



THE MIDWAY REVIEW

A JOURNAL OF POLITICS AND CULTURE

Benno Nelson *on* RESTAGING THEATRICAL CLASSICS

Dmitri Leybman *on* PAUL KRUGMAN'S CONSCIENCE

Bryan Duff *on* ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

Ellie Poston *on* THE PITFALLS OF POLITICAL RHETORIC

Gabriel Cahn *on* THE WIRE

and

Aaron B. Roberts *discusses* LEO STRAUSS'S LEGACY

THE MIDWAY REVIEW

.....

Editor in Chief

David Kaye

Business Manager

Kati Proctor

Design Editors

Bobby Zacharias (head)

Rachel Cromidas

Editorial Board

Gabriel Cahn

Aaron Greenberg

David Kaye

Jon Kurinsky

Matt Mutino

Kati Proctor

Aaron B. Roberts

Will Selinger

Bobby Zacharias

Faculty Advisor

Herman Sinaiko

Cover photos by Bobby Zacharias

.....

The Midway Review is a nonpartisan magazine of political and cultural analysis and criticism, written and published by students at the University of Chicago. We are a forum for civil debate across the political spectrum and across the humanities and social science disciplines, and for serious reflection on current events, culture, politics, religion, and philosophy.

The Midway Review was founded in Autumn 2005 by Rita Koganzon.

We are accepting Spring Quarter submissions. Please consult
<http://midwayreview.uchicago.edu/> for submission guidelines.

Letters to the editor may be addressed to midrev-staff@listhost.uchicago.edu.

We ask that letters for publication be limited to 350 words or fewer.

Publication of the Midway Review is made possible by the Student Government Finance Committee, the College of the University of Chicago and the Collegiate Network.

The Midway Review is printed by Congress Printing.

Right Cause, Wrong Rhetoric?

by Ellie Poston

.....

With the massive influence of media and public opinion on politicians today, it is no wonder that political rhetoric—especially the way in which political elites label campaign issues—has become a major focus on campaigns.

The classic example is the abortion debate. Those in favor of legalized abortion choose to frame the debate in terms of the word “choice,” which on its own is impossible to oppose. By setting themselves up as “pro-choice” and those that oppose them as “anti-choice,” the rhetoric of abortion activists conjures emotions just within the context of the terminology, issues aside. The other side has chosen a word just as irrefutable—“life”—in order to cast themselves as “for” and others as “against” this most basic of human values.

Anti-abortion conservatives took this war of words one step further though, to their great success, with the introduction of the “partial-birth abortion” ban. Faced with a medical procedure with a somewhat technical, neutral name, “intact dilation and extraction,” Republican lawmakers renamed the procedure, giving it a much more graphic and emotion-evoking name, “partial birth abortion.” The support gained from this shift in rhetoric is thought to have played a role in the passing of a ban on the procedure in 2003. In this case, strategic language was successfully used to gain support for a controversial policy. To be sure, many opposed the terminology and fought vigorously against it, but overall it won more support than it lost.

Another recent example is 2007’s “Protect America Act,” an extremely controversial amendment to the Foreign Services Intelligence Act allowing government agencies to wiretap citizens’ phones without a warrant. Without a serious change of rhetoric, opposing the act is played as opposing the protection of America. Overall, particularly in the case of the conservative Republicans, calling on inflammatory rhetoric in order to shore up support and provoke reactions has been an extremely successful political strategy.

.....

Ellie Poston is a third year in the College, majoring in Political Science.

The question is, can this rhetoric sometimes be more divisive and off-putting than inspiring and provocative? Most of these terms have been invented by expert politicians who probably tested and fine-tuned them before their adoption, but recently a group of student activists at the London School of Economics took this strategy in the wrong direction, invoking language that may have been too strong, and thus hurting their cause significantly.

The London School of Economics has one of the most active Student Unions of any university in the world. They have four full-time paid staff members and hold weekly meetings open to the student body where anyone is welcome to propose motions which are put before the general meeting for a vote. Often these motions regard issues on campus such as revisions to the Student Union’s constitution or the formation of a campaign to keep the library open later, but occasionally activists on campus bring their causes to the meeting to try to obtain a vote of support or a promise of action from the Union. Recently members of the Palestine Society did just this, putting forth a motion for the Student Union to put pressure on the University to divest from companies supporting Israel, to formally admonish the actions of the Israeli government and army in the Palestinian Territories, and to support Palestine’s struggle against the Israeli occupation. Given Europe’s history of sympathy for the Palestinian cause—with the UK as no exception—as well as the leftward-leaning tendencies of the LSE student body, I guessed that most students would support much of the content of the motion. Instead though, in the most well-attended General Meeting in my time at the LSE, there was a high turnout of extremely angry Israel supporters there, emotionally calling for the rejection of the motion on the grounds that it alienated Israeli and Jewish members of the community and made unjust claims about the actions of the Israeli state.

Now, normally this kind of rhetoric rings somewhat false to me. Though the threat of anti-Semitism is very real, both historically and today, defenders of Israel often unjustly cast critics of the state as haters of its people, an extremely frustrating and counterproductive

argument. In this particular case, though, members of the Palestine Society decided to name their motion to the General Meeting, “Make Apartheid History.” Speakers for the motion wore t-shirts with this slogan on them and the word “apartheid” was mentioned several times in the motion itself.

My guess is that if members of the Palestine Society had been wearing T-shirts declaring “Make Military Occupation History,” “Make Massive Human Rights Abuses History,” or even “Make Oppression History,” the scene in and around theatre during the meeting would have been very different. As it was, though, I arrived on time to find the theatre so full that I was forced to stand in the entryway, where I was crammed between a wall and an angry Israel supporter who was reduced to yelling racial stereotypes about Palestinians at the stage and even personally attacking one of the people passing out ballots.

To put the question of terminology to the side for a moment, the idea of comparing humanitarian crises at all seems somewhat bizarre to me. Is the implication that comparing the plight of the Palestinians to black South Africans warrants a scale of action and concern that would otherwise be unnecessary? I lived in East Jerusalem for three years as a child and have

spent time in the West Bank and even the Gaza Strip and what I saw there seemed comparable to apartheid. More importantly, I have talked to long-time human rights activists who witnessed first hand the quality of life of black South Africans under apartheid and Palestinians under the current occupation who have made the comparison and believe firmly that it

is an accurate one. Despite this, I have learned that it is almost impossible to have a productive conversation to these ends with anyone who has not witnessed the occupation first-hand, especially those who have had opposite experiences of Israel as a strong and good nation rather than the racist and cruel regime with which they associate apartheid South Africa. But whether or not one believes in the comparison, does insisting on it imply that conditions of severe oppres-

sion are not worthy of our attention and our passion unless they are sufficiently apartheid-like?

While it was certainly exciting to see so many LSE students engaged in the activities of their Union, as someone who cares deeply about the Palestine issue, I could not help but question the strategic decision by the Palestine Society to insist on using the rhetoric of apartheid. Much like in the case of the “Protect America Act,” supporters of the Israel society would have struggled to oppose the motion had it been named, for example, “Stop the Persecution of Oppressed Groups.” They would have been much harder pressed, I think, to combat proof that Israel commits daily human rights abuses in the occupied territories and that the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza are living with an entirely inhumane and degrading level of oppression. These arguments, too, would have been compelling in convincing the student body that such a forward-thinking and activist institution as the LSE Student Union should ally itself against this occupation by encouraging divestment and condemning the actions of an oppressive Israeli regime.

When they insisted on using the terms that they used, however, those supporting the motion allowed the argument to become about rhetoric itself, not about substance or results.

When debating the Protect America Act, very few opponents argue that allowing the federal government to wiretap without warrants would to some extent protect America; most argue instead about the cost of that protection. Since the rhetoric of apartheid is debatable and hard to defend, supporters of Israel did not need to address the concrete realities of the

.....
If members of the Palestine Society had been wearing T-shirts declaring “Make Military Occupation History,” “Make Massive Human Rights Abuses History,” or even “Make Oppression History,” the scene would have been very different.
.....

crimes being committed against the Palestinian people. They did not need to stand against making apartheid history, but rather to reject the terms of the argument by defending Israel against comparison with a political regime that was in power forty years ago in a country on the other side of the world.

Needless to say, when put to a vote the motion did not pass. While I was in favor of the motion, I be-

lieve many who may have supported the content of the motion were put off by their uncertainty when it came to the rhetoric used. I understand the thinking of the Palestine Society in choosing terminology that they not only felt accurately depicted the conflict that they represent, but also rhetoric they felt would be hard to oppose. It is possible, however, that they underestimated the negative emotional reaction that many would have to the invocation of historical apartheid to describe the situation in the Middle East, and they also chose to frame the issue in a context that was

controversial enough that they were forced to defend the word rather than the issues they were proposing. While choosing inflammatory rhetoric to generate excitement about your cause is a tried and true method by professional politicians, and while these terms often seem very simple, it is possible that more thought goes into them than we know. It is important for less experienced activists to think hard about the terms that we use when describing our causes so that we can keep the debate focused on issues and not allow the opposition to be distracted by the rhetoric itself. **



The Open Possibilities of Dostoevsky's Diary

by Elliot Hasdan

.....
A character is created, his thoughts and feelings are connected—all very well constructed.
But what if it's something completely different?

—Dostoevsky's notebooks for *The Brothers Karamazov*

In one of the strangest literary experiments, Fyodor Dostoevsky, in 1876, invited his readers to his one-man monthly publication. It was to be a continuation of an idea he abandoned in 1874 as editor of the journal *The Citizen*.

He warns in that it will not be a newsletter—"It will be a diary in the literal sense of the word, an account of impressions actually experienced each month, an account of what was seen, heard, and read" (Diary 295). For only two rubles, fifty kopecks, readers could subscribe to *A Writer's Diary*, the serial publication "written by a single pen."

The announcement, so expansive as to exclude nothing, is ironically cited when the author apologizes for overstepping his commitment to actual events. But what is remarkably odd about the *Diary*, which Dostoevsky would compile into a single text at the end of each year, is this exhaustive jumble of genres and styles. This, however, makes it very difficult to consider the *Diary* an integral work as opposed to a collection of articles.

Though it may not be difficult to imagine a series of impulsively written public opinions—Dostoevsky's *Diary* reads something like a precursor to today's "blog"—he was at pains to portray a spontaneous investigation into the potentials of each event. Appropriately, as the very first "blogger," Dostoevsky was criticized for wasting his gifts on trifles. Nevertheless, he would work on the publication, often irregularly, until his death in 1881.

Gary Saul Morson, in his "Introductory Study" to the 1993 edition of the *Diary* writes that Dostoevsky's plan was to "make the topical timeless" (7). The dif-

ficulty lay in uplifting the artistic significance of the mundane, which forced the author to improvise with material out of his control. The complete openness would make it a diary, and the artistic authority would make it belong to a real writer.

With the expectation of an audience from the inception of the project, and loosely defined topics, how was this different from the serial publication common to the nineteenth century? Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* was written in twelve monthly installments in 1866, and even *The Brothers Karamazov* would be revealed through serial publication between 1879 and 1880. Charles Dickens was already famous for his serialized novels, such as *The Old Curiosity Shop*, which he even altered due to reader feedback. But a project so oblique left readers confused. Dostoevsky's readers sent him irritated letters, only to receive wry and nebulous responses.

Dostoevsky drolly introduces the 1873 *Diary* as a proper one in that it doesn't demand an audience: "My situation is as uncertain as it can be. But I shall talk to myself and for my own amusement, in the form of this diary, whatever may come of it. What shall I talk about? About everything that strikes me and sets me to thinking" (124).


The introduction aptly introduces the themes of madness, talking to oneself, and the complete openness of the present moment. He recounts his casual appointment as editor of *The Citizen*, and remarks that in China, his career and project would have been decided generations in advance. He and his publisher would do nothing but humbly present themselves before the emperor: "After kowtowing and licking the floor, we would rise, raise our index fingers, and respectfully bow our heads...In China we would put out an excellent publication" (122). In St. Petersburg, however, the outcome would be spontaneous.

.....
Elliot Hasdan is a third year in the College, majoring in Fundamentals: Issues and Texts.

The wandering style of the *Diary* serves as a mocking stab at Russian intelligentsia and their smug superiority. He warns that “no one wants to think,” and the task of writing becomes easy, this does not quite serve the community—“*The Citizen* certainly must speak to citizens, and that is precisely its whole dilemma!” (123). Even when Dostoevsky publishes his *Diary* independent of *The Citizen*, he cultivates the idea that people are naively compelled by Western materialism and earthly power, and that he is the father figure ready to save them.

What makes the serial a diary, and not a chronicle, has to do with the puzzling format and feverishly irregular writing. It is full of personal anecdotes, reactionary politics, fantastical stories, offensive polemics, and baffling titles. What makes it a *writer’s* diary is that he tries to create order out of spontaneity, invoking a passionate narrative authority in the process.

Though reading the *Diary* straight through is a painstaking process, reading enough articles—there are usually four to six per monthly installment—uncovers a dynamic self-referential text that manipulates tangents and *feuilletons* and crafts a new identity for the author.

One of the headings reads “Forget Immediate Problems So That the Roots Can Be Restored. Through Lack of Ability I Enter into Something Spiritual.” Another heading simply quotes *Hamlet*: “Words, Words, Words!” While often  incomprehensible until the end of the issue, the headings are usually starting points that embrace the impulsive writing, and evoke a narrator unable to keep his thinking concise. They are subtle riddles, implicitly asking the reader to find the connections and coherent theme.

A January 1881 article is curiously titled “Finances,” and then the following article begins:

‘So what about finances? Where’s your article on finances?’ I’ll be asked. But, again, what sort of an economist am I? What kind of an expert on financial matters? In fact, I don’t think I even have the nerve to write about finances. So why, then, did I embark on such a venture and start writing such an article? I did so precisely because I’m sure that once I’ve begun to talk of finances I’ll change the subject to something else entirely and the result will be an article not about finances but something altogether different. That’s the only thing that encourages me. (52)

Through these wry twists Dostoevsky fashions a voice that is often insulting and provocative, but gains authority as he speaks for the Russian people. The author’s personality fills in the gaps, and *Diary* becomes a narrative with Dostoevsky as its hero. It is always and everywhere about Dostoevsky himself.

A part of his created literary authority involves speaking of women’s rights. In June 1876 he commemorates the death of George Sand, and writes, “Women all over the world should put on mourning in her memory, because one of the most elevated and beautiful of their representatives has died.” He continues by remarking that George Sand’s heroines “represented a type of such sublime moral purity as could not be imagined without a most thorough moral scrutiny within the poet’s own soul” (511).

In fact, real women play roles in the *Diary* that Dostoevsky did not even imagine in his fiction. The “Russian woman” is often elevated, as she has “chastely ignored obstacles and mockery” and has “firmly declared her wish to participate in the common cause,” meaning a commitment to education as opposed to “acquisition, cynicism, and materialism.” In May 1876 he concludes that by “sincerely and completely” permitting higher education for all women, “Russia would once more take an enormous and original step ahead of all Europe in the great cause of the regeneration of humanity” (501–2). But of course, it is only Russia’s keenest and most compassionate spectator who can best understand the situation of all Russian women.

He actively critiques the authority of jury trials, established through the Great Reforms of 1864, and affirms that his understanding of the cases is superior to any lawyer. He intervened in a famous child abuse case in which Ekaterina Kornilova was convicted for throwing her stepdaughter out of a window.

Dostoevsky sketches out a field of possibilities, his point being that identical circumstances can lead to myriad results. The incomplete moment cannot predetermine a single outcome. Dostoevsky grants moral freedom to Kornilova, and affirms that her intentions were not formed until the last possible instant.

This freedom of open possibilities has a forceful presence in *The Brothers Karamazov*, where for example Dmitri unintentionally seizes a pestle and cannot pro-

vide a motive. It is the attorney who binds Dmitri to a psychological framework, arguing that his murderous anger caused him to grab the pestle as a weapon.

The court case becomes a novella in the *Diary*, creating a suspenseful narrative throughout the meandering articles. The narrative form is persistent throughout the text, and is one of the few discernable unifying principles. Dostoevsky retells an event from the Russian press, muses upon it intermittently, and imagines its possibilities as a story. Occasionally, a story might follow. Dostoevsky crafts a self-conscious drama that slowly reveals the process of creativity. It is this investigation into potentials and resonating perspectives that is most familiar to readers of his novels.

In January 1877 Dostoevsky scathingly dubs Lev Tolstoy a “historian,” claiming that he can only investigate the past, and doesn’t understand the present—that to live through the present is to live uncertainly. In an 1873 entry titled “Apropos of the Exhibition,” Dostoevsky explains the importance of incompleteness. He writes:

What is genre, in essence? Genre is the art of portraying contemporary, immediate reality that the artist has himself felt personally and has seen with his own eyes, in contrast with historical reality, for instance, which cannot be seen with ones own eyes and which is portrayed not in its immediate but in its completed aspect. (215)

He goes on to argue that memory imports the future into recalling past events, and ignores the real freedom of the moment, positing a false sort of foreshadowing. The author of the *Diary* evokes the narrator of *The Brothers Karamazov*, who constantly hedges and subtly twists his ideas. The opening pages of the novel are teeming with uncertainty as the narrator introduces the Karamazov family patriarch:

Fyodor Pavlovich was drunk when he learned of his wife’s death, and the story goes that he ran down the street, lifting his hands to the sky and joyfully shouting: ‘Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.’ Others say that he wept and sobbed like a little child, so much so that they saw he was pitiful to see, however repulsive they found him. Both versions may very well be true—that is, that he rejoiced at his release and wept for her who released him, all at the same time. (9)

In the *Diary* Dostoevsky treats time as truly open, and wherever he is tempted to see one path, he projects the possibility of others that might have occurred. He affirms that even the present does not have to be what

it is. The present we know is one of many possible presents, and the field of possibilities is what is important. When the alternative presents are made visible, and time acquires a double, only then can we begin to understand our actions.

“The Dream of a Ridiculous Man” is one of the famous short stories found in the *Diary*. The story projects a parallel world in which the narrator is able to live his life differently and become aware of the possibilities he has ignored. He wonders if this imagined world, so similar to ours but with a different history and temporality, could ever exist. Dostoevsky’s affirmation is overwhelmingly clear.

Dostoevsky is a master storyteller in his *Diary*, as he gives voice to the assembly of events and ideas that surround him. However, as Morson argues in his introduction, it is in some sense a failure, because Dostoevsky could not become both the authoritative prophetic figure for Russia and at the same time allow the open possibilities of time without serious confusion. What remains is only a superficial aspect of the original plan—“The monthly format, the division into chapters and articles, and the lengthy chapter titles,” which he dismisses as the “empty shell.”

A Writer’s Diary, with its brilliant sketches, is an intriguing source of the conflicts and themes that influenced Dostoevsky’s thought and art. Any reader looking for a better understanding of this writer is sure to be amazed, but the text is daunting and disheveled.

It is hopeless to begin without Morson’s thorough introduction. He takes on the colossal task of organizing the material and finding its unifying threads. Morson traces the *Diary* from its early planning stages and offers remarkable coherence to the “loosest and baggiest” of Russia’s “loose, baggy monsters,” quoting Henry James.

Dostoevsky joked that ultimately writing for his own amusement would still be satisfying. Though he wrote to pay his bills, his project is perhaps an interesting lesson for the diary-keepers who might revel in declaring their opinions onto the internet—for those that do not simply look to chronicle their lives in an open narrative, but affirm themselves as its heroes. **

Teacher of Evil? Not Quite

by Aaron B. Roberts

.....
Catherine H. Zuckert and Michael P. Zuckert

The Truth About Leo Strauss: Political Philosophy and American Democracy.

University of Chicago Press, 2006. 320 pp.

Paperback edition, April 2008, \$19.00.

When I first entered college, many believed that the late University of Chicago professor, Leo Strauss, was the sadistic mastermind behind America's foreign policy in the Middle East. Others found him to be a harmless, but fascinating, scholar of Western political thought. *The Truth About Leo Strauss* makes an attempt to dissuade us of the former and to promote the vitality of Strauss's thought. The Zuckerts' intended audience includes both those who are curious about this man who has lately drawn so much attention and those already familiar with Strauss.

This winter, I had an opportunity to sit down with the authors—University of Notre Dame professors Michael and Catherine Zuckert; husband and wife—to discuss with them Strauss's reception within the academy (both negative and positive), where Strauss fits into intellectual history, and the future legacy of the kind of study which Strauss began.

.....
Roberts: Since his death, there have been a few noteworthy (intelligent) 'attacks' on Strauss that have come from within the academy. Why has Strauss inspired such vitriol, even amongst the most elite of the intelligentsia, who display remarkable familiarity with his work? What sort of implications does this have for Strauss, the academic and thinker—if any?

Professor Catherine Zuckert: One of his foremost critics, Myles Burnyeat, faults Strauss on two counts—for his reading of Plato, in particular. One is that Strauss doesn't follow what was then the conventional, especially British, version of Plato, which has to do with the Ideas and philosopher-kings being serious. Second, Burnyeat objects to the conservative politics of some of those who had been students of Strauss.

Since then, Burnyeat continues to object to the conservative politics associated with Strauss; but, in a sort

.....
Aaron B. Roberts is a third year in the College, majoring in Fundamentals and Political Science.

of backhanded fashion, Burnyeat has started saying that, "Terrible as these Straussians are, they're the only people who pay attention to the dramatic beginnings, settings, and character of the dialogues." Instead of just dismissing Strauss, in fact, he started to take at least the method, the more literary approach, seriously.

Professor Michael Zuckert: Burnyeat's criticism strikes me as far thinner than Drury's book [*The Political Ideas of Leo Strauss*]. Drury tried to understand Strauss, and I think she has a way better sense of what Strauss is about than Burnyeat does. I remember he had misstatements in it like, "No one who hasn't studied with Strauss has ever been influenced by him." That's completely ridiculous; just an ordinary empirical error. Like Catherine said, the British academic world has this stance, "We know what we're doing. If you don't agree with us, you don't know what you're doing."

At the very least, you have to say that Strauss is not an easy writer to get a hold of. You need to pay a lot of attention to what he's saying before you spout off about him. Burnyeat, I don't think, did that.


I would say there's a germ of point in Lilla's article that's worth taking to heart. Strauss has an account of the course of the history of philosophy. It's a powerful account. There are alternatives, however. One ought to, one needs to, treat Strauss's account like other accounts. It's one theory; there are others out there. Don't just take it on faith that Strauss's account is the correct one. So far as there are people who tend to just accept Strauss's account as the correct one, I suppose Lilla has a point. Lilla then jumped to the conclusion that therefore maybe Strauss's account isn't the correct one. You can't reject it on faith either.

Catherine: Aren't there two issues in the Lilla article? One is the phenomenon of his having these loyal students, for whatever reasons. That's been the magnet that's attracted a lot of the criticism.

On the other hand—and I suppose I have a professional

interest in this—Strauss was educated in Germany, he comes out of early twentieth century, German philosophical thought, he was very familiar with it, he came to the United States (he and Hannah Arendt have this in common), they all of a sudden find themselves addressing an audience for whom these things weren't familiar, and Strauss ends up in a political science department. In effect, Strauss wasn't read in the appropriate context. He should have been read as a student of, and a responder to, Husserl and Heidegger, instead of as simply a commentator or critic of modern social science. Until recently, this has been the case.

In Burnyeat, Strauss was just this old-fashioned, moralist, natural-law thinker, ridiculous, conservative. After Drury's book, he's a Nietzschean, nihilist, manipulator, etc. I don't think that's true, but I think it's in some ways a step towards something that is true.

Michael: I'd say the two views of Strauss are somehow co-existing out there now—as this old-fashioned guy who hasn't gotten what's going on in the modern world, on the one hand, versus this ultra-modern, nihilist, Nietzschean, Heideggerian, Carl Schmittian, who is a  bad guy, who covers over his badness with esoteric prose. That's the view that Drury produced. As Catherine said, she's a good corrective to the other view. I think she errs on the other side as well, but she does see something in Strauss that the others didn't see.

I think Strauss had a big impact in the discipline of political philosophy from *Natural Right and History* and on, which appeared in the early '50s. Strauss was a polarizing thinker. People either were admirers of his and tended to go into his orbit or were negative—very critical and sometimes harshly so. He is writing in such a way as not to appeal to a large audience and perhaps to turn off a lot of people. He's looking for *his* readers. In this way, I think he's a little bit like Nietzsche, who wanted his readers, the right readers for him.

Roberts: Why is it that philosophy departments are so stand-offish when it comes to Strauss? Strauss was, after all, a student of 'the great philosophers.'

Michael: You have to put it in the broader context of their tendency to be disdainful of anything that isn't Anglo-American analytic philosophy. They're generally stand-offish from all continental traditions, of which I think ultimately Strauss was a part. I think the thing that gets them about Strauss is that he doesn't do philosophy in the way that they recognize philosophy.

Their idea of philosophy is that you take a problem, and you analyze it in a certain way, and most of Strauss's works are in the form of interpretations of historical texts, which is not something that philosophy departments are that particularly interested in now. But so far as they are—so far as there are people in philosophy departments who do history of philosophy—I think they do take Strauss seriously.

For Strauss it was a big question, "Why should one be doing history of philosophy? Why not just do philosophy?" His answer was that our common sense way of looking at the world had been so infected, or affected, by a long tradition of philosophy, that we had to become self-conscious and self-aware of our own ideas, where they came from, what the connections were, and what their point was—before we could just sit down and think, because otherwise we're kind of trapped by these things that we've inherited from one place or another. He saw at the beginning of the tradition that there wasn't a tradition. The beginning of the tradition wasn't bound in the same way that we, in a sense, are.

This, I think, reflects something which Catherine said earlier: the influence on Strauss of Husserl and Heidegger, both of whom I think had somewhat similar insights. So, it's not an accident that Heidegger ended up doing a lot of history of philosophy, really for the same reasons as Strauss did later. What I think Strauss learned from Husserl is that you need to get behind theoretical structures about the world and back to a sort of primal way in which the things themselves appear to us, to human beings. That required—as Strauss and Heidegger thought—history of philosophy. Strauss always saw history of philosophy as propaedeutic, preliminary to, preparatory for, philosophy. He also argued that you can't really do history of philosophy without doing philosophy. He was of the view that his rediscovery of esotericism opened up an understanding of the tradition that had been lost for many centuries, and that this was a prerequisite for rediscovering philosophy in its fullest and proper sense.

Roberts: In an age of system building in political science departments (e.g., John Rawls), how is it that a man like Strauss, who purported to be a "mere scholar"—which I take to mean a "commentator"—took off with such strength and vigor?

Michael: When Strauss first broke onto the scene in the American academy, it was really a pre-Rawls era. Rawls's *Theory of Justice* came out just about when Strauss died.

I would say that Strauss and Rawls's book spoke to some of the same concerns. The general view before them was that political philosophy was played out, there was nothing much more to do. We have George Sabine as the main authority, and he begins his book by saying, "I think Hume is right. There's the Is-Ought distinction, and political philosophy's the attempt to talk about 'oughts,' and you can't do that," and therefore, what Sabine had presented us with was a five hundred page or more summary of all these errors people had made. That's not very interesting. What Strauss wanted to say was, "No, we want talk about what's positively true and not about this history of errors." Strauss had a kind of critique of why Sabine and other people thought political philosophy was impossible today, and he made the case that it was as possible now as it ever was.

Rawls appealed to the same thing. People had been diddling around with these little petty analytic studies of this or that concept in political philosophy, and Rawls came onto the scene and gave us a big theory about justice. It's been subject to much criticism, but nonetheless, people say, "He's talking about something important. He's making big claims. He's got interesting ideas." So I would say in that regard Strauss and Rawls are parallel—though admittedly they moved in different directions—but they were parallel at the moment at which they had their first impact.

Catherine: If one generalizes, then the context for this discussion is what Strauss calls "positivism," the rise and dissemination of the Is-Ought distinction following World War II, and the social science that goes along with it. Strauss and Rawls in different ways both said, "No, we still care about justice. This is a real question. It's not just a feeling or a subjective reaction."

Roberts: How do you predict people will speak of Strauss fifty years from now? Without a doubt, he is fashionable today. However, is he fashionable in the derogatory sense, or is he here to stay?

Catherine: Well, I'm not quite sure what you mean by fashionable. It seems a strange word to use to describe Strauss under any circumstances. I think that he will become the author of one of the main alternative understandings of the significance of the history of western philosophy. I think people will see that increasingly.

Michael: I think it's awfully hard to predict reputations. What will people say about Rawls fifty years from now? That's another interesting question. I might be wrong in this, but I think Strauss has more staying power than Rawls. Rawls is exhausted already. We've sucked him dry, we Rawls scholars. There were a lot of us. We did it in a short order. But Strauss isn't like that. We haven't sucked Strauss dry, because we can't really get down into what he's doing. There are different dimensions of Strauss's work that people turn towards. I think one of the issues that's going to be very big is reconstructing Strauss as a response to, and a development out of, Husserl, Heidegger, and very late modern German philosophy. That dimension of Strauss will become larger over time as a big alternative to what he called "radical historicism."

Roberts: What was your relationship to the man, if any? Could you clarify for us who Strauss, the man, really was?

Michael: We were here in Strauss's very last years. He left in the fall of '67. He projected a sort of humility. He was a very gentle man, who was unfailingly polite to people. Never in my memory of him did he ever embarrass a student in public. Never did he do anything that was harsh. He was an easy grader.

Catherine: When we were here, he was old and ill. He had had a heart attack. So at that point he was very careful about his expenditure of energy. He came to school in time to teach his class, and then he left. At least at that period, one could say that he was concentrating on his work, because he saw that he didn't have all that much time.

Michael: I do think he was absorbed in what he was doing, which he thought was important. I don't think he was a guy who had a lot of time for chit-chat, because there was a sense to urgency, given his ill-health. He was a very serious guy. He worked very hard. He was quite remote when we were here. He had office hours, very few, but no one really had the nerve to go to see him.

Catherine: Sometimes you had to, but they weren't long conversations.

Michael: He was a great man actually. It was a great privilege to have touched him a little. Everybody had tremendous respect for him. Everybody knew that he was smarter than all of us. **

UChicago: the Life of the Mind (Bowed to the Yoke)

by Adwait Parker and Aaron Greenberg

.....

With every gesture the pupil is given to understand that what is most important is understanding the demands of 'real life' and fitting oneself properly for the competitive realm, and that the ideals themselves were either to be taken as a confirmation of this life or were to be immediately placed in its service.

—Theodor W. Adorno, "The Schema of Mass Culture"

In some senses, Rick Perlstein's *New York Times Magazine* essay, "What's the Matter with College?" (August, 2007) improves upon typical discussions of college. Rather than discussing it in terms of rankings, as is common, Perlstein instead takes a historical view of the transformation of the student body, both as it understands itself and as society sees it. But he ultimately doesn't stray far from the most popular discourse about higher education, the discourse framed by elegy and motivated by nostalgia.

This elegy for college takes two main forms: it either bemoans the loss of college as an intellectual enclave separated from society, harkening back to college's elitist roots; or, it fondly remembers its populist, hyper-charged, hyper-political iteration in the 1960s, distinct from the apathy of today's youth.

But when it comes to a thoroughly social and dynamic institution like college, examining history won't tell us anything interesting about what college should be today. What college specifically "was" in 1928 and 1968 (conservative and radical as popularly believed, respectively) seems ultimately irrelevant when confronting the possibilities of college in 2008. Collegiate life, like the broader term "culture" that it often qualifies, has no essence; the experiences of students have always been immanently shaped by unique, historical moments. So we need to ask whether our college generation has confronted its unique historical moment head-on, or (perhaps more insolently) if it has even been given the opportunity to.

Reframing Perlstein's thesis in this light, when asked whether there are such problems with college, he

.....

Adwait Parker and Aaron Greenberg are third years in the College, both majoring in Philosophy.

should (and does) answer affirmatively. We resoundingly agree. But we don't think he goes far enough.

So what's the matter with college today? Much of the problem concerns our colloquial ideas about it: what life in it should go like, why we should chose some schools over others, what the process should consist in. All these ideas, floating around in our culture, point to an essentialist narrative about *what college is*.

But its main conceit follows this logic: the student, like the retiree, is a consumer with certain preferences, and those preferences can be met by certain well-marketed institutional arrangements. Of course, the narrative quickly loses this crudely economic language. However, students begin to judge their own experiences against what they see as external reference points in the culture. That self-perceptions are informed by cultural images is nothing new; what we would like to argue for is the fruitfulness of understanding the propagation of properly "collegiate" images in economic terms.

What follows is an interpretation of college life (limited to our experience at a private school, Chicago) that seeks to source some of its problems in the dangerous kinship between the idealized narratives of "student life" and the economic language of market decisions. These affinities may account for the potency of the simple collegiate storyline, and why students are so willing to embrace it.

Conformity is one thing. But the "narrative of college" is socially toxic: dulling creativity, vulgarizing choice, turning the most potentially liberating institutions in America into pre-professional dungeons. In speaking about a generation that seems like "the freest that ever was" (with the most choices and the most information

at the earliest stages of their lives) this might sound surprising. But more striking is how willing college students have shown themselves to live out a narrative only nominally of their own creation.

The logic of the narrative might lead us to summarily describe college, like nearly everything else in society, as having been “commercialized.” Making an analogy between literal consumer choice (Coke and Pepsi) with college choice (Harvard and Chicago) also seems too thin. Instead, the question about the college student as consumer should be posed in the following way: What does it mean for college students to couch their admissions decisions in market language? And what does this mean about the way students are encouraged, even incited, to think of themselves?

Even before they arrive, students are dropped into a machinery of college marketing. It’s this ritual that reveals more about us than the caravan of station wagons at opening day or the week-long ceremony of orientation. The voluminous reading materials, the constant bombardment by online advertisements and junk email, the yearly college rankings: these are the first social moments in “college.” They link people together into an economic group, an imagined community of sorts. How is this link forged?

It’s not merely the fact that such information is disseminated, but the way that it’s presented. What is regarded as relevant to choosing a college must fall under a rubric: school size, class size, geographical location, and political leaning of the student body, to name a few. At issue is not the content of the conclusions students draw from such and such a category (i.e., the association of small class sizes with more personal relationships with professors). Instead, it’s a question of the deeper presumptions made by the industry in producing this information. It’s the matter of assuming that this is the type of information that students need in order to make an informed choice.

This information readies students for assimilation, in the sense that every quantum of information ought to be (and—this is the point—is) understood, integrated, and incorporated into a student’s decision-making scheme, analyzed with respect to a set of defined preferences that the student is supposed to know or be made to discover during the process. College infor-

mation manuals, books, and websites respond to this model of student as consumer, and consumers need the right resources to make informed choices. In the end, the student herself assimilates into this model of subjectivity.

There’s no doubt that new admissions procedures are much better than historical alternatives. Students know more about what they’re getting into; they can decide according to their own preferences, and the role of this information is precisely to order and deploy those preferences. But what does ordering and deploying preferences imply? Optimization. Students optimize their utility by best approximating their set of preferences, matching up their preferences with their choices. Though they aren’t always put in these terms, this is the latent conceptual vocabulary in which the entire industry (admissions counselors, the College Board, admissions departments, and the media that cover them) deals.

But the machinery does not stop when students enter college. Though the housing system has been a staple of college social life for centuries, it has taken on a new life, extending the normalization present in the initial college process.

The housing system does make it easy for some to transition to a very different social experience. But every element of this new experience is defined by choices made by the administration. Quotas for equal distribution of gender, race, and geographic origin ensure diversity. Students don’t need to evaluate the University’s claims about diversity independently—not when they have a perfectly diverse “house” (even if their house does not accurately reflect how few students of color, or from South Dakota, there are in the college). All their friends, lovers, and intramural sports teammates can be found a few doors away.

The house trips, the house dining table, the house conversations waiting to burst forth from the Ikea-decorated, band-postered room down the hall: *college* social life, ready-made. Questions like “Why this? Why here? Why these people?” are foreign in such an accepting, accessible social environment. Indeed these questions are virtually precluded by the administration of student life. Student social fate is sealed, and students are content with this fate, because they are

confident that *this* is the life of a college student—and why should we want anything other than that? The spontaneity that should define life is, then, twice deadened: first by the deep expectations that students have about their college experience before they even arrive; and then by the social institutions in place to cement exactly the expectations with which students arrived. Any doubts that this life is indeed college life evaporate with a trip to Facebook. Here the “universal” spectacle of college is constantly reaffirmed. Girls clutching red plastic cups at a party; fraternity brothers posing in the middle of a beer pong toss; two boys perhaps exaggerating their mutual affection: these are the scenes of college. We don’t mean to criticize students heavy-handedly. Though the greatest problems are induced by the structures administering student life, by the choices presented to them, it would be more than offensive to pretend these students exercised no agency in choosing their social life. It’s one thing for these images to float around, unclaimed, and quite another for students to latch on to them, for them to joyously embrace them as constitutive of their college experience. No traditional moral critique of college can take a hold of what’s going on here. It’s not the underage drinking, or a sexualized environment, or even the “liberal groupthink.” It’s a conforming to a toxic narrative of economy, and to a tightly limited conception of a form of life, of a specifically college life.

The point should not be to distill one narrative and privilege it as what college really ought to be. The way the educational machinery is marketed today, all these narratives are combined and presented as part of the package. *Essentially*, “The University of Chicago offers opportunities to engage with diversity to insure a financially secure future.” Even the political dimension is packaged as a set of political “opportunities” (and consequently effaces any pretense of being radical): join student organizations for campus activism, for party politics, for résumé building.

The institution of college has erected a grander narrative, one that allows choice among various opportunities as they align with individual preferences. And so when a student in the house lounge and a student in the fraternity basement are equally content with their own imagined collegiate character, they are satisfied insofar as they embrace a particular narrative that they

feel embodies the collegiate life. But what binds the two students together is that these forms of life are already accounted for by the contemporary structure of college. These students enact nothing new, they create nothing. And in the end, they manifest a strong will to normality. They optimize mediocrity.

All the socially, politically, economically, and intellectually thick diversity of the world can be oversold so easily when students don’t look any further than the arbitrary circumstances of their immediate social environment. They have no time to recognize themselves and yet their entire college life is spent as an abstraction of a college student. But simply acknowledging the tropes of college is not enough.

Obviously the situation is too complicated for a purely causal explanation. These social patterns have been caused not only by administering college like a commodity, but also by the dangerous intersection between thinking about the institution as a product and living within that institution as a consumer. The point is that today, the chicken and the egg of these styles of thinking and living support one another’s logic, regardless of which came first. As with every interpretation, this one comes with a certain kind of neglect. But our aim is not to produce an absolute description of reality, but to exhibit phenomena in such a way that they become amenable to change.

College administration will not lead students by the hand to discover other possibilities. That takes the kind of hard work required of advancing any such cosmopolitanism, of denying any institutional practice which sells itself as necessary, of breaking down disparate social practices held together by the glue of marketed need, of recasting need itself as contingent: it could just as well have been otherwise.

So many students filtering through college seem more like well-prepared tourists, who have constructed expectations of their journeys and destinations beforehand, and who reach college with itineraries listing all those ubiquitous experiences (sexual, political, academic, alcoholic) that will constitute college. Students must shuck this superficial tourism and take to an experience of college that values spontaneity and relationships outside of the official channels, beyond the given narrative and well off the itinerary. **

Beyond the Political: the Other Orhan Pamuk

by Andrew Hamilton

.....

In May of last year, I had the good fortune of watching Orhan Pamuk accept his honorary degree from the Freie Universität Berlin. It was a highly publicized event—it had been postponed several months, after Mr. Pamuk declined an invitation to Berlin in the wake of threats on his life—and the auditorium was filled with journalists, security personnel, and scholars of all kinds. The popular mayor of Berlin spoke, in his introductory remarks, about artistic freedom and liberal values; several distinguished professors of literature spoke (at unfortunate length) about Mr. Pamuk’s pivotal role in adapting Eastern art forms to a modern, multi-cultural literature and about his importance, politically and artistically, in today’s world. It was two full hours of anticipation before Mr. Pamuk finally took the stage to give his acceptance speech.

Mr. Pamuk took the podium and, in his speech of only a few minutes, explained that he has always been drawn to literature because it is the only way that adults can acceptably live within a child’s world. He went on to say that he could never have thrived with an “adult” job, and was pleased to be doing so well for himself playing in the realm of the imagination. And thank you very much for this honor.

This was probably not what anyone was expecting from a recent Nobel laureate, winner of countless literary prizes, and one of the best-selling and most controversial authors in the world today, a figure seen as standing directly on the fault-line between secular Europe and the Muslim Middle East. But such an episode sheds light on what it is that makes Mr. Pamuk’s work so remarkable, and that is precisely the part that scholars—including his audience in Berlin—find so baffling. Despite what those distinguished professors have been saying about Mr. Pamuk’s work ever since 1990, when the first translations of *The White Castle* made him known in the West, he is in fact walking an entirely different—and, artistically, much more

.....

Andrew Hamilton is a fourth year in the College, majoring in Germanic Studies.

interesting—fault-line: that between the politically engaged and socially aware man of letters, and the child-like writer who hates to leave the fantasy world that he spins around himself as he sits alone in his office, answering to no one but his imagination.

When Orhan Pamuk won the 2006 Nobel Prize for Literature, very few journalists were much surprised, as his name had been circulating as a candidate for some time. His biography seems almost tailor-made for a prize that often uses its choices to make tacit political statements, invariably in favor of secularized liberalism. Mr. Pamuk has lived in Istanbul for nearly his entire life, and draws frequently on the symbolism inherent in a city straddling two continents: forward-looking Europe, and an Asia that is still mired in problems addressed ages ago in Europe. This inherent criticism of some of Islam’s more retrograde tendencies has won him near-constant praise in Europe and America, and heavy criticism in his native country, where he is an extremely polarizing figure.

Mr. Pamuk drew unconditional support from the Western media when, in 2005, he was charged by the Turkish government with violation of the controversial article 301, which essentially makes it illegal to criticize “Turkishness.” His crime consisted of openly discussing the Armenian genocide of 1915, which the entire world except for the Turkish government has acknowledged as an atrocity. Although charges were later dropped, Mr. Pamuk’s image as a crusader for Westernization, struggling against an oppressive government, has stuck. His most recent novel, *Snow*, promoted this image. It is the story of Ka, a Turkish poet who has been living in Germany—because he offended the Turkish government—and his return to his homeland to visit a provincial city on the Armenian border. While there, a snowstorm breaks off all communication with the outside world, and the predictable havoc ensues: a coup is launched; a famous terrorist, on the run from the law, makes an appearance; the Islamists seize the opportunity to commit a few murders; Atatürk’s legacy is constantly re-interpreted by the most unlikely of

characters, and so on. The symbolism of the snow as the force that robs one of larger perspective is clear, and Mr. Pamuk’s implicit critique of the “snow” that has blinded his own country won him great praise and helped develop the Western image of him as “our man in Istanbul,” or something like it. This is the Orhan Pamuk whom most Westerners know best, and probably who won the Nobel Prize.

Snow is a great novel, not only for its insight into an extremely complicated political situation, but also for its reflection on what it means to be an artist, developed through Ka’s personal struggles. Running parallel to the political drama is a storyline in which Ka falls in love, writes inspired poetry, and eventually alienates the entire city by refusing to become explicitly involved in politics. He becomes an informer for the police against a known terrorist, not because he particularly cares about terrorism, but because he and this radical are in love with the same woman. In this action, the duality of this novel becomes clear—while the political stands out as the most accessible, it is the personal, the artistic, the imaginative, that lies underneath it all in a more meaningful sense. Ka’s love, and the poetry that comes from it, the author seems to suggest, are ultimately stronger than the political affiliations that the others take so seriously. This is the work of the other Orhan Pamuk, the one who deserves the recognition his more outspoken counterpart receives, and who is possibly the greatest writer in the world today.

This version of Mr. Pamuk comes to the front as never before in the recently published *Other Colors: Essays and a Story*, a compilation of highly personal newspaper columns, essays, interviews, and reflections on his work. The picture the author paints of himself corresponds quite nicely with the awkward personage I saw on that stage in Berlin. He comes across as a shy bookworm, who would much rather be reading and writing (he says that he typically spends ten hours a day at his

writing desk) than talking about such “adult” topics as politics. It is not surprising that one section of the book is entitled “My Books Are My Life.” None of his columns address political issues, and he discusses politics in interviews only when asked directly, and then with a clear hesitation. Rather, he devotes a great deal of time to describing the streets of Istanbul, the waters of the Bosphorus, and childhood memories of soccer matches and movie theatres. If the political Orhan Pamuk cares strongly enough to discuss Istanbul’s role in the world’s political conflicts, it is only because this other Orhan Pamuk loves it so much.

Armed with this glance into Mr. Pamuk’s personality, the genius and craftsmanship behind his novels become more apparent. In, for instance, the novel *My*

.....
A snowstorm breaks off all communication with the outside world, and the predictable havoc ensues: a coup is launched; a famous terrorist, on the run from the law, makes an appearance; the Islamists seize the opportunity to commit a few murders; Atatürk’s legacy is constantly re-interpreted by the most unlikely of characters, and so on.
.....

Name is Red, a murder mystery set in sixteenth century Istanbul, there are, for those who wish to concentrate on it, elements of cultural conflict central to the book. The story focuses on a group of illuminators, one of whom was deemed too “Western” in his methods and was subsequently murdered. It has become the critical convention to describe the work as a portrait of Istanbul coming to terms with powerful Westernizing forces encroaching on the Ottoman Empire, which I suppose it is. But *My Name is Red* stands out as exceptional because it so effectively relegates the political to

the realm of the implicit. Like Ka, who engages in politics for purely personal reasons, Mr. Pamuk’s use of this “collision of cultures” serves to support the themes of his central story and heighten his ability to develop characters. The confrontation with Western art is an opportunity for the Ottoman artists to look at their work in a new light, to re-ask themselves fundamental questions of identity, of style, of the meaning of their art. It is in these questions that the heart of the novel lies, and we see its reflections in the murder mystery, in the love story—even in the humorous incursions narrated by the works of art themselves.

While the majority of critics characterize this and other works as addressing the conflict between East and West in terms of some sort of struggle for the Turkish soul, it might be more accurate to say that Mr. Pamuk is telling the story of a few instances of that Turkish soul, and that exposing those cultures has had those souls. It is and not necessarily this notion of living between cultures would stand out to foreign readers, but Mr. Pamuk is inviting us to go a step further, to immerse ourselves in his fantastic stories, which are as much indebted to Thomas Mann and Franz Kafka as to the Arabian Nights or the Qu'ran. The problems begin with the hesitation on the part of most readers, and certainly by the critical establishment, to take this crucial step, to forget for a moment about Turkey's role in global politics, and follow Mr. Pamuk through the streets of Istanbul.



posure to conflict—a hand in shaping understandable problematic that on the border

The Swedish academy seemed to understand their inherent bias when awarding him the Nobel Prize. The official press release read, “To Orhan Pamuk, who in the quest for the melancholic soul of his native city has discovered new symbols for the clash and interlacing of cultures.” It is as though they recognized that these “new symbols” are what the Western audience is looking for, and accordingly extracted them from his body of work and praised them, leaving the author's actual intention—evoking the “soul of his native city” and using it to tell stories in the grandest of traditions—practically untouched. And it is exactly this attraction to Istanbul, this obsession with the details of the city and compulsion to tell the stories of its inhabitants that defines the other Orhan Pamuk, the one who doesn't concern himself with things like the Armeinan genocide, who spends ten hours every day alone with his imagination, and whose great talent is to draw the reader into his child-like world. He is perhaps the greatest author of his generation: not the socially concerned writer, but the man I saw on the stage in Berlin, even if he was not the one anyone in the audience was expecting. **



More Than a Campaign Promise: Making Economic Inequality a Social Priority

by Bryan Duff

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, the United States Presidential candidates took the opportunity to praise the late Dr. King's efforts in fighting the institutionalized discrimination which for so long contributed to inequality in the United States. Each candidate emphasized that Dr. King's work is far from over. According to Senator Obama, America must still address "the common challenge" of inequality. Indeed, reflection upon the present state of inequality reveals that contemporary stratification in the United States has not only assumed a more pronounced and widespread form, but also one that is less politically institutionalized and more dramatically economic.

Obviously, the history of the United States is littered with inequality, both institutionally and otherwise. Despite claiming to be the paradigm for liberal self-government, the U.S. has long contradicted its own commitment to the classically liberal idea that all men are created equal. One hardly needs to invoke the historical spectres of slavery or limited suffrage to demonstrate this contradiction.

Senator Obama and his fellow candidates are right to praise Dr. King for his incredible fight against this hypocrisy, which perpetuated majority interests. Thanks to leaders such as Dr. King, the United States has progressed in freeing us from discrimination by making discrimination, for the most part, an illegal activity. With the exception of the current same-sex marriage debate, political institutions which once explicitly excluded or discouraged minority involvement are now mostly an element of America's bleak history.

However, Obama is again accurate, and more importantly realistic, when he claims that this fight must continue if America truly hopes to uphold the doctrine that all men are created equal. Yet the problem of modern inequality seems more complex than a simple prejudice in that it now results from a multi-

tude of modern economic processes. Though there are likely numerous instances of non-institutional racism and sexism, today's inequality in the United States is the result of a modern economic philosophy, based on many core elements of the liberalism experiment, which ensures high personal freedom and low personal obligation.

One might argue that inequality in America has always existed economically, but one must also recognize that as of the past twenty-five years this stratification has certainly become exacerbated. The U.S. Census reveals that our country's median income has stagnated while the wealthiest have become wealthier. Recent economic growth for the wealthy, not to mention the rising cost of services such as health care, is currently waging a war of attrition against the American middle class. Thus, unlike most past instances of inequality, today's circumstances exclude and oppress the majority of Americans instead of a marginalized minority.

Yet the Presidential candidates, despite clamoring for "change," have offered little in the way of suggesting how this tide might be turned. Instead, they continue to favor the old policies which, despite no one's admission, contribute to economic inequality. These practices unceremoniously perpetuate the interests of the few.

A snapshot of contemporary American society displays that economic inequality yields serious social consequences: those with higher incomes continue to exclusively enjoy many advantages. Wealthier Americans have been able to provide their children with better educations, thus ensuring their economic standing and perpetuating the exclusion of others from better opportunities. And though private institutions of higher learning may offer scholarships to attract lower-income students who do not benefit from such privileged educative backgrounds, this is not so easily the case for state institutions. In an environment which increasingly requires certificates of higher education as devices of evaluation (and perhaps exclusion), the shrinking middle class has fewer prospects for upward mobility

Bryan Duff is a third year in the College, majoring in Sociology.

due to their inability to pay rising tuitions at underfunded state schools.

Yet why does this happen? Why do state colleges lack funding despite the growing workplace demand for college degrees? Why are many Americans in the middle class deficient in health care? And why has the median income failed to keep up with the growth of higher incomes?

The answer likely lies, in large part, to the recent guiding economic principle of the United States: Reaganomics. Reaganomics is a highly politicized term for what essentially amounts to the practice of supply-side economics over the past twenty-five years. The guiding idea is that growth can be most successfully increased if tax rates on income and capital are lowered in order to provide taxpayers with financial relief. This allegedly acts as an incentive for them to supply goods and services, and increases employment.

Again, the idea is that decreasing taxes—mostly for the wealthiest Americans—increases government revenue. In theory, this would allow the U.S. federal government to better fund its state schools. In addition, the theory holds that if the government collects less money from its richest citizens, then these savings will eventually “trickle down” to the lower classes as the upper classes now have more money to reinvest. This reinvestment ought to provide benefits such as the creation of middle class jobs.

However, it seems that this theory has not worked in practice. Despite the claim that tax cuts will actually increase government revenue as they either inspire harder work from taxpayers or incite the creation of small businesses by struggling entrepreneurs, the federal budget deficit was at its lowest when taxes were the highest ten years ago. When the deficit was at its highest, during years in which taxes were cut, the government was logically less willing to spend itself further in debt, even if on programs to aid needy Americans.

Additionally, this economic theory implies that improvements seen in the situation of America’s lower classes was in fact not the result of institutional change, but the product of Reaganomics’s capacity for a trickle-down effect. However, this practice, it seems, has not occurred. The policies of old have not prevented the growing divide in American incomes.

In addition to the fact that acting fiscally with an eye to the effects on the poor was not required of America’s wealthy, the cycle of long busts following short booms over the past twenty-five years has done little to provide the wealthy with the confidence to invest rather than save. Nonetheless, whether they had fiscal security to have acted or not, wealthy Americans indirectly contributed to the economic hardships of poorer Americans simply because they did not exceed their expectations under the government’s policy. It seems then that the indirect reinforcement of inequality seems to be the real trickle-down consequence of Reaganomics.

Thus, despite recognizing the existing problem of growing economic inequality, a question remains: will the Presidential candidates assume an innovative stance as opposed to recycling past policies? As was perhaps to be expected, most GOP candidates offered few new ideas in regards to economic strategy. Former Governor Romney hoped to limit the government’s involvement in schools and healthcare in order to promote competition so that the middle class receives better alternatives. Like most of his party, Romney believes wealth is not zero-sum, and that growth for the rich does not actually prevent growth for the middle class. Additionally, Senator McCain, who once opposed recent “skewed” tax cuts for the wealthy, now supports their permanent introduction, and thus supports past American economic mistakes.

There are those in the field who stray from the Reaganomics doctrine. This includes former Republican Governor Huckabee, who wishes to get rid of all income and payroll taxes in lieu of an encompassing sales tax over all services. Additionally, Democrats called for greater government involvement—and higher taxes on the America’s wealthy—in order to ensure that Americans are offered greater financial aid and universal health care. Senators Obama and Clinton also want to remove the tax-cuts for the wealthy in order to relieve the middle class. They aim to spend more government money on creating jobs rather than hoping that they might trickle down.

However, even these more liberal proposals, which encourage the government to take a much more active role in providing economic relief to those who need it, also incorporate Reaganomics’s tragic flaw. Just as Reaganomics assumed that American’s wealthiest

would undertake productive and responsible personal action in response to their tax relief, contemporary liberal plans do little to encourage Americans to act responsibly themselves. Unfortunately, under greater taxation, the wealthy might be inclined to more actively protect and hold on to their savings and less prone to act in a way that will help others, either through economic reinvestment and development or even charitable works.

Perhaps the answer to this problem can be found in America's past. As we now face a newer challenge of inequality, the solution appears the same as what was learned from Dr. King's success: an active government role combined with a new social outlook. Dr. King's accomplishments were just as much social as they were political: we are truly fortunate to now live in a society where treating minorities like second-class citizens warrants collective outcry. But it seems that in today's increasingly economically stratified society, there ought to be an equal outcry for the ongoing conspicuous conversion of America's majority middle class into a class of increasingly disadvantaged and progressively poorer Americans. Thus, America would likely be best

served by a leader who reminds us that we as society have a responsibility to uphold our founding principles and to oppose inequality—of any sort, whether institutionalized, economic, or otherwise.

In regards to addressing this problem politically, it is ultimately our prerogative within our own free institutions how much America will tolerate the economic manifestation of inequity. To those who argue that we may lose freedom at the expense of enhancing our equality, our institutions were designed to be flexible enough to provide for both. As the late President Lincoln famously misquotes, it is our constitutional right to be both "free and equal."

Some might say that America's upper class ought to be taxed more heavily in order to be held accountable for their failure to come through on the promise of Reaganomics. Perhaps it would be best for the country if an increased financial contribution by wealthy Americans ought to be viewed more as a responsibility than as a punishment. This seems possible if we again recommit to equality as a social value, as well as political priority. **



The Aesthetics of Revival

by Benno Nelson

.....

The recent production at the Court Theatre of Joe Orton's *What the Butler Saw* raised for me many questions about the means and merits of revivals. In the theatrical landscape of Chicago, revivals are everywhere. The Court, for instance, has dedicated itself exclusively to "classic theatre," and it is by no means alone. On any given night at the theater, one is more likely to see an old play than a new one. It is necessary, then, to understand what it means to produce an old play, and how it must be treated. The views expressed in this article will be dismissed by many as conservative, but I reject the pejorative connotations of the label. My program is rigorous and insistent on the widest diversity of theatrical experiences and the continued creation of new and vibrant plays. (For the sake of full disclosure, in the past four years I have been involved in the production of 14 plays, the most modern of which dates to about 1734.)

The production of *What the Butler Saw* and its director Sean Graney received varied but generally positive reviews from the major arts and news sources of Chicago. In fact, one of the few negative reviews centered mostly on the author's personal distaste for Joe Orton rather than on any feature of the production itself. Overall, the design was inspired: the antiseptic façade of clinical calm provided the perfect canvas on which insanity could splatter itself, jolting to life with the satisfaction of anticipation well-rewarded at every flower cut and every table overturned. The acting was evenly exceptional, particularly the ecstatic madness of Joe Foust and the doe-eyed desperation of Mechelle Moe. And despite all this, the show, though enjoyable, failed to reach its potential.

Sean Graney's direction, while laudable for providing the environment necessary for a cohesive and glittery production, seemed ultimately antagonistic to the play. Setting it in the modern day, rather than the play's contemporary 1960s England, allowed Graney to indulge in unmotivated and overwrought excursions through the Ridalin-added subconscious of the immediate

.....

Benno Nelson is a fourth year in the College, majoring in Classical Studies.

present. Dr. Rance's presumed fetish for robot masks and spaceships (wholly absent from the text) was unveiled as Elton John's "Rocketman" blasted from the speakers; the policeman, stripped, revealed an unmotivated and exhausting cat fixation—these additions obscured with bold brush the more pointed sexual revelations of principal characters Dr. and Mrs. Prentice. Graney seemed unconcerned also with the tireless pace and dazzling wit of Orton's style. He slowed to an accentuated crawl dialogue written for the snap of a wit and the quick sting of the rebuttal to follow.

All this, I am confident, was undertaken nobly with an eye toward "modernizing" the play and making it more palatable to an American audience of our present day. Unfortunately, ever intent on wresting from it some new meaning or hip relevance that the play itself is entirely unconcerned with, Graney missed its native excellence. *What the Butler Saw* is still dirty, still smart, still as fast and funny as when it was written. Barely forty years old, it deals with themes that the avant-garde of every generation for over a hundred years has taken credit for—it is accessible.

When we revive classic plays, we universally strive for the least interference toward the greatest intelligibility. If the play is foreign, we need to get it into English. Other aspects of the dramatic environment we leave uninterrupted because they are either essential to the piece, or at least convenient and delightful. We don't need to translate Shakespeare but we acknowledge his language offers many barriers to immediate comprehension. This is one of the better reasons we have to defend the contemporary necessity of transplanting Shakespeare's plays to any number of times and settings, or for forgiving the much worse habit of the winking, bucking, over-expression of every possible sexual pun. And even when such unmistakable linguistic barriers drop, there are always others, subtler and discreetly located but still challenging. Throw-away lines about obscure pop-culture figures: should these be changed, cut, or left to fall to a twitter? And how can we wrestle with impertinent themes or outdated styles?

It is appealing for these reasons to think of every revival as a kind of translation, but this flirts with missing the point of revivals in the first place. Indeed, why insist that a revival is a translation when it could be rather a journey into the realities and concerns of a *different* time? How marvelous, having arrived, to learn that these concerns are still my concerns, that I am not alone in the universe! Why, in theater, do we feel the need to bend the texts to us? We do not ask this of books or of films. We never ask why the Joads didn't take a plane to California. We can watch *Dr. Strangelove* and not lament its foreign Cold War paranoia. We don't remake it to our current tastes. Art worth revisiting is worth revisiting honestly and worth acknowledging for the author's intents and concerns. If these are seen as too foreign, or if anyone has an idea to position the piece in some entirely new way to render it more fresh and exciting for a new generation, he is welcome to write a new play. We should take as an example the recent *Merchant On Venice* produced at the Silk Road Theatre Company. The play has its own imperfections, certainly, but it strikes me at least as more honest about its deviation from its Shakespearean kernel than, say, Court's more recent *Titus Andronicus*. Theater has an illustrious history of telling stories everyone already knows; why incorporate homosexuality or Indian-Pakistani relations into Shakespeare's play when we can rather endow new circumstances with the weight and brilliance of the well-known tale?

By avoiding the analog of translation, we can also escape the translator's traumas. When translating Plautus or Molière for production, we must determine whether we are asking ourselves, if he were alive today in our country, *what would he write?* Or are we acknowledging the singularity and concrete existence of a piece of work and allowing it to live for its time again on stage—an ancient voice in present tense? This is not a simple question. In his production, Graney was insistent on the former. He wanted to put on the *What the Butler Saw* that Orton would have written had he been alive in the early Chicago winter of 2007. But he didn't succeed for the simplest reason: it wasn't good

enough. The textual changes were poor and noticeable—"Aunt Jemima Dolls," for instance, loses all the rhythm of "golliwog"—and the unscripted additions were meandering or asinine.

We have an incredible inheritance in the masterpieces of the past. But, let's never forget that options exist for an audience that wants well-written comedy tuned precisely for the contemporary ear, and the same is true for tragedy (consider Chicago's own Neo-Futurists and the iO Theater). Not least of all, sublimating the native desires of the expressions of past generations, while insisting on the necessity of dwelling on them, injures the present as mortally as it does the past. As long as we consider it legitimate to inject any contemporary theme or point of reference into weathered masterpieces we rob ourselves the chance of letting a new play do that talking.

Theater is activity in time; it is fleeting and to some degree impossible to recreate. When we do a revival we insist that the two dimensional map of the drama is so excellent or so popular that it is worth walking through again. Certainly, we are not bound to produce the show

exactly as it was originally done; this would never be fun and would rarely be interesting. We must produce shows that speak to our current circumstances as they honor their origin. We must draw out themes, arguments, characters, and ideas overlooked but extant in the dramas. But there must be something in the text sufficiently excellent to merit revisiting on its own

terms: characters, language, themes, plot, or comedy; the list is long. In Orton's case it is plot and comedy. The play is funny enough to warrant seeing again, and sufficiently unique in its comedy to merit being singled out and revived. So let the comedy alone. In every case it is the justification for revival that must be preserved. If the comedy is not funny enough as written, why produce it? Let it fade into obscurity. We are not required to perform old plays. The academics can have them to ruminate and footnote. But if it is worth producing again—and *What the Butler Saw* is; *Titus Andronicus* is—let it be worth producing honestly. **

.....

Art worth revisiting is
worth revisiting honestly
and worth acknowledging
for the author's intents
and concerns.

.....

The Hubris of David Simon

by Gabriel Cahn

“Americans are a stupid people. By and large we pretty much agree with whatever we are told.” This line from the new season of HBO’s *The Wire* sums up writer/producer David Simon’s view of modern America. In the fifth and final ten-episode season of *The Wire*, Simon has finally unleashed the bile built up over decades against his former employers at the *Baltimore Sun* and the American people who have systematically ignored the plight of America’s inner city. Sadly, like all truly all-consuming passions, his rage is hurting the very elements that made his show great: its unflinching honesty, its deeply flawed characters, and its tragic scope. The current season is the weakest entry in an epic exploration of America’s urban institutions embodied in the failures of Baltimore. It is a calamity for television that the greatest and most innovative show in decades is forced to end more weakly than it began.

The labyrinthine plot of the first four seasons of *The Wire* cannot be easily summarized in this limited space. But, let it be clear that I have nothing but admiration for almost every narrative decision of the first four seasons. David Simon successfully took his writing motto, schooled both by a twelve year career with the *Baltimore Sun* and two books on the inner city: “fuck the average reader,” and applied it to television. By refusing to dumb down the complexities and details of his backdrops (Baltimore’s drug trade, its longshoremen’s union, and its public schools), in each new season he crafted complex, vivid worlds that depicted the awful tribulations of institutional decay in America’s inner cities. By bringing writers like Ed Burns—both a Baltimore cop and an inner city teacher—to write about drug gangs and inner-city schools, he has stayed true to the realities of Baltimore.

But now Simon is attempting to examine his own former world, the newsroom of the *Baltimore Sun*. This new milieu has spawned few interesting characters and much didactic moralizing on the role of the press. Gus Haynes (Clark Johnson) the struggling City Editor is

more saintly than any character in *The Wire* deserves to be. He butts heads with his editors whom he claims become “tumescent” at the thought of a Pulitzer Prize, sacrificing good reporting for cute, pat, human-interest stories. As Haynes fights for a form of journalism that gets to the root of urban problems (something Simon also attempted to do before he retired) he is constantly stymied by lack of resources and uncommitted editors. He dispenses wisdom to younger reporters who must deal with the harsh realities of journalism in the days of the Internet and broadcast news, particularly, layoffs and cost cutting. One reporter’s turn to plagiarism (reminiscent of an actual plagiarism scandal at the *Baltimore Sun* in 2006, not to mention Jayson Blair and Stephen Glass) is shown as a result of heartless media corporations destroying great news organizations combined with personal ambition. Whether or not this is an accurate portrayal of the changes to our domestic media sources, it exhibits none of the moral urgency created by earlier plots. In other words, despite snappy dialogue in the newsroom, the plots surrounding the *Baltimore Sun* lack the gritty intensity and moral intricacy of his earlier work.

The other new plots in this season are the least compelling in the show’s dark history. Detective Jimmy McNulty (Dominic West) and Detective Lester Freamon (Clarke Peters) attempt to resurrect their wiretap investigation with a scheme so pulpy, even farcical, that it undercuts the stark realism that the show has strived to attain and keep. Even the return of the ever-popular shotgun-wielding Omar Little (Michael K. Williams) has yielded bloody gunfights more reminiscent of action films than the gritty low-level violence of past seasons. As the drug-dealing antagonist Marlo Stanfield (Jamie Hector) puts it, “Spiderman shit” has replaced interesting stories. Moreover, these plots rarely expand the complexities of the characters involved; instead they come dangerously close to the cop show conventions that Simon has so effectively combated in his past work.

.....
Gabriel Cahn is a second year in the College, majoring in History.

The brilliance of *The Wire* was always its ability to

maintain a clear moral picture of good and evil while never denying the complex, morally ambiguous motivations of its characters. It avoided relativism while still steering clear of sermonizing. This season wallows in simplistic moral messages about newspapers, crime, even Iraq. Old characters, like Nick Sobotka (Pablo Schrieber) are brought back just to hammer home brief moral points. Gus Haynes, Simon's clearest mouthpiece in the show's long history, is always able to simplify a situation to a moral punch line. The subtlety with which past seasons had brought the economic, social, and moral problems of the city to light is gone. Instead of bringing his moral outrage to a dramatic conclusion Simon seems to be dissipating his message by venting his spleen.

However, Simon's new season is not without its strengths. Indeed, the continuing vibrancy of Simon's world may make it the best show currently on air, even if it has declined (although Matthew Weiner's thought provoking drama *Mad Men* gives it a run for its money). Many of the characters and plotlines from earlier seasons remain strong and compelling. The continuing inner tumult of now-ex-junkie Bubbles (Andrew Royo) is one of the strongest acting jobs on a long running show. The struggles of Mayor Carcetti (Aiden Gillen) to balance his egoistic desire for the Governorship with his desire to improve Baltimore are continually fascinating. Perhaps the most heart wrenching drama is the continued transition of Michael Lee (Tristan Wilds) from middle school youngster to hardened drug enforcer. However, it is telling that the strongest elements of the show are holdovers from earlier plots. Simon has not been able to weave his old stories effectively into new settings in nearly as compelling a way as in the past.

.....

As the drug-dealing antagonist Marlo Stanfield puts it, “Spiderman shit” has replaced interesting stories.

.....

I must admit that I make these criticisms because I hold Simon to an unusually high standard. It is because he has created some of the most memorable characters, plots, and dialogue in the history of television that I find his failure so galling. It should not be his lot for his magnum opus to end on such a false note. An attempt must be made to understand his overreach. Simon tried to turn the show to look at world he himself inhabited

with the same searching anger with which he depicted the rest of Baltimore's failed institutions. However, by making an incredibly personal story the centerpiece of this new season he couldn't attain the narrative distance necessary to attain the moral subtlety that formerly animated *The Wire*.

Simon has said that he began his journalistic career wanting to emulate Woodward and Bernstein and grew to hate his paper; an institution that he believed was in decline. His personal hatred of two editors at the *Baltimore Sun*

was “fuel for ten years of my life.” Simon is a brilliant observer of the human condition and certainly understands the self-destructive tendencies of anger. This season, his most audacious and flawed act, fueled as it is by anger against the organization that has disappointed him most, is reminiscent of the failures of many of his major characters. Many of his show's protagonists, from McNulty to Major Bunny Colvin (Robert Wisdom), act out of anger and destroy themselves by taking on their own organizations. He would certainly understand the irony of his ire destroying his own life's work. Although even a weak season of *The Wire* is one of the most enjoyable experiences on television, I hope that writers return again and again to its last season to learn the dangers of allowing their anger, however righteous, to escape their artistic control. **

The World According to Paul Krugman

by Dmitri Leybman

.....

If genuine democracy requires, by definition, at least a rough equality of political influence or power among citizens in their attempts to control elites, then any significant economic inequality among citizens is an obstruction to democracy.... Because market systems produce inequality of income and wealth, they obstruct democracy. Q.E.D. That communist or other nonmarket systems also produce inequalities of income and wealth does not refute this conclusion.

—Charles E. Lindblom, *The Market System: What It Is, How It Works, and What to Make of It*

Paul Krugman is arguably the most famous and polarizing political columnist working in the United States today. A modern-day version of John K. Galbraith, Krugman is an unapologetically liberal economist in an academic discipline usually distrustful of government efficiency and effectiveness in the free market. If one were to search for an analogous propagator of economic principles and political ideology, one could do worse than name Milton Friedman. Both, after all, produced deeply influential work in their respective fields (Friedman in monetary policy; Krugman in international trade theory), both have written for a public audience without sacrificing their academic productivity, and most importantly, both were ideological figures who intertwined their scholarship with their own political ideals. Where Friedman put his faith in Capitalism and Freedom (to cite the title of his 1962 bestseller), Krugman is more skeptical of the free market, preferring to temper its efficiency with government policies designed to reduce social and political inequality.

Before the *New York Times* offered Krugman a position as an op-ed columnist in 1999, Krugman's output had been largely confined to *Slate* and *Fortune Magazine*, with some contributions to *New York Times Magazine*, *Mother Jones*, and *Financial Times*, to name just a few. Judging from his previous writing, the *Times* imagined they were hiring a center-left economist with impeccable academic credentials, an already wide readership, and an ability to convey a sophisticated understanding of economic issues in entertaining, well-polished prose. Most importantly, when his first article appeared in January 2000, Bush was still a "compassionate conser-

vative," the country's economic prospects were good, and 9/11 had yet to occur. Once the decade was underway, the relative serenity and bustling boom of the nineties were replaced by an increasingly polarized electorate, an unpopular war in Iraq, terrorist threats, the bursting of bubbles in the Internet sector and in housing markets, and lower consumer confidence.

Krugman's writing has changed too. His recently published book *The Conscience of a Liberal* is the argument of an economist who has turned to history to explain political dynamics. The book's title alludes to Barry Goldwater's 1960s work, *The Conscience of a Conservative*, which galvanized the burgeoning conservative movement whose political ideals continue to play a prominent role in American culture. Krugman's intention is to do the same for "liberalism," a word that has become a political epithet. *The Conscience of a Liberal* examines the growing political polarization occurring in the United States. Contrary to mainstream economic thought, Krugman disagrees that the rise in income inequality can be explained by technological change, immigration (a factor most economists don't even take seriously anymore), or the outsourcing of jobs. Most important, Krugman argues, are the normative and structural changes that have occurred in the United States since the 1970s. The rest of the book is his attempt to explain how a rising coalition of "movement conservatives" use racial rhetoric to divide the electorate even as they simultaneously enact fiscal policies designed to turn back the clock, pushing the country back into a New Gilded Age.

Krugman's analysis is controversial. As Krugman reminds us, economists tend to believe politics follows economics, not the other way around. When economists look at the current growth in inequality, the

.....

Dmitri Leybman is a third year in the College, majoring in Political Science and English.

usual explanations cited minimize the importance of cultural and political change in favor of quantifiable factors that tie in with economic theory. For example, if it were cheaper to manufacture a good in China, rather than in the United States, almost any profit-maximizing firm would seize the opportunity to accentuate the amount of money it could make from its product. Because manufacturing jobs were the first outsourced jobs, it should not be surprising to find that employment levels and wages in those industry have declined to keep them competitive with foreign competition. Skill-intensive jobs, the kind that require college training and long-term human capital investment, are the ones that will be more valuable on the job market because there are fewer substitutes to it in other foreign countries.

Krugman suggests far more malicious forces in play. Since the 1970s, a growing movement of radically reactionary conservatives has overtaken the leadership of the Republican Party. This movement is led by manipulative figure-heads with radical ideals for the country, ideals that would overturn the progress made by the New Deal enacted by Roosevelt in the 1930s. What economists see as the inexorable workings of the market, Krugman sees as a massive overhaul of progressive public policy threatening the basic egalitarian ideals of democracy. As the quote at the top page makes clear, free market interactions are not moral or immoral; rather the market's behavior allocates resources efficiently without any thought to the equality among citizens that liberal democracies demand.



One of the problems with his argument is his inability to explain whether the correlation between vast economic change and a radical shift in Republican ideology can be used to explain the causality of rising incomes. Another problem is his inability to persua-

sively counter explanations by University of Chicago Professors Kevin M. Murphy and Gary S. Becker, among a variety of others. Murphy's careful work explained the changes in income from the very same persuasive perspective that Krugman denies: namely that importing of manufacturing goods has forced lay-offs and lower wages.

Since income inequality can be antithetical to democratic participation, Krugman's attack on mainstream economic thought does deserve attention and analysis. And it seems as though some economists are coming to agree with his position. For example, economists Emmanuel Saez and Thomas Piketty have studied long-term data on incomes in the United States, finding possible explanations for rising inequality in wages because of institutional norms and political changes. The idea that the Republican Party has shifted in ideology has had many proponents even before Krugman laid it out in this book. It's not an original contribution, especially because he carelessly overlooks the intricate interactions between both Republicans and Democrats in their own transformations. In other words, the book's perspective on history is so biased, so narrow-minded, so self-important, that balance is completely omitted. In the process, Krugman damages any authority his analysis might have for the reader.

But it would be misguided to dismiss the book's importance. It is full of ideas, misguided or not, that need to be debated and understood if the strength of our government is to be preserved. When economists talk about economics, political factors are too often absent from their series of equations, utility functions, supply and demand curves. Their absence is for a good reason: politics simply can't be quantified in terms economists are used to employing. But not everything that matters can be counted. And in economics, perhaps it is we who have been overlooking the essential political components shaping our economic destinies. **

Sources

The Open Possibilities of Dostoevsky's Diary

Dostoevsky, Fyodor, trans. Kenneth Lantz. *A Writer's Diary: Volume 1, 1873-1876*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1993.

———, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky. *The Brothers Karamazov*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002.

Frank, Joseph. "Dostoevsky: The Encounter with Europe." *Russian Review*, 22.3 (Jul 1963): 237–252.

Fueloep-Miller, Rene. "Dostoevsky's Literary Reputation." *Russian Review*, 10.1 (Jan 1951): 46–54.

Morson, Gary Saul. *Boundaries of Genre*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988.

Murav, Harriet. *Russia's Legal Fictions*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998.

Teacher of Evil? Not Quite

Burnyeat, M.F. "Sphinx without a Secret." *New York Review of Books* 32, no. 9 (1985).

Drury, Shadia B. *The Political Ideas of Leo Strauss*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988.

Lilla, Mark. "The Closing of the Straussian Mind." *New York Review of Books*, November 4, 2004.

———. "Leo Strauss: The European." *New York Review of Books*, October 21, 2004.

Sabine, George Holland. *A History of Political Theory*. New York: H. Holt and Co., 1937.

Beyond the Political: the Other Orhan Pamuk

Pamuk, Orhan. *My Name Is Red*. New York: Vintage Press, 2002.

———. *Other Colors: Essays and a Story*. New York: Knopf, 2007.

———. *Snow*. New York: Vintage Press, 2005.

Table of Contents

- 1 **Right Cause, Wrong Rhetoric?**
Ellie Poston
Activists at a meeting of the London School of Economics Student Union inadvertently illustrate the deep significance of language as employed for political ends
- 4 **The Open Possibilities of Dostoevsky's Diary**
Elliot Hasdan
Dostoevsky's Writer's Diary, initially released as a pioneering fanciful serial to which readers subscribed, represents an early hybrid of literary forms that still fascinates
- 7 **Teacher of Evil? Not Quite**
Aaron B. Roberts
An interview with Professors Catherine and Michael Zuckert on the polarizing, stubbornly relevant subject of their recent book, The Truth About Leo Strauss
- 10 **UChicago: the Life of the Mind (Bowed to the Yoke)**
Adwait Parker and Aaron Greenberg
The American college experience has become dangerously defined by a marketplace mentality rooted in consumerism that effectively serves nobody
- 13 **Beyond the Political: the Other Orhan Pamuk**
Andrew Hamilton
The masterful Turkish writer who won the 2006 Nobel Prize for Literature has managed to subtly craft a double identity
- 16 **More Than a Campaign Promise: Making Economic Equality a Social Priority**
Bryan Duff
If they truly embrace the American commitment to equality, the presidential candidates must also confront our increasingly serious need for economic reform
- 19 **The Aesthetics of Revival**
Benno Nelson
In reviving theatrical productions with an eye towards contemporary relevance, directors perform a disservice to the plays and their new audience
- 21 **The Hubris of David Simon**
Gabriel Cahn
Wire producer David Simon's blistering revenge against the Baltimore Sun has found an unintentional victim: the final season of his award-winning series
- 23 **The World According to Paul Krugman**
Dmitri Leybman
The maverick economist Paul Krugman analyzes the political forces shaping modern American income inequality in his new book, The Conscience of a Liberal
- 25 **Sources**

Photographs by Bobby Zacharias