in

usage, by the war’s end, from saying “the United States are” to saying “the United States is....”

April 1865 contains a series of vivid sketches of those who figured in the big stories of the month: Grant and Lee, of course, but also such generals as Sherman, Johnston, and Nathan Bedford Forrest; the two presidents, Davis and Lincoln, and even Lincoln’s assassin, John Wilkes Booth, the most famous actor of the time. The portrait of Lee is an admiring one, and Winik is insightful about Lincoln.

Winik credits Lincoln’s greatness, but he observes that Lincoln was “ill-prepared for his job,” his resume thin and his moods often dark. Still, on the decisive issue of his time—the very future of the country—no one was more dedicated than Lincoln to keeping it together. Winik uses religion to explain Lincoln’s “dogged tenacity” in behalf of union. Deeply moved by faith as the war progressed, Lincoln began to see himself as “an instrument of providence,” satisfied that “when the Almighty wants me to do or not do a particular thing, he finds a way of letting me know it.” Winik comments: “Amid the scourge of conflict, this provided some of the lubricant of presidential leadership.” Books on presidential leadership today are many, but few dare speak openly of a leadership importantly lubricated by faith.

Winik doesn’t pursue the matter of providence further. Yet his book provokes reflection on this point. In stating that a month saved America, Winik obviously means that America was saved during that particular month, not that the month was the agent of the saving. But to recognize that America was saved invites the question of the purposes for which it might have been saved. The twentieth century suggests part of the answer, for the United States was there—was it not?—to counter the evils of fascism and communism.

There have been innumerable books about the Civil War, many of which have led to films. It’s not hard to imagine *April 1865* coming to a movie theater near you. But I would recommend you read the book first. ♦

Television Journalism as Oxymoron

Two lives in one medium

By ANDREW FERGUSON

One mark of a son of a bitch is the pleasure he takes in pointing out how many people think he's a son of a bitch. By this measure, to judge by his new memoir *Staying Tuned*, the former CBS News correspondent Daniel Schorr is one first-rate, top-of-the-line, gold-plated—but let him tell it.

[President] Johnson awoke me at midnight to say, on the telephone, "Schorr, you are one prize son of a bitch."

And again:

"You know," [CBS Washington bureau chief Bill Small] said, "I think you are one prize son of a bitch."

Again:

"Yeah," [President Nixon] mused, "the only exception, of course, was that son of a bitch Schorr."

And again:

His face ashen from fatigue and strain, [CIA chief Richard Helms] turned livid. "You son of a bitch," he raged.

I could go on, but you get the idea. (And I'm passing over John Ehrlichman, who said Schorr was a "prick." A distinction without a difference, as the scholars say.) Is it any wonder, then, that Walter Cronkite, in his back-cover blurb for *Staying Tuned*, describes the memoir as "Schorr's detailed report on why numerous heads of state and other officials have called him a son of a bitch." Trust Walter: That is exactly what *Staying Tuned* is.

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The first publicity shot for 60 Minutes, 1968. Public Affairs Press.

Tell Me a Story, by Don Hewitt, the creator of *60 Minutes* and a former colleague of Schorr's at CBS, is a different matter. Nowhere does he admit to being a son of a bitch, leaving readers to draw their own conclusions. Though different in tone and style, and in quality too,

him a jerk. Since the late 1980s Schorr has been NPR's "senior news analyst." At NPR, where all political commentary must fall into one of two categories—the obvious or the untrue—Schorr tends to specialize in the former. Whether he's chewing the fat on Saturday mornings with his interlocutor Scott Simon, the host of *Weekend Edition*, or offering one of the several on-the-spot homilies he produces throughout the week, Schorr is usually content to summarize the same news stories the rest of us have already read and add a sprinkle of his own leftist sarcasm. He's hardly ever offensive. Sometimes he even sounds as avuncular as Cronkite himself.

Still, the disdain of his acquaintances seems to have been constant from his childhood onward. He was born to impoverished immigrant parents in 1916, and his father died when Schorr was six. To this gloomy childhood he attributes his own emotional remoteness and his uncommon sense of self-sufficiency. As managing editor of his high school yearbook, he allowed his

the two memoirs are worth considering together as windows, fixed at different angles, into the world of television journalism, which seems to be filled with sons of bitches.

Youngsters familiar with Daniel Schorr only from his association with National Public Radio may be surprised to discover that so many people, over so long a span of time, have considered

Staying Tuned

A Life in Journalism
by Daniel Schorr
Pocket, 368 pp., \$26.95

Tell Me a Story

Fifty Years and 60 Minutes in Television
by Don Hewitt
Public Affairs, 288 pp., \$26

staff to write the blurb that appeared under his class picture. When the books appeared he discovered that they had written a bit of doggerel in his honor: *I love me, I love me / I'm wild about myself / I love me, I love me / I've got my picture on my shelf*. He reprints these lines without comment or contradiction.

Together with his admitted egotism, an eerie detachment seems to be Schorr's primary personal attribute, and he describes it with—no surprise here—an eerie detachment. His first experience as a journalist came at age twelve, when he saw a woman fall to her death from the roof of his apartment building. He immediately phoned in the story to his neighborhood newspaper and got \$5 for his tip. "I felt no particular sense of awe or emotion about the first dead body I had ever seen," he writes. Bright, bloodless, with a curiosity about human beings that never intensified beyond the purely clinical, Schorr had the makings of a good reporter.

Which he was—certainly when measured against the standards of TV journalism, where most of the practitioners are happy to piggyback on the work of their colleagues in newspapers and magazines. He got a job with a Danish news service after the war and became a stringer in Europe for the *New York Times*. His ambition had always tilted toward newspaper work, but when CBS and Edward R. Murrow offered him a job, in 1953, he took it, and remained ever after transfixed by the "exposure and remuneration" that television uniquely offers. He began his network career covering the Army McCarthy hearings in Washington, followed by a decade abroad, first in the Soviet Union and then in Germany, returning at last to the Washington bureau in time for the launch of the Great Society. He had some scoops along the way.

There are a few good stories in *Staying Tuned*, and one or two funny ones, but for the most part Schorr recalls his experiences with the same talent for the obvious that has made him so indispensable to NPR. Joe McCarthy, just in case you didn't know, "brutalized people who may have had left-wing leanings at some point in their lives."

Khrushchev was cunning, Adenauer imperious, Jack Kennedy ironical, Bobby passionate, Nixon devious, Agnew vulgar, and so on. He quotes often from his own broadcasts; the passages don't advance the narrative, but they do give a reader the impression that he thinks them rather finer than they are. What lends Schorr's career some special interest, though, was his own knack for creating controversy—not a talent that TV news executives, of that generation or this, highly prize.

Nowhere in his memoir does Schorr discuss his personal politics, but anyone



Schorr leaving CBS after 23 years

who has followed his career from CBS to NPR will know that they are the standard-form liberalism of the professional journalist—that tidy little packet of principle and prejudice that gets issued along with the press card. But Schorr's views had a sharper edge, and unlike his colleagues he was clumsy about disguising them behind the niceties of journalistic convention. His first serious bout of trouble came during the presidential campaign of 1964, when the national press corps was seized by anti-Goldwater hysteria. The contagion was strong enough that Schorr caught it in Germany.

On the eve of the Republican convention in San Francisco, Schorr was asked to prepare a report on German

reaction to Goldwater's impending nomination. Why *German* reaction? In the nation's news rooms, if nowhere else, the relationship seemed obvious: Goldwater means right-wing, right-wing means fascist, fascist means Germany. Schorr did not disappoint. The morning after his report aired, Goldwater's political enemies placed a transcript under the hotel room door of every delegate in San Francisco. Goldwater denounced CBS at a press conference and barred its reporters from his campaign. Even some executives at the network, notably its founder William Paley, grumbled privately about Schorr's reporting. (Like many great media honchos—from Henry Luce to Harold Ross to David Sarnoff—Paley was a Republican who hired only Democrats.)

What happened? The untutored reader of *Staying Tuned* can only wonder what the fuss was all about. Schorr's account here is, to put it kindly, incomplete. When CBS asked him for a story, he writes in his memoir, he learned from his reporting "that Goldwater had plans, as yet unannounced, to leave directly after the convention for a vacation in Germany as guest of . . . Lt. Gen. William Quinn. They would spend their time mainly at an American army recreation center in Berchtesgaden in the Bavarian Alps. Berchtesgaden was famous as Hitler's favorite retreat. This, along with the obvious enthusiasm of right-wing Germans for Goldwater, I reported from Munich in my analysis."

In his own autobiography, Goldwater gives a fuller account, quoting at length from Schorr's actual report. Schorr opened the report like so: "It looks as though Senator Goldwater, if nominated, will be starting his campaign here in Bavaria, center of Germany's right wing" also known, Schorr added helpfully, as "Hitler's one-time stomping ground." Goldwater, he went on, had given an interview to *Der Spiegel*, "appealing to right-wing elements in Germany," and had agreed to speak to a conclave of, yes, "right-wing Germans." "Thus," Schorr concluded, "there are signs that the American and German

right wings are joining up.” Now back to you, Walter, and have a nice day!

Today Schorr’s story, with its hints of paranoia, seems merely quaint, an almost comical artifact of the era that gave us *The Manchurian Candidate* and *Seven Days in May*—except that this was broadcast as a genuine bit of news, in the middle of a real campaign. Though easily checkable, it was false in all its particulars. Goldwater had spoken vaguely of vacationing in Europe but had made no plans to visit Germany, and he hadn’t spoken to Quinn, an old friend, in more than a year. Goldwater’s interview in *Der Spiegel* was a reprint of an interview that had appeared elsewhere, and he had not even considered addressing the group Schorr mentioned. More important, the story was false in its obvious implication of an *Anschluss* between German neo-Nazis and U.S. Republicans.

If Schorr was embarrassed by the Goldwater episode, his memoir shows no signs of it. In a few years he was back in Washington, reporting on a constellation of social-welfare issues that formed the Great Society initiative. He stayed on the beat through the first years of the Nixon presidency, during which social programs were enlarged beyond the wildest dreams of Lyndon Johnson. Yet the unvarying theme of Schorr’s reporting was that this vast expansion of the welfare state was either nonexistent or insufficiently vast—presumably on the grounds that, since it was happening under Richard Nixon, it wasn’t happening.

The press’s hostility toward Nixon was even more intense than its hostility to Goldwater (though Nixon-phobia, of course, was far more rational). With his nightly agitations on the *CBS Evening News*, Schorr became a kind of exemplar of press bias. For this the gruesome martinets who manned the parapets of the Nixon White House placed him on their famous “enemies list.” Being branded an enemy by Nixon made Schorr an instant celebrity, and he was to dine out on this elevated status for the next twenty-five years and counting. (For Schorr watchers, the biggest surprise in *Staying Tuned* is that



The cast of 60 Minutes in its seventeenth season, 1984.

the author waits until his second page before mentioning the enemies list.)

His celebrity was magnified spectacularly a few years later, in yet another controversy—one that was to end his network career. In early 1976, Schorr was leaked a copy of a report prepared by the House Intelligence Committee, which had been investigating CIA covert activities. Over the course of several nights he disgorged the contents of the report on CBS. Alarmed at the leak, and with its customary logic, the House of Representatives voted not to issue the report as scheduled but to keep it secret instead, notwithstanding that all its secrets had just been revealed. Delighted with his scoop, Schorr petitioned CBS executives to publish the report as a book, much as the *New York Times* had done with its purloined Pentagon Papers. When they declined, he leaked his leaked report to the *Village Voice*, which published it entire. CBS News executives, believing the report to be the network’s proprietary work product, were not pleased. They demanded an explanation from Schorr. So did the House Ethics Committee, which summoned him to testify about how he had obtained the original report.

What happened next is a matter of dispute. Several memoirs of the period, most recently one ghostwritten for Schorr’s CBS colleague Lesley Stahl, allege that Schorr, facing the wrath of

his network bosses, led them to believe that Stahl herself had leaked the report to the *Voice*. (Her fiancé was a writer for the paper.) Only after the *Washington Post* identified him as the leaker did Schorr admit to what he had done. CBS suspended him.

In *Staying Tuned*, Schorr’s account of the episode is characteristically spotty. His apparent attempt to shift attention to Stahl, he writes, was all a terrible misunderstanding. But his colleagues and supervisors at CBS saw it otherwise, as a craven evasion of responsibility. In his memoir, Schorr prefers to dwell on his testimony before the committee, which foolishly persisted in its effort to compel him to reveal his source. He says now that the committee’s interest in his work was particularly upsetting to his parents-in-law, who “were refugees from Nazi Germany.” So, like, they had seen all this before.

Schorr’s testimony before the committee was carried live on public television. It was a masterpiece of sanctimony—the straight-backed, flared-nostril self-righteousness that many journalists can summon at will. “To betray a source,” he announced, “would be, for me, to betray myself, my career, and my life.” Within days he was transformed from a pariah—the cad who tried to blame the girl—into a First Amendment martyr. Of course, in

America the martyrdom of reporters follows a peculiar course. For one thing, the martyr never gets martyred. He scarcely gets inconvenienced. Instead he gets famous, makes lots of money from speaking engagements, and for the next several years is routinely called the “conscience of . . .”—his generation, his craft, his country; you can fill in the blank.

It’s a great job, and by his own admission Schorr enjoyed it immensely. Johnny Carson mentioned him in monologues, and the *New York Times* crossword puzzle used his name as the definition of “TV Reporter.” His celebrity softened the resentment of higher-ups at CBS—nothing impresses TV people like fame—and for a moment it seemed that Schorr might be reinstated from his suspension. But it was not to be. Schorr knew his tenure at CBS was over when, not long after his

conducted the interview with Schorr—had taken the workaday hit piece as practiced by most reporters, with its sly insinuations and careful shadings and imperceptible elisions, and buffed and polished it to a gleaming perfection.

Schorr refers to his *60 Minutes* interview only glancingly in his memoir. The story is more fully told by the reporter Stephan Leshner, in his book *Media Unbound*, published in 1982. By the standards of *60 Minutes*, the Schorr take out was rather low-tech. There were no hidden cameras, no “ambush interviews,” no jumpy footage of Wallace chasing Schorr down back alleys and hotel corridors. They weren’t necessary. The only technique Wallace needed was the classic “sandbag,” in which a subject is lulled into complacency by a sympathetic-seeming interviewer, who then edits the taped interview to fit his (unannounced) thesis.

ing to CBS executives—the Stahl affair, and other in-house problems Schorr had had with his superiors and colleagues at the network. It seemed an unusually parochial exercise for a program devoted to national news, and Schorr came off badly. Not coincidentally, however, the segment aired on a Sunday night before a Monday meeting scheduled between Schorr and his network bosses to discuss his professional future. “The day after *60 Minutes* presented Daniel Schorr to its millions of viewers,” Leshner writes, “the erstwhile knight in shining armor was battered. For CBS, there would be fewer public problems from shrugging off an unworthy than there would have been from trying to unhorse a hero.” By mutual agreement, Schorr’s employment at CBS was terminated.

Hewitt doesn’t mention Dan Schorr in his own memoir. Having been with CBS for fifty years, and having overseen *60 Minutes* for thirty-three of those, he has so much else to discuss. (So many hatchet jobs, so little time!) But it must be said that whereas Schorr’s memoir is a real book—that is, a book that appears to have been written by its author, with occasional flashes of wit and intelligence—Hewitt’s is a celebrity quickie, mostly ghostwritten and lighter than air. I say *mostly* ghostwritten: Mixed in among the many paragraphs about how essential “good writing” is to the TV news business, one finds passages so inept that Hewitt could only have written them himself.

Here he describes how he invented the television “chyron,” a technique for superimposing letters over a televised picture: “It suddenly hit me: White letters superimposed on a black background is the way you superimpose names on the screen because the camera will not pick up the black, and you can superimpose that shot over anything you want to and show the letters and the picture simultaneously. Bingo!” You simply cannot pay ghostwriters to be this confusing.

Whoever the ghost was for *Tell Me a Story* (it appears, from the acknowledgments, to have been a journalist named Michael Ruby), the book employs the



Morley Safer, Mike Wallace, and Dan Rather in 1978.

testimony, Don Hewitt and *60 Minutes* said they would like him to sit for an interview.

“The Revolution is like Saturn. It eats its children,” wrote the poet Buchner about Danton, guillotined by his fellow revolutionaries. Surely there is some irony in the fact that Dan Schorr, pioneer of so many patented hatchet jobs, should fall victim to a CBS hatchet job himself. But when *60 Minutes* came to call, he was simply outclassed. From the program’s debut in 1968, Don Hewitt and his colleagues—especially Mike Wallace, who actually

Wallace’s interview with Schorr, Leshner notes, went on for seventy-five minutes and was cut down to thirteen. The bulk of it was given over to Schorr’s ruminations about the ethics of leaking and effusive praise from Wallace: “Dan,” Wallace said as the tape began to roll, “you have my profound admiration and that of your colleagues here and elsewhere.” When a camera malfunctioned, requiring them to begin the interview again, Wallace repeated his encomium twice more.

None of this made it into the broadcast. The tape instead was cut to concentrate on matters much more interest-

ruthlessly breezy tone that writers adopt when they are trying to stitch together the disconnected reminiscences and opinions of their not-terribly-involved subject. Hewitt is evidently not a reflective man, and even under the guidance of his amanuensis the narrative flops around incoherently. This is too bad. One would have hoped for a real book from Hewitt, for he is indeed the large figure that his boosters say he is. He is clearly, to judge by his book, a boor and a vulgarian, but he is also, to judge by the achievement of *60 Minutes* over three decades, a genius, too. No man has had a greater influence over the way television presents the news.

Hewitt didn't revolutionize television journalism so much as extend it and intensify it, by drawing out the elements of show business and entertainment that had always been latent within it and making them essential to the telling of news stories. He cites the patron saint of TV news, Ed Murrow, as an inspiration. Murrow did genuine news reporting on his show *See It Now*, which solidified his reputation as a newsmen; and he did fluffy celebrity interviews on his show *Person to Person*, which made him lots of money. Hewitt had an epiphany: "Why not put them together in one broadcast and reap the benefits of being both prestigious and popular?" The insouciance here is almost endearing: From the start Hewitt thought of journalism not as a means of advancing the public good or elevating the citizenry—none of that Fred Friendly, high-minded baloney for him. Serious journalism was a way to *acquire prestige*. And, of course, he was right. Just as long as it wasn't too serious.

Hewitt's genius was to take the documentary format and "make the information more palatable and feed it [to viewers] in shorter and more digestible bites." He was a master at constructing brief narratives—few segments on *60 Minutes* run longer than thirteen minutes—and he surrounded himself with producers who had the same gift, along with on-air correspondents who had gravelly voices and looked marvelous in trenchcoats. (On *60 Minutes*, of course,



Don Hewitt, the executive producer of *60 Minutes*, in 1998.

AP / Wide World Photos

producers actually report the story, and Mike and Morley and the other fellas parachute in to do interviews and narrate the text when the cameras start to roll.) The show's success built slowly until, after ten years on the air, it became the most profitable show in the history of television.

Hewitt's method—revised and adapted, to be sure, by practitioners less skilled than he—has since become a kind of house style for features on television news, from the local cable channels on up to the flagship nightly news broadcasts on the networks. There are a few drawbacks to his approach. First, to condense a gripping ten-minute story from a large mass of information, Hewitt's producers have to construct a moral universe that is, to say least, uncomplicated. While facts can't be invented, facts that gum up the story line must be carefully ignored. There are bad guys (usually businessmen, sometimes doctors; soldiers sometimes, too) and good guys (Mike and Morley and the gang), and more often than not the good must triumph over the bad. There's never much question about what emotions the producers are trying to extract from the viewer: awe, revulsion, contempt, admiration. This manipulation, in fact, becomes the point of the story.

The second drawback is related to the first. Because the primary purpose of a successful *60 Minutes* segment is not to convey interesting or useful information but to manipulate a reaction from the viewers, the chances of any given story being true—the chances of it pre-

senting an accurate picture of reality—are only about fifty-fifty. The story's relation to events in the real world is always incidental.

For a journalistic enterprise, this would be a problem. But it has become the condition of television news programming, which is seldom informative but never fails to entertain. (Hewitt's innovations, by the way, are ideologically neutral; they can work just as well on the other side of the political divide, as witness the equally manipulative reports from the right-wing libertarian John Stossel on ABC's *20/20*.)

Not surprisingly, *60 Minutes* has often been sued. Its defenders point out that it has never lost a lawsuit in court, but this is a consequence of CBS's massive legal arsenal and the near-impossibility of bringing a successful case under American libel law. The casualties of *60 Minutes*'s distortions have sometimes managed to develop methods of their own anyway. Interestingly, Hewitt in his book mentions only one example—the Illinois Power Company, of Clinton, Illinois, whose huge cost overruns in the construction of a nuclear power plant brought the attention of *60 Minutes* in 1979.

The theme of the segment was, of course, the dangers and expense of nuclear power, and the emotions, drawn from the viewer with customary Pavlovian relentlessness, were indignation and fright. But the story was inaccurate in many of particulars, as well as its over-riding allegations of mismanagement and malfeasance. "We did make some

factual errors in reporting the Illinois Power story,” Hewitt writes, adding, not coherently, “although we were right on the facts—the plant was years behind schedule and the cost overruns were huge—we made some mistakes and frankly admitted that we had.”

Hewitt’s account of the controversy is inaccurate, too. He and his producers admitted their mistakes only after Illinois Power publicized a videotaped rebuttal to the *60 Minutes* story. The rebuttal included tape it had made of *60 Minutes* producers filming interviews of Illinois Power executives, which demonstrated the tendentious editing their comments had received. It showed that the three on-air sources used by the program either had no expertise, no firsthand knowledge for their allegations, or were anti-nuclear political activists who were not identified as such. The causes of the cost overruns were misidentified, and the producers apparently misunderstood the plant’s construction schedules.

There was of course a good story to be told about the exploding costs and schedule delays that almost killed the nuclear power industry in 1979. As Leshner notes in *Media Unbound*, “The elements existed for a sound story filled with furious and significant disagreement among company officials, [state power] commissioners, environmentalists, anti-nuclear activists, citizens groups, and others.” This story would have been complicated, however, and difficult to tell. And not at all entertaining. The same could be said of countless other *60 Minutes* stories that have been proved fallacious: its exposé on “sudden acceleration” in Audi automobiles, for example, or its fire-bell warnings about the danger of the pesticide Alar on apples.

Hewitt, like Schorr, is hard to embarrass. But one project in recent years seems to have upset him mightily: the 1999 Hollywood movie *The Insider*, about an aborted *60 Minutes* investigation of the tobacco industry that was supposed to air in 1995. The segment was delayed for three months when Hewitt and CBS executives became worried that it might expose the net-

work to a lawsuit from a tobacco company. The producer who put together the story eventually resigned in protest, but not before portraying Hewitt in newspaper and magazine articles as a tool of the corporate power structure. *The Insider* casts the producer’s story as a heroic struggle against capitalist villainy.

Don Hewitt—corporate tool? He is outraged, and in *Tell Me a Story* he writes about the controversy with unaccustomed heat. “Much of *The Insider* is simply wrong. They took so many liberties with my position that I was portrayed as a CBS lackey, which people at my company and other networks know damn well is far from the truth. . . . A lie is a lie.”

For a certain kind of audience, *The Insider* must be a marvelously effective movie. It is expertly paced, beautifully photographed, acted with uncanny skill. It constructs a small, uncomplicated moral universe with good guys (the *60*

Minutes producer and a whistle-blower) and very bad guys (corporate executives and Don Hewitt), and the good guys win in the end. It is entertaining above all, and most likely has nothing to do with the events as they actually happened. It resembles nothing so much as a *60 Minutes* segment stretched out and turned into a movie.

No wonder Hewitt is outraged. The Revolution, once again, is eating its children. In his memoir, he objects that the actor who portrayed him in *The Insider* was physically unappealing, but it seemed to this viewer, having read the book and then seen the movie, that the actor had Hewitt down cold. At one point, the Hewitt character objects that something has leaked to the press. “The AP’s got the story,” he shouts, “and they’ve been calling Mike and I!” I bet it’s the only authentic line in the movie. ♦

President Bush is set to announce a series of initiatives designed to “foster community spirit and family values,” administration officials said. Among the proposals: use of the presidential “bully pulpit” to encourage news organizations to “increase reporting of good news.”

—Washington Post, July 29, 2001

“GOOD NEWS FOR A GREAT PRESIDENT”

BUSH TODAY

NO. 1 IN THE WHITE HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE



Fox News to buy CBS

“Rather is
O-U-T, Barnes in,”
Ailes vows ■ 1, 12C

urtesy of CBS

Thursday, October 25, 2001

Newsline

NYTimes firebombing leaves dozens dead; Clymer, Dowd among newsroom casualties

“He’s still an a*****e . . . big time,” Prez says of fallen newsman. 3A

McCain to join Trappists

Az Sen will take vow of silence. 9D

Rangers sweep Braves in World Series

ARod announces engagement to Jenna. 1C

Jeffords mauled by dairy cows

Recount shows Bush won big in Florida

Margin tops 8 million votes, study proves; Bush “won fair and square,” says DNC’s McAuliffe.