The New Sheriffs Of Wall Street

The women charged with cleaning up the mess

BY MICHAEL SCHERER

Elizabeth Warren, Mary Schapiro and Sheila Bair
My Diamond Dream

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Romantic moment Forever love
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LETTERS
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A few weeks back, at an event to celebrate the role of women in finance, Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner tried to get things started with a joke. He said he had recently come across a headline that asked, "What If Women Ran Wall Street?"

"Now that's an excellent question, but it's kind of a low bar," Geithner continued, deadpan amid rising laughter. "How, you might ask, could women not have done better?"

It is rarely noted that the financial wreckage littering our world is the creation, almost exclusively, of men, not women. And no wonder: to this day, each of the large banks, from Citigroup to Goldman Sachs, employs fewer than a handful of women in senior positions, and only 3% of Fortune 500 companies have a woman as CEO. Embarrassing tales of a testosterone-filled trading culture tumbled out of the what-went-wrong probes as the Great Recession took hold.

In itself, Geithner's joke was not extraordinary for Washington, where self-deprecating fare is the norm. But what happened next drove home a deeper point: the lectern in the marbled hall at the U.S. Treasury known as the Cash Room was cleared away so that a panel of women could take their seats. Among them was Sheila Bair, the chair of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) and one of the first federal regulators to publicly sound the alarm about the collapse three years ago. She sat next to Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) chair Mary Schapiro, the first woman to hold that post and the deciding vote to initiate the agency's recent lawsuit against Goldman Sachs. Across the stage sat Elizabeth Warren, chair of the panel bird-dogging the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) bank bailout and the chief advocate for new consumer-finance regulations that banks and their allies have
spent millions to oppose. Suddenly, something else became clear: these women may not run Wall Street, but in this new era, they are telling Wall Street how to clean up its act.

The same is true all over Washington: three of the five SEC commissioners are women; the head of the White House Council of Economic Advisers is a mother of three; and in the Senate, women have been leading the charge for tougher regulations. Arkansas Senator Blanche Lincoln stunned the banks in April with tough derivatives regulations that she announced in a letter to a small group of mostly female Senators, who fought beside her to include the language in a final bill.

Unlike many of the men they oversee, the new sheriffs of Wall Street never aspired to eight-figure compensation packages or corporate suites. Bair, Schapiro and Warren all made their careers far from Manhattan, taking on new jobs during pregnancies and outhustling the men around them. But it is their willingness to break ranks and challenge the status quo that makes these increasingly powerful women different from their predecessors. As Washington gets down to the hard work of putting laws into place that are designed to prevent another crisis, they are shaping the way government will protect investors and consumers for the next generation. Under financial regulatory reform, which all three women support, both the SEC and the FDIC stand to win powerful new authority to limit and dismantle offenders. The Consumer Financial Protection Agency, a proposed body now working its way through the Senate, is the brainchild of Warren and is envisioned as a bulwark against what she calls the "tricks and traps" that banks hide in credit-card agreements and mortgages.

"Let's face it, women in the financial-services industry are outsiders," explains Warren when asked what unites her with Schapiro and Bair. "You see the world from a different point of view." Bair agrees. "There is a tendency — with some, not all — to value us less, whether it's our opinion or our work product," she says.

That's an attitude Wall Street's traders and their bosses would be wise to start shorting — and fast.

The Bank Examiner

Sheila Bair's Washington office overlooks Barack Obama's new White House basketball court, but her agency's roots reach back more than 70 years, to Franklin Roosevelt's days. The FDIC was created by Congress over the objections of the nation's biggest bankers in the 1930s so that the government would have the power to take over poorly run banks and safeguard the nest eggs of depositors. Banks have been delighted to slap that recognizable gold-and-black FDIC guarantee on their branch doors ever since, as long as the little New Deal agency doesn't meddle too much in their business.

Bair had hardly been named to the FDIC post by George W. Bush in 2006 when aides alerted her to a dangerous disintegration of lending standards across the banking industry — loans with hidden fees, poor documentation and explosive adjustable rates. Even though the regulation of these standards was the primary responsibility of the Federal Reserve, Bair authorized her staff to purchase a large industry database to confirm their suspicions. "It was just amazing to us what we saw," she says.

She began meeting with the banks, urging them privately in the spring of 2007 to renegotiate entire categories of loans to avoid massive foreclosures that could erode home values. The banks balked, so Bair went public. "We have a huge problem on our hands," she told bankers at a conference on Oct. 4 of
that year. The response was hostile. "They were shocked and horrified," she says now. "I thought they were going to throw tomatoes at me."

Of course, Bair was right about the coming crisis: by the end of 2008, 25 banks had become insolvent and were taken over by the FDIC, including Washington Mutual, the largest bank to collapse in U.S. history. By the end of 2009, 140 more banks had failed. In private meetings with other regulators, Bair continued to hold a more populist line. She pushed her own plan for foreclosure prevention, resisted a proposal for the FDIC to backstop all bank debt and effectively bail out unsecured bondholders and clashed regularly with colleagues who held closer Wall Street ties, including then Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Geithner, who was running the New York Federal Reserve. Bair says now that much of the tension could have been avoided. "We generally worked well together, but there were times when I felt the guys kind of got in a room and made a decision and then called me in," she explains. "And when I would ask questions or push back, I was being 'difficult.'"

The ugly days of late 2008 were strewn with moments when Bair was criticized both privately and in the press for saying what others would not. On Sept. 9, Bair decided that she had to call the CEO of Washington Mutual to warn him of a disagreement over the bank's ratings. When John Reich, the head of that bank's primary regulator, the Office of Thrift Supervision, found out about the call, he e-mailed one of his male colleagues, writing, "I cannot believe the continuing audacity of this woman."

For Bair, such challenges are nothing new. She was born in Independence, Kans., the daughter of a Depression-era surgeon and a nurse who always shunned debt. In 1981 she went to Washington to work for Republican Senator Bob Dole, who became her most important mentor. "She was available 24/7," Dole says, with a clear sense of pride. "As my wife will tell you, more is expected of women." In 1990, Dole encouraged Bair to run for an open House seat in Kansas. She ran as a pro-choice Republican and lost narrowly. "Senator Dole told me the reason I lost was because I was a woman and I was unmarried," Bair recounted in May 2009, on accepting an award at Harvard University. "That made me all the more determined to take on new challenges."

That she has done. This year Bair's agency has quietly taken over 68 more banks, though she believes the wave of failures will peak in 2010. She is pushing Congress to place her agency in charge of liquidating nonbank financial firms like insurance companies, which proved to be the source of huge systemic dangers during the collapse. If she succeeds, she says she would be happy to leave when her term expires in 2011. The author of two children's books, she has already begun to think about her memoirs. "When I write my book, that should be the title," she quips. "The Audacity of This Woman."

The Consumer Activist

Like Bair, Elizabeth Warren comes from the central plains. She was born and raised in Norman, Okla., with three older brothers and a fierce competitive streak to match. She was the state's top debater at 16; at 19, she was married; at 22, she had her first child. She enrolled in law school at Rutgers and two years later went to work as one of two female summer associates at the oldest continuing law firm on Wall Street. She says, "I still remember one of the partners taking me aside and saying, 'You know, being a summer associate is all well and good, but take a deep breath. Try to figure out if you think these guys are ever going to make a woman partner.'"
Just as she remembers his words, she remembers the brushback stirring her competitive juices. "It made me think, I can do that." But her career led elsewhere, into bankruptcy law. In 1978, Congress passed a revamped bankruptcy code, making it easier for businesses and individuals to start anew. Warren was teaching law at the time in Houston and decided to investigate, initially expecting to find that the system was filled with sleazy debtors. She found instead that most bankruptcies resulted from job loss or illness at home, a situation made worse by banks that were increasingly learning to trap people in costly debt cycles.

How? Partly by just confusing them. "For Bank of America's credit card in 1980, the agreement was 700 words long," she says. "The average credit-card agreement by the mid-2000s was 30 pages long, and it was loaded with 'double-cycle billing' and 'LIBOR-linked' — terms no one understood." The effect, Warren concluded, was akin to predation, not just for those with bad credit but for the entire middle class, which she felt was being hollowed out by agreements many of its members didn't understand. Over time, her academic work began to spill over into activism. She appeared on Dr. Phil, giving financial advice to young families; met with bank executives; and with her daughter Amelia wrote a nonacademic book called The Two-Income Trap, which Barack Obama cited before his run for President.

A couple of months after Lehman Brothers collapsed in 2008, she was preparing a barbecue for her students at Harvard Law when the phone rang. "He's saying, 'This is Harry Reid,' " Warren remembers. "Who?" As part of the final wheeling and dealing that led to the passage of the $700?billion TARP, Congress demanded an oversight board. Reid asked Warren to skipper it.

Since then, Warren has wielded her clout like a cudgel, releasing monthly reports demanding more information from Treasury, better investment returns from the banks and greater efforts to help borrowers. Warren's relations with Treasury officials and the banks have often been strained, sometimes by the harshness of her panel's critiques. She remembers talking in early 2009 with an official on Capitol Hill — she won't say whom — who told her point-blank, "That's not what reports are supposed to look like." She asked, "Why not?" The reply: "The language is far too direct."

At about the same time, President Obama decided to adopt another of Warren's ideas, from a 2007 academic article: a new Consumer Financial Protection Agency that would be devoted to protecting customers from tricky financial products. Bair and Schapiro voiced their support for the agency, even as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce promptly announced a willingness to spend "whatever it takes" to defeat the proposal. At least $3 million in advertising later, the chamber's effort has had only marginal success, though the fight continues in the Senate.

In the meantime, Warren has become something of a public intellectual, always game for interviews with Jon Stewart, Charlie Rose and Bill Maher. Her rising fame has come with added pressure. "It gets me deeply anxious," she says. "Here's this one brief minute, just like the one minute on Dr. Phil. Will I say the thing that needs to be said? Will I get it right? Will Congress make the changes they need to make?" The longer the odds, it seems, the more determined she is to succeed.

The Turnaround Artist
Taped to the door of Mary Schapiro's office on the top floor of the SEC building is a piece of paper that
reads, "How Does It Help Investors?" The maxim is meant not just as a lodestar for her agency but also as a repudiation of its recent past.

Schapiro was appointed to a first stint at the SEC in 1988, to fill what she said was called its "woman's seat." When President Obama picked her as the commission's chair in 2009, the agency was on its heels, stung for missing Bernie Madoff's Ponzi scheme and embarrassed by news reports that senior officials had used their work computers to view pornography. "The world really changed around the SEC, and I think the SEC didn't change with it," she says now, somewhat diplomatically. When she arrived at the agency, she was far more direct. "I've been called the Muammar Gaddafi of regulation," she told a reporter.

In her first year, Schapiro has added staff, restarted an in-house think tank to mine data for systemic risk and initiated rulemaking to rein in arcane trading practices that had given large institutions advantages over individual investors. She did away with a rule that forced SEC investigators to get commission approval before proceeding with a case or negotiating settlements. Enforcement actions are up, as are fine collections, and in April she cast the deciding vote to bring charges against Goldman Sachs for alleged fraud — charges that have shaken the entire banking industry. To top off her first year, she also put out word to her staff: Anyone caught viewing porn at work would be "subject to termination." "You could call her a turnaround artist," says Elisse Walter, an SEC commissioner.

Born to a college librarian and an antiques dealer near Long Island's Great South Bay, Schapiro played three sports in high school and several more in college. Her academic focus at Franklin and Marshall College was the native culture of the Trobriand Islands off New Guinea. She started working as a lawyer at the Commodity Futures Trading Commission in 1980, just after the Hunt brothers had illegally tried to corner the global silver market. "I think it was the anthropologist in me that was fascinated by this idea that people thought they could control a world commodity," she recalls. "Here they were, causing extraordinary pain to lots of people."

In 1994, Robert Rubin, then President Clinton's economic czar, tapped Schapiro, then nine months pregnant, to take over the CFTC. Upon arriving, Schapiro promptly refused a request by Chicago traders to be exempted from federal regulations. Tom Donovan, then the head of the Chicago Board of Trade, struck back, announcing that he would not be "intimidated by some blond, 5-ft. 2-in. girl." Schapiro responded by telling a reporter, "I'm 5 ft. 5."

*Sisterhood Is Powerful*

In the mid-1990s, Schapiro was invited to Chicago to address a convention of commodities-and-derivatives traders. "Talk about a male-dominated industry," she recalls. "And standing up there, giving my maiden speech and searching the audience for just one or two women I could focus on, thinking there would be some empathy for the position I was in." The face she lighted on belonged to Bair, a fellow regulator and colleague who knew exactly what she was going through. "My favorite is when you are at a meeting and you say something, and it's just dead silence," Bair says. "Fifteen minutes later, some guy says exactly the same thing, and everybody is nodding their head."

All three women know these experiences, but they all have also noticed something else. "There are lots more women at the table now," Schapiro says. And the women have learned how to work together better.
Like Angel's Wings I am happy in the past across,
I will leave bright memory with you
Leaves will go where the wind a lone gull flew
across the sky Only left the sky in a beautiful
Like Angel's Wings I am happy in the past across,
I will leave bright memory with you
Around Washington, women call this "amplification," the extra juice that comes when powerful figures join forces to speak up against entrenched interests. As chairs of their commissions, both Bair and Schapiro have independently consulted with Warren in recent months for advice on consumer rights. They have largely spoken with a united voice on financial reform, and when they gathered in late April for a TIME photo shoot, they promptly huddled to strategize on arguments to head off bank lobbyists’ efforts against the new derivatives regulation moving through the Senate. The measure, believed to be dead a few months ago, now looks likely to pass by the end of the month. The only question is whether it will have the teeth to prevent a repeat of the crisis of 2008. "Do you know how many little changes could be made in that statute to just cut the legs out from underneath it?" Warren asks.

There is something else that all three share, an experience that can happen on the street, in line at the airport, in the supermarket. Women will approach them, even though they don't have famous faces, to shake their hands, to thank them, to ask if they will take a photograph with young daughters or sons. "That's a powerful thing," says Schapiro. "I've had people lean out of car windows and yell, 'Keep it up, Elizabeth,'" adds Warren. "I can't go out in my sweats anymore," says Bair.

Those chance encounters mean that Tim Geithner isn't alone in asking the question, What if women, not men, were the real powers on Wall Street? With the arrival of Bair, Schapiro and Warren, we are finally getting an answer.
Risk Inverse: The Third World Is Now a Better Bet

By ZACHARY KARABELL Monday, May 24, 2010

The unfolding drama of the Greek economy has roiled markets and awakened fears of global economic calamity that had been dormant for more than a year. The $1 trillion rescue package assembled by the European Union and the International Monetary Fund may be enough to keep the Greek disease from infecting Spain, Portugal, Ireland and other overleveraged European countries. But the events of the past weeks echo the lessons of the near global meltdown of late 2008 and early 2009: the world is indeed a risky place, although not in the places most people think of as risky. The global economy is indeed riddled with problems, but not in the places most people think of as problems.

For most of the past 40 to 50 years, the world has been divided in various ways: communist and capitalist, democratic and authoritarian, West and East, First World and Third World, and developed economies and emerging economies. When it came to business and investing, the First World — the Western world and the developed world — was seen as secure, stable and capital-rich, while the Third World and the emerging economies were seen as unstable, capital-poor and highly risky. Think of the much heralded and much needed bailout of the Mexican peso in 1994, the contagion of currency devaluations that started in Asia in 1997 or the periodic hyperinflation that has plagued Argentina.

The crises of the past two years, however, stemmed not from the risky parts of the world but from the supposedly safe havens of the U.S. and the euro zone. Risk is no longer over there; it's here. It isn't in exotic parts of the world; it's in the cradle of Western civilization. In the fall of 2008, it wasn't oil shocks in the Middle East that triggered the meltdown; it was subdivisions in Phoenix and financial wizardry on Wall Street. In the 1970s, sovereign-debt defaults in Latin America hit Citibank hard; in the past two years, the near default of Citi rocked Latin America.

Investors haven't adjusted to this new reality, though. Rates on emerging-market bonds — a good proxy for how much risk investors perceive there to be — from countries like Brazil are more or less on par with the rates charged on Greek and Spanish debt. And the latter two are dead broke. American pension
plans, which have every incentive to reduce their risk, allocate on average only 2.1% of their portfolios to emerging-market debt, compared with double digits for U.S. and European debt.

Or take the continued misreading of China's economy. Before 2008, it was commonly assumed that the Chinese banking sector would bring that economy to a halt — either in a soft landing, as the loans were written off and the government recapitalized those banks, or in a hard landing, when the banking sector imploded. Turns out Chinese banks weren't the problem; American and European banks were. It wasn't China's nonperforming loans that should have caused anxiety; it was ours.

Today it is the Asian, Brazilian and Indian banks that are well capitalized and run conservatively. Yes, China's banks are chock-full of sketchy loans, but many of those are government-backed, meant to finance an industrial build-out that is key to economic growth. They are less like bad loans and more like government expenditures, and unlike the social handouts of Greece and the E.U., those expenditures are going into infrastructure and investment rather than just consumption. Look around the world and you will see growth and capital discipline born of hard experience in those places still associated with risk; you will see capital profligacy and anemic growth in those parts of the world still seen as safe.

Granted, some of this is human nature. People everywhere suffer from home-country bias — the belief that one's own society is safer and more comprehensible than others'. Investors tend to put more money in local stocks and bonds. But for the first time, home-country bias makes sense if you're in Brazil or India or China or dozens of other regions. And it makes much less sense if you're American or European. Although world stock markets are down this year more than U.S. and European ones, that is largely because big institutions in America and Europe have been selling non-U.S. assets to bolster their balance sheets and average investors have remained skittish about a risky world beyond their borders. In short, while the reality of risk has shifted dramatically, the perception of it hasn't.

The Great Recession, so great in the West, is the Great Emergence for the rest, and risk has moved from far away to uncomfortably close. Our compass is broken, and our desire for safety is leading to ever greater risk. We need to understand that new reality, and quickly.

Karabell is the president of River Twice Research and a co-author of the forthcoming book Sustainable Excellence
It is one of the grand and glorious traditions of American politics that traitorous behavior is cloaked in principle and indignation. Ronald Reagan, famously, didn't leave the Democratic Party in the 1950s. The Democratic Party left him. Ever since, the Reagan formulation has been the ironclad rule for party switchers. And it would have been perfect for Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter, a Republican whose prickly moderation — and proud pork barreling — had become decidedly aberrant among Republicans. After five cholesterol-laden terms in office, Specter was facing a prohibitive primary challenge from a right-wing ideologue named Pat Toomey. He was also in an excellent position to make a deal: his vote would secure passage for both Barack Obama's stimulus package and his health care plan. And so, convinced of his indispensability, Specter dispensed with the Reagan camouflage. He told a starker version of the truth: "My change in parties," he said, "will enable me to be re-elected."

But candor is rarely rewarded in politics, especially when it is self-aggrandizing. Specter's invited the question, Is that the only reason you decided to become a Democrat? It also invited a primary challenge from an actual Democrat — an estimable one, Congressman Joe Sestak, a former three-star admiral who, in 2006, became the highest-ranking former naval officer to serve in the House of Representatives.

I covered Sestak's 2006 House race and was impressed. He was a long shot, a relative unknown running against a 10-term Republican named Curt Weldon, also famed for bringing home the bacon. When it became known that Weldon was stuffing his own pantry — yet another congressional Republican caught up in scandal that year — Sestak's victory became inevitable. But he made a clever argument along the way, about how life in the military had made him a Democrat: the sense of community and responsibility, the incredible social benefits — education (he received a doctorate from Harvard's Kennedy School), retirement, health care. When his daughter Alex was diagnosed with brain cancer (she has survived and is a lovely, exuberant girl), Sestak became a man on a universal health care mission.

Sestak was a long shot in the Senate race too. He wasn't known outside his district in the Philadelphia suburbs. Specter was an institution, with support from the state and national party establishment — and
from special interests like the labor unions, which had always benefited from his Appropriations Committee porkification. "When our community was devastated by Hurricane Ivan," says Jim Burn, the Allegheny County Democratic chair, "President Bush and a bunch of public officials landed in a helicopter, surveyed the damage and then took off. Specter was the only one who stayed. He got us through that disaster. How can we toss away his 30 years of seniority?"

Pennsylvania is an old-fashioned sort of state. Its Democrats tend to be union laborers, Catholics and urban minorities well organized by big-city machines. It is the sort of party in which Specter's decisive vote on the stimulus package is something to be bragged about — the antithesis of Tea Party America. But it is not immune to the fierce political winds blowing in the country. This is not a good year for incumbents — and Specter, at age 80, the survivor of two bouts with cancer and heart surgery, has come to the point where he seems more geriatric than old-fashioned. "My rank and file likes Sestak," a labor leader told me. "Specter just seems old."

And Sestak has made him seem older with a nimble, counterpunching ad campaign that turned the race around in a two-week period at the beginning of May. Specter made the initial mistake of attacking Sestak's military record: after a sterling career, the admiral had been sacked from a top naval planning job. (Sestak was known to be a very demanding boss and, according to military sources, was responsible for bad morale in the planning shop.)

Sestak responded with an effective ad featuring veterans defending him and slamming Specter for swift-boating his record. And then he landed a real haymaker, an ad featuring Specter's immortal gaffe about switching parties, followed by footage of George W. Bush touting Specter as "someone I can count on." Specter's response was a tepid endorsement ad from Obama, which seemed a sour echo of the Bush endorsement. With days to go before the election, Sestak slipped ahead in the daily tracking polls.

A week before the May 18 election, Specter visited Pittsburgh and spoke to the Allegheny County Democratic Party. It was a sad, disjointed speech, a series of stale jokes that didn't go over and promises of pork that were cheered. But the substance, such as it was, was overwhelmed by another Specter gaffe. At both the beginning and the end of the speech, the Senator thanked the "Allegheny County Republican Party." In the end, it seemed that Arlen Specter might have left the Republican Party, but the Republican Party hadn't left him.
The woman seated next to me on the plane told me her name was Stefanie but that she went by Adventure Girl. This was a moment I had been prepared for since I got married, thanks to Hall and Oates. But it turned out, I discovered without asking, that Adventure Girl was just her Twitter name. It also turned out that she had 1.5 million followers. Eventually, I told her that I too am on Twitter and waited for her to ask how many followers I have. When I told her I have more than a million, her eyes got wide, and she leaned in, listening closely. This, I realized, must be what it's like to have money.

Then Adventure Girl asked me what my brand was. No one had ever asked me that before. "My brand used to be 'Finding the adventure girl in you,'" she said. "Now it's 'Living life's adventures.'" After a career as a model for tool companies and as a freelance writer, she became "funemployed" in 2009 and trademarked the name Adventure Girl™. Now she's paid for speaking gigs, for public appearances and by the Cherry Marketing Institute to brand cherries as a natural cure for jet lag. Meanwhile, I was running around yelling random stuff like a brandless idiot, sleeping in and paying for my cherries.

So Adventure Girl™ tried to help me find my brand. She started by asking me what my passion was. Now I didn't have two things. "Until you figure out what gets you up in the morning, you're throwing money away," she said. I had no idea I was already throwing money away on this. I was getting scared.

Back at home with my baby and lovely wife Cassandra, I realized that I was sometimes funny, sometimes serious and a lot of the time staring at the television. This was not a brand. So I called Adventure Girl™, who was in Rwanda giving the tourism authority advice on rebranding the country as a tourist destination instead of a genocide destination. She had already come up with an angle: "The Switzerland of the
African countries. It's incredibly clean. There isn't a paper on the ground." If it was this easy for Rwanda, I was sure I could do it too.

Adventure Girl™ suggested I ask my Twitter followers and Facebook friends to help me find my brand. This, it turns out, was not a good idea. Many people thought I was looking to create a line of products to sell, and one woman suggested toilet-seat covers with people's faces on them, like Sarah Palin's. Another guy came up with "Joel the Mole." The nicest observations anyone made involved the words snark and self-deprecating. I hope for Rwanda's sake that it didn't try the same experiment.

I called Sandra Carreon-John, senior vice president at M&C Saatchi, the advertising and public relations firm that handles Coke and Reebok, for advice. She thought I needed a handle, like Bill Simmons' Sports Guy or Howard Stern's King of All Media. We came up with the Sultan of Snark™, since we both felt sultan is way underused. If I branded myself correctly, I'd soon be selling a line of Sultan of Snark™ T-shirts, hats and key chains that said things like "Yeah ... in 1997!?" The first step, Carreon-John said, was to call myself the Sultan of Snark™ a few times. Once the Sultan of Snark™ had done that, the Sultan of Snark™ should try to get other people to call the Sultan of Snark™ that too. "Insult someone on Fox, like Bill O'Reilly, so he'll say, 'The Sultan of Snark™ talked about me in his column,'" she said. The Sultan of Snark™, I let her know, has no interest in starting a fake fight with a balding, jowly gerbil whose job has been reduced to wiping Glenn Beck's whiteboards.

To get my brand out there, I consulted Amy Jo Martin, whose company, Digital Royalty, creates social-media strategies to increase the reach of people like Shaquille O'Neal. Martin wanted to define my brand further and asked me to describe myself. I told her I was lazy, self-involved and sexually frustrated. Martin, who is very good at her job, turned "lazy" into "needing stimulation," which she then turned into "dynamic" and finally "rock star." She transformed "self-involved" into "open." Starting to get it, I suggested that "sexually frustrated" is really just "sexy." "I think the first two for sure," she said.

By the end of our conversation, Martin had convinced me that in the age of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr, putting out an exaggerated version of your personality is necessary. Sure, we want the people in our lives to have a full understanding of us, but controlling our shorthand is a good idea. It's like our superhero costumes, only not necessarily supergay. If you don't give your brand some thought, you become the guy whose funeral is all about how much he loved the Mets. "A funeral is the ultimate brand evaluation," Martin said. Luckily, it's not hard to find a rabbi who is into snark.
Here we go again. As soon as President Obama nominated Elena Kagan to the Supreme Court, Senate Democrats predicted an easy confirmation while Republicans hedged their bets. Calling Kagan's background “thin for this position,” Senator Jeff Sessions, the ranking Republican on the Senate Judiciary Committee, suggested that the antigovernment sentiments of the Tea Party movement will affect the atmosphere in which Kagan faces the Senate. In a preview of the Republican playbook, Sessions added that Kagan would have to “explain” to the American people why, as dean of Harvard Law School, she briefly barred the military from recruiting through the law school's office of career services and supported a legal dispute over the Pentagon's policy on gays in the military.

If Republicans were already trying to paint Kagan as too liberal, some Democrats wondered whether she might be too centrist. "Why do the conservatives always get the conservatives but we don't get to get the liberals [on the Supreme Court]," Iowa Democratic Senator Tom Harkin complained to Politico before Kagan was nominated.

President Obama, however, betrayed no concern about critics on the right and the left. In his nomination announcement on May 10, he seemed to describe Kagan very much as he'd describe himself: as someone who can build bridges between liberals and conservatives. He noted that at every stage of Kagan's career — as legal scholar, Clinton domestic-policy adviser, Harvard Law School dean and Solicitor General — she had earned respect for "her openness to a broad array of viewpoints; her habit, to borrow a phrase from Justice [John Paul] Stevens, 'of understanding before disagreeing'; her fair-mindedness and skill as a consensus builder."

Obama seems to feel that Kagan's inclination to find common ground between liberals and conservatives will equip her to achieve consensus on the Supreme Court, winning over swing Justice Anthony Kennedy.
and moving the court to the center. Like everyone else who has ever seen Kagan in a legal conversation, I admire her ability to appeal to ideological opponents. (I've known Kagan for years, and my brother-in-law is her deputy in the Solicitor General's office.) Even with the political skills of Ronald Reagan, however, Kagan might have trouble persuading the conservatives on the Roberts Court to accept her — and Obama's — vision of judicial power. While Kagan and Obama want the court to uphold the centerpiece of Obama's domestic agenda, from health care reform to economic reform, conservative activists are determined to persuade the Justices to strike down those landmark federal laws.

White House aides are straining to argue that Kagan, an Ivy Leaguer from New York City, will represent the values of the real world. But there's no question that she has shown a knack for searching out ideological common ground at every stage of her education and career. She was raised on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Her mother taught at the selective Hunter College Elementary School, which Kagan attended, and her father, a Yale Law School graduate, represented tenants in rental apartments that were being converted to co-ops. After attending Princeton and Oxford, Kagan went to Harvard Law School. On the Harvard Law Review, Kagan became known not just for her fierce intellect but also for her ability to get along with classmates who held widely different political perspectives. "She could map out even the longest, most abstruse articles like some amazing cartographer," says Carol Steiker, a professor at Harvard Law and a fellow Law Review editor of Kagan's. "This degree of analytical brilliance is not often joined by an equally high degree of interpersonal skill, but Elena is a happy exception."

Kagan went on to clerk for Judge Abner Mikva and Justice Thurgood Marshall (who called her Shorty) and then began her teaching career at the University of Chicago Law School. In 1995 she wrote an academic book review that will be cited endlessly in her confirmation hearings, calling the confirmation process a "vapid and hollow charade" because Senators don't press Supreme Court nominees on their views. But Kagan also included a shout-out to someone who may soon be her sparring partner on the court, Justice Antonin Scalia. Praising Scalia for having "challenged and amused a decade's worth of law professors," Kagan lauded him for provoking debate with the "quality and intelligence (even if ultimate wrong-headedness)" of his work.

In the Clinton White House, where President Clinton used her as a reference book on constitutional issues, she was promoted from the counsel's office to deputy chief of domestic policy because of her cool in negotiations and political savvy. Once again reaching out to conservatives, for example, Kagan persuaded John McCain and other Senate Republicans to give the Food and Drug Administration authority to regulate tobacco.

Kagan returned to Harvard Law as a professor and then as dean, where she calmed the ideological divisions of a famously polarized faculty. She hired noted conservative scholars — like Jack Goldsmith, the former head of George W. Bush's Office of Legal Counsel who broke with the Administration's terrorism policies — over strenuous liberal objections, and she persuaded the faculty unanimously to reform the grading system and curriculum.

Obama hopes that on the Supreme Court Kagan will build the same consensus between liberals and conservatives that she achieved in the Clinton White House and at Harvard. But you can't build judicial consensus without having a judicial vision to build it around.
So what, exactly, does Kagan believe? Her lack of a track record (she has never been a judge, and she has written relatively few articles for so lengthy an academic career) has earned her critics on the left and right who view her as a cipher, but her judicial philosophy can, in fact, be gleaned from her writings. Like Presidents Clinton and Obama, she believes in judicial restraint, or the view that courts should be hesitant to strike down laws and that political change should come not from judges but from Congress and the President. Obama made clear that he shares this constitutional vision when, in comments to reporters at the end of April, he challenged liberal orthodoxy by suggesting that liberal activist judges in the ‘60s and ‘70s had been “guilty” of overreaching with a judicial approach that “ignored the will of Congress, ignored democratic processes and tried to impose judicial solutions on problems instead of letting the process work itself through politically.” Today, Obama suggested, conservatives are making the same error by embracing judicial activism: as soon as conservative Senators such as Mitch McConnell and Orrin Hatch lost the debates over campaign finance and health care, for example, they rushed to support lawsuits challenging the reforms as unconstitutional.

Kagan’s paper trail, although thin, suggests that she would embrace the kind of liberal judicial restraint that Obama recently praised. Essentially, Kagan and Obama believe that Congress and the President, when they work together, should be given broad power to regulate areas ranging from the economy to national security. Kagan is a scholar of the regulatory process, and in her most important academic article, a 2001 piece in the *Harvard Law Review*, she argued that the President should be able to use the federal administrative agencies to pursue a progressive policy agenda — unless Congress explicitly says otherwise.

Would Justice Kagan be successful in persuading her conservative colleagues on the Supreme Court to embrace this vision of liberal judicial restraint? The answer largely turns on one man: the swing Justice, Kennedy. Although Kagan might be to the right of Justice Sonia Sotomayor on some questions involving executive power, she could be more effective than Sotomayor at moving the court as a whole to the left because her interpersonal and management skills make her more likely to win over Kennedy. On the other hand, Kennedy, unfortunately for Kagan, is the most activist Justice on the Supreme Court. From 1995 to 2000, he voted to strike down more state and federal laws combined than any other Justice.

If Kagan is unable to win over Justice Kennedy, she won’t be the first public official to go to Washington from Harvard Law School pledging to overturn partisan divisions and represent the vital center, only to be bitterly disappointed. Both Barack Obama and Chief Justice John Roberts began their government service by articulating a similar vision of bipartisan unanimity, but both have been unable to produce consensus in the most hotly contested disputes.

What would Kagan do if she were to be similarly frustrated? She might become a more passionate and partisan liberal warrior, inheriting Justice Stevens’ mantle as the leader of the liberal wing on the court and making her current liberal critics look shortsighted. For now, however, conservative activists fear that Kagan will be too liberal, and liberal activists fear that she will be too conservative — which seems exactly where President Obama wants Kagan to be.

*Rosen, a law professor at George Washington University, is the author of The Supreme Court: The Personalities and Rivalries That Defined America.*
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In Indonesia, the People Who Live With Dragons

By JASON MOTLAGH Saturday, May 08, 2010

Indonesia’s Komodo National Park attracts a particular kind of traveler, eager to see the namesake dragons that exist nowhere else in the world. The place is remote, scorching hot and barren as a bone, prowled by hundreds of giant carnivorous lizards that can outrun humans and tackle water buffalo. The world’s largest lizard grows up to ten feet long and more than two hundred pounds, capable of eating half its own weight in a single meal. Aided by wind, it’s also able to smell fresh blood as far as five miles away. As one might expect, the archipelago that comprises the park is almost uninhabited. Almost. In the coastal village of Kampung Komodo, many ethnic Bugis fishermen have managed to coexist with the 1,200 dragons who dominate the island.

The dragons do turn on the humans. In June 2007, a nine-year-old boy was attacked while relieving himself in the brush on the fringe of the village. The dragon was chased away, but rapid blood loss proved fatal for the boy, one of just a handful of documented deaths over the years. The presence of as many as 50 strains of virulent bacteria in the lizards' saliva means just one bite can kill if untreated. The villagers build their homes on stilts and keep their goats on raised planks as extra precautions. In the evening hours, when the dragons are most active, they rarely stray beyond the glow of outdoor lanterns. And, as a rule, red clothing is avoided since it can be mistaken for blood and attracts attention.

Inevitably, though, there are times when the lizards come down from the hills to poke around. Villagers respond with sticks and stones: Public fork-shaped sticks are widely available, but if none are at arm's reach even children reflexively throw rocks that send them on their way. Short of these, locals say it's best to project as big a presence as possible by barking, flailing one's arms, and stomping feet. An
aggressive posture will, in most cases, make the dragons back off as they prefer a sneak attack from the shadows over a direct confrontation.

Some say the reptiles are coming down from the hills more often to feed on animals, but the Bugis insist the dragons have done more good than harm by luring outsiders — and their money — to their far-flung island. The Bugis augment their living by selling woodcarvings of the lizards, known as Oras, to visitors arriving at the park entrance across the bay on privately chartered boats or the occasional cruise liner. The lizards "live here and we have our families, so we must share," says Komodo native Kadir Ahmed. "The dragons are our friends."

It is a symbiotic relationship. The mostly Muslim Bugis on Komodo do not eat the Timor pigs that are a staple of the dragons' diet, and have generally refrained from hunting deer and water buffalo, leaving the dragons with abundant prey that have kept populations up. "They are really the perfect people to live here because they understand how important the dragon is [for their livelihood]." says Yusuf Sahabun, a veteran park ranger. Although poaching occurs, he notes that offenders these days are generally not from the island. The same goes for the fishermen who illegally use dynamite to blast Komodo's hyper-diverse coral reefs, threatening an underwater ecosystem that offers world-class diving.

Strict, and, some would even say, draconian measures devised by the Indonesian government have curtailed such problems in recent years, making the place a rather austere destination for tourists. Some of these rules trouble villagers like Abdul, 28, who contends that life on the island is already "so, so difficult." Reduced tourist traffic from the economic recession has further pinched his earnings as a wood carver. Conservationists with the Nature Conservancy, the Virginia-based environmental group enlisted by the government to help manage the park, counter that while the dragon population is not in serious danger, unchecked human activity would spell extinction.

For now, however, the dragons have their way. Inside the park deer and pigs roam aplenty, ready to be ambushed with a stealthy burst. There is no need to venture far to see them in action, either. There are always a few loitering around the visitor's center, enticed by the scent of cooking food. The rangers, accustomed to their habits, give them a wide berth. But first-time visitor Daniel Irvine of Burlington, Vermont, practically stumbled into a pair resting in the shade of a cabin as he rounded a corner moments after arriving. "I didn't expect it would be that easy to see them," he says. From then on, he kept his head on a swivel; and carried a big stick.

Haiti

By Jessica Desvarieux / Port-au-Prince Monday, May. 24, 2010

Four months after the earthquake, Port-au-Prince is a collection of jury-rigged tent cities. Now just add water and watch despair grow.

Have you ever seen a city melt? You will, once the storm season comes to Haiti, sending wind and water through the encampments that appeared after the Jan. 12 earthquake in Port-au-Prince. Made of
tree-branch poles and plastic sheeting, discarded canvas and corrugated cardboard, found metal and
donated supplies, the tent metropolises are set up on hillsides, in front of the presidential palace, on the
ruins of houses, on the remains of previous slums. They shelter hundreds of thousands of people who no
longer have a place to call home. Just add water to this misery and Haiti will flood with even more
despair.

After the quake, 35,000 people took refuge in the Champ de Mars for what seemed to be a good reason.
They thought the park in front of the presidential palace would be closest to aid because of the proximity
of ministries and the police. But it is also one of the worst places to be when it rains: residents often
spend soggy nights awake and standing because they cannot lie down in the pooling waters. In the
capital, any concrete surface is now prime real estate; people who set up their tents there don't have to
deal with mud when it rains. Not that concrete is a guarantee of security. When the quake struck, houses
in the Gros Morne area slid down the slopes of the valley because they were constructed without regard
for building codes. Now 5,000 people live in the constricted district, in a funnel perfect for flash floods.

The rains have already started. The wet season will be gathering even more strength in the next few
weeks—and then, quickly, come the hurricanes. Always the bane of Haiti, the winds this time may sweep
away more than fragile houses built on desiccated hills. Entire tent cities may dissolve. Just as if an
earthquake had happened.

The Tent Cities of Haiti

Camp Obama
Almost immediately after the devastating January 12 earthquake, tent cities began to spring up all over
Port-au-Prince. Camp Obama, above, home to approximately 10,000 people was named to draw U.S.
attention. Residents say that they are often the target of raids by people who believe the camp receives
special treatment.
Makeshift City
In Delmas 33, above, a program funded by the United Nations and the World Bank inspects the structures to determine if they are safe or not. Almost four months after the quake, some of the kids in the community are back in school.

Solid Ground
Sites like this abandoned gas station are particularly desirable because the ground does not get muddy when it rains.
Garbage

The 7.0 magnitude earthquake was centered in Carrefour, above. The area's canals are filled with trash.

Fragile

While some of the tents are relatively well equipped, others are vulnerable constructions of sticks and sheets.
Carrefour

Many not-for-profits groups have donated tarps which can be built into tents like these.

Interior

The day's washing stands in a relatively well-appointed tent in Cité Soleil.
Precarious

Many of the homes in Gros Morne, above, slid down the slopes of the valley in the January 12 quake, because they were built without regard for building codes.

Elevated

Even some of the country’s middle-class residents have been forced to live in tents. This family cannot return to its home because they fear it may collapse as aftershocks shake the island.
Gros Morne

About 5,000 people live in this tent city.

School

A derelict trailer in Morne l'hopital has been converted to a school.
The Presidential Palace

The 35,000 people who set up their tents in the park across from the Presidential Palace thought they would be closest to aid because of the proximity of ministries and the police, but it is a terrible place to be when it rains. Residents often spend soggy nights awake and standing because they cannot lie down in the pooling waters.

Petionville Golf Course

As the rainy season gathers steam, communities like this one, home to 60,000 will become especially vulnerable. Water of course is a huge threat, but winds from hurricanes could also easily sweep away the fragile structures, bringing yet more misery to the devastated island.
Unruly Britannia: Can This Coalition Government Work?

By Catherine Mayer / London Thursday, May 13, 2010

A common lament among the citizens of liberal democracies is that politicians don't listen to them. On May 6, Britons turned that complaint on its head, ignoring the insistent warnings from their political classes and stridently politicized national newspapers that failure to elect a majority government could lead only to chaos and despair. In a collective act of joyful bloody-mindedness, the nation somehow found a way to subvert the electoral system that for the best part of a century had efficiently upheld the duopoly of rule by the Conservative and Labour parties.

The outcome of this mutiny isn't just a hung Parliament — or a "balanced Parliament," as its enthusiasts prefer to describe it. Deprived of the outright majority in the House of Commons his two-year frontrunner status had promised, Conservative David Cameron has been forced into partnership with the Liberal Democrats, starting the first formal coalition to rule Britain since Winston Churchill forged a government of national unity at the height of World War II.

You could argue that the country's fiscal deficit and ebbing confidence in the British economy threaten to flatten the bulldog spirit just as the Luftwaffe redrew British cityscapes. That seems reason enough for Britain's new leaders to reinvent politics. In some respects, they're off to a good start, promising an emergency budget within 50 days and an overhaul of the creaking political system through the introduction of five-year, fixed-term Parliaments and a referendum on voting reform. Cameron's first public utterance as Prime Minister paid graceful tribute to his Labour predecessors for leaving the country "more open at home, more compassionate abroad." What he did not go on to say — it may have struck too close to home — is that such openness has proved inimical to the preservation of the class-ridden, convention-honoring, pliant Britain that Conservative and Labour leaders have long relied on.
Ah, unruly Britannia: to focus purely on the new order in Downing Street is to miss the deeper significance of Britain's election and its aftermath. Voters elected a hung Parliament because they wanted to — in order to circumscribe the power of the politicians who presume to govern them. Britons are still subjects of Queen Elizabeth II, who, as their country's unwritten constitution demanded, graciously accepted the resignation of Labour's Gordon Brown and conferred the premiership on Cameron. But they're also citizens of a new world of their own making. It's one the Westminster establishment had better get used to, fast.

Hang the Consequences

"I hope this is the start of the new politics I have always believed in — diverse, plural and where politicians with different points of view find a way to work together," said Lib Dem leader, now Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, hailing the coalition deal. His appearance on the U.K.'s first ever televised debate between party leaders had for a while induced in some viewers opinion-poll-bending Cleggstasy but failed to translate into solid electoral gains. The Lib Dems emerged from the election holding the balance of power but without the enhanced moral authority to wield it that an increased vote might have promised.

Britons, in truth, seemed unhappy with all the choices that confronted them on election day. Like pub landlords wearied by the tiresome antics of their customers, they were clearly ready to call time on New Labour, the 13-year project defined by Tony Blair and bequeathed to Brown that constructed a free-market, center-left hegemony from a patchwork of different interest groups and demographics. But voters remained unconvinced by the oxymoronic positioning of Cameron's Conservatives as the agents of change and progressive politics. Despite a better-funded campaign than their rivals' and the hectoring support of some newspapers — most notably the mass-market daily the Sun, which switched allegiance from Labour to the Tories last autumn and promoted its new favorites with increasing desperation — Conservative support ebbed as polling day neared.

Pollsters discovered one reason for this. Swaths of respondents, in some cases a majority, said they'd prefer a hung Parliament. The mordantly witty response to this finding — that Britons would prefer their Parliament hung — contained more than a grain of truth. The ideal of public service underpins many political careers, but last year's exposés by the Daily Telegraph and its Sunday sister paper about the misuse of parliamentary expenses amplified a mistrust of politicians that had bloomed during the Blair years — that time when spin led the black arts of politics and the Prime Minister took Britain into a war in Iraq that turned out disastrously.

It all started so differently. "A new dawn has broken, has it not?" asked Blair on the morning of his 1997 election, and many Britons who had shed their customary carapace of humor-infused pessimism to greet Labour's return to power with real hope dared to believe he was right. The long, tough years of Conservative rule under Margaret Thatcher and her gray successor John Major had polarized the country between have and have-nots, city financiers and unemployed factory workers, hard-nosed entrepreneurs and bleeding-heart liberals. Labour and Blair seemed to herald a fresh consensus and a rising economic tide that would lift all boats. There were some notable successes, an erosion of outdated certainties, the rise of a more confident, plural society. But by the time Blair left office in 2007, the consensus was fraying, the gap between Britain's richest and poorest had widened despite an overall improvement in living standards, and the manipulations and evasions of the government spin machine,
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most notably as it attempted to sell the Iraq war to a skeptical public, had undermined faith in the Establishment.

That Establishment includes Britain's brilliant, often brutal national press, as accustomed to the exercise of influence as any veteran head of state. The Sun famously claimed credit for Major's 1992 victory with the banner headline "It Was The Sun Wot Won It." Eighteen years later its ineffectual campaign for Cameron suggested it was the Sun wot had lost clout, just like the Tory party it championed and the Labour Party it sought to rubbish.

Statistics tell part of the story. At its high point, in the mid-1990s, the circulation of the Sun was more than 4 million. It's now down to 3 million. That print publications have to strive harder for authority in the fragmented, digitally driven marketplace is hardly a revelation, even if the impact of the Telegraph's coverage of the expenses scandal graphically illustrates the folly of writing off the old media just yet. But the Sun used to know its readers just as instinctively and viscerally as the big political parties knew their core voters. Now there is a disconnect. In the 1955 general elections, Labour and Conservatives together won 96% of the popular vote. This month their combined tally was 65%, with the rest fragmented among everyone from the Lib Dems to nationalists on the Celtic fringe, neofascists and Greens — who elected their first ever MP, a quite astonishing feat in Britain's first-past-the-post electoral system. So at the top of the agenda for the new government — and the media seeking to define public responses to it — must be figuring out just who these variegated, willful, unbiddable New Brits are and how to communicate with them.

**Doing the Deal**

"I voted for a hung parliament because I wanted politicians to grow up and work together. Tell them to get on with it, would you?" Ignoring the fact that there weren't actually boxes on the ballot forms marked "hung," a London cabdriver dropping his passenger at Westminster on the fourth — and what proved the final — day of negotiations toward a coalition expressed a sentiment that was easily understandable. Voter satisfaction at bucking the system had given way to anxiety about what might come next. The markets were jittery, with the FTSE 100 share index losing more than 100 points on May 11 as rumors circulated that the Lib Dems had done a deal to keep Labour in power.

As the parallel Lib Dem–Conservative and Lib Dem–Labour talks progressed, there wasn't much sign of grownup behavior in the notoriously infantilized culture of Westminster. (Parliament's architecture may recall a church, but in reality it's more of a Hogwarts, an elite institution dedicated to fostering competition.) There were tales of slanging matches behind closed doors and fierce confrontations in corners. "Politicians of all parties react emotionally [to the situation], as I do," said one Lib Dem MP, who proceeded to rip into his own party colleagues for holding out hope for a deal with Labour. "We are on an island with the Tories, but some people hope a lifeboat driven by [Labour's] Ed Balls is going to come along," he said. "What they don't realize is that the lifeboat is going in the wrong direction and it's sinking." Former Labour Cabinet minister David Blunkett appeared no more enamored of the possibility of a deal with the Lib Dems. "Can you trust the Liberal Democrats? They are behaving like every harlot in history," he told the BBC.

Yet even in this febrile atmosphere and despite the obvious gulfs between the Europhile Lib Dems and
Euroskeptic Tories (during the second leadership debate, Clegg accused Cameron of aligning the Conservatives in the European Parliament with "nutters, anti-Semites, people who deny climate change exists and homophobes"), signs of increasing détente between the two parties weren't hard to spot. "This is a time for cool heads," a Lib Dem comforted a Conservative. "If you guys keep your cool, Labour will f*** it up."

Labour did. Notwithstanding Brown's announcement on May 10 that he would step down as party leader — an essential prerequisite for any deal, because whoever may or may not have won the election, Brown certainly lost it — Labour's attempt to stitch up a coalition of the center-left disintegrated, triggering a series of events that left constitutional experts scrambling to keep up. Cameron moved into 10 Downing Street two hours before his putative Lib Dem partners ratified their end of the coalition agreement in a midnight session. Nobody seems entirely clear how the impending by-election in Thirsk and Malton in northern England will play out. A date will soon be set for the contest — delayed, as the rest of the country voted, by the death of a candidate. The Conservatives and Lib Dems will fight each other, but Cameron joked he may even share a car with Clegg, to save gas when they visit the constituency.

Amid the sense that Britain is witnessing not just a transition of government but also a sea change, it's easy to forget how unremarkable coalition governments really are. In the European Union, the only remaining majority administrations are in France, Malta and Greece. Witnessing the Greek government's struggles to implement austerity measures, Britain's Conservatives have some reason to be cheerful about having failed to win an outright majority, as they prepare to share the blame and the burden of selling unpalatable policies. "Hard and deep cuts are coming. There will be a lot of unrest, strikes and protests," says John Van Reenen, director of the Center for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics. He adds, however, that while most electorates respond to economic hardship by turning to more extreme parties, Britain's does not. Extremist parties fared badly on May 6. (A joke doing the rounds after the catastrophic electoral performance of the far-right British National Party asks how the BNP differs from a bus. Punch line: A bus has seats.) "Brits are prepared to put up with quite a lot before they start rioting in the streets as the Greeks do," says Van Reenen.

More of the Same?
Cameron and Clegg, however, cannot rely on a certain passive strain in British political life. They recognize that they'll need broad public support for their plans to lop £6 billion off government spending in this year alone. Such steep cuts would always be a hard sell. Coming from a political elite that has at best communicated imperfectly with voters and at worst has been seen arrogantly to feather its nest at taxpayers' expense, the cuts may prove too much to swallow. Britons' consent will depend, at least in part, on their new government's ability to convince them that Westminster really has changed.

And that is something of a moot point. There is palpable excitement in Britain, a sense that the fresh-faced 43-year-old Cameron and the fresh-faced 43-year-old Clegg might bring out the best in each other and their parties. But in their similarities there are potential pitfalls. Both attended elite, fee-paying schools (Eton and Westminster, respectively). Both were students at Britain's two most prestigious universities (Oxford and Cambridge, respectively). They lead parties stacked with white men from similarly comfortable backgrounds: 54% of Tories were privately educated and 41% of Lib Dems, compared with a national average of about 7%. Among candidates seeking to succeed to the Labour
leadership, the front runners are all white men, all Oxford graduates, aged 40, 43 and 44. Only 4.1% of MPs are from nonwhite backgrounds, less than half the total percentage in England and Wales and especially conspicuous in London, where nonwhite residents make up 31% of the population.

Women, 22% of MPs, were largely invisible during the election campaign, or they were assigned walk-on roles as decorative spouses. Such an imperfect reflection of the wider population received scant attention from media that more closely reflect the makeup of Parliament — overwhelmingly white and male — than of their audiences.

These bald numbers tell only a small part of the story of how Westminster became so detached from modern Britain. The speed of social change; the profoundly transformative effects of globalization; the digitized, interconnected, buzzing 24-hour culture: these forces are leaving institutions across the world struggling to keep up. Still, if the new brooms of the British government wish to avoid being quickly swept away themselves, they ought to start getting better acquainted with the people who put them into office.

— With reporting by Eben Harrell / London

Inside the World of David Cameron

On May 11, 2010, the Conservative Party's David Cameron, 43 (here with his wife Samantha), took up residence at 10 Downing Street, becoming the U.K.’s youngest Prime Minister since the early 19th century.
On the Trail
Cameron's party (also known as the Tory Party) earned the largest number of seats in Parliament but still not enough to form a majority.

Offices
A graduate of Oxford, Cameron has worked in Conservative Party politics since 1988. He was elected as the party leader in 2005.
**Match of the Day**

In choosing Cameron as leader, many Tories hoped the party would widen its appeal among younger voters. Here, he plays around with Gary Lineker, a famed former soccer player turned sports broadcaster.

**On the Stump**

During the campaign, Cameron borrowed a page from the playbook of President Obama, focusing on the theme of change. "Change vs. more of the same is the big clarion call," he told TIME.
Onboard
As Prime Minister, Cameron will have to make difficult decisions. The country’s budget deficit stands at 12% of GDP. Government spending will need to be cut drastically. The question is what will be eliminated, and how fast.

Radio Show
To his critics, Cameron is smooth to the point of being glib. His manner, they say, is all patter and no substance.
Man and Wife

Cameron’s wife Samantha, pictured here, is the creative director of the luxury-goods brand Smythson.

Election Day

Here, Cameron votes in his district of Oxfordshire. Prime Minister Gordon Brown, former leader of the Labour Party, resigned on May 11, making room for Cameron to take over and form a government under the Conservatives.
In his first speech as leader of the British government, Cameron said, referring to the newly formed Conservative Liberal Democratic coalition, "I believe that is the right way to provide this country with the strong, the stable, the good and decent government we need so badly."
It's a gorgeous place to hold an apocalypse. *Lost* — TV's biggest, head-trippiest desert-island adventure — is shooting a scene from its final episode on Lanai Lookout, a treacherous, windswept slope of naked lava encircled by roiling blue water and hammered by whitecaps. [Spoiler alert: if you don't want to know even the slightest details about the finale, skip this opening section.] As the cameras are set up on the rocks, a crew member scouts out an especially dramatic crag downhill. He radios up to director Jack Bender: "The view is great. The safety is ... questionable."

They opt for a less precarious spot farther up. [Seriously, I'm about to name who's in the scene; skip ahead now if you don't want to know.] Six of *Lost*'s stars are on hand — Michael Emerson, Matthew Fox, Jorge Garcia, Josh Holloway, Evangeline Lilly and Terry O'Quinn — and before they shoot, they need to get sprayed down with a massive hose to simulate a drenching storm. Properly soaked, the actors take their places, Bender calls action, and — Oh, like I'm going to tell you. It's not just that if I were to give away the surprisingly spoilery scene they've let me witness, ABC would kill me. The 2½-hr. finale, on May 23, is the broadcast event of the year: the network is charging $900,000 per 30-sec. ad, more than anything save the Oscars and the Super Bowl. It's also that if you're a *Lost* fan, you would kill me. This is a show that for six seasons has stretched the ambitions and challenged the assumptions of network television. Its intensely devoted fan base has been not just watching *Lost* but poring over it, dissecting details, formulating theories — and avoiding the numerous spoilers, real and bogus, that are swirling around even now. So let's just say the scene involves a typically *Lostian* mix of melodrama, metaphysics, emotion, blood, shouting, tenderness and comic relief. Also rain. A lot of rain.
When the scene's done, Bender announces that this is the "series wrap" for Lilly: her last scene in *Lost* ever. Lilly, shivering and with her head wrapped in a towel, thanks her co-stars and her stunt double. There's applause. Cigars are smoked. Holloway lifts her off the ground in a bear hug. I suddenly feel a little sea mist in my eyes. Shut up.

Something special is ending here. The cast knows it, I know it, fans at home know it. In an era of diminished major-network expectations, *Lost* has made big, demanding, intellectual TV on a broadcast network. It's married epic action with myth, science and ideas about human nature like few mass-culture hits besides *Star Wars* and *The Matrix*. Audaciously and improbably, it's become TV's most philosophical work of entertainment — or its most entertaining work of philosophy.

**Rejecting the Expected**

In a business that's too often about dumbing down, *Lost* is unapologetically challenging. (See sidebar for a taste.) But its origins were humbler. In 2004, ABC asked hitmaker J.J. Abrams (*Alias, Star Trek*) to create a drama about plane-crash survivors stranded on an island. But Abrams, who co-created the show with Damon Lindelof and Jeffrey Lieber, decided to complicate this premise. A lot. The cinematic two-hour pilot set out tantalizing mysteries: an unseen monster, a polar bear in the jungle, a mysterious radio transmission. And the producers assumed — at a time when easy-to-follow dramas like *CSI* ruled the airwaves — that the show was doomed. Recalls executive producer Bryan Burk: "The two things you couldn't do on TV in 2004 were serialized TV and science fiction."

But with 19 million viewers, *Lost*'s debut was a hit — and its creators were left scrambling to figure out the long-haul story. Executive producer Carlton Cuse came on midway through Season 1 to run the show with Lindelof and work out a master plan. First up: rejecting trite desert-island tropes. "Like they should form a government," says Cuse. "Someone should be elected leader. They should have a system of laws. We said, 'Let's make the criteria be, 'Why? Is there a really good reason we have to do it?' ' And that led us down the untrodden story path."

**A Complex Show for Complex Times**

So *Lost* would not be about tribal elections, digging wells or devising systems of coconut-shell currency. It would be a weird mystery involving time travel, the butterfly effect and conspiracies within conspiracies. It would be a spiritual journey about characters seeking redemption. It would be about big ideas: free will and predestination, science and faith, mankind's essential good or evil. Through this prism — and through narrative flashbacks, flash-forwards and flashes into an alternate reality — it would be about, well, everything.

*Lost* doesn't attempt to answer those eternal questions. What it does instead is challenge the audience to ponder such mysteries themselves. Cuse and Lindelof have dropped plenty of guideposts along the way. Several characters are named for authors or philosophers (Locke, Milton, Rousseau, the Zen master Dogen) whose concepts play into the story, and classic works of literature sneak into key scenes. The writers say they use these references as "a tip of the cap" to their influences, as Lindelof puts it, "as opposed to saying, 'Hey, we came up with this idea for the first time.' " Also, says Cuse, "it's usually meant to say, If you want to go deeper, here's something that you can explore." *Lost* is like a TV show with footnotes.
私は夏が好き。

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But more than that, *Lost* is myth in the classic sense. It draws on deep-seated archetypes — paradise and the fall, the monster/tempter in the forest primeval, resurrection and redemption — that recall stories from folktales to the Bible to the Greeks. (A major character, Desmond, came to the island when his boat was blown off course and spent years trying to get back to the woman he loved. Her name? Penny, short for Penelope — as in Odysseus’ mainqueeze.)

Like *Star Wars*, that other sci-fi saga *Lost*'s characters often reference, *Lost* takes elements of Western and Eastern myth and philosophy and wraps them in a white-knuckle popcorn-movie story with suspense, romance and engaging characters. But *Lost* has not a single protagonist but a huge ensemble of heroes and antiheroes with checkered pasts. The loser, the con artist, the arrogant doctor, the fugitive, the junkie: each has his or her part in the quest, which has less to do with good beating evil than determining how to be good, less to do with getting the happy ending than finding out what it means to have a happy ending. Collectively, they are — to borrow the title of Joseph Campbell's classic study of myth — the Hero with a Thousand Faces, or at least a dozen or so. It's a concept of heroism for our complicated, connected world, where problems are too complex for a single savior.

All this makes for a dense, heady story — made more so this season, when Cuse and Lindelof introduced a "flash-sideways" narrative that depicts an alternate reality in which the plane never crashed. It's tough to wrap your mind around alone; you — like *Lost*'s heroes — need a community. As soon as an episode airs, *Lost* fans online swarm it like ants, picking it clean for morsels of meaning and trying to guess together what might be coming next

*Lost* is a multimedia experience of which the show itself is only the first component. You can watch *Lost*, talk it over with your spouse and go to bed. But you can also rewatch it, looking for the "Easter egg" visuals sprinkled throughout. You can play online games, watch webisodes or listen to Cuse and Lindelof's teaser-sprinkled podcast. You can go to fan forums, blogs and reference sites like *Lostpedia.org* to ask questions, read theories or post observations. The next time someone tells you TV makes people stupid, think of the *Lost* fans chatting about gnosticism, Einstein and the British East India Company.

Any network would love to have the next *Lost*, with a big fan base and cultlike devotion. Can they? Yes and no. Making a stunningly original, mass-culture hit is easier said than done, and shrinking network budgets don't help. "This show will not be duplicated in terms of location and scope," says director Bender. Or if it is, it may be on cable, where there's more room for ambition. Most likely, the next *Lost* will be as different from *Lost* as *Lost* is from, say, *Twin Peaks*.

First, though, *Lost* has to end, and in a way that doesn't make future network execs hear the phrase "the next *Lost*" as a cautionary tale (like, come to think of it, "the next *Twin Peaks*"). Cuse and Lindelof freely admit the finale won't answer every minor mystery, but they say it will resolve the big ones. When *Lost* began, Lindelof says, the question was whether the characters had been brought to the island intentionally. "The answer was yes," he says. "And in the wake of that question: for what? ‘For what’ is about to be answered."

**The End — In a Way**

*Why are we here?* It doesn't get much bigger than that for a TV drama. "The finale is tremendously
spiritual," says co-star Fox. "It becomes much more character-driven and focused on some of the big philosophical questions: What's the nature of humanity? What happens when we die?" Not even all the cast members know what happens in the end. But they say it aims more at emotional closure. "It's a kind of soulful ending," says Emerson. "It's very human-scale." Of course, as O'Quinn says, a spiritual, human-scale ending could disappoint some sci-fi fans: "If you're all about 'Answer what the Dharma Initiative was doing with the polar bears,' you're probably barking up the wrong tree."  

(See the top 10 TV series of 2009.)

Regardless, the fact that Lost has told an elaborate story and finished it on its own terms — rather than stretching on until it died of low ratings — is almost unprecedented on TV. Lost's ending may be good, bad or in-between, but it will be, conclusively, as the finale is titled, "The End." And then again, it probably won't be — not as far as Lost's legions of amateur scholars are concerned. Cuse and Lindelof — who are fans of The Sopranos' controversial cut-to-black closer, though they swear theirs will be clearer — realize that any sufficiently ambitious ending will have to tick someone off.

And they're fine with that. On Lost, says Lindelof, "the question has mostly been, What's going to happen next? But that question no longer exists after the series finale. And we anticipate that it will be replaced by a question along the lines of, What did they mean by that? And the question that we would throw back at the audience is, Well, what did it mean to you? Your own personal relationship with Lost actually trumps any intention that we had as storytellers. And we wanted that to be the legacy of the show."

Which is as it should be. The TV show that is Lost will be over as of May 23. The phenomenon that is Lost — a story authored by everyone who watches — will continue. And the way we watch TV will have changed into an experience that's more communal, demanding and rewarding. The only truly disappointing series finale Lost could make is one that we won't still be obsessing about a month later.

Previously on Lost

By JAMES PONIEWOZIK Monday, May 24, 2010

It's 2004. There's a plane. It crashes on an island. There are polar bears. And a smoke monster. And angry natives called the Others. Jack is a doctor. Locke is a paraplegic who can walk now. Sawyer's a con man. Kate's a fugitive. Kate likes Jack, and also Sawyer, and also Jack again. Jin and Sun are a married Korean couple. Claire's pregnant. Charlie's a junkie. Sayid's a former Iraqi torturer. Hurley's a lottery winner with extremely bad luck. The Losties find a hatch in the ground. Inside the hatch, there's a dude named Desmond. Every 108 minutes, he punches six numbers into a computer so the world won't end. (He believes.) The hatch was built by the Dharma Initiative. Dharma was a group of scientists and
hippies who came to the island in the ’70s and drove VW microbuses. The Losties capture Ben, the leader of the Others. The Others capture several Losties. Locke decides they should stop entering numbers in the hatch. The hatch blows up. The sky turns purple. Desmond starts seeing the future. The captured Losties escape. Desmond tells Charlie that Charlie’s going to die. (He's right.) A freighter shows up offshore. Jack wants to be rescued, but Locke thinks the island needs them to stay. (He's right.) The freighter was sent by Desmond's girlfriend Penny's dad, who's kind of a jerk. It blows up. Jack, Sun, Hurley, Sayid, Desmond and Kate escape on a helicopter. It crashes. (They're O.K.) Locke, Sawyer and the rest are left on the island. Ben goes underground and turns a frozen wheel, which sends the island skipping about in time. The left-behinds end up in 1974 and join Dharma. Locke leaves the island via the frozen wheel. (It is confusing.) He finds Jack. Jack doesn't want to return. Locke is murdered by Ben. Jack changes his mind. The Losties return to the island, but some end up in 1977, where they find their friends. They detonate a hydrogen bomb to alter time and stop their original plane crash from happening. (It is confusing.) The Losties are back in 2004. The plane does not crash. But they are also in 2007. Still on the island. In a parallel timeline! (It is confusing.) Locke comes back to life. Except he is really the Man in Black, who has lived on the island with his brother Jacob for a really, really long time. (He is also the smoke monster.) Locke, who is not Locke, tricks Ben into killing Jacob. Jacob, who is maybe a ghost, tells Jack that the castaways are "candidates" to replace him. Desmond returns. On a submarine. With Penny's dad, who's still kind of a jerk. Penny's dad blasts Desmond with radiation. This makes alternate-reality Desmond aware of island Desmond. Alternate-Desmond tries to make alternate-everyone-else aware of the parallel universe. On the island, Locke persuades Jack and his friends to escape on the submarine. Which Locke has booby-trapped. Sayid blows himself up to save the rest. Sun and Jin are reunited! Then they drown. Locke vows to finish what he started ...
On Nov. 9, 2004, Stieg Larsson arrived at the Stockholm offices of Expo, the antifascist magazine he founded. The elevator was broken, so he had to climb seven flights of stairs instead. When he reached the top he collapsed. He was having a massive heart attack. He died before he reached the hospital.

It was a sudden, shocking death — but not a completely surprising one. Larsson was only 50, but he was a 20-Marlboro-Lights-a-day smoker with a legendary junk-food habit, and his family had a history of heart problems. The truly surprising part is what happened next.

Larsson had spent most of his life documenting the activities of fascist groups in Sweden, but at the time of his death he’d also written three unpublished crime novels, now known as the Millennium trilogy: The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo, The Girl Who Played with Fire and The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet’s Nest. They went on to become best sellers, and then international best sellers, and then a global phenomenon that has generated a fortune in royalties.

But whose fortune? With Hornet's Nest set to be released in the U.S. on May 25, Larsson's legacy remains the focus of a protracted legal dispute between his family and his companion of 32 years, Eva Gabrielsson. It's become a public soap opera in Sweden, with all the elements of a literary thriller: a star-crossed romance, a missing will, a house divided and a mysterious manuscript. It's the sort of story Larsson might have written — except for the ending, which is likely to be something out of Tolstoy, maybe, or Chekhov: sadder and less satisfying.

The Boy Who Died Too Soon
Larsson was born in 1954. His father and mother were shopworkers in Umea, a small city in northern Sweden. In 1972, when he was 18, Larsson went to a demonstration against the Vietnam War, where he met Gabrielsson, a fellow protester, also 18. Two years later they moved in together, and in 1977 they left Umea for Stockholm. Larsson signed on as a reporter with a news agency, and Gabrielsson began studying the history of architecture. They were still together 32 years later when he died.

But they never married. Larsson proposed in 1983, but shortly after their engagement he was hired as the Swedish correspondent for Searchlight, a British antiracist, antifascist magazine. From that point on he was forced to keep a low profile. Fascism is a live issue in Sweden, and fascist groups have been known to attack reporters who investigate them. But informational transparency is a point of national pride there too, and married couples must make their addresses public. To stay under the radar, the couple put off their wedding indefinitely.

His résumé notwithstanding, Larsson wasn't a humorless, steel-jawed crusader. By all accounts he was a man of large and joyful appetites who loved to drink and smoke and, above all, to talk. "He wasn't at all driven," says Graeme Atkinson, Searchlight's European editor, who knew Larsson for 20 years. "He was easygoing. His curiosity about things was just so immense."

In 2002, Larsson and Gabrielsson took a vacation on an island in the Stockholm archipelago. "Stieg had nothing to do," Gabrielsson told the Los Angeles Times in late 2009. "That's when he picked up a short story he had written about an old man selling flowers who gets murdered. And that became the first chapter of Millennium."
Over the next two years he wrote 2,000 pages, with Gabrielsson kibitzing and editing. Ultimately he hoped to run the series to 10 novels in all. A Swedish publisher offered him a three-book deal. Larsson delivered the manuscripts in a plastic shopping bag. Six months later, he was dead.

Life Imitates Art
The first hint of trouble arrived in early 2005, in the form of a big brown envelope from the Swedish government. It informed Gabrielsson that Larsson's entire estate, including half of their apartment and the rights to his books, had gone to Larsson's father Erland and younger brother Joakim. She had inherited nothing.

The government's position was simple. Larsson and Gabrielsson never married, and Sweden has no common-law marriage. Larsson had asked his publisher to help him draw up a will, but it was never executed. When Gabrielsson asked the Larssons for the rights to Stieg's novels, they declined — although they did offer her a share in them. Gabrielsson refused to discuss it: it was all or nothing. Standoff.

The irony here, or one of the ironies, is that embattled, disenfranchised women are Larsson's fictional specialty. His books have two heroes. One is Mikael Blomkvist, a Larssonesque journalist, middle-aged and unmarried, like Tintin grown up and gone to seed. The other hero, and the series' salvation, is Lisbeth Salander, a young computer genius whose abusive childhood has left her a misanthropic nihilist.

Larsson's writing has a slightly robotic affectlessness — conveyed in part by his, or his translator's, apparent lack of interest in contractions — but Salander burns through the Nordic languor with her electric rage, her incandescent cleverness, her principled refusal of all emotional ties and her determination to think the worst of everybody. Much of the pleasure of reading Larsson lies in getting righteously angry on Salander's behalf.

Joakim and Erland Larsson hasten to point out that Gabrielsson wasn't cut off completely, but under the circumstances their generosity doesn't play particularly sympathetically. "When Stieg died, he had a little bit of money" — about $20,000, says Joakim. "We gave Eva that money. If you take away the books, Eva got more money when Stieg died than if they were married."

It isn't much when you look at the outlandish scale of the books' success. They've sold 3.5 million copies in Sweden alone, all the more impressive when you consider that Sweden has only about 9 million people. They were the three top-selling novels in Germany last year. They've outsold Harry Potter in France. The first two have sold 4 million copies in the U.S. The Swedish film of The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo was the most successful release in Europe last year, and a Hollywood remake is in the works, with the role of Blomkvist reportedly offered to Brad Pitt. The Larssons say Stieg's estate is worth $15 million, although that is a very low estimate based on the many millions of books sold, not to mention the movie rights.

It's not all about money. Each side has accused the other of being incompetent in managing Larsson's legacy, and the extent of Gabrielsson's contributions to the books has also been debated. But the most hotly contested point is the nature of Larsson's relationship with his family. Gabrielsson's tale is that of a man all but estranged from his brother and father, who as soon as he was dead swooped down to loot.
the corpse. "I had no idea they had it in them to behave like this when money and power came along," Gabrielsson told the Daily Mail in January. "Stieg really disliked his father ... They blew the last 50 years and they still don't get it." But the Larssons tell a very different story. "I loved him very much," says Joakim. "He was a sort of hero for me. My father would speak to him once or twice a week on the phone."

Gabrielsson has little legal ammunition in this fight. Her only points of leverage are public opinion — a fan has set up a website, SupportEva.com to raise money for her — and Larsson's old laptop, which is still in her possession. On its hard drive are 200 pages of an unfinished fourth Millennium novel, which the Larssons, and most of the rest of the literate world, would love to get their hands on. In a bizarre negotiating gambit, the Larssons offered to trade her their half of the apartment for the manuscript. Gabrielsson declined.

The Larssons have made concessions. Two years ago they caved on the apartment, where Gabrielsson still lives, and last November they offered her $2.6 million to settle the matter once and for all. "I don't have a dispute with her," Joakim says. "She does with us. We want her to have a good life. If we can help her with that, then we will do it."

Gabrielsson declined again, but the conversation isn't over. "We've met a few times and discussed some issues," says Sara Pers-Krause, Gabrielsson's lawyer. "We will probably go on doing that as long as we think it's worthwhile."

Fans hungry for the missing Millennium novels have seized on the legal drama surrounding them as a substitute. But it's a poor one: if Larsson were writing the story, Gabrielsson would emerge from the fray in a satisfying blaze of vindication, re-enfranchised by some yet undreamt-of legal wrinkle or computer hackery. But the reality will probably be slower and messier, and it's unlikely to leave anybody completely satisfied. It's a strange afterlife for a man who never cared much about money. "If he saw his pictures around the world's airports and underground stations," says Atkinson, "he would have given his characteristic response: a rather wry and slightly mischievous smile."

—Reported by Carla Power / London
Detroit liquor store depleting its stock on January 16, 1920, the last day before Prohibition goes into effect.

Walter P. Reuther Library / Wayne State University

The rise of the United States is one of history's amazing stories, even more remarkable when you realize how many of our forefathers were three sheets to the wind. John Adams drank hard cider with breakfast. James Madison drained a pint of whiskey each day. By 1830 the average American was guzzling the equivalent of 1.7 bottles of hard liquor per week — three times the amount consumed today.

So it was inevitable, perhaps, that a movement arose to dry out the nation. And because Americans disdain half measures, that movement eventually demanded, and passed, a Constitutional amendment banning booze. Daniel Okrent tells the tragicomic tale of that misbegotten venture in Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition (Scribner; 468 pages). Anyone fretting over hypocrisy and corruption in modern politics can learn from this book what pikers we are, compared with our forebears, at such venality.

Okrent, the first public editor of the New York Times (and — disclaimer — an editorial adviser to Time Inc.), is the author of Great Fortune, a history of Rockefeller Center that established him as a gifted storyteller of America between the World Wars. No fact is more central to that era than Prohibition, which was ratified in 1919 and repealed in 1933, having proved that if alcohol demoralized American society, outlawing alcohol was even worse. The 18th Amendment made criminals out of casual drinkers, turned clergymen into cheats, encouraged doctors to practice deception and sowed the seeds of the Mob.

Okrent fills a vast canvas with captivating characters, from the hatchet-wielding saloon buster Carry Nation ("six feet tall, with the biceps of a stevedore, the face of a prison warden and the persistence of a toothache") to Canadian bootlegger Sam Bronfman, whose audacious smuggling laid the foundations of a billion-dollar family fortune. The central role, however, belongs to a man forgotten by time, though in his day he cowed Presidents and had Congress on a leash.
Wayne B. Wheeler was the mastermind who transformed the temperance movement into a political shock wave. "Imagine Ned Flanders of The Simpsons, but older and shorter and carrying on his slight frame a suit, a waistcoat and, his followers believed, the fate of the Republic," Okrent writes. A maestro of coalitions, he stitched together a crazy quilt of forces behind Prohibition: progressive reformers, white supremacists, utopian socialists, xenophobes, Methodist bishops, prim Baptist ladies, suffragettes and the virulent anti-Semite Henry Ford.

Wheeler's crusade was ultimately doomed. America's borders were too extensive, its entrepreneurs too creative, its thirst too great to stop the flow of booze. Every legal loophole — like those allowing farmers to ferment fruit juice for personal use, or blessing wine for religious sacraments, or prescribing alcohol for medicinal use — was blown wide open by a torrent of alcohol. Smuggled liquor flooded into the country by train, plane, boat and automobile.

In one sense, Prohibition worked: less booze was consumed. But as a means to a better society, it was a bust. "It encouraged criminality and institutionalized hypocrisy," Okrent concludes. "It deprived the government of revenue, stripped the gears of the political system and imposed profound limitations on individual rights." If you're looking for a lasting legacy of Prohibition, it's the Washington lobbyists who use Wheeler's tactics to bend government to their agendas. But more entertaining would be to visit its enduring monument — the "money machine" eventually created by the men who got their start running rum: Las Vegas.

All Yesterday's Parties
By GILBERT CRUZ Monday, May. 24, 2010

LCD Soundsystem James Murphy
Ruvan Wijesooriya / EMI Music
Past a certain age, it just doesn't seem dignified to listen to dance music anymore, let alone make the stuff. It reeks of one's youth — sweaty nights out and hazy, hungover mornings. That certainly hasn't stopped James Murphy, a 40-year-old record producer and musician who, under the moniker LCD Soundsystem, has released three of this young century's most groove-filled and witty albums. By combining undeniably catchy beats with lyrics about regret, coolness and nostalgia, Murphy has hit on a formula that appeals both to 20-somethings who just want to lose their bodies to the music and to their more dignified elders who are beginning to realize they won't be able to do the same for much longer.

On _This Is Happening_, LCD Soundsystem's follow-up to 2007's critically beloved _Sound of Silver_, Murphy (who records as a one-man band and picks up about half a dozen musicians for live shows) again finds his musical sweet spot at the intersection of a trio of genres. "If I'm on an airplane and I meet a lady and she says, 'What do you do?' I say I'm in a band," says Murphy, reached on tour in Luxembourg, where he was nursing a miserable bronchial infection. "And if she says, 'What kind of music do you make?' I'll say, 'It's pop music, it's kind of dance music, and it's kind of like punk rock.' That's usually how I describe it."

Yet despite the genre-blending, body-rocking qualities of each song on _This Is Happening_ — from the completely ridiculous rocker "Drunk Girls" to the muted new wave of "I Can Change" (whose synth lines sound more '80s-esque than any other song's since the actual 1980s) — the album as a whole remains elegiac. On the track "Dance Yrself Clean," Murphy wails, "I miss the way the night goes/ With friends who always make it feel good." And it's no coincidence that two of the best songs here, "All I Want" and "Home," feature a repeated plea to "take me home." Much as in _Sound of Silver's_ "All My Friends" — easily the most poignant rock song of the aughts — there is an acceptance of the fact that all good times must come to an end and that sometimes home is the best place to be.

He feigned retirement after his last album, but Murphy swears that this is the proper end of LCD Soundsystem. There's just too much else to get around to doing. "Making records over and over again is not the most desirable thing to do unless you started a successful band at 22 and just don't know what else to do," he says. "One day, you're going to die, and you want to do as much as you can before then. I want to stay home, garden, see people, cook, read more, write a book, watch movies. There's a million things to do." If those aspirations sound somewhat middle-aged, so be it.

**Alex Gibney**

By _Steven James Snyder_ Monday, May 24, 2010

Unless your name is Michael Moore, making documentaries is a tricky, risky business. The average project requires years of reporting, filming and editing, often on a shoestring budget, and faces long odds of ever finding its way into theaters—where audiences for such movies are dwindling anyway.
Then there's the curious case of Alex Gibney. The 56-year-old UCLA film-school grad, who won an Academy Award for 2007’s Taxi to the Dark Side, has no fewer than four new features hitting screens this year. The most provocative is an as yet untitled Eliot Spitzer documentary, which charts the former New York governor's meteoric rise and scandalous fall and quickly became the hottest ticket at the Tribeca Film Festival. Also on Gibney's slate are a chapter in the multidirector adaptation of Stephen Dubner and Steven Levitt's book Freakonomics, opening this fall, and My Trip to Al-Qaeda, a big-screen rendering of Lawrence Wright's one-man play based on his 9/11 history The Looming Tower, coming to HBO later this year. A long-in-the-works profile of jailed lobbyist Jack Abramoff, Casino Jack and the United States of Money, opened in select theaters May 7.

Gibney says the pileup is less about being prolific—which he is—than it is "just a matter of timing." The director was so determined to talk to Abramoff in person that Casino Jack arrived in theaters a year and a half later than planned; it was frozen in production as Gibney embarked on his Spitzer investigation and traveled to Japan to produce a segment on corruption in sumo wrestling for Freakonomics. Still, Gibney says Abramoff's cautionary tale of influence peddling in Washington could not be timelier: "We just went through this health care debate, which was horribly perverted by money on both sides, and now you look at Abramoff and realize we are making horrible decisions for our country, all because we've put our government up for sale."

The Short List of Things to Do
WEEK OF MAY 14

Exile on Main St.

reissue of the Rolling Stones hazy, dissolute, blood-raw 1972 masterpiece adds on 10 new outtakes from the original sessions, some newly completed. Sacrilege? Maybe—but as prayerful as the Stones could be, their sympathies were always with the devil.

Illustration by SEAN MCCABE

The new reissue of the Rolling Stones' hazy, dissolute, blood-raw 1972 masterpiece adds on 10 new outtakes from the original sessions, some newly completed. Sacrilege? Maybe—but as prayerful as the Stones could be, their sympathies were always with the devil.
**Alan Wake**

A Stephen King—esque horror writer goes on vacation in a small Northwestern town. But he keeps finding pages from a manuscript he doesn't remember writing, and the stuff in the pages keeps coming true. A creepy tour de force of digital storytelling.

**3 Idiots**

3 idiots, India's highest grossing film ever.

India's highest-grossing film ever, this bubbly musical comedy by Rajkumar Hirani casts 45-year-old superhunk Aamir Khan (Lagaan) as a genius college kid who schools his teachers on the value of eccentric inspiration. Isn't it about time for a Bollywood crossover hit?
In a faded, Orwellian future, Europe is united by a single subway system — one that can read riders' minds. Available under the Tribeca Film option on your cable system's on-demand channel, Metropia is a haunting animated sci-fi thriller that'll get inside your head.

The National's slow-boiling fifth album pumps up weary melancholy into brooding grandeur. The velvety arrangements underscore Matt Berninger's clipped baritone, in which he croons rueful lyrics about bees, eating brains and not being as youthful as he once was.
Mother and Child

Illustration by Sean McCabe for TIME
Rodrigo García's novelistic ensemble piece about children lost and found through adoption finds Naomi Watts at the top of her considerable game. But as a woman who never recovered from giving up her baby as a teenager, Annette Bening is heartbreakingly unforgettable.
During a Roots of Empathy Family Visit to The Carleton Village Public School in Toronto, these 8 and 9 year-olds observe Baby Stephana’s problem solving skills, reading her cues to understand when her interest turns into frustration. Neuroscience and social-emotional understanding are a part of this experiential learning.

Finn O’Hara for TIME

At a public school in Toronto, 25 third- and fourth-graders circle a green blanket and focus intently on a 10-month-old baby with serious brown eyes. Baby Stephana, as they call her, crawls toward the center of the blanket, then turns to glance at her mother. “When she looks back to her mom, we know she’s checking in to see if everything’s cool,” explains one boy, who is learning how to understand and respond to the emotions of the baby — and to those of his classmates — in a program called Roots of Empathy (ROE).

After the recent bullying-related suicide of a 15-year-old in Massachusetts, parents and educators around North America are wondering: Could her death have been prevented? What can schools do to stop the taunting that takes place on and off campus? And most important, can positive qualities like empathy and kindness be taught? In December, the Campbell Collaboration, an international research network, published an examination of decades of data from the bewildering array of school antibullying programs (with names like Expect Respect, Youth Matters and S.S.GRIN) and found that the ones that work best have many different elements — including engaging and training parents — and last the longest, sometimes for years.

One of the most promising antibullying programs, ROE (along with its sister program, Seeds of Empathy) starts as early as preschool and brings a loving parent and a baby to classrooms to help children learn to understand the perspective of others. The nonprofit program is based in part on social neuroscience, a field that has exploded in the past 10 years, with hundreds of new findings on how our brains are built to care, compete and cooperate. Once a month, students watch the same mom and baby interact on the
blanket. Special ROE instructors also hold related classes and discussions before and after these visits throughout the course of the school year.

"We love when we get a colicky baby," says founder Mary Gordon. Then the mother will usually tell the class how frustrating and annoying it is when she can’t figure out what to do to get the baby to stop crying. That gives children insight into the parent's perspective — and into how children's behavior can affect adults, often something they have never thought about.

When Baby Stephana cries, an ROE instructor helps students consider what might be bothering her. They are taught that a crying baby isn't a bad baby but a baby with a problem. By trying to figure out how to help, they learn to see the world through the infant's eyes and understand what it is like to have needs but no ability to express them clearly.

Founded in 1996 in Canada, ROE has taught 315,000 children in four countries. It reached 50,000 children in some 2,000 classrooms this academic year. To date, nine independent studies have shown that ROE schools experience "reduced aggression" and "increased prosocial behavior" among students. (ROE's use of these terms is probably the reason it was not evaluated in the Campbell study, which used a keyword search for studies on "bullying.") In the U.S., where momentum is starting to build for a congressional bill that would create federal grants for social and emotional learning in elementary and secondary schools, ROE is currently used in 40 schools, and Seeds of Empathy is in three Head Start centers in Seattle, with expansion planned next year.

"When kids are able to watch an interaction that's empathic, empathy isn't just being taught; it's being demonstrated," says Dr. Daniel Siegel, a clinical professor of psychiatry at UCLA. ROE is unique, he notes, because it "combines the direct observation of babies and their mothers, weekly time devoted to talking about the internal world of mind and watching a baby grow up over time." Among the program's many big-name fans: the Dalai Lama, who has twice appeared publicly with Gordon and thinks ROE can help spur world peace.

Although human nature has historically been seen as fundamentally selfish, social neuroscience suggests otherwise. Researchers are finding that empathy is innate in most humans, as well as in some other species. Chimps, for instance, will protest unfair treatment of others, refusing to accept a treat they have rightfully earned if another chimp doing the same work fails to get the same reward.

The first stirrings of human empathy typically appear in babyhood: newborns cry upon hearing another infant's cry, and studies have shown that children as young as 14 months offer unsolicited help to adults who appear to be struggling to reach something. Babies also show a distinct preference for adults who help rather than hinder others.

But like language acquisition, the inherent capacity to empathize can be profoundly affected by early experience. The first five years of life are now known to be a critical time for emotional as well as linguistic development. Although children can be astonishingly resilient, studies show that those who experience early abuse or neglect are at much greater risk of becoming aggressive or even psychopathic, bullying other children or being bullied themselves.
That helps explain why simply punishing bullies doesn't work. Most already know what it's like to be victimized. Instead of identifying with the victims, some kids learn to use violence to express anger or assert power.

After a child has hurt someone, "we always think we should start with 'How do you think so-and-so felt?'' Gordon says. "But you will be more successful if you start with 'You must have felt very upset.'" The trick, she says, is to "help children describe how they felt, so that the next time this happens, they've got language. Now they can say, 'I'm feeling like I did when I bit Johnny.'"

When children are able to understand their own feelings, they are closer to being able to understand that Johnny was also hurt and upset by being bitten. Empathy is based on our ability to mirror others' emotions, and ROE helps children recognize and describe what they're seeing.

Observing infants is simple and effective. Their helplessness and cuteness evoke a powerful protective response — quite different from what happens when bullies sense vulnerability. "Babies are exquisite teachers of empathy because they are theaters of emotion," says Gordon. "They don't hide anything." If only adolescents were so easy to read.

*Szalavitz is a co-author of Born for Love: Why Empathy Is Essential — and Endangered (Morrow, 2010)*

Are Marriage Statistics Divorced from Reality?

*By BELINDA LUSCOMBE* Monday, May 24, 2010

Laughing Stock / Corbis
Do half of all marriages really end in divorce? It's probably the most often quoted statistic about modern love, and it's a total buzz kill, in line with saying that half of all new shoes will give you hammertoes or that 50% of babies will grow up to be ugly. Now the divorce stat is coming under scrutiny — and not just because of its unromanticity.

"It's a very murky statistic," says Jennifer Baker, director of the marriage- and family-therapy programs at Forest Institute, a postgraduate psychology school in Springfield, Mo. She's often erroneously credited with arriving at the 50% figure; it was around long before she used it. Figuring out divorce rates is tricky. Not all states collect marital data, and the numbers change dramatically depending on the methods and sources that are used. In the end, the best that researchers can do is look for trends within a specific group or cohort (say, all people who married in the 1980s) and project what will happen. As Baker says, "It's very difficult to know, if a couple gets married today, whether they'll still be married in 40 years."

But in an upbeat new guide to marriage, For Better, Tara Parker-Pope, a New York Times reporter (and divorcée), devotes a chapter to debunking the 50% stat, at least among the subset of the population that reads books like hers. Since the 1970s, when more women started going to college and delaying marriage, "marital stability appears to be improving each decade," she writes. For example, about 23% of college graduates who married in the '70s split within 10 years. For those who wed in the '90s, the rate dropped to 16%.

According to research at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, one of the clearest predictors of whether wedding vows will stick is the age of the people saying them. Take the '80s: a full 81% of college graduates who got hitched in that decade at age 26 or older were still married 20 years later. Only 65% of college grads who said I do before their 26th birthday made it that far.

But just 49% of those who married young and did so without a degree lasted 20 years, a cohort that Parker-Pope spends little time discussing. Instead she contends that the 50% stat is a myth that persists because it's something of a political Swiss Army knife, handy for any number of agendas. Social conservatives use it to call for more marriage-friendly policies, while liberals find it handy to press for funding for programs that help single moms.

Moreover, Parker-Pope argues, all the talk about grim marriage stats becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. "It makes us ambivalent and more vulnerable to giving up when problems occur," she writes.

Perhaps, but there may still be truth to it. Penn State sociologist Paul Amato, in a thorough new report on interpreting divorce data, writes that the half-of-all-marriages-end-badly figure still "appears to be reasonably accurate."

What seems most clear is that less-educated, lower-income couples split up more often than college grads and may be doing so in higher numbers than before. "The people who are most likely to get divorced have the least resources to deal with its impact, particularly on children," says Amato.

Talk about buzz kill.
Point, Click, Drop and Dive

By PETER HA Monday, May 24, 2010

Casio Exilim EX-G1

Olympus Stylus Tough-8010

Panasonic Lumix DMC-TS2
Pentax Optio W90

When it comes to cameras, the only thing worse than dropping one on the ground is dropping one in the drink. Such Kodak-moment calamities are common, which is why a number of camera manufacturers have come out with point-and-shoot models that can be dunked, dunked and even buried in the snow.

I tested four shockproof, waterproof, freeze-proof cameras, all of which can be dropped from at least 4 ft. (1.2 m) and can withstand temperatures as low as 14°F (−10°C). (It wasn’t in the budget to send me to Antarctica, so the office-kitchen freezer had to do.)

A number of technologies give this crop of everything-proof cameras their ruggedness. Vital circuits and bits like the image sensor are wrapped in memory foam or protected by a hardened bezel to keep things in place if the camera should take a tumble.

Generally, the sturdier the camera, the bulkier it is. The “crush-proof” Olympus Stylus Tough-8010 is built like a tank and can withstand up to 220 lb. (100 kg) of pressure. Like the Panasonic Lumix DMC-TS2, the Olympus can be submerged at 33 ft. (10 m) for up to an hour. The Pentax Optio W90 bottoms out at 20 ft. (6 m), and the wafer-thin Casio Exilim EX-G1 goes down only 10 ft. (3 m).

As with nonshockproof cameras, a higher megapixel count doesn’t necessarily mean superior picture quality. Both the Pentax and Casio, with 12.1 megapixels, outperformed the 14-megapixel Olympus and Panasonic models. But unless you plan on making poster-size prints, any of these cameras should be sufficient.

One key area of differentiation is video. All but the Pentax have a one-touch button dedicated to switching to video mode. And all but the Casio offer high-definition video. But only the Pentax and Panasonic can connect straight to your HDTV.

The core features put all four cameras on even ground: the Casio, for example, is the only one that lacks image stabilization, but its interval-shooting feature allows for time-lapse photography. So you’ll have to decide for yourself which one best suits your needs. Are you more likely to surf the Banzai Pipeline or to dirt-bike over your camera? As for me, I’m going with the Pentax Optio W90. It shoots HD video, takes crisp photos and fits great in the hand. It also comes with a cool carabiner strap that can hook onto a belt loop. Surf’s up.
Super-High-Alcohol Beer Heads to the U.S.

By SEAN GREGORY Saturday, Apr. 10, 2010

BrewDog's Jim Watt and Martin Dickie, with the world's strongest beer, Sink the Bismarck!

Duncan Brown

Thanks to a war among European brewing companies, it's never been easier to catch a healthy beer buzz. Or get yourself totally sloshed. In November, BrewDog, a three-year-old Scottish microbrewery, released a new brand, dubbed Tactical Nuclear Penguin. The beer set a new record by weighing in at a scary 32% alcohol by volume (ABV), more than six times the strength of familiar domestic brands like Budweiser. As explained in a cheeky video on the company's website (warning: the clip contains simulated penguin sex), the brewery was able to attain the high alcohol content by freezing the beer at a local ice cream factory, at temperatures as low as -6°C (21°F), for 21 days. Alcohol freezes at lower temperatures than water, and removing water from the solution increased the alcohol concentration.

Jim Watt, one of BrewDog's co-founders, says that some 400 bottles of Tactical Nuclear Penguin are in the process of being shipped to a few stores in California and New York City, including a Whole Foods location; about half of the consumers buying beer from the BrewDog website are from the U.S. Watt's eyes are clearly fixed on the American market. "We're keen to push the envelope," he says, "and challenge people's perceptions of how beer can be enjoyed."

A warning label on the Tactical Nuclear Penguin bottle does state, "This is an extremely strong beer; it should be enjoyed in small servings and with an air of aristocratic nonchalance. It is exactly the same manner you would enjoy a fine whisky, a Frank Zappa album or a visit from a friendly yet anxious ghost."

Some alcohol-watchdog groups aren't laughing. The chief executive of Alcohol Focus Scotland, Jack Law, has blasted BrewDog's high-alcohol products as "irresponsible," especially at a time when Scotland is experiencing "severe alcohol-related problems." In December, BrewDog received a slap on the wrist from a British alcohol regulatory body, the Portman Group, which ordered that retailers pull the company's 18.2% Tokyo beer brand off shelves because of its marketing tactics. A note on the Tokyo label says, "It is all about moderation. Everything in moderation, including moderation itself. What logically follows is that you must, from time, have excess. This beer is for those times." After the beer was pulled, BrewDog came out with a 1.1% ABV brew meant to tame the critics. Its name: Nanny State.
The drinking games continued in February when a German brewer, Schorschbrau, released a 40% ABV beer called Schorschbock. The BrewDog boys fired back a few weeks later with high-octane concoction Sink the Bismarck!, which checks in at 41%, enough to reclaim the "world's strongest beer" mantle (the name is a not-so-subtle reference to the famous German battleship deployed during World War II).

For now, Sink the Bismarck! is only available for purchase on BrewDog's website, and the 500 or so bottles that BrewDog has produced are already sold out. Watt promises that more are on the way. Because of the painstaking process involved with producing such a strong drink, an 11.2-oz. bottle of Sink the Bismarck! costs some $60, minus shipping. Tactical Nuclear Penguin costs about $53 a bottle, and can also be ordered online.

Even if these brands end up being carried by more bars and retailers, Watt firmly believes that the high prices will prohibit unsophisticated drinkers (read: high school kids at a kegger, or college students on spring break) from just picking up the stuff and chugging it. But you can't deny that if the beer becomes more widely available in stores, or if other brewers mimic BrewDog's strategy, it could become hazardous. Since most drinkers don't check the alcohol level on the label like they would the expiration date on a milk carton, an unsuspecting soul with money to spare could sip a little too much strong stuff.

"We're all for responsible consumption," Watt says. But as we all know, beer and responsibility often don't mix. So enjoy the beer wars at your own risk.
10 Questions for Willie Nelson

What is one of your most memorable onstage moments?

Gaia Thiele, ARCATA, CALIF.

The first time I got onstage was when I was about 5 years old. It was at a church social, and I had a poem to recite. I had on a little white sailor suit, and my nose started bleeding. I went up to make my speech, and I put one finger there to stop the bleeding and said, "If you don't like the looks of me, you can look some other way." I've never had stage fright since.

What do you think about legalizing marijuana in America?

Karen Do, NEWPORT BEACH, CALIF.

Sooner or later we'll get around to legalizing it everywhere, because people are beginning to see that it's not as horrible as they were once taught. It's [also] a way to help the economy. I think if we legalize it and tax it and regulate it the way we do tobacco and alcohol, it would be a big source of revenue.

Is there a point where country becomes so pop that it stops being country music?

Ryan Lambrecht, MINOT, N.D.

Sure. In my opinion, it's a little watered down now. The mainstream country music that I hear--to me, it's not really country, and it's not really anything. So it may be pleasing to the ear, and that's great, but as far as I'm concerned, it's not country music.

You're the president and co-founder of Farm Aid. Do you think America has embraced the good-food movement?

Francis Bova III, CHICAGO

We're trying to. People are thinking about where their food comes from because of all the problems we've had along the way with bad food and pesticides and chemicals. People know they can grow their own food and make sure that it's healthy. Or they can find a farmer in their local area to grow for them.

Who are some of your favorite people to duet with?

Mary Ann Rennick, ST. LOUIS, MO.
Waylon Jennings and I had a lot of fun recording together. Frank Sinatra, I enjoyed that. We did a couple of commercials together. I got to know [Sinatra] pretty good. He has always been my favorite singer. As far as I'm concerned, the rest of us--we trot along behind him.

Who has influenced you outside of country music?

Frank Schieber, ATLANTA

Ray Charles. He took country music to another level when he did his country-music album. He was a good buddy, and the story goes that we played chess one time and he kicked my ass pretty good.

What do you think of the Tea Party movement?

Steve Stringham, BROOKINGS, ORE.

I don't really know what the Tea Party is. I don't really know what they're for or against. Is the country in trouble? I think our economy is in a downward spiral, and hopefully we can pull it out. I'm not sure the Tea Party is who we need to pull us out.

If you had to do it all over again, is there anything in your life you would do differently?

Sue Bromen, BELLE PLAINE, MINN.

I just had to answer that question a few days ago. I would like to think that I'm happy with the way things are now. And I would be hesitant to change anything in the past because it would change where we are now. I like it the way it is.

What helps you get through difficult times in life?

Bram Rodenburg, BLEISWIJK, THE NETHERLANDS

Positive thinking. Believing that it's going to be O.K. And so far it has been. Why bitch about anything? You're not hungry. You're not cold. Neither am I. We're not sick. So everything is fine. If you continue to live in the now, then things will be O.K.

You've always seemed to be the quintessential American. What does it mean to be American?

Trevor Hande, KELOWNA, B.C.

America, to me, is freedom. I'm from Texas, and one of the reasons I like Texas is because there's no one in control. [Laughs.] You can look at that as less government if you want to, but I like America when [there's] no one in control.
Senate Climate Bill: Last Chance for Cap and Trade

By BRYAN WALSH Thursday, May. 13, 2010

Senators John Kerry, left, and Joe Lieberman
From left: Mohamed Nureldin Abdallah; Larry Downing / Reuters

Cap and trade — which seeks to reduce air pollutants by mandating a decreasing limit on emissions levels and letting the market find the most efficient way to meet it — began as an obscure academic idea, before becoming the mainstream method for tackling climate change. On Wednesday, when Senators John Kerry and Joseph Lieberman unveiled the American Power Act — climate legislation that would reduce greenhouse-gas emissions and boost clean energy — cap and trade reached its apogee. It also may have reached its end.

Kerry and Lieberman’s draft bill — the product of eight months of contentious negotiations with environmentalists, the energy industry and nearly everyone in between — would establish a carbon cap that aims to reduce U.S. greenhouse-gas emissions to 17% below 2005 levels by 2020, and ultimately 80% below those levels by midcentury. It would also devote billions of dollars in aid to transportation, including public transit, and expand funding for carbon sequestration and clean-energy research and development. If the bill passes — and if it is reconciled with the tougher cap-and-trade bill passed last year by the House — it will represent the first truly national program to reduce the greenhouse-gas emissions that contribute to climate change. “The American Power Act will finally change our nation’s energy policy from a national weakness into a national strength,” said Kerry at the bill’s unveiling. “It’s time to act.”

Joining the two Senators at the bill’s introduction were representatives of the broad coalition the legislators had worked hard to hold together — chief executives of energy companies, senior military officers, some centrist environmentalists. Duke Energy CEO Jim Rogers, who has a more progressive attitude toward climate legislation than most of his industry peers, spoke in support of the bill, focusing on its potential to build a clean-energy economy rather than its impact on climate change (Rogers’ company still operates more than a dozen coal plants.) “This bill will not only create jobs today but tomorrow and in the future,” Rogers said, echoing a note the White House has also struck repeatedly on energy. “It gets the transition right to a low-carbon world.”
It took some doing to get major carbon emitters and energy executives to stand shoulder to shoulder with environmentalists. Kerry and Lieberman had to make more than a few concessions: the bill contains $54 billion in loan guarantees for up to 12 nuclear plants; heavy industrial emitters would receive free carbon allowances to help them adjust to life under the cap; carbon limits would not be phased in until 2013; and manufacturers would not be subject to the cap until 2016. There would also be upper and lower limits on the price of carbon in a trading market — between $25 and $12 per ton, with a steady increase year on year — to ensure stability.

Most controversially, however, the bill would allow for expanded offshore oil and gas drilling, with restrictions; states would be able to veto offshore drilling in a neighboring state and opt out of drilling that would occur in waters within 75 miles of its shores. (The Interior Department would carry out studies to determine which states drilling would impact.) As an additional incentive, states that allow drilling would retain 37% of the federal royalties from oil and gas development — right now all the money is kept by Washington, an arrangement most inland states want to keep in place.

The concessions are a way to thread the differences between the Republicans who still want to drill here and drill now, and the green, coastal Democrats who have threatened to oppose any energy bill that supports expanded drilling. Before the BP spill, offshore oil and gas exploration was meant to be the bridge that would convince some Republicans to support climate legislation. (The Democrats don’t have the votes to beat a filibuster.) But the spill has made offshore drilling politically radioactive for Democrats and even some Republicans — especially after BP released a video showing thousands of barrels of oil pouring out of the wreckage of the rig. “The oil spill has completely changed the politics of this thing,” said an environmental leader.

Indeed, the offshore provisions were just one reason that many deeper-green environmental groups came out against the bill, despite requests that critics wait at least 72 hours before attacking it. Other groups, including Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, argued that the bill was too weak to meet the demands of climate science and contained too many giveaways for the fossil-fuel industry. “The climate proposal put forth today by Senators Kerry and Lieberman represents a disaster for our climate and planet,” said Kieran Suckling, executive director of the Center for Biological Diversity.

Most major environmental groups came out in support of the bill, however, saying the legislation represented the best chance to put the country on a low-carbon path and that Kerry and Lieberman should be credited for attempting to pass legislation in such a toxic political environment. At Wednesday’s press conference, Fred Krupp, head of the centrist green group Environmental Defense Fund and one of the fiercest advocates of cap and trade, reminded the audience that U.S. businesses need a signal from government before they will truly begin investing in clean energy. “We need to remove the shackles of uncertainty that has restrained investment,” he said. “I’ve been at this a long time, and this is the first time we’ve had such a broad level of support.”

But the kind of support the bill will need to become law — from Republicans — was nowhere to be seen. Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, who had been a major player in the bill, dropped out abruptly late last month, ostensibly because the Senate Democratic leadership seemed poised to act on controversial immigration reform before energy. It’s not clear what Graham will do now — he did not endorse the American Power Act but did say in a statement that he may eventually support it. No other Republican
has moved to endorse it, and even the White House in its statement of support managed to reference the bill by the wrong name, calling it the American Clean Energy and Security Act, the title of last year's House cap-and-trade bill.

It is no surprise to the bill's co-author that criticism is coming from every side, from hard-green environmentalists to climate-change-denying conservatives. "A comprehensive climate bill written purely for you and me — true believers — can't pass the Senate no matter how hard or passionately I fight on it," Kerry wrote in a post on the green website Grist on Wednesday.

Kerry has said the bill could be the last, best chance for cap and trade — but right now, it looks like it might just be the last.

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Lena Horne

By RICHARD SCHICKEL  Monday, May. 24, 2010

Lena Horne, who died May 9 at 92, was a ferocious yet curiously vulnerable woman, trying first to be a good, obedient girl before she became, later in life, simply a good woman. Her hauteur derived from her birth into a black bourgeois family, her vulnerability from her hard years traveling the racist South, where her mother was a stock-company actress.

Her fate, however, was largely--unfairly--determined by her astonishing beauty. She was a showgirl, a band singer, a nightclub performer and finally (nominally) an MGM movie star. Or as she sometimes put it, "a butterfly pinned to a pillar," in sequences that could be cut from films when they played below the Mason-Dixon Line. She was rarely allowed to be bluesy or soulful; she was, in the '40s and '50s, a white guy's very limited idea of what a black woman might be--exotic, sexy, tempting, untouchable. She chafed at that definition. And overcame it.

To know Lena (as I came to when I helped write her autobiography) or to witness one of her astonishing one-woman shows was to ride in the eye of a weather system always verging on stormy. She was eventually able to confront her lucky-unlucky early years ironically, speak out for civil rights and--best of all--sing her songbook with a forcefulness untrammeled by the cautions and calculations of people who once tried to tame this passionate woman into a bland symbol of racial accommodation. Finally, she visibly became what she'd always been inside: a complex, entrancing woman.
Umaru Yar'Adua: Remembering Nigeria's Patient President

By ALEX PERRY Thursday, May 06, 2010

When Nigerian President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua, who died on Wednesday at age 58, took power in May 2007, he did not look like the most promising of leaders. The first democratic change of civilian power in West Africa's giant at a general election earlier in the year had been a sham, widely dismissed as a ruling-regime fix by international election observers. Also, Yar'Adua was a virtual unknown. In an interview just before his formal accession to power, TIME asked whether he was a puppet of departing President and strongman Olusegun Obasanjo, who had unsuccessfully tried to rewrite the constitution to give himself another term. "Puppet?" said Yar'Adua, laughing. "You obviously don't know me."

As Nigerians and the world got to know the President, what they discovered was surprising. Even within the confines of Nigeria's factionalized, winner-take-all politics, Yar'Adua strove to be his own man. Unlike his predecessors, he acknowledged Nigeria's problems, mainly its criminalized governing and business elite, which inspired a violent anti-elite insurgency in the oil-rich Niger Delta in the south and a Taliban-like violent Islamist movement in the north. And under him, the government pushed through business and banking reform, cracked down on corruption — albeit, as some charged, selectively — and secured a cease-fire from the Delta militants. All this was done with a patience and bookishness that contrasted favorably with the rough-and-tumble nature of Nigerian politics. "The problem is that people think that problems can be solved magically," Yar'Adua told TIME. "Too many people with loud voices like to condemn and condemn. But with patience, we will all get there."

Nigeria is not there yet. Yar'Adua, a chain smoker who was already in poor health when he won power, had been hospitalized or bedridden since November 2009, and the power struggle that ensued between his family and supporters and his deputy, Goodluck Jonathan, all but paralyzed the government and stymied progress. Jonathan became acting President in February and replaced Yar'Adua's Cabinet with his own in March; now Yar'Adua's death puts the final seal on what has been a damaging and drawn-out transition.
Jonathan, like his predecessor, has proposed ambitious reforms. But also like Yar’Adua, he’s unlikely to have the time to see them through. Nigeria is due to hold another general election in early 2011. And under an informal agreement that holds that the presidency should alternate every eight years between the largely Muslim north of the country and the largely Christian south — a religious divide that regularly sparks bloody outbreaks of violence — the Muslim north is owed one more term. Whoever eventually leads Africa’s most populous country could do worse than to follow what Yar’Adua said was his guiding principle, one that was almost revolutionary in the venal and self-serving world of Nigerian politics. “I think people should know that you derive the greatest satisfaction from serving others, rather than serving yourself,” he told TIME. “I would want more and more Nigerians to define themselves also in this light of service to the nation and service to humanity.”

Cancer, Cancer Everywhere

By TIFFANY OCALLAGHAN Monday, May 24, 2010

Was it hype or health care? on may 6, the President’s Cancer Panel published an alarming 240-page report on the risk of cancer from chemicals and other substances in the environment. “The true burden of environmentally induced cancer has been grossly underestimated,” the report’s authors concluded. “The American people — even before they are born — are bombarded continually with ... these dangerous exposures.”

The list of potential threats is exhaustive and, frankly, unavoidable: bisphenol A (BPA) and phthalates found in plastic, pesticides, exhaust from traffic, pharmaceuticals in the water supply, industrial chemicals and radiation from medical tests, cell phones and the sun. The authors of the report — Dr. LaSalle Leffall
Jr., of Howard University College of Medicine, and Margaret Kripke, professor emerita at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center — urge the government to increase research and regulation of these carcinogens, which pose "grievous harm," especially to children, and give specific advice to consumers for avoiding them. More than 80,000 chemicals are on the U.S. market, of which only a few hundred have been proved safe, the authors note. "People have the idea that they are being protected and that things that are harmful aren't getting onto the market," says Kripke. "But that's probably wishful thinking."

In large part, the panel's findings — chiefly that more research is needed — jibe with those of mainstream cancer researchers. But while the report highlights valid data, says Dr. Otis Brawley, chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society, its final conclusions overreach them. "There are environmental causes of cancer. We should not trivialize them, and we do need more research," he says, but the contention that the rate of environmentally caused cancers is "grossly underestimated" is not based in fact. "[The rate] very well may be higher [than the current estimate of 6% of all cancers], but the research has not been done to quantify that."

But that is precisely the point, says Kripke. Although the panel's report concedes that "at this time, we do not know how much environmental exposures influence cancer risk," Kripke says the 6% figure is based on a study from 1981 and long outdated. "A lot has happened in 30 years ... and will still affect people for the next 30 years," she says, which is why the panel argues that we must not wait for proof of harm before protecting the public. In its lengthy policy recommendations, the report calls for, among other things, routine discussions between doctors and patients about environmental exposures and shifting the burden of proof of chemical safety from government to industry.

But researchers' main criticism of the cancer report is that it distracts from the known, major causes of cancers: smoking, obesity, alcohol, sexually transmitted infections. We don't want mothers to be "very concerned about some chemical in plastic, which might theoretically cause cancer in her child," instead of focusing on the food that's going into the container, says Brawley, estimating that up to one-third of all cancers in the U.S. are obesity-related. So while choosing pesticide-free produce may be a good precaution — indeed, none of the panel's advice is bad — you might be better off simply eating more fruits and vegetables in general, he says.

**SIDEBAR**

**10 Cancer Panel Recommendations**

1. Drink filtered tap water
2. Store food and water in glass, stainless steel or BPA- and phthalate-free containers
3. Minimize children's and pregnant women's exposure to carcinogens and endocrine-disrupting chemicals
4. Choose fruits and vegetables grown without pesticides or chemical fertilizers; wash all produce to remove residues
5. Choose free-range meat that has not been exposed to antibiotics or growth hormones
6. Minimize consumption of processed, charred or well-done meats
7. Turn off lights and electrical devices when they're not in use
8. Drive a fuel-efficient car; walk, bike or use public transportation
9. Check home radon levels
10. Reduce radiation exposure from cell phones and medical tests; avoid UV overexposure
European Bailout

After rounds of contentious negotiations, leaders of the European Union approved a nearly $1 trillion (750 billion euros) bailout package on May 9 to stabilize the weakest economies among the 16 countries that use the euro. The crisis, which began in Greece, whose government is struggling to pay its international debts, has steadily widened since earlier this year as analysts have become increasingly worried about the towering debt levels of several other European countries. Designed to stave off further erosion of the euro—which has lost nearly 12% against the dollar in 2010—the bailout was greeted with relief, as stock markets briefly rallied worldwide. But it is crucial that the weaker governments make lasting fiscal improvements now, or the bailout will prove a fleeting respite from deep and worsening economic disparities on the continent.

[The following text appears within a chart. Please see hardcopy or PDF for actual chart.]

Highest government debt among E.U. countries, as a share of GDP

- Italy 115.8%
- Greece 115.1
- Belgium 96.7
- Hungary 78.3
- France 77.6
- Portugal 76.8
- Germany 73.2
- Malta 69.1
- U.K. 68.1
- Austria 66.5

SOURCE: EUROSTAT, 2009 FIGURES
2010年黄圣依健康瘦身推荐
绿色天然 瘦身更自然
一个疗程轻松减少20斤

美国天然花草塑身胶囊
纯天然植物萃取配方无副作用
畅销美国7年使用人群超100万
快速燃烧脂肪30天狂减15斤！

突破传统瘦身概念
创造绿色瘦身减肥新时代！
快速减肥，养颜排毒，抑制反弹，
定位消脂，安全无毒，水果配方，
效果迅速，绿色减肥，无需节食。

国家特批减肥保健产品
一切源于植物草本精华
无需运动 无需节食 轻松快乐减掉脂肪
适用于各类减肥人士
2 | Turkey

A Political Party Sex-Tape Scandal

Deniz Baykal, chairman of Turkey’s secular opposition Republican People’s Party, resigned on May 10 after a sex tape allegedly involving the married 71-year-old politician and a former aide circulated on the Internet. Baykal, an outspoken critic of the country’s Islamic-rooted government, accused the ruling party of being behind the leak, a claim that Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan dismissed as “just as ugly and worthless as the tape.” Baykal’s party will elect a new leader at the end of May.

3 | Russia

An Underground Disaster

On May 8, two explosions hit Russia’s largest underground coal mine, located in Siberia's Kemerovo region. Sixty were killed, and more than 30 were trapped up to 1,600 ft. (488 m) below the surface--so deep that experts said a rescue was nearly impossible. While mine owner Raspadskaya Coal Co. was unable to determine the source of the blasts, the cause is presumed to be a buildup of methane gas. Despite newly installed ventilators, the extreme depth of the mine makes it susceptible to such flare-ups.

4 | Washington

First Lady Tackles Childhood Obesity

The White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity, led by Michelle Obama, released 70 recommendations May 11 on how the U.S. could reduce its obesity numbers from the current rate of 20% to 5% by 2030. Among the suggestions: voluntary reductions in restaurant-portion sizes; voluntary self-regulation by the soft-drink industry; increased BMI screening by pediatricians; updated federal nutritional standards; increased use of locally grown food in school-lunch programs; and snack companies’ voluntary agreement to stop using cartoon characters to promote junk food.

5 | Philippines

Aquino Dynasty Extended

Benigno Aquino III never planned to run for President. But when his mother—beloved by Filipinos for leading the country's pro-democracy movement following her husband's assassination—died last August, Aquino was thrust into the spotlight as a potential national leader. On May 10, voters extended the family's legacy by electing the 50-year-old to the presidency in a landslide. The vote was not without mishap. At least 12 people were killed in separate election-related incidents.

The Aquinos: A Family of Notables

Mother: Corazon Aquino, President from 1986 to '92

Father: Senator Benigno Aquino Jr., assassinated in 1983
Sister: Kris Aquino III, "the Filipina Oprah"

Benigno Aquino III, elected President May 10

6 | Louisiana

STILL GUSHING

One day after execs from oil giant BP and its partners testified before Congress, investigators revealed that a hydraulic leak in a blowout-preventer mechanism may have caused the April 20 oil-rig explosion. Meanwhile, experts continued to try to halt the 5,000-bbl.-a-day Gulf of Mexico spill by covering the leak site with a small container that would siphon oil into a tanker. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar announced a plan to split the Minerals Management Service in two, eliminating conflicts of interest; one part would collect oil royalties, and the other would police energy companies.

7 | Libya

A Lone Survivor

On May 12, 103 people died when an Afriqiyah Airways plane crashed near the runway on its approach to the airport in Tripoli. A 10-year-old boy, one of more than 60 Dutch nationals on board, was the only known survivor of the crash, which was deemed the result of pilot error. The accident quickly drew attention to what some aviation experts consider to be subpar airport and airline safety standards across most of Africa.

8 | Utah

The Incumbent Blues

How much influence does the Tea Party movement have? Enough to unseat a three-term Senator, apparently. A rising anti-incumbent tide proved strong enough to prevent Utah Senator Robert Bennett from winning the nomination at his state's GOP convention. The blow was regarded as a warning to other incumbents nationwide not to underestimate voters' anger over issues such as the bank bailout and health care reform. The two Tea Party--backed candidates who bested Bennett--lawyer Mike Lee and businessman Tim Bridgewater--will square off for the Republican nomination in a June 22 primary.

9 | China

Kindergarten Killings

In the country's fifth major attack on children in less than two months, seven kindergartners were stabbed to death at a school in northwest China by a meat-cleaver-wielding man who then took his own life. Eleven other students were injured. Possibly fearing more of the copycat attacks that have left at least 65 children dead and 15 injured since March, Chinese censors scrubbed the news from the Internet.

10 | Iraq
A Most Deadly Day

Several U.S. officials said they would consider delaying this summer's scheduled drawdown of troops from Iraq after more than 100 people were killed in a series of shootings and suicide attacks on May 10. It was the deadliest day in Iraq so far this year. Some blamed the violence on lingering instability following March's contested election and subsequent recount. Hopes were raised for electoral progress when a campaign to bar candidates with ties to Sadaam Hussein's Baath Party was dropped.

* | What They're Installing in New York City: On May 10, the historic Apollo Theater began to add rectangular bronze plaques on the Harlem sidewalk under its iconic marquee in an effort to create its own version of Hollywood's star-filled Walk of Fame. The project--part of the Apollo's $96 million renovation plan--has been in the works since 2008 but was put on hold last year because of the recession. The first honorees to receive plaques were Quincy Jones, James Brown, Patti LaBelle, Little Richard, Ella Fitzgerald and Motown legends Smokey Robinson and Gladys Knight and the Pips.

Verbatim

Monday, May 24, 2010

'The greatest persecution of the church doesn't come from enemies on the outside but is born from the sin within the church.'

POPE BENEDICT XVI, offering the Catholic Church's strongest statement of fault to date in its widespread sexual-abuse scandal

'We are losing a battle, but losing a battle is not losing a war.'
U NYAN WIN, spokesman for jailed Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi's pro-democracy party; the group was dissolved May 7 after refusing to register for upcoming elections it has denounced as undemocratic.

'It doesn't make a difference whether I'm here or in Israel.'

ZABLON SIMINTOV, the last Jew in Afghanistan, declining to join his family in Israel even though he hasn't seen his children in 12 years; Afghanistan's Jewish community was once 40,000 strong.

'I was shocked to learn that the group was omitted from the list.'

CHARLES SCHUMER, New York Senator, urging the Obama Administration to add the Pakistan Taliban, blamed for the recent Times Square bomb threat, to the U.S. list of foreign terrorist groups.

'Pretty cool.'

DALLAS BRADEN, pitcher for the Oakland Athletics, on pitching MLB's 19th perfect game on May 9 against the Tampa Bay Rays.

'It's kind of like it says on the rearview mirror: Things may appear larger.'

HOPE DWORACZYK, a Playboy centerfold, on being photographed nude for a 3-D spread in the magazine's June edition.

'I was also going to give a graduation speech in Arizona this weekend, but with my accent, I was afraid they would try to deport me.'

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER, governor of California, ribbing Arizona's new immigration law during his commencement speech at Emory University in Atlanta.

TALKING HEADS

Donna Brazile

Calling for an end to punditry, in the Washington Post:

"I probably shouldn't say this--it's the definition of biting the hand that feeds me ... It's time to abolish punditry ... If your only credentials are 'GOP shill' or 'Democratic hack,' you've no business cluttering up the airwaves or the op-ed pages. My mama always told me that if you don't know what you're talking about, it's best to keep your mouth shut."

--5/7/10

Thomas Friedman

On recharging the economy in the New York Times:
"The meta-story behind the British election, the Greek meltdown and our own Tea Party is this: our parents were the Greatest Generation. [They made] enormous sacrifices and investments to build us a world of abundance ... The Baby Boomers [have] eaten through all that abundance like hungry locusts. Now we and our kids together need to become the Regeneration—one that raises incomes ... in a way that is financially and ecologically sustainable."

--5/8/10

Matt Taibbi

Writing on True/Slant about possible changes to Miranda rules:

"Memo to those Tea Party activists ... congratulations. You've just opened the door ... for a discussion on whether or not it makes sense to selectively suspend the constitutional rights of Americans ... Given that they're part of a movement that is driven almost entirely by a paranoid fear of the exploding powers of government, it's bizarre to see these people signing on for the corruption of the Fifth Amendment."

--5/10/10

Sources: AP; New York Times; CNN; Wall Street Journal; AP (2); Atlanta Journal-Constitution

The Moment

By MASSIMO CALABRESI Monday, May 24, 2010

The Obama administration's realism was on display during Afghan President Hamid Karzai's visit to Washington. The American ambassador to Kabul once famously called Karzai "not an adequate strategic partner," but President Obama needs him more than ever as the U.S. expands the fight against the Taliban to their stronghold in Kandahar. Karzai's last Washington visit garnered him cold photo ops; this time he got big dinners hosted by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Vice President Joe Biden. But effective realism depends on knowing who you're dealing with. Karzai's half-brother Ahmed is the provincial ruler of Kandahar and allegedly profits from the drug trade, which in turn funds the Taliban. (Ahmed himself denies any ties to the narcotics business.) It's one thing to live with the Karzai brothers' shortcomings; it's another to appear ignorant when they act against U.S. interests. St. Bernard said, "See everything, disregard much, change a little." As the U.S. presses into Kandahar, it risks seeing little, disregarding much and changing nothing.
LETTERS

Inbox

Monday, May 24, 2010

The TIME 100

The TIME 100 this year was full of big names, big people and big stories [May 10]. It was very interesting to read, but my favorite story was on Reem Al Numery. In high school I've been learning about the dangers of being a girl in an Islamic nation and was told these girls live their desperate lives without hope of change. It really moved me to see that a girl not much younger than me had the strength to stand up not only to her abusive father but also to an institution as powerful as the Islamic faith. Thank you, TIME, for not letting her get lost among the bigger names. Now she can serve as an inspiration to us all.

Emily Saeli, ORCHARD PARK, N.Y.

Really? You managed to find 99 guest essayists to praise their subjects with reviews ranging from glowing to fawning. Yet for the leader of the free world, who has faced the biggest challenges with skill and achievement, you chose to feature a dismissive, cavalier piece from his current biographer, who was apparently determined to show how much more discerning he is than the rest of us dolts who admire President Obama?

Barbara Rapp, WARRENTON, MO.

Thank you so much, TIME, for recognizing Neil Patrick Harris as one of the TIME 100. He is an amazing person whose stance as a gay male in today's discriminating society has been empowering. He has behaved as a celebrity who happens to be gay without being famous for it or being outrageously weird or any other stereotype.

Trey Amsler III, MURFREESBORO, TENN.

Anyone who is "influenced" by Lady Gaga needs psychiatric help. Shame on TIME for contributing to the dumbing down of America!

Mary Ann Houston, SPENCER, MASS.

I will turn 50 this year, and when I hear the live version of the rock song "Stranglehold," I still get goose bumps. For that I thank Ted Nugent. I won't dispute Nugent's admiration of Sarah Palin's "rugged individualism," but a "herculean work ethic"? Where does quitting your job as governor count as herculean? My impression of her is that she is uninformed about the issues she traverses the country screeching about.

Bob Beatty, NORTH HAVEN, CONN.

I really like Lady Gaga because, unlike a lot of popular artists' songs and lyrics nowadays, hers actually have some meaning behind them. However, her ridiculous wardrobe does not. I highly doubt that there's
any significance to her fiery metallic nipples or the statues she wears on her head. It only keeps her fans wondering what random thing she's going to do next.

Molly Scott, FOREST HILL, MD.

What a sad sign of the times that in the profiles of two men who have dedicated their lives to serving the nation (General Stanley McChrystal and Admiral Mike Mullen), the word patriot was not used. Yet it was used in the profiles of two others who have promoted divisiveness while making millions in the process: Sarah Palin (by Ted Nugent) and Glenn Beck (by Palin).

Michael Lerseth, VALLEJO, CALIF.

When I first started reading the 100, I kept thinking, Really? That person? But even though I might not have agreed with every pick, I found I did indeed agree that somehow the person made a positive impact. Bravo, and thank you for opening minds!

Heidi Swajanen, EBEN JUNCTION, MICH.

Partisanship Personified

Re 10 Questions with Karl Rove [May 10]: Rove's answer to what Democrats might do strategically going into the 2010 elections shows he's afraid that something might get done in a bipartisan way to help the economy grow. Read his words carefully: he does not want something good to happen for the economy this year. Period. This, in a nutshell, is exactly what's wrong with people like Rove and with our overall political climate right now (both Democrats and Republicans). To them, it's not about what's good for the American people. It's only about winning.

Chris Lindberg, BARRINGTON, ILL.

Debating Spanking

Re "The Long-Term Effects of Spanking" [May 3]: As a clinical psychologist, I find the study TIME cites--on spanking resulting in aggression later on--to be yet another one to uncover the obvious. If you hit an adult, he will retaliate immediately. If you strike a defenseless child, he will also hit back--as soon as he has grown old enough to inflict significant pain in a society that has been aggressive toward him. This is simple common sense.

John Thurston, EAU CLAIRE, WIS.

When my kids were growing up, we formed a babysitting co-op: 10 families with about 30 children. We all loved our kids. We all spanked our kids. I've had the privilege of watching these kids grow up; the oldest ones are now 15. While not perfect, they are all respectful, loving, happy teens and preteens. This method of discipline can be abused, but if done right, it can help produce amazing kids.

Therese Stenzel, TULSA, OKLA.
Testing a 5-year-old for aggression two to three weeks after being spanked will most likely reveal that he or she is still upset, not aggressive. Instead, why not test the millions of adults who were provided good discipline with a few swats on the rear? Studies like this usually set out to prove a point, not to find the truth.

Dick Rogers, CRESTVIEW, FLA.

Please. As a father of five wonderful adult children, I never disciplined them so they would "understand what motivated them to do something wrong." Rare spankings were needed to help them understand boundaries and the importance of obeying and respecting parental authority.

Richard Stanton, THREE RIVERS, CALIF.

Marriage: There Should Be an App for That

Re Belinda Luscombe's Essay "Revoking the Marriage License" [May 3]: Here's an easy way to eliminate the Larry King--Liz Taylor multiple-marriage syndrome. We should issue learners' permits, good for two years. After that amount of time, both parties would have to agree whether or not they wanted to renew it, i.e., get married. No lawyers, no alimony.

Philip Barnett, SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ.

Zsa Zsa Gabor married nine times. Jesse James and Tiger Woods are having sex with everyone in sight. Yet some feel that same-sex marriage is going to destroy the institution of marriage? Give me a break.

Matthew Merrill, SEATTLE

What ever happened to the days when you met someone, fell in love, got married, made love, then had babies and stayed together till death do you part? My husband Al and I said we were meant to be. We met when he was in the Navy. We knew each other two months before we married. I went from being an Army brat to a Navy bride. He was 21; I was 18. In June we will celebrate being happily married 56 years.

Jo Boever, PARRISH, FLA.

France and the Veil

Thanks for "Spotlight: France and the Veil" [May 3]. As a Muslim woman who chooses to cover herself voluntarily, I am extremely fortunate to be living in the United States, where the Constitution guarantees and respects my personal freedom and choice to practice my faith. It is incomprehensible how a ban on the veil (observed by merely 2,000 women) can help secure France's secular tradition. It would only fuel resentment and further alienate the Muslim population in Europe.

Mansura Bashir Minhas, MIAMI

If a Western woman is not allowed to wear a halter top or the like in many Muslim countries, why would France allow Muslims their own style of dress?
Loretta Kaczorowski, ALEXANDRIA, VA.

Did You Really Have To Go There?

Re 10 Questions with Sarah Silverman [May 3]: The reader's comment "I want to f___ Matt Damon" is unfunny, not newsy and lowers the bar for even the worst sort of journalism.

Sandy Cohen, NORTH PORT, FLA.

Please recycle this magazine and remove inserts or samples before recycling.
Jewellery

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