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ON THE COVER: Photo illustration by Keith Wright for WORLD; Graham: Diedra Laird/Charlotte Observer/KRT; Obama: Charles Rex Arbogast/AP
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Truth teller

Ruth Bell Graham didn’t need handlers or PR experts

I DON’T WANT YOU TO THINK IT WAS PART OF A typical morning at work to get a personal phone call from Mrs. Billy Graham. True, she lived just a few minutes down the road and had literally hundreds of friends in our community. But if we had bumped into each other at the grocery store—as had actually happened several years earlier—she wouldn’t have known me from Adam.

Now, it turned out, she had read a news feature in WORLD that she didn’t think we had gotten quite right. Could I drive out, stop by to see her, and let us talk it over? What she actually asked was whether she could “chew my ear” for a little while.

That was vintage Ruth Bell Graham. She didn’t beat around the bush. In this instance, she wanted me to know that our coverage of some aspects of U.S.-Chinese relationships had missed the mark. There were nuances, she said, that we should have picked up on but hadn’t. She reminded me that, having been born in China, she had kept her contacts there alive for an entire lifetime. She knew what she was talking about.

And she did. I didn’t end up agreeing with every detail of her interpretation of things. But I did realize that here was one of the world’s truly well-informed and intelligent people. She was in that sense a news man’s delight. My note-taking lagged far behind her torrent of words—and vigorous ideas.

“So,” I countered when she finally paused. “As I see it, Mrs. Graham, there are three possible ways for us at WORLD to respond. One would be to do a follow-up interview with you, giving you a chance to say for our readers what you’ve just said to me. We’d be happy to do that. Or, if you don’t want to be quite that visible, you might recommend someone else who could offer the same point-of-view—but frankly, we’d much rather have you do it. Or finally, maybe you simply want us to keep what you’ve said in the backs of our minds, and let it provide an additional perspective when we do our next story about China.”

“Oh no,” she protested ever so amiably. “It’s certainly the third option—if you do anything at all. I don’t mean at all to tell you how to run your magazine. I simply wanted to help you be as accurate as you can be.”

Then the zinger. “Before you leave,” she said with quiet but unmistakable awareness of the power at her disposal, “Mr. Graham’s in the next room. He really would like to meet you—if you have a few minutes.”

I’d been had. With full transparency and straightforward honesty, Ruth Graham had manipulated and maneuvered me right where she wanted me. No handlers; no public-relations experts. She could—and did—do all this very much on her own.

At her funeral last week, Ruth Graham’s son Franklin spun a few wonderful tales of his own about his feisty and powerful mother. Chasing a rattlesnake down their driveway with a hotdog fork. Crawling across the rooftop of their house so she could throw cold water through an upstairs window on her indolent and overly sleepy son.

But who should be surprised? For 64 years, Ruth Graham managed this very same thing with one of the world’s most influential and admired men. Here she was, a lifelong Presbyterian who had never conceded the fine points of her theology to the world-famous Baptist preacher she lived with. Why should she be daunted by overly confident outsiders or by her own sometimes rowdy children?

Speaking the truth candidly, but speaking it in unmistakable love, was a lifelong trademark of Ruth Bell Graham. I like to think Mrs. Graham inherited that wonderfully biblical trait from her father, L. Nelson Bell—who, incidentally, in 1942 founded the company that now publishes WORLD magazine. I also like to think that those of us who follow her, whether closely or from afar, may have learned to imitate her very notable example.
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**North Korea**

In a breakthrough, Pyongyang says it is ready to play nuclear disarmament, after months of stalling over a banking dispute. In mid-June the United States found a Russian bank willing to take the tainted, laundered $25 million in North Korean funds that had been sitting in a Macau bank blocking Pyongyang’s access to the international banking system.

Now negotiations may be in gear: North Korea invited International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors to monitor the shut down of its nuclear Yongbyon reactor, which will reportedly close completely by July. South Korea is poised to ship heavy fuel to the starved nation. Diplomats hail the movement as a success, but the North—which was supposed to close Yongbyon in April—is likely to issue new conditions as it extorts more aid out of the West in exchange for compliance.

**Middle East**

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas dissolved his unity government with Hamas after the militant group took Gaza by force.

Abbas’ Fatah faction has long walked a line between legitimacy and militancy—and now has a new opportunity to govern in the West Bank with U.S. and Israeli backing (story, p. 22). But Mahmoud Zahar, the leading Hamas figure in Gaza, warned that Hamas could take the fighting to Fatah in the West Bank—a more economically prosperous Palestinian area and more strategically vital for both Israel and Jordan.

**Politics**

President hopefuls Rudy Giuliani and John McCain announced they would not compete in the Iowa straw poll next month in order to focus on primary races ahead. Those races took on new significance after New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg stoked speculation that he will enter the presidential race as an independent candidate when he officially left the GOP on June 20. The now-unaffiliated Bloomberg insists he isn’t running, but added: “I do think the more people that run for office the better.” Meanwhile, all eyes remained on Republican Fred Thompson, who was expected to announce his candidacy on July 4. In the Democratic field, frontrunner Hillary Clinton reclaimed a 10-point lead over Barack Obama in national polls, but...
Obama gained ground in politically important South Carolina, where he shored up support on a recent visit to the state (story, p. 30).

NBA

If the NBA holds a championship series and nobody outside San Antonio and Cleveland watches it, does it make any noise? Ratings for this year’s NBA Finals featuring a four-game sweep by San Antonio over Cleveland were the worst ever for an NBA Finals series. For sports fans, it was a perfect storm of disinterest: The highly favored but boring Spurs swept the series of two small-market teams as expected. Neither team showed much offensive flash—only one game featured scores above 90—and not even the candle power of Cleveland’s LeBron James could light up the stage.

Disaster

Nine firefighters in Charleston, S.C., died of smoke inhalation and burns while fighting a massive blaze that swept through a furniture store on June 18. The deaths marked the nation’s worst loss of firefighters in a single day since 9/11, according to the U.S. Fire Administration.

The fallen ranged in age from 27 to 56, and included three captains. Three of the men had more than 20 years of firefighting experience. Charleston mayor Joseph P. Riley called the loss “difficult to fathom or quantify… This is a profession we must never take for granted.”

Medicine

President Bush vetoed a bill June 20 that would have allowed federally funded embryonic stem-cell research. It was the second time Bush vetoed stem-cell legislation and only the third veto of his administration. “The president does not believe it’s appropriate to put an end to human life for research purposes,” White House spokesman Tony Snow said. “That’s a line he will not cross.”

Democrats vowed to schedule an override vote—though passage is unlikely—and to attach a new measure to vital appropriations bills. But the president also threatened to veto those, including bills that contain “excessive levels of spending”—something he has not done before.

In vain they claim

CULTURE: Independence Day requires dependence upon God by MARVIN OLASKY

As our article on the recent rash of atheistic best-sellers (p. 58) notes, the hills are alive with the sound of musings about the purportedly increased role of religion in American public life. But, contra the alarmists, George W. Bush and others have merely tried to return Washington to the principles enunciated by George Washington.

The earlier George had two excellent, bedrock principles regarding religion and public policy. First, as he wrote in 1789, “Every man, conducting himself as a good citizen, and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience.” Second, if Americans stopped believing in God, the nation was in big trouble.

Here’s Washington’s ringing affirmation in his 1796 farewell address: “Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them.”

Washington offered specific warnings: “Where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion.”

He concluded, “Virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule, indeed, extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabric?”

The New York Times on June 14 complained that the Bush administration, instead of looking with indifference upon such shaking, “has recast the federal government’s role in civil rights by aggressively pursuing religion-oriented cases….” The word “recast” is truer than the Times probably intended: Its article suggested a radical change was underway, but “recast” actually means “cast again.” The administration’s policy is traditional, an attempt to reclaim what has been cast away.

(If you want to know more about the history, Stephen Mansfield’s Ten Tortured Words: How the Founding Fathers Tried to Protect Religion in America… And What’s Happened Since, a book published last month by Thomas Nelson, provides a good overview.)
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British idol

A South Wales mobile phone salesman stunned audience members and judges of the United Kingdom singing show, Britain’s Got Talent when he walked on stage and announced he would be singing opera in the American Idol-style contest. Judges, including uber-critic Simon Cowell (also of Idol), seemed to instantly disregard Paul Potts, who was hamstrung by a poorly fitting suit jacket, lumpy figure, and disastrous haircut. But moments after Potts opened his mouth to sing “Nessun Dorma,” the audience erupted into wild cheers and the judges’ countenance changed from discreet mocking to stunned silence. In the days following the event, which Potts won, millions watched Potts’ amazing performance on sites like YouTube.

YouFood

Authorities in Montreal are blaming internet sites like YouTube for fueling extreme food fights that are filmed by students and posted online. Police in Montreal needed three hours to quell a cafeteria food fight at a local high school that turned into a riot on June 13. It was the third large-scale high school food fight in a week in Montreal, suggesting students are attempting to one-up each other on the video-sharing site.

Old dog digs

The newest example of pet owner excess: nursing homes for dogs. For Japanese dog owners who can’t simply put Fido down in his old age, there’s now a dog nursing home north of Tokyo where canines can spend their golden years—for about $820 a month. “It is extremely cruel to force people who think of pets as their own children to care for animals who are crying all night long,” said Takao Kanai, who says he plans on opening seven such canine old-age homes.

Home rule

An Ontario judge’s decision is likely to crimp the lifestyle of 24-year-old Canadian Steven Cranley following his conviction for assaulting his former girlfriend. Judge Rhys Morgan effectively took Cranley off the relationship market, ruling he couldn’t have a girlfriend for three years. The judge encouraged Cranley to seek counseling for his diagnosed dependent personality disorder.

Streets of San Francisco

Something clicked in Karen Lodrick’s head the moment she saw a woman with a brown suede coat draped over her arm while waiting to order at a San Francisco Starbucks. Lodrick had seen the unique coat before: It was worn by a woman she saw in a bank security camera withdrawing money from her checking account. Face to face with a woman who had stolen her identity and cost her thousands in lost work, Lodrick did what every identity theft victim dreams of doing: She took off in hot pursuit of the Prada bag-wielding perpetrator. After tailing Maria Nelson for 45 minutes, Lodrick finally led police to apprehend her. Reflecting on the adventure to the San Francisco Chronicle, Lodrick criticized the thief’s priorities: “She had bad teeth and looked like she hadn’t bathed,” she said. “I thought, ‘You’re buying Prada on my dime. Go get your teeth fixed.’”

Off-road adventure

One wrong turn (and a bunch of alcohol) has landed a 24-year-old Colombian man visiting Rome in a lot of trouble. The young man mistakenly confused a historic staircase for a road and managed to drive his Toyota Celica down the famous Spanish Steps at a high rate of speed. The steps, a famous 18th-century landmark, are generally off limits to such activity, and the drunken escapade is believed to have damaged many of its 138 steps.
No mystery here

**MOVIE:** A classic detective turns hearts of young girls—and their mothers—to an old heroine  
by MEGAN BASHAM

LIKE OLD-FASHIONED THINGS,” Nancy Drew says to the girls making fun of her in her first big-screen incarnation since the ’30s. After watching her sleuthing antics for an hour and 40 minutes, a great many tween girls may surprise themselves by thinking, “I do too!”

Bringing the classic Nancy back to life in a new millennium with cell phones, iPods, and the internet poses obvious challenges. But rather than reinvent the heroine for modern times, screenwriter Tiffany Paulsen highlights her nostalgic appeal by moving her from River Heights (better known as Anytown, USA) to good ol’ La La Lanç. Once arrived, Nancy finds that she not only has the mystery of film star Dehila Draycott’s death to solve, but also the mystery of where the modesty, courtesy, and common sense of the teenage girls of Los Angeles disappeared to.

Nancy Drew’s plot is admittedly predictable, and the film (rated PG for mild violence and language) has ongoing anachronistic problems (Dehila Draycott is supposed to have been a star in the ’70s and ’80s, but her house and her movie clips make her look more like a contemporary of Jane Russell than Jane Seymour). But in spite of all this, the young, comedically gifted cast manages to pull it off.

As played by Emma Roberts (daughter of Eric and niece of Julia), Nancy boasts a plucky self-assuredness that inspires rather than annoys. Unlike her classmates, she’s smart and capable, cares more about being good than looking good, and isn’t particularly interested in what the boys think. In this day and age that’s pretty groundbreaking stuff, and I couldn’t help wondering why the strongest example of true feminism Hollywood has offered girls in years comes from a creation nearly eight decades old.

The hearts of mothers battered by Paris Hilton and Bratz dolls will get a lift from an afternoon out with their daughters enjoying the wholesome fun of Nancy Drew. And in a perfect world, their girls will get a new role model, too.

In her dreams

**MOVIE:** *Waitress* seeks escape, Southern Gothic style  
by MINDY BELZ

FROM THE MOMENT SHE SPIES the two pink lines on her EPT, waitress Jenna Hunterston is as willfully determined to keep her baby as she is not to want it. “I respect this baby’s right to thrive,” she declares, if through clinched teeth.

What is surprising about *Waitress* (rated PG-13 for sexual content, language, and thematic elements) is the independent film’s ability to introduce the cliché—and then upend it.

Jenna (Keri Russell), whose unwanted pregnancy by her lout of an abusive husband Earl (Jeremy Sisto) will dash her hopes of entering the $25,000 pie bake-off that is her ticket out, is primed for grim humor and that sort of illicit affair audiences love to hate cheering for. Yet her rescue, in this case a just-in-from-the-North ob-gyn named Dr. Pomatter (Nathan Fillion), is a self-described neurotic, who—despite describing Jenna’s famous pies as “biblically good”—offers something less than redemption.

An exceptional Andy Griffith plays the resident Joe of Joe’s Pie Diner, less cranky grandpa, it turns out, than sober conscience. The diner is set at the end of a dusty delta lane, but once the waitresses get their Southern drawls right and don’t overdo the gum-chewing sass. *Waitress* upholds food as redemption but it’s less sensual than *Like Water for Chocolate*, less serious than *Babette’s Feast*. Dreams for Jenna are shaped like pies but reality is a sweaty Southern Gothic delivery room and a lusty baby’s cry.
Power for good

MOVIE: What’s a home with a family when you can be out saving the world? by JOHN DAWSON

In the annals of hypotheticals, nothing captures imaginations like superpower questions. But beyond the standard Flight vs. Invisibility conundrum comes an even more vexing question: If you had a superpower, how would you use it? Would you use that power for good or evil? To fight crime or to get to Paris without the hassle of booking a flight?

Comic books—and films based on comics—always are keen to explore such hypotheticals. That’s the case for Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer, rated PG. As the film opens, two of the four—the elastic Reed Richards (Mr. Fantastic played by Ioan Gruffudd) and the fading Sue Storm (the Invisible Woman played by Jessica Alba)—are preparing to marry. Naturally, the job of superhero interferes with their wedding plans. And Richards must balance his attention between his annoyed fiancé and a growing threat by a mysterious doom prophet riding a silver surfboard.

Here’s the crux of the hypothetical: Faced with the possibility of a normal married life with children, Storm convinces Richards to retire once the matter with the Silver Surfer is closed. Naturally, Invisible Woman shuns the Fantastic Four’s tabloid lifestyle and wants to fade into anonymity. Richards makes promises to his fiancé, but his heart isn’t in it.

Good thing, too. When the Silver Surfer’s total-Earth-destruction plot becomes evident, Richards is ready with just the right tools. The Thing, played by Michael Chiklis (always a shock to consider that The Thing also was The Commish), is ready as usual, although Human Torch (Chris Evans) loses some of his mojo from a previous encounter with the Surfer.

But even that isn’t enough. Eventually the Fantastic Four need a superpower showcase to avert crisis and save the world. Without them, it may have been exploded into an asteroid field. And that’s the whole point: With so much power and responsibility, how can they aspire to be normal?
Gravitation Defyer Shoes from the impact research technology lab

Advanced Technology in Footwear! The first shoes that make you feel like you are Defying Gravity. Walk with the stride of a champion. Walk with comfort. Be active. Walk taller and with more confidence than ever!

The Gravity Defyer Shoes are the culmination of years of scientific research and one man’s relentless passion for solving his nephew's debilitating health problem. Two parallel stories that cross paths on the way to inventing the most technologically advanced shoe in the world. This is the story of the Gravity Defyer Shoes.

The Science Behind the Shoes

It started with the research of rubber for the construction and automobile industries. Scientists investigating shock absorption for buildings and automobiles discovered a special polymer that was both lightweight and absorbed shock and vibration. The research lead to the development of the very first Gravity Defyer Shoe: the Catapult MMX3. Others in the sport shoe industry had been trying for decades to produce a shoe that would provide the shock absorption and energy reciprocating power of the Gravity Defyer Shoes. However, the entire shoe industry was surprised when Alexander Innovation Wizard launched the first of its kind energy reciprocating shock absorbing sole in a dress shoe nonetheless!

Tragedy Precedes Passion

In 1998, a tragic event affected Alex's extended family. His budding 14 year old nephew, a promising young man, was diagnosed with a cancerous growth in his heel. After heel replacement surgery, Alex's nephew was given little chance of ever living pain free as he would have to have constant adjustments to his heel to keep his artificial heel in alignment with the rest of his young, quickly growing limbs. Overwhelmed by the pain during years of rehabilitation, Alex's nephew was losing self-confidence and the hope of enjoying his youth.

A Sudden Impact

In 2003, Alex was reading about research being conducted by the automobile industry. These were the same researchers that had discovered the lightweight polymer that would eventually be the foundation of Alex's Impact Research Technology Laboratory and the Gravity Defyer Shoes. As Alex was sitting on the airplane, he suddenly realized that planes and automobiles were being tested under shock and vibration, and that these could be applied to the human body. Alex had a sudden realization! If he combined inflatable tires with spring shocks... Having just read about the research being done halfway around the world, Alex was inspired to build the Impact Research Technology Lab in order to find a shoe that would be comfortable enough to allow his nephew to walk without pain.

What is the Gravity Defyer Shoe?

It was scientifically constructed with a hidden 6mm (1/8") shock absorber under the heel that releases its reciprocating resistance power each time you step. As your weight changes to the balls of your feet, the hidden shock absorber generates upward pressure, rebounding your body upward and propelling you forward in life.

Have a More Active Lifestyle

The Gravity Defyer Shoes are guaranteed to be the most comfortable and relaxing pair of shoes you will ever own. For that simple reason, you will want to get up and walk everywhere you go. You might find yourself parking further away from the grocery store, shopping mall, or the office just to get extra time walking in your Gravity Defyer Shoes.

It is nearly impossible to stand still with the Gravity Defyer shoes! As soon as you slip your feet into the Gravity Defyer Shoes, you feel energized with power as the scientifically designed springs push you from your heels to your toes and put you in constant movement. You might just find yourself joining a dance class soon. With all this extra activity in your life you may even find yourself losing inches around your waist and wearing a smaller pair of pants. One thing is for certain: your lifestyle will change!

Appear Nearly 2" Taller

The confidence that comes with being taller and having proper posture is also yours with the Gravity Defyer Shoes. You will gain nearly two inches (2") of height without looking like you are wearing platform elevator shoes. The elegant design of the Gravity Defyer Shoes boosts you to new heights in your life without a thick looking outside. The hidden 6mm (1/8") shock absorber provides you with just a little extra boost in height without slapping on an extra pad of rubber to the bottom of the shoe.

Ease Joint Pain and Pressure on Your Spine

It's almost as if Acolas, the Greek god of wind, himself has taken his powerful wind out of his bottles and put it into each pair of the Gravity Defyer Shoes. Your entire body will receive an energy burst when you slip on the Gravity Defyer Shoes because your joints and spine will no longer feel the full impact of your high impact life. The basic findings by the scientists of the Impact Research Technology Lab were that the combination of lightweight rubber and lightweight, durable springs will reduce the impact and force of gravity on our entire body much the same way that a suspension system helps reduce the impact on an automobile and airplane.

Jump Higher and Walk Faster

These ethereal shoes will transport you through life with such vigor that your friends and family will hardly be able to recognize you. The Gravity Defyer Shoes will power your step, making your steps longer and your jumps higher. You might find that you are walking faster and you may even find yourself showing up to those important meetings at work early! You might even find yourself joining a local basketball league.

Look like a Million Dollars

We all have them, an expensive pair of dress shoes for those "special occasions". The shoes that would make secret agents wear to the black tie party where they end up doing some reconnaissance before they are chased around a European city by evil henchmen. The kind of dress shoes that show class, style, and sophistication but are so uncomfortable you can't wait to take them off. Designed by the best shoe designers from three continents, the Gravity Defyer Shoes provide you with all the sophistication and comfort needed to keep up with the best of the world's famous secret agents.

Not Just Comfort and Style

The Gravity Defyer Shoes are each handcrafted using the finest leather available. Utilizing the best material and components, each shoe is sewed together by hand, ensuring the attention to detail necessary to construct the most comfortable shoe in the world. Every shoe is also sent through a comprehensive quality assurance process to ensure that each pair of Gravity Defyer Shoes adheres to the highest standards set forth by the Alexander Innovation Wizard.

Relieve your feet, ankles, knees, hips, and spine. Give your whole body a break from the pressures of your daily life. And gain the confidence that comes with exemplary posture and added height without appearing like you are wearing platform shoes. The Gravity Defyer Shoes will provide you with access to a breakthrough in your active lifestyle all while looking like a distinguished gentleman deserving of a cover story in a quality men's magazine.

Alexander Innovation Wizard offers full and complete satisfaction or your money back. He stands by his guarantee. "Wear the shoes for 30 days. If you are not completely satisfied, I will come and pick up the shoes from you and I'll pay for the shipping." He is offering something no other shoe company is offering. "If you find that your pair of Gravity Defyer Shoes is a little too big or a little too small, I'll come and pick them up. I'll send you the right size at no additional shipping cost to you. But that's not all that he wants to do to make sure you are comfortable with your purchase."

"I guarantee the manufacturing for the life of the shoe! If you encounter any mechanical problem with your shoes that are the result of a manufacturing defect, send them back. I'll send you a new pair of shoes, even if you've been wearing them for 20 years or more." The lifetime guarantee does not include regular wear and tear, but Alexander is confident in the quality of the Gravity Defyer Shoes. Prices start at just $129.95 + shipping and handling for either black or mocha shoes (with 8 handsome styles). The Gravity Defyer Shoes are sure to become your favorite dress shoe for every occasion. You can find out more by calling 1-800-429-0039 or by visiting www.gadgetuniverse.com/7AWLM
**Category 7**
*Bill Evans and Marianna Jamson*

**Plot:** A wealthy businessman learns how to control weather. His personal weaknesses and a long-standing grudge cause him to use this power to strengthen a hurricane bound for Manhattan.

**Gist:** This compelling page-turner raises questions about the limits of scientific exploration and the way sin and greed can pervert something that appears good into its opposite. Meteorologist Evans makes sure the plot doesn’t veer too far into fantasy, and co-writer Jamson keeps the plot moving along. Warning: Bad language.

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**False Witness**
*Randy Singer*

**Plot:** A Chinese Christian has figured out the algorithm that provides a fast way to factor prime numbers. Before long the criminal Chinese Triad are in pursuit of the formula, which is of great value for internet security. An American bounty hunter, his wife, and several law students are at risk.

**Gist:** Regent Law School professor Randy Singer knows how to craft page-turning legal thrillers that combine courtroom drama, heart-pounding action, and tough questions about the pursuit of justice—and the danger posed by those with too much power to use in pursuit of noble ends.

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**Oracle Bones**
*Peter Hessler*

**Content:** The discovery of Chinese “oracle bones”—fragments of inscribed turtle shells—pushed back the date for knowledge about China’s earliest history. Hessler uses the search to understand these artifacts as a means to explore past and present Chinese identity.

**Gist:** Hessler is a gifted observer and storyteller whose knack for striking up friendships with unlikely people, and his commitment to documenting their changing lives, make him a great guide for understanding China’s complexity. Only quibble: He ignores Christianity’s explosive growth there.

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**The Naming of the Dead**
*Ian Rankin*

**Plot:** Detective Inspector John Rebus and Detective Sergeant Siobhan Clarke must solve the murders of three ex-cons whose names were featured on a website that exposes sexual predators. Meanwhile, London subway bombings, a G8 summit, and the apparent suicide of a government minister complicate their task.

**Gist:** Rankin, a bestselling British author, masterfully creates a realistic and gritty world. His cops are deeply flawed, yet some are heroic—not because they are successful, but because they persevere even though temptation is always present.

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**Spotlight**

Khaled Hosseini’s *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (Riverhead, 2007), is the much-anticipated follow-up to *The Kite Runner*. By weaving Afghanistan’s tumultuous recent decades into the story of two women whose lives come together by marriage to the same violent man, Hosseini helps us to understand the country’s sadness.

His first section tells of Mariam, the illegitimate daughter of an affluent businessman who marries her off (at age 15) to a 40-year-old Kabul cobbler. Her failure to bear him a son leads to a life of drudgery and beatings. Years later the cobbler takes another wife, Leila, a 14-year-old orphan. The story follows these two women—at first competitors and then friends—as they struggle to survive.

Hosseini’s gifted storytelling and memorable characters, combined with the frequent brutality of Afghan life and the steady flow of tragic events, make *A Thousand Splendid Suns* gripping but somber reading—maybe not ideal for lying on a beach but perfect for keeping perspective when annoyed by flight delays.
"We are friends with the Americans, the Anglo-Saxons, but it's economic war."
French lawmaker Pierre Lasbordes on advice from French defense experts that government agencies avoid BlackBerry use. They fear that U.S. intelligence agencies might snoop on e-mail messages.

"It was like a 30-foot tornado of flames."
Mark Hilton of Orangeburg, S.C., on the collapse of a furniture store roof during a June 18 fire in Charleston, S.C., that killed nine firefighters (see p. 13).

"We just had to sit like sardines in a can."
Traveler Jocelyn Ashberg of Capetown, South Africa, on being stranded on the tarmac in Chicago on June 20 after a United Airways computer malfunction halted all departures for two hours.

"The annulment process was allowing us to cop out of taking any responsibility for the choices we made. It wasn't that God didn't bless the union. To put if off on God I didn't feel was valid."
Sheila Rauch Kennedy, wife of former U.S. Rep. Joseph Kennedy II from 1979 to 1991 and mother of his two children, on her decade-long fight against the annulment of her marriage that the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston granted to Rep. Kennedy. She said last week that Rome had overturned the annulment.
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Fighting chance
The battle in Gaza is a humanitarian and security nightmare—and an opportunity for anti-Hamas Palestinians to start fresh

By JILL NELSON

IFEX GAZA HAS NEVER BEEN EASY, and Abu Nada weathered the storms despite hostile gunfire and threatening text messages sent to his phone courtesy of Hamas. But when the militant group took over the coastal territory on June 14 and seized the Fatah-controlled television station where Nada was general manager, he had seen enough.

Without risking a trip home to pack his belongings, Nada joined the exodus of hundreds of Gazans seeking passage into Israel, traversing the back roads to avoid Hamas checkpoints and even crawling at times to reach the border. Thanks to contacts in Israel, Nada was able to cross. Oth- ers weren’t as fortunate.

After five days of intense factional fighting and more than a year of attempting a coalition government, Hamas gained the upper hand over Fatah forces in Gaza, and two Palestinian mini-states emerged: Hamas now controls the Gaza Strip and the secular Fatah party rules the West Bank. In a move Hamas leaders called a coup, Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas promptly fired Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh, and a new government was formed.

Israelis—concerned about the humanitarian and security crises ensuing just yards away—have been patrolling their borders while playing a limited role in the Palestinian shakedown.

Security was everyone’s top concern in the days surrounding the quasi-civil war. In a multi-faceted lockdown, Israel and Egypt immediately closed their border crossings while Hamas militia set up checkpoints on their end, trying to prevent a mass exodus and hunt down Fatah leaders wanted by the terrorist group.

As many as 600 Gazans set up camp in the stench-filled passage into Israel, caught between Israeli tanks on the one side and Hamas forces and public executions on the other. A select number of injured civilians, humanitarian cases, and Fatah officials were allowed to pass through the tightened borders, but the rest were turned away by Israeli forces concerned about terrorist infiltration.

“When you see your friends being killed in front of your eyes, when you see Hamas fighters killing the wounded, stopping ambulances, storming houses and security officers, this leads you to one thing: to get away,” Preventative Security officer Ahmed Sawan said.

ALMOST TWO YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE 3,000 Israeli settlers packed their belongings and bid Gaza farewell. In a controversial “land for peace” initiative, Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip, entrusting the small piece of land to the Palestinians with hopes of propelling forward the stalled peace process. Things did not go as planned.

Hamas emerged as the victor in parliamentary elections at the beginning of 2006, earning the right to form the coalition government but still refusing to acknowledge past peace initiatives or Israel’s right to exist. Although Israel maintains control over Gaza airspace and monitors the border crossing with Egypt via video link, weapons and explosives are frequently smuggled into the territory, and Qassam rockets are common intrusions in Israeli towns nearby.

Shlomo Dror, the Israeli Defense Forces Coordinator for Activities in the Territories, told...
NO MAN'S LAND: Palestinians wait in a passageway leading to the border with Israel, hoping it will allow them transit to the West Bank; West Bank residents watch Abbas on TV on June 20 (bottom left); Hamas supporters protest Abbas' speech (bottom right).
WORLD: he expects an increase of illegal activity under Hamas rule in Gaza: “We have to remember that we have a force now that is actually connected to Iran and connected to Islamic terror organizations all over the Middle East.”

But border closings mean Gazans have limited access to basic supplies already scarce in the impoverished state, and some fear a humanitarian crisis is on the horizon. Prior to the hostile takeover, Israelis transferred necessities through Fatah leaders at the borders, refusing to deal with Hamas. Dror says the government is addressing this new scenario, searching for a way to help Gazans without aiding Hamas: “Hamas is calling to destroy us. It’s not in our interest to assist the government.”

Hussein Ibish, a senior fellow at the American Task Force on Palestine, says al-Qaeda does not appear to be a major player in the recent strife, but cautions that further deterioration in Gaza’s crowded and poverty-stricken core could result in al-Qaeda influence down the road: “The petri dishes that give rise to popular support for the Salafist jihadist movement and the al-Qaeda phenomenon are these pockets of extreme over-population and extreme poverty in and around numerous Arab cities.”

Since fighting subsided, Israel has allowed crucial medical supplies to be sent into Gaza, and a June 19 food shipment helped ease concerns about the 1.4 million Palestinians trying to survive with a lackluster economy and international isolation.

While Gaza has retreated into further seclusion, the prospects for the Palestinian government in the West Bank may be looking a bit brighter. “This is a very dark cloud,” Ibish said, “but if there is an opportunity, it certainly has to do with rebuilding ties to the outside world, including to the Arabs.”

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas was immediately surrounded by international efforts to embolden his newly invented Hamas-free government. During their June 19 meeting in Washington, both President Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert affirmed Abbas as the legitimate ruler of the Palestinian people. The United States and the European Union pledged to end a 15-month embargo and restore vital aid, and Israel “road map” to peace may need to be redrawn. A myriad of options are being thrown on the table from all sides, including calls from the Israeli right to retake and occupy the Gaza Strip. While Dror doesn’t deny the possibility of Israeli forces entering Gaza to cripple militant activities, a full-scale occupation is highly unlikely, he said: “We didn’t get out of Gaza in order to go back into Gaza. It’s in the Israeli interests to stay out of Gaza.”

Other options circulating in the fringes include returning the West Bank to Jordan and Gaza to Egypt or absorbing the West Bank and all its citizens into Israel proper (both highly unlikely).

Despite the rebellion in Gaza, Ibish still exalts the two-state solution as the only option for Palestinians and believes Hamas will eventually realize the folly of its ways: “This moment of Hamas triumph in Gaza I think is ultimately going to be short-lived. In the end, Gaza does not have an independent future, and I think that’s going to be clear sooner or later.”

But from the Israeli Defense Forces’ perspective, Dror sees a division between Gazans and West Bank residents that runs deeper than politics. West Bank residents are more educated and have a higher economic and family status than their counterparts. Most West Bank residents, he says, are also willing to disavow violence and engage in dialogue, while Gazans have chosen the road less peaceful: “We knew before how violent [Hamas] could be. Now we’ve seen what he can do to his brother. Think what he can do to other people.”

DEEP DIVISION: Hamas supporters burn a poster of Abbas during a protest in Gaza, on June 20 (left); A demonstration supporting Fatah in the West Bank on June 21 (right).

ABBAS DIDN’T WASTE ANY time proving the legitimacy of his government: After firing Hamas leader and Prime Minister Haniyeh, he promptly replaced him with economist Salam Fayyad, a favorite in the international arena and a leader Ibish describes as one of the “cleanest and most honest figures in Palestine.” Fayyad formed an emergency government on June 17, and Abbas called President Bush the following day to tell him it was time to restart Mideast peace talks.

But with militants in Gaza straying far from current peace initiatives, the
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Remembeing Ruth

Thousands journey to North Carolina retreat center to celebrate "the glue that held many parts" of the Graham lives together by JOEL RELZ
If the folks charged with planning the funeral of Mrs. Billy Graham miscalculated a bit on one or two logistical details, consider the difficulty of their assignment: Plan for a gathering of thousands, they were told—give or take a few thousand. The crowd will include some prominent people, both as hosts and as guests, so security will be an issue. The media might well swarm the place, but then again, the media might just ignore it. Summer thunderstorms are possible.

And oh, yes. No one knows exactly when all this will happen.

That’s the nature of a VIP funeral. The guest list is a guess list—especially when the service is for an older person. Ruth Bell Graham’s osteoarthritis had crippled her for many months; she was receiving nourishment via a feeding tube; then came word late in May that pneumonia was also taking its toll. The end seemed near—but “near” doesn’t tell several hundred waiting volunteers exactly when they’ll need to spring into quiet action, implementing months of painstaking preparation.

The preparation showed, loud and clear, even though the big public event was just 48 hours after Mrs. Graham’s death—which itself came only four days after her 87th birthday. The hurried schedule was dictated by the heavy summer booking of the 2,000-seat Anderson Auditorium at Montreat Conference Center in North Carolina, just a few blocks from the Graham’s mountain home. The Saturday afternoon time slot was the only opening available amid summer camps and conferences. But it also proved a handy time for a full house, many gathering two and even three hours early just in case seats might be hard to come by. Three closed-circuit overflow facilities were ready, but not needed.

The long wait was just what many guests needed for a quiet time to chat with folks not seen for years. With an hour to go, presiding minister Richard White stepped up to test the sound system: “The Lord is my shepherd,” he said a couple of times. “I shall not want.” Glenn Wilcox, whose travel agency had coordinated Graham events all over the world for the last 40 years, found friends everywhere. Duane Littfin, president of Wheaton College (where Ruth Bell and Billy Graham first met),

had flown with his wife from Chicago that morning. “Strong, steady, and dauntless,” Littfin said of Mrs. Graham. “She was the glue that held many of the parts of their lives together.”

Elizabeth Dole (R-N.C.), senator to the Grahams and wife of former presidential candidate Bob Dole, came in not long before the service began, as did Graham friends as varied as author Joel Eareckson Tada, actress Andie MacDowell, televangelist Robert Schuller, and politician’s wife Lynda Johnson Robb.

All this for the woman sometimes referred to as the “first lady of evangelical Protestantism in America.” Born in China to missionary parents (her father, L. Nelson Bell, was also a notable surgeon, writer, churchman, and promising baseball player), as a girl, Ruth hated the thought of going off to boarding school in what is now North Korea—and actually prayed when she was 11 that she could die a martyr. “I prayed that she wouldn’t,” says her sister Rosa Montgomery, “and my prayers were more effective than hers.”

By everyone’s telling—including her husband Billy—she anchored the Graham family while he toured the world for his evangelistic crusades. Her intellect, wit, and personal presence would have allowed her center stage wherever she might have wanted to go. But her clear desire was to be home with her three daughters and two sons. And to make the Graham home a haven to many, including down-and-outers who sometimes wandered by.

A vignette of the legendary Graham hospitality waited on each of the 2,000 seats at the funeral: a bottle of water, a fan, and a complimentary copy of Ruth Graham’s popular book of photos and poems, SLITING BY MY LAUGHING FIRE.

A big part of the crowd, of course, included present and past staff members from the Grahams’ offices, the Graham radio stations, the Cove conference center near Asheville, Graham headquarters in Charlotte 100 miles to the east, and the headquarters of Samaritan’s Purse 80 miles north.

Hundreds wandered to the front of the big auditorium to pause next to the closed plywood coffin, one of two matching items fashioned by volunteer prisoners in Louisiana. “They tell me,” said Robert Seybold of Charleston, WV., “that it cost only $200. And it’s a whole lot more beautiful than the gaudy metal models.” Seybold and his wife had gotten up at 4 that morning to make the five-hour drive to attend the service.

The service itself—both faithful and feisty—painted an accurate picture of the woman whose memory so many had come to honor. From a robust Doxology to the bagpipe-accompanied 23rd Psalm, and even with George Beverly Shea’s solo in between, traditionalism was dominant. The audience loved the hearty storytelling from a variety of siblings and children; if Ruth’s older sister Rosa went on a bit long, listeners didn’t seem as worried as the schedulers were.
And if biblical evangelism was the steady theme of the Grahams' long lives, no message could have been more pertinent than the straightforward warning from the Grahams' pastor, Richard White: "If you leave here today thinking Ruth Graham was a great woman, then you will have missed the main point of her life. Ruth Graham knew herself to be a sinner who needed the grace of a great God."

As the service ended, the Grahams' five children, with their spouses, stationed themselves at the auditorium's several doors to greet visitors. And as they left, some remembered—as had WORLD writer and one-time Graham staffer Ed Plowman—Mrs. Graham's aversion in any big event to riding with her husband in the lead car. "He was often driven in limousines, especially in other countries," Plowman recalled, "usually accompanied by a church leader or two, an aide or two, and sometimes a state official. Ruth insisted on riding in the bus or van with the rest of the party. She didn't want to take up space in the car that could be used by a national leader or other VIP. Ruth enjoyed being with us common people."

On this particular Saturday, though, Ruth Bell Graham was in the lead car—a black Cadillac hearse on its way to the newly prepared gravesites at the recently dedicated Graham museum in Charlotte. This time, her famous husband was in the supporting role, a lonely passenger in the limousine that was just behind. ☺

**Woman of letters**

Ruth Graham learned from great writers past and present, and taught a few lessons all her own by STEPHEN GRIFFITH

When I asked Ruth Graham on our first meeting to name her favorite book, without hesitation she answered, "Men of the Covenant." Surprised, I responded, "Do you mean Alexander Smellie's book about the persecution of the Scottish Church?" She just smiled and I suddenly realized it was more a test for me than for her. We became fast friends.

Over the years I served as her book developer, editor, agent, and occasionally as the collator of her notes into rough chapters. We spent many hours talking books, poetry, theology, as well as details of her life. She also always asked about, and showed interest in, the mundane details of my life.

I spent many hours rummaging through her famous pack-rat attic looking for notes, photos, and other odds-and-ends. When it became difficult for her to climb the stairs, she would sit on the bottom step trumpeting instructions and asking for a play-by-play. She only asked that I not look through one particular box: the one containing love letters between Ruth and Billy. I never yielded to the temptation.

I realized, in the two days between her death and her funeral, that I knew Ruth Bell Graham better than I knew anyone else in my life. And I have also learned more from her than anyone else.

Her often hilarious take on life was never at the expense of someone else. Her humor was self-deprecating and according to her, the material was endless. Putting the car in forward instead of reverse and careening off a cliff into a tree would be something many of us would rather not be circulated. It was a story she delighted in and she insisted we tell in several books. In fact, today if you look down the cliff in front of the Graham house, you will see a stop sign attached to a tree at the bottom of the hill.

Also Christ-like was her compassion. She would give someone the dress off her back. In fact, she did. Once an African pastor at a world evangelism conference felt he could not return home without something for his wife. Ruth, hearing the distress in his voice, found something to change into and gave him the dress she was wearing to give to his spouse.

Ruth was the most well-read person I've ever met. Her knowledge was vast—biblical knowledge, Puritan writings, current non-fiction, and some popular fiction (Jan Karon and Patricia Cornwall were great friends, but so were C.S. Lewis, G.K. Chesterton, and George MacDonald, men she only knew from their books). Although I tried hard to keep up with her reading, I never had her unique alchemy of turning knowledge into wisdom.

No one was as loyal in friendship as Ruth Graham. If you stopped being friends with Ruth, it was something you did, not her. The nearest thing to judgment I received from her was when my hair was down to my shoulders. Instead of suggesting I get a haircut, she gave me some of her scrunchies to pull it back.

When I study the attributes and character of Jesus, it is Ruth that illustrates His love, faith, meekness, compassion, forgiveness, peace, gentleness, and goodness. One of my great regrets will be never finishing our last book, How to Marry a Preacher and Remain a Christian. The book would have been funny, compassionate, erudite, loving toward her husband, and practical in her advice to spouses of ministers and evangelists. It would have been just like the Ruth I knew and loved. I will miss her dearly.

—Stephen Griffith is a book editor who worked with Ruth Graham for more than 20 years.
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SOUTHERN CHARM
BARACK OBAMA makes important time in South Carolina: “If he can derail Clinton here, he can win the nomination” by JAMIE DEAN in Greenville, S.C.

WHEN SEN. BARACK Obama (D-III.) strode into a shopping mall in Greenville, S.C., he wasn’t hunting for sales. Instead, the Democratic presidential candidate told an energetic crowd of nearly 3,500 supporters packed into the atrium of Greenville Technical College: “All we’re selling here today is hope, change, and a new kind of politics.”

So far in South Carolina, those promises sell: While Obama trails Democratic frontrunner Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY.) by double digits in national polls, he firmly leads Clinton and other Democratic contenders in South Carolina, an early primary state.

Clemson University political scientist Dave Woodard told WORLD that's significant for Obama: "If he can derail Clinton here, he can win the nomination.”

Obama hasn’t yet derailed Clinton in South Carolina, but he has widened the gap. According to a June 18 Mason-Dixon poll, Obama leads the state with 34 percent of likely Democratic primary voters. Clinton garners 25 percent, and John Edwards trails in third place with 12 percent.

That’s a striking reversal for Obama, who trailed behind Clinton and Edwards in the state just four months ago. It’s also striking considering Obama’s first-quarter performance in South Carolina: The candidate visited the state fewer times and raised less money here than either Clinton or Edwards. (While Clinton raised $36,100 in the state, Obama brought in $31,811. South Carolina native Edwards hauled in more money in the state than any other presidential candidate: $186,109.)

At least part of Obama’s success in South Carolina stems from the support of black voters, who make up about half of Democratic primary voters in the state. Recent polls show that black voters in South Carolina overwhelmingly favor Obama. (National polls show Clinton leading Obama among black voters elsewhere.)

But while gaining support from black voters is key to winning South Carolina and building momentum across the country, Obama’s recent swing through
the South proved the candidate is also determined to cast a wide campaign net, and capture as many votes from across the spectrum as possible.

Capturing votes in Greenville began with a vigorous campaign to capture names and addresses at a June 15 rally. Local attendees picking up free tickets for the event filled in contact information on a sign-in sheet. As they wrapped around the mall waiting to file into the rally, campaign volunteers distributed pens and asked attendees to write the same contact information on their paper tickets. When the doors finally opened, another set of campaign workers stood at the entrance, checking each ticket to make sure every person provided a name and address.

Once inside, supporters crowded into the mall’s atrium, and began the long wait for Obama to appear. Two hours later, the sturdy crowd still stood shoulder-to-shoulder as the 1970s hit “Give Me Just a Little More Time” blared through stage speakers. But the tiring wait didn’t drain the crowd’s energy, and when Obama bounded onto the stage about 30 minutes later than scheduled, he met boisterous cheers and a sea of blue “Obama ’08” signs.

The candidate also met a decidedly diverse crowd, with an even mixture of black and white supporters. In a preacher-like cadence, Obama told supporters one of his favorite parts of campaign events is “looking out on crowds of black folks and white folks, Asian folks and Native American folks. . . . It tells me that there is a hunger for change in America.”

The senator struck a similar chord during his first campaign visit to South Carolina in February when he told a racially diverse crowd at the Columbia Convention Center: “Twenty years ago, nobody would have believed this crowd right here in South Carolina.”

But Obama was mindful of directly addressing black voters as well. He loaded his half-hour stump speech with references to the civil rights movement of the 1960s, saying it inspired him to enter politics. Earlier in the day, at Mount Moriah Baptist Church in nearby Spartanburg, Obama sharply criticized black fathers who abandon their families. “Too many black men simply cannot afford to raise a family—and too many have made the sad choice not to.”

The candidate called on more black fathers to be responsible, and the government to pour more money into inner-city neighborhoods entrenched in poverty. In a speech to black ministers in Washington, D.C., earlier this month, Obama called on the government to expand job programs and improve schools in low-income areas, and to provide more support to ex-offenders trying to find jobs after prison. He warned that a “quiet riot” of despair is simmering in black neighborhoods across the country.

Obama seemed mindful of another group of voters in Greenville as well: religious voters. The candidate spoke about his work in the 1980s with inner-city churches on Chicago’s South Side to revitalize declining neighborhoods: “Our faith requires that we not just preach the Word, but that we act out on the Word.”

When considering a run for the Senate, Obama said he did “what any wise man would do: I prayed about it—and then I asked my wife.” When criticizing a lack of government services for veterans, Obama asked: “Whatever happened to the notion that I am my brother’s keeper? That’s not just in the church—that’s in the government too.” The religious-themed remarks drew “amens” from the crowd.

The candidate emphasized the central issues of his campaign as well. He drew one of the biggest applause lines of the day when he asserted that everyone in the country could have affordable health care “by the end of my first term as president.” Campaign aides have estimated that Obama’s universal health care program would cost between $50 billion to $65 billion a year, and say it would be financed largely by eliminating tax cuts that President Bush wants to make permanent.

Obama also decried the war in Iraq, declaring: “There will be no military solution to this war.” The remark drew mostly cheers, but one ardent war opponent in the crowd interrupted Obama’s remarks, shouting that he should vote to de-fund the war if he is against it. The senator pointed out that he opposed the war from the beginning, but didn’t respond to the critic’s call to vote down war funding.

Obama recovered quickly from the interruption, and ended his speech by assuring the crowd: “I believe our better days are ahead of us, not behind us.” The senator then enthusiastically shook hands with clamoring supporters as the sound system pumped out Tina Turner’s rock song, “You’re Simply the Best.”

The next few months will reveal whether Obama can convince a majority of Democrats that he’s the best candidate. One thing already is certain: He will face a grueling battle against Clinton, who boasts a sophisticated campaign machine, and who is aggressively courting the minorities Obama depends on for votes. At a conference of 100 black ministers in Chicago in May, Clinton told the group: “I am not ceding any voter, anywhere, to anyone.”
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A backlog in passports has bureaucrats on 24-hour call and air travelers fuming

KARA McELHENY was ready for her school art trip to Italy. The 17-year-old had covered the costs, raising $3,000 for her plane ticket and accommodations through church fundraising and by working at a local lodge in New Mexico. At midnight on June 1, five hours before her plane was to leave, she sat with bags packed for the airport, missing just one thing: her passport.

Kara applied for her passport in early March, told by passport officials it would take eight to 10 weeks to arrive—in plenty of time for her trip. Instead, some 11 weeks later at the 11th hour, Kara was still waiting, one of thousands of Americans who have applied for a passport this year only to be snatched up in a thick backlog of applications.

The backlog is the result of a new border security law that took effect in January, which requires Americans traveling by air to and from Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean to carry passports. Congress passed the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) in 2004, on the recommendation of the 9/11 Commission.

Even seemingly minor changes can overwhelm a system, however, and the department is struggling to meet the resulting surge in demand for passports—despite adding staff. Officials say some 500,000 applications have been stuck in the pipeline for more than 12 weeks, and that they underestimated demand by as much as 1 million.

About a week before she was due to leave, Kara grew worried. Her family called the National Passport Information Center, an emergency line set up for travelers, only to reach a recording all but one time. A red-letter paragraph on the State Department’s travel website warns callers to try the clogged line several times to reach a person.

for help. And when the law’s second phase goes into effect—requiring Western hemisphere travelers by land and sea to have passports as well—she said things will only get worse.

Salazar and other congressional staffers say the State Department does its best to help when travel dates get close. Part of the backlog simply seems to be a last-minute rush from travelers to get their passports. “You’re trying to squeeze a lot through a very tiny hole,” said Dan Scandling, communications director for Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.).

WHTI’s second phase was due for implementation Jan. 1, 2008. But facing a huge bottleneck, House lawmakers passed a measure postponing the date to a year later. It still needs to pass the Senate, against the wishes of the Homeland Security Department, but on June 19 Senate lawmakers held a hearing that prodded top consular official Maura Harty about the backlog.

To ease the pressure until September, the department will allow air travelers to Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean simply to show proof that they have applied for passports. The department is set to issue 17 million passports this year, up from 12 million last year.

Passport centers in New Hampshire and South Carolina—which together handle half the output—are now working 24 hours a day. Kara’s case, however, shows that amid changing travel rules one rule remains: Start early.
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SINCE JULY 1, 2000, I'VE BEEN TELLING WORLD readers every few months about my treadmill reading—books that exercise my mind while exercising my body. Normally I note only books worth reading, and have cited about 400 during those seven years. Here are 100 all-time treadmill favorites (listed in alphabetical order by author):

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*Heaven* (Tyndale, 2004)
*The Grace and Truth Paradox* (Multnomah, 2003)
Grace and truth-telling work together.

Debby Applegate
*The Most Famous Man in America* (Doubleday, 2006)
Liberal preacher Henry Beecher, thinking that God is love only and not justice as well, was surprised when his love for several women led to a court case that turned him into the Bill Clinton of the late 19th century.

Jeff Baldwin
Christianity is the only religion that comes to grips with the nature of man.

Michael Barone
Part of America is ruled by competition

and accountability, but some Americans try to shield themselves and others from tough realities.

Mike Bechtle
*Evangelism for the Rest of Us: Sharing Christ within Your Personality Style* (Baker, 2006)
Introverts can evangelize via the internet and in other ways different from those best suited to extroverts.

John Blanchard
*Does God Believe in Atheists?* (Evangelical Press, 2000)
A witty apologist filled with curious details about major philosophers, world religions, cults, and lots of other stuff.
James Montgomery Boice
*Whatever Happened to the Gospel of Grace?* (Crossway Books, 2001)
- Five doctrines that shaped the Protestant Reformation can reawaken the church today.

Robert Boynton
*The New New Journalism* (Vintage, 2005)
- These conversations with America’s best nonfiction writers on their craft are helpful to young journalists.

Arthur C. Brooks
*Who Really Cares: The Surprising Truth About Compassionate Conservatism* (Basic, 2006)
- Religious conservatives contribute more of their time and a higher percentage of their income than secular liberals.

William F. Buckley
*The Fall of the Berlin Wall* (Wiley, 2004)
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- Many professors make their subjects unintelligible by writing in academese rather than English and scaring popular culture rather than examining connections.

Joshua W. Greene and Shiva Kumar
*Witness: Voices from the Holocaust* (Free Press, 2000)
- Interwoven firsthand accounts of 27 witnesses faced with slavery or death.

Wayne Grudem et al.
*Translating Truth: The Case for Essentially Literal Bible Translation* (Crossway, 2005)
- It’s hard to develop necessary trust in God if we can’t trust the book that tells us about God.

Philip Hamburger
*Separation of Church and State* (Harvard University Press, 2002)
- Secular fundamentalists have transformed the First Amendment into an excuse for intolerance and discrimination.
Victor Davis Hanson  
*Carnage and Culture: Landmark Battles in the Rise of Western Power* (Doubleday, 2001)  
- Historical perspective that readers can relate to current challenges, including the war in Iraq.

Paul R. Harris  
*Why Is Feminism So Hard to Resist?* (Reprintnation Press, 1998)  
- Churches should not succumb to feminist theology and practice.

Hugh Hewitt  
- How to make the most of God-given talents.

Deborah Howard  
*Sunsets: Reflections for Life's Final Journey* (Crossway, 2005)  
- An excellent book for the non-Christian elderly or others who have suddenly learned that their lives will be shorter than they expected.

Kay Hymowitz  
*Marriage and Caste in America* (Ivan R. Dee, 2006)  
- Marriage breakdown is turning us into a nation of separate and unequal families, with the poor falling further behind.

Philip Jenkins  
- The Jesus Seminar and others try to remake Christianity in their own Gnostic images.

Philip Jenkins  
- By 2050 only one Christian in five will be white and non-Latino; Asia, Africa, and Latin America will be the centers of Christianity.

Robert Bowie Johnson Jr.  
*The Parthenon Code* (Solving Light, 2004)  
- Provocatively theorizes that key works of ancient Greek sculpture depict biblical accounts from a humanist perspective.

R.T. Kendall and David Rosen  
*The Christian and the Pharisee* (FaithWords, 2006)  
- This thoughtful exchange of letters between an evangelical pastor and a rabbi clearly shows both theological differences and personal respect.

Richard Land  
*The Divided States of America?* (W Publishing Group, 2007)  
- Both liberals and conservatives miss much in the God-and-country shouting match.

Peter Lawler  
- The new biotechnology could obliterate the need for virtue and the desire for love.

Bernard Lewis  
*What Went Wrong?* (Harper, 2003)  
- Multi-century decline in the Middle East came because Muslim collectivists did not allow individuals to go out on their own or think for themselves.

Erwin W. Lutzer  
*Ten Lies about God, and How You Might Already Be Deceived* (Word, 2000)  
- Many people believe in a laid-back god of their own devising.

Myron Magnet, ed.  
- Governmental welfare programs treat the poor as victims and assume fatalistically that they'll stay that way.

Paul Marshall  
*Heaven Is Not My Home* (Word, 1998)  
- Work in this world is significant, and evangelism is not the only important work in which believers should be engaged.

Paul Marshall, Roberta Green, Lela Gilbert  
*Islam at the Crossroads* (Baker, 2002)  
- An excellent introduction to an Islam that could head toward war or peace.

Gerald R. McDermott  
- The great philosopher believed that all humans at first gained knowledge of true religion either from Noah's scns or, later, from Abraham.

Bruce McDowell and Anees Zaka  
*Muslims and Christians at the Table* (P&R Publishing, 1999)  
- Information on Muslim history and theology, along with practical reminders, such as never sit cross-legged with Muslims (showing the sole of your foot is offensive).

Alister McGrath  
*The Twilight of Atheism* (Doubleday, 2004)  
- Atheism was weighed in the 20th century and found wanting.

John McWhorter  
- Government programs infect African-Americans with the defeatist cultural virus of victimology, separatism, and anti-intellectualism.

Brian Mitchell  
*Eight Ways to Run the Country* (Praeger, 2007)  
- An eight-way circular division of the American polity that is much more sensible than a simple left-right spectrum.

Mykel Mitchell  
*Word: For Everybody Who Thought Christianity Was for Suckas* (New American Library, 2005)  
- A hip-hop record industry veteran turned to Christ when he couldn't get satisfaction from "the expensive toys, the fly gear and the expensive girlfriends."
Timothy M. Monson  
*Hope for the Southern World*  (CCW Books, 2006)  
- Christians can and should build civil society both in democracies and dictatorships.

Jennifer Roback Morse  
*Love & Economics*  (Spence, 2001)  
- The laissez-faire family, where each member pursues his own bliss rather than loving others, fails miserably.

Chawkat Mouarra  
*The Prophet & the Messiah: An Arab Christian’s Perspective on Islam & Christianity*  (IVP, 2002)  
- The earliest known Quranic fragments date from the second century after Muhammad and are not reliable.

Joshua Muravchik  
*Heaven on Earth: The Rise and Fall of Socialism*  (Encounter, 2002)  
- Socialists (including fascists and Nazis) needed to worship something.

Stephen J. Nichols  
*Heaven on Earth: Capturing Jonathan Edwards’s Vision of Living in Between*  (Crossway, 2006)  
- Evangelism should introduce people to Christ; it cannot make the sale.

Peggy Noonan  
*A Heart, a Cross, and a Flag*  (Free Press, 2003)  
- Captures beautifully the traumatic year that began on Sept. 11, 2001.

Peggy Noonan  
*When Character was King*  (Viking, 2001)  
- A biography of Ronald Reagan that emphasizes the need for presidents to have character that people come to recognize as high, sturdy, and reliable.

Michael Oren  
*Power, Faith and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present*  (Norton, 2007)  
- The 230-year-old U.S. encounter with Muslims and Israel.

Glenn Parkinson  
*Like the Stars: Leading Many to Righteousness*  (iUniverse, 2004)  
- Responding to American social decline with resentment and hostility only alienates our neighbors from Christians and from the gospel.

Leon Podles  
*The Church Impotent*  (Spence, 1999)  
- Many Christians misunderstand grace and the tough spiritual and intellectual warfare to which all are called.

Thom S. Rainer and Eric Geiger  
*Simple Church*  (Broadman & Holman, 2006)  
- Vibrant churches free members to engage in more ministry by cutting down the number of meetings and functions throughout the week.

Diane Ravitch  
*The Language Police*  (Knopf, 2003)  
- Educators concerned with bias and “sensitivity” have substituted bland material for lively stories.

Gordon C. Rhea  
*Carrying the Flag*  (Basic, 2004)  
- The story of a 40-year-old South Carolina soldier during the horrific Virginia fighting of May 1864.

Steven Rhoads  
*Taking Sex Differences Seriously*  (Encounter, 2004)  
- On average, men and women differ in aggression, dominance, sexuality, and nurturance.

Mike Robbins  
*Ninety Feet from Fame: Close Calls with Baseball Immortality*  (Carroll & Graf, 2004)  
- Many baseball near-legends lost out through “circumstance, bad luck, and bad timing”—also known as providence.

Matthew Robinson  
*Mobocracy*  (Prima, 2002)  
- Journalists manipulate surveys so they can trumpet their own views while still claiming to be “objective.”

Kathy Roth-Douquet and Frank Schaeffer  
*AWOL*  (HarperCollins, 2006)  
- The absence of upper-class kids from military service is hurting the United States.

Leland Ryken  
*The Word of God in English: Criteria for Excellence in Bible Translation*  (Crossway, 2002)  
- Indicts translations that cater to cultural trends.

Frank Schaeffer  
*Faith of Our Sons: A Father’s Wartime Diary*  (Carroll & Graf, 2004)  
- What U.S. parents go through when their children are in danger in Afghanistan or Iraq.

Alvin J. Schmidt  
- Christianity changed charity, sexual conduct, medical care, education, science, literature, the arts, business, and labor, and a host of other fields.

Hampton Sides  
*Ghost Soldiers*  (Doubleday, 2001)  
- Brutally mistreated and malnourished American prisoners of war in the Philippines during World War II desperately needed biblical teaching—and some chaplains came through.

Michael Simpson  
*Permission Evangelism*  (Cook Communications, 2003)  
- How to engage in conversation that can cut through the biases against evangelicals that some non-Christians have developed, at times because of unloving acts by people who claim to be Christians.
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BOOKS

James Sire
**Why Good Arguments Often Fail** (IVP, 2006)
- How to strengthen arguments for the Christian faith.

Oskar Skarsaune
*In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity* (InterVarsity, 2002)
- Christianity is Jewish.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn
*The Solzhenitsyn Reader* (ISI Books, 2006)
- Highlights of the heroic dissenter's work.

Thomas Sowell
*Basic Economics* (Basic Books, 2000)
- A free-market introduction to economic problems.

Robert Spencer
*The Myth of Islamic Tolerance* (Prometheus, 2005)
- Those who say Muslims and Christians or Jews can all get along if we're just nice to each other are thinking like children.

Rodney Stark
*The Victory of Reason: How Christianity Led to Freedom, Capitalism, and Western Success* (Random House, 2005)
- The Christian doctrine that sin is a personal responsibility led to the extension of liberty and economic opportunity in the early modern era.

Mathew Staver
*Eternal Vigilance: Knowing and Protecting Your Religious Freedom* (Brookman & Holmar, 2005)
- A thorough handbook on how to stave off aggressive secularists.

Mark Steyn
*Amerika Alone* (Regnery, 2006)
- European cowardice in not having children may turn that continent into Eurasia.

S. Joshua Swamidass
*How Deep Is Your Dungeon?* (Send Fellowship International, 2000)
- The book of Job shows that God is near when He seems especially far away.

Timothy C. Tennent
- How Christians should talk with Buddhists, Hindus, and Muslims.

Chan Kei Thong
*Faith of our Fathers* (Faithofourfathersbook.com, 2007)
- The early Chinese venerated a Supreme Being with characteristics similar to those of the God of the Bible, and the 4,000-year-old Chinese sacrificial system has startling and meaningful parallels to the biblical system.

Paul Vitz
*Faith of the Fatherless: The Psychology of Atheism* (Spencer, 1999)
- Many atheists never had a good father and so doubt that one can exist.

Bruce Ware
*God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism* (Crossway, 2001)
- Demolishes arguments that God doesn't decide what to do until He hears from us.

Ibn Warraq
*The Quest for the Historical Muhammad* (Prometheus, 2000)
- The real Muhammad was probably nothing like the character depicted in the orthodox Muslim story.

Ben J. Wattenberg
*Fewer: How the New Demography of Depopulation Will Shape Our Future* (Ivan Dee, 2004)
- The one-feared population explosion is giving way to a birth dearth.

John West
*Darwin's Conservatives* (Discovery Institute, 2006)
- Critiques pundits and academics like George Will and James Q. Wilson who praise Darwin's grinding materialism as a brake on liberalism's utopian fantasies; West rightly points out that Darwinism corrodes religious beliefs and concepts of limited government.

James Emery White
*Serious Times* (InterVarsity, 2004)
- The world changes when individuals touched by Christ turn around and touch the lives of others.

Juan Williams
*Enough: The Phony Leaders, Dead-End Movements, and Culture of Failure That Are Undermining Black America—and What We Can Do about It* (Crown, 2006)
- We should no longer accept corruption and excuse wrongdoing by black leaders.

Lauren F. Winner
*Girl Meets God* (Algonquin, 2003)
- A picaresque tale of a young woman weaving back and forth as Christ pulls her.

Miroslav Volf
*Free of Charge: Giving and Forgetting in a Culture Stripped of Grace* (Zondervan, 2005)
- God's gifts obligue us to give freely to others.

Thomas Woodward
- The rise of the ID movement.

Bat Ye'or
*Islam and Dhimmitude* (Fairleigh Dickinson, 2001)
- *"Human rights" is a meaningless term within Islam, and conquered people have to pay extra taxes and put up with enormous scorn and abuse.*

Ravi Zacharias
*Light in the Shadow of Jihad* (Multinomah, 2002)
- Faulty Muslim theology leads to political and social dictatorship, and Muslim scholars who question Quranic teaching and origins often have a short life expectancy.

Karl Zinsmeister
*Boots on the Ground* (St. Martin's, 2003)
- The evocative account of a smart journalist embedded with the 82nd Airborne during the initial U.S. success in the Iraq war.

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• Arguments fall into a handful of distinct categories—and the same issues are at stake each time one of these distinctive patterns occurs.

• There are three kinds of evidence that can be advanced to prove an argument that something is true—and the same tests for truth can be applied to these types of evidence every time.

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Fictional communities
From Mitford to Port William, two elegant writers show different sides of Scripture—grace and the valley of the shadow of death by NANCY M. TISCHLER

INSPIRATIONAL FICTION—shelves at Barnes & Noble or Borders are full of Christian serial romances. In novels by Janette Oke, Tracie Peterson, Judith Pella, Michael Phillips, Brock and Bodie Thoene, Lori Wick, and dozens of others, the heroes are usually handsome, the heroines beautiful and religious, and the outcome foreordained. Many of these books use historical settings and rely on tragic times, exotic places, or wild adventure.

Scattered among the general fiction shelves are less predictable Christian novels by Marilynne Robinson, Athol Dickson, David James Duncan, Walker Percy, Leif Enger, and Anne Tyler. And at least two moderns who take their religion seriously, Jan Karon and Wendell Berry, have created richly imagined settings for their linked novels, including—like William Faulkner, with his famous Yoknapatawpha novels—maps of their terrain.

Karon’s Mitford is a lovely village in North Carolina, Berry’s Port William a rural town in Kentucky. Mitford and its rector echo a small 18th-century English village. Berry’s Port William is rougher and cruder, full of farmers and poor folks, more akin to the towns of William Faulkner or Flannery O’Connor.

Both authors see our lives filled with everyday miracles. Both rely on well-developed characters who look and sound like real human beings. Each tracks the lives of a handful of characters in the imaginary worlds of Mitford or Port William. Berry compares telling a story to reaching into a granary of wheat and pulling out a handful: In each novel, he goes back for a new handful.

Karon usually has Father Timothy as her center of consciousness, though she allows us to enter other characters’ minds from time to time, and uses their memories to explain motivation. Berry, by contrast, likes to develop a full portrait of one character at a time, using the others as context. He often takes an old person and circles back over a lifetime of memories, “like a hunting dog, keeps turning back and turning back, tracing out the way it has come.”

Karon emphasizes the blessedness of small things—Esther’s famous marmalade cake, local festivities, and a little yellow house and rose garden. Over the course of seven novels Father Tim falls in love, marries, and retires, and in the process saves several children from brutality, helps reformed criminals return to a respectable life, oversees the building of a home for the elderly, escapes the clutches of the
local witch (an affluent member of his congregation), and lives through life-threatening bouts with diabetes.

Father Tim's church is comfortable and generally harmonious. He loves Scripture, does not fret about theological controversies, and even feels free to skip the recitation of the Nicene Creed. Absent from this blessed corner of the Church of England are the grand debates that are shattering his denomination.

Berry is not so comfortable in the Baptist church. Like his character Jayber Crow, he tends to sit on the edge of the back pew and argue with the ministers. Jayber, the Port William barber and erstwhile theological student, is uneasy about selective literal interpretation of Scripture, public prayers, and belief in the resurrection of the flesh while denying the beauty of the physical, natural life. Jayber loves the Gospels but has problems with Paul's epistles.

Berry's novels also touch on his quarrels with modern social and economic developments. He despises highways, tractors, and big business. He is a much tougher writer than Karon, much more challenging, much less orthodox, and much more of a poet. His taciturn people cannot speak their joys and sorrows except through their gestures and simple words. They offer an arm to an elderly man or touch the shoulder of a mourner. They use the language of the Bible, the only book most of them know.

Port William is a small town full of poorly educated, sweat-drenched rural folk, the remnant of a lost culture of small self-sufficient farms diminished by foreign wars, bypassed by the railroad, and abandoned by its young people. Friends and kin respect one another, observe one another's problems, and help out only when needed. They make no grand pronouncements about their benevolence, nor do they gossip about the evils they understand. These yeoman farmers know who they are and have a kind of simple dignity that leads them to respect a good worker and scorn a slacker.

In Mitford, old folks stay in their homes, move in with others, or have an idyllic final stay at Hope House, the lovely nursing home built with Miss Sadie's vast wealth. But in Port William, when Jayber Crow grows older and unnecessary, he moves to a cabin in the woods where some of his old friends continue to drop by for a haircut, a drink, and gossip. Old Jack, one of Berry's most heroic and tragic figures, has spent his life trying to labor on the land, at enmity with the internal combustion engine and time. Alienated from his only daughter and alone, he ends his days in a rocking chair, staring over the fields.

Time is no friend in Berry's small town and no enemy in Karon's. Her Mitford avoids the problems of the interstate and the big-box stores, retaining its whimsical charm. Some of the farm folk in Port William, though, settle for what Jayber calls the "local airport," an old hotel "where are gathered those about to depart into the heavens." In Karon's nice world good people eventually find one another, fall in love, and work out their common lives through grace. In Berry's world the lonely child searches for meaning through hard work, good friends and love, faces anguish and loss, and finally death.

Both are good writers. They have different goals and attract different readers. Many Karon readers enjoy a world without profanity or cruelty, a world in which rapists, murderers, thieves, or other brutes are caught, killed, or converted. They expect what Victorian audiences expected, that Good will prevail over Evil by page 450. This is not the story line we find in Scripture: Cain lived on after murdering Abel,
though marked by the sin. And the best Man of all, Christ, died on the cross, after forbidding Peter to attack the soldiers. Paul found blessedness in the suffering; his idea of living happily ever after is a reference to Heaven.

Readers who prefer writers like Berry expect a level of discomfort. He will not preach his sermon so explicitly as some of the gentle writers. He will not cite his scriptural references nor sanitize his language, though he rarely uses explicit sexuality or profanity. Some of his central characters have affairs and never repent. Like Karon, Berry loves woodlands and hills, but his farms are full of mud and manure, weeds and thistles as well as flowers. Her animals are domesticated; his are hound dogs and mules—fellow workers.

Berry also places the church at the center of his community, but his pastors are pitiful young seminary students without wisdom or life experience. When non-churchgoing Jack Beechum dies, the funeral arranged by his condescending, pretentious daughter reveals the superficiality of her mourning. The casket is as lavish as the daughter’s elegant car; the undertaker makes up the corpse and dresses him in a suit and tie that are flat wrong for this weather-beaten old man who lived in overalls most of his life. The young preacher who never knew Old Jack prays a long evangelistic prayer in an embarrassing effort to convert the mourners, whom he also does not know.

When Paul told the Philippians to try chewing some tough meat, he meant something deeper than the feel-good theology of a satisfied people. Rather than baby’s milk, too many Christians settle for cotton candy or angel food cake, when they should be seeking to understand suffering and God’s mercy. Karon portrays a gentle life full of grace. Berry shows us the valley of the shadow of death. @

—Nancy Tischler, Professor Emerita of English at Pennsylvania State University, is the author of studies of Scripture and literature, including the forthcoming Thematic Guide to Biblical Literature

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Novelist Flannery O'Connor “speaks” on the work of fiction and aspiring fiction writers by MARVIN OLASKY

A

READER ASKS: “I’m trying to get started as a novelist. Could you recommend something about fiction writing by a Christian writer?” Easy answer: Read Flannery O’Connor’s Mystery and Manners, available in paperback (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1969), an exceptionally clear book that reads almost as if the author were answering questions.

O’Connor wrote two novels—Wise Blood (1952) and The Violent Bear It Away (1960)—and 31 published stories before dying in 1964 at age 39 of complications from lupus, a chronic autoimmune disease. Had she lived she would now be 82 and WORLD would want to interview her. So let’s do it anyway, using Mystery and Manners.

All the words of the answers are O’Connor’s own, with the exception of a few connecting and explanatory words in brackets. Readers will see that she was acerbic toward what passed as “religious fiction,” but Christian novel-writing has changed over the decades, so her critique from over 40 years ago should not necessarily be applied to current efforts.

WORLD: What’s the difference between a Christian novelist and a naturalistic (or materialistic) one?

O’CONNOR: The novelist is required to create the illusion of a whole world with believable people in it, and the chief difference between the novelist who is an orthodox Christian and the novelist who is merely a naturalist is that the Christian novelist lives in a larger universe. He believes that the natural world contains the supernatural. And this doesn’t mean that his obligation to portray the natural is less; it means it is greater.

WORLD: Do you think some Christian writers are willing to do a slapdash portrayal of the natural because they want to emphasize the crucial evangelistic message?

O’CONNOR: Fiction operates through the senses. . . . No reader who doesn’t actually experience, who isn’t made to feel, the story is going to believe anything the fiction writer merely tells him.

WORLD: Why do you call lots of religious novels “sorry”?

O’CONNOR: The sorry religious novel comes about when the writer supposes that because of his belief, he is somehow dispensed from the obligation to penetrate concrete reality. He will think that the eyes of the Church or of the Bible or of his particular theology have already done the seeing for him, and that his business is to rearrange this essential vision into satisfying patterns. . . . by beginning with Christian principles and finding the life that will illustrate them. . . . The result is another addition to that large body of pious trash for which we have so long been famous.

WORLD: Some Christians object to showing evil and violence on the grounds that the good must be emphasized because the good is the ultimate reality?

O’CONNOR: The ultimate reality has been weakened in human beings as a result of the Fall, and it is this weakened life that we see.

WORLD: Some of our readers who don’t like writing about adultery or murder quote the admonition in Philippians 4:8 to think about what is good. Should novelists avert their eyes from what is bad?

O’CONNOR: The novelist is required to open his eyes on the world around him and look. If what he sees is not highly edifying, he is still required to look. . . . What he sees at all times is fallen man pervaded by false philosophies. Is he to reproduce this? Or is he to change what he sees and make it, instead of what it is, what in the light of faith he thinks it ought to be . . . to ‘tidy up reality’?

WORLD: I think I know how you answer those questions. . . .

O’CONNOR: [The Christian fiction writer] is entirely free to observe. He feels no call to take on the duties of God or to create a new universe. He feels perfectly free to look at the one we already have and to show exactly what he sees. He feels no need to apologize for the ways of God to man or to avoid looking at the ways of man to God. For him, to ‘tidy up reality’ is certainly to succumb to the sin of pride.

WORLD: Is tidied-up writing also weak writing?

O’CONNOR: The fiction writer has to make a whole world believable by making every part and aspect of it believable. [He has to be concerned] with the evil, and not only with the evil, but also with that aspect which appears neither good nor evil which is not yet Christianized.

WORLD: But there are dangers in this.

O’CONNOR: It is very possible that what is vision and truth to the writer is temptation and sin to the reader. There is every danger that in writing what he sees, the novelist will be corrupting some ‘little one,’ and better a millstone were tied around his neck. . . . This is no superficial problem, but to force this kind of total responsibility on the novelist is to burden him with the business that belongs only to God.

WORLD: So what do good writers do when they see the need to describe but want to minimize the anger of corruption?

O’CONNOR: [The good writer should] take great pains to control every excess, everything that does not contribute to the central meaning and design. He cannot indulge in sentimentality, in propagandizing, or in pornography and create a work of art, for all these things are excesses.

WORLD: Should readers have obligations as well?

O’CONNOR: [Some readers] open a novel and, discovering the presence of an arm or a leg, piously close the book. We are always demanding that the writer be less explicit in regard to natural matters or the concrete particulars of sin. [Such readers] are over-conscious of what they consider to be obscenity in modern fiction for the very simple reason that: in reading a book, they have nothing else to look for. They are totally unconscious of the design, the tone, the intention, the
meaning, or even the truth of what they have in hand. They don't see the book in a perspective that would reduce every part of it to its proper place in the whole.

**WORLD:** Where do beginning writers often go wrong?

**O'CONNOR:** [They] are apt to be reformers and to want to write because they are possessed not by a story but by the bare bones of some abstract notion. They are conscious of problems, not of people, of questions and issues, not of the texture of existence, of case histories and of everything that has a sociological smack, instead of with all those concrete details of life that make actual the mystery of our position on earth.

**WORLD:** You emphasize that "in most good stories it is the character's personality that creates the action of the story." Where do beginning writers often fall short?

**O'CONNOR:** [Some] don't go very far inside a character, don't reveal very much of the character. I don't mean that they don't enter the character's mind, but they simply don't show that he has a personality. . . . In most of these stories, I feel that the writer has thought of some action and then scrounged up a character to perform it.

**WORLD:** Are you overly hard on some Christian writers? Can't even poorly written religious novels with pious characters be edifying?

**MYSTERY AND MANNERS:** O'Connor

In Milledgeville, Ga., in 1964.

**O'CONNOR:** Poorly written novels — no matter how pious and edifying the behavior of the characters — are not good in themselves and are therefore not really edifying.

**WORLD:** But can't God use them for good?

**O'CONNOR:** We have plenty of examples in this world of poor things being used for good purposes. God can make any indifferent thing, as well as evil itself, an instrument for good; but I submit that to do this is the business of God and not of any human being.
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Backward, atheist soldiers!
Notable anti-religion and anti-Christian books of the past year—particularly Christopher Hitchens’ God Is Not Great—make something out of, well, nothing by MARVIN OLASKY

NINETEENTH-CENTURY novelist Gustave Flaubert used to joke about archaeologists discovering a stone tablet signed “God” and reading, “I do not exist.” His punch line had an atheist then exclaiming, “See! I told you so!”

These days, nothing stops atheistic caissons from rolling along the bookstore aisles. Maybe that’s because atheists on average have small families and lots of discretionary doubloons jingling in their pockets. Sam Harris’ Letter to a Christian Nation (Knopf), Daniel Dennett’s Breaking the Spell (Penguin), and Richard Dawkins’ The God Delusion (Houghton Mifflin) all hit bestseller lists during 2006—and a new book, Christopher Hitchens’ God Is Not Great (Twelve), has ascended this year.

Last year’s trio emerged alongside anti-Christian books purportedly based on hard reporting. Michelle Goldberg’s Kingdom Coming: The Rise of Christian Nationalism (Norton) typified the genre’s misreporting when she wrote that Christian pregnancy counseling centers “usually” present false or exaggerated information—but there’s no indication that she visited even one center, let alone the 3,000 or so that exist throughout the country. (Here’s some evidentiary trivia: In four pages about me she makes five clear factual errors, along with many questionable interpretations.)

This year it’s the same: a new screed by Chris Hedges has as its title not “Mistaken People” or even “Lying Liars,” but American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America (Free Press). The genre is old, with new villains appearing as necessary. Ten years ago Frederick Clarkson’s Eternal Hostility: The Struggle Between Theocracy and Democracy stated that the sky was falling, with Promise Keepers as the spearhead of Christian dictatorship.

The ferocity of these books is sometimes astounding. Here, for example, is Dawkins’ view of God: “arguably the most unpleasant character in fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomani-acal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.”

Even Publishers Weekly noted concerning The God Delusion, “For a scientist who criticizes religion for its intolerance, Dawkins has written a surprisingly intolerant book, full of scorn for religion and those who believe. . . . Even confirmed atheists who agree with his advocacy of science and vigorous rationalism may have trouble stomaching some of the rhetoric. The biblical Yahweh is “psychotic,” Aquinas’ proofs of God’s existence are “fatuous” and religion generally is “nonsense.”

Happily, Alister and Joanna Collicutt McGrath have just come out with an effective response, The Dawkins Delusion? Atheist Fundamentalism and the Denial of the Divine (IVP). The McGraths note, “Until recently, Western atheism had waited patiently, believing that belief in God would simply die out. But now a whiff of panic is evident. Far from dying out, belief in God has rebounded.”

The McGraths also point out the folly of believing that if religion were eliminated wars would cease: After all, conflicts often reflect human desires to declare some people as “in” and others as “out,” sometimes on the basis of race, ethnicity, tribe, class, gender, or whatever.

Christianity is above all others the religion that seeks kindness to those in the out-group: Jesus told us to love our neighbors and even to love our enemies. When Christians fail to live up to His teachings it’s because of sin, not Christianity—and scapegoating religion delays efforts to deal with the real problems of social division.

Scapegoating is also evident in the writing of Sam Harris, who frequently forgets to use reason and instead falls back on words like “preposterous.” He asserts certainty about what he admits not knowing: “How the process of evolution got started is still a mystery, but that does not in the least suggest
that a deity is likely to be lurking at the bottom of it all.”

He complains not only about ignorance but about moral failings: “An average Christian, in an average church, listening to an average Sunday sermon has achieved a level of arrogance simply unimaginable in scientific discourse.”

Yet Harris, for all his attacks on Intelligent Design, does not even understand the distinction between macro-evolution—one kind of creature changing into another—and micro-evolution. One of his proofs of theistic obtuseness is that “viruses like HIV, as well as a wide range of harmful bacteria, can be seen evolving right under our noses, developing resistance to antiviral and antibiotic drugs.”

The one good aspect of Harris’ work is his understanding that theology has consequences: “There is no escaping that fact that a person’s religious beliefs uniquely determine what he thinks peace is good for, as well as what he means by a term like ‘compassion.’” Harris at least understands that the biblical theology he hates makes obnoxious sense in a way that liberalism does not; given a suffering world, “liberal theology must stand revealed for what it is: the sheerest of mortal pretenses.”

Harris also criticizes the niceties of political rhetoric concerning Islam: “The idea that Islam is a ‘peaceful religion hijacked by extremists’ is a fantasy.” Too bad he and other atheist authors are determined to believe that Christianity is inevitably hijacked by hate, and that they pick up support from reviewers like Natalie Angier, who wrote in The New York Times that “Harris writes what a sizeable number of us think, but few are willing to say.”

Harris’ work has also engendered several Christian responses this year. One asks whether Harris would commend evangelicals who “forsook the use of antibiotics because of the genocidal devastation it was causing to the microbes within.”

Wilson also points out that the litany of religious folks fighting each other that Harris recites “is beside the point. We don’t believe that religion is the answer. We believe Christ is the answer.” Harris’ list of religious messes merely confirms “one of the basic tenets of the Christian faith, which is that the human race is all screwed up.”

And what about this year’s champion screed, offered by Christopher Hitchens? His scorn—“monotheistic religion is a plagiarism of a plagiarism of a hearsay of a hearsay, of an illusion of an illusion, extending all the way back to a fabrication of a few nonevents”—oozes off every page of God Is Not Great, with its extraordinary subtitle, How Religion Poisons Everything.

“Everything”? That sounds improbable. Are 1.3 billion Muslims all murderers? Might Christianity have produced 50 percent evil and 50 percent good? If not, how about 40 percent good? Thirty percent? Twenty percent? Ten percent? Will not Hitchens relent from his anger if we can find 5 percent that’s good?

God Is Not Great has received extraordinary publicity, including an adulatory review in The New York Times, so it’s worth going page by page to see what
Hitchens is selling and many atheists are buying:

- On Page 4 he writes that religion produces a “maximum of servility.” Islam, maybe, but were Abraham, Moses, and Job servile when they argued with God?
- On Page 5 he writes, “No statistic will ever find that without [religious] blandishments and threats [athests] commit more crimes of greed or violence than the faithful.” Prison Fellowship and other organizations can show that prisoners who go through evangelical programs have much lower recidivism—committing new crimes after release from prison, leading to new sentences—than others.
- On Page 7 he writes, “Religion spoke its last intelligible or noble or inspiring words a long time ago.”

Leaving aside the inspiration millions get from daily Bible reading, what about Martin Luther King Jr.’s speeches, with all their biblical imagery? Or Pope John Paul II, whose words inspired many people to rise up against Communism in Eastern Europe?

- On Page 17 he writes that religion “does not have the confidence in its own various preachings even to allow coexistence between different faiths.” At the annual March for Life in Washington tens of thousands of Catholics and Protestants walk side by side along with individuals from Jews for Life, Buddhists for Life, and so on.
- On Page 32 he writes, “The nineteen suicide murderers of New York and Washington and Pennsylvania were beyond any doubt the most sincere believers on those planes.” Todd Beamer, the man who said “Let’s roll” on United Flight 93, and made sure it didn’t crash into the U.S. Capitol, was a strong Christian believer. So were others who died, stopping the terrorists, when Flight 93 crashed in Pennsylvania.

Hitchens of course thinks the Bible is nonsense (see also “The world according to Hitch,” June 3, 2006). On Page 102 he writes, “It goes without saying that none of the gruesome, disordered events described in Exodus ever took place.” Without saying. A slam dunk. On Page 103: “All the Mosaic myths can be safely and easily discarded.” On Page 104: All five books of Moses are “ill-carpentered fiction.” Such pronouncements were repeatedly made in the 19th century, but again and again biblical accounts considered mythical back then have gained new archeological support. For example, scholars at one point said that the Hittites described in the Bible did not exist, nor did rulers such as Belshazzar of Babylon or Sargon of Assyria. Archeologists now have records of all those civilizations and reigns.

Many brilliant people have spent lifetimes studying these writings that Hitchens so blithely dismisses.

Princeton’s Robert Wilson, who knew 26 ancient languages and dialects and so could read just about all that remains from the ancient Near East, was impressed with the accuracy of those accounts that Hitchens wishes to discard.

Coming to the present, Hitchens on Page 160 calls “the whole racket of American evangelism . . . a heartless con.” Hmm. WORLD for two decades has reported stories around this country of compassionate evangelicals who must be dumb, because they’ve spent their lives in a racket that’s yielded them almost no money. They’ve adopted hard-to-place children, built AIDS orphanages in Africa, helped addicts and alcoholics to turn their lives around, transformed the lives of teens who were heading into drugs and crime, and much besides.

In responding to Hitchens and mini-Hitchens, it’s also worth noting the leadership of Christians over the centuries in setting up hospitals and schools. Historians such as Jonathan Hill of Oxford, Alvin Schmidt of Illinois College, and Rodney Stark of Baylor have described the long-term effect of Jesus telling his followers to love their neighbors as themselves.

The evangelical tendency to help others, not poison them, has even attracted the attention of New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof, who calls America’s evangelicals “the newest internationalists” for fighting sexual trafficking in Eastern Europe and slavery in Sudan. As Jewish leader Michael Horowitz has put it, evangelicals “led the way in taking on the slavery issue of our time—the annual trafficking of millions of women and children into lives of sexual bondage . . . led the way in organizing a campaign to end a growing epidemic of prison rape.”

Horowitz concluded his message to evangelicals this way: “As you define your human rights successes as central to who you are and what you’re done, it will no longer be possible for those who fear your face to cruelly caricature you or to ignore the virtue that Christian activism brings to American life and the world at large.” Spoken too soon, because authors like Harris, Dennett, Dawkins, and especially Hitchens, despite all the evidence, still proclaim that religion, or Christianity in particular, poisons everything.
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MIKE AND VIRGINIA
Fischer didn’t train their kids to love America. Instead, they showed their kids America and other countries; the younger Fischers fell in love on their own. Mike was a career military man. On long drives, moving from one state to another, the family rarely listened to the radio. Instead, Mike and Virginia talked with their son, Scott, and daughter, Kristina, about the vast panorama rolling by outside the car windows.

“For example, when passing through an Indian reservation, we would talk about the tribe and how Indians came to live on reservations—the bad and the good” said Virginia, 49, of Nezperce, Idaho. “In passing through farm country, we talked about . . . what it might have been like to travel in a wagon across what was taking us just a few days, and why people might want to do that.”

The family attended a Civil War reenactment in Missouri, toured a submarine and aircraft carrier in Georgia, and in South Dakota, visited Mount Rushmore. “We did not make a great conscious effort to teach our kids patriotism; we lived it,” Virginia said.

Such examples are becoming less common, say Myrna Blyth and Chriss Winston, authors of How to Raise an American: 1776 Fun and Easy Tools, Tips, and Activities to Help Your Child Love This Country, a new book on teaching kids patriotism. “Parents want their kids to learn patriotism,” said Blyth, former editor of Good Housekeeping, now a columnist for National Review Online. “But many parents believe someone else is teaching it, the way it was when they were growing up, when the schools did.”

Today, though, many school systems have dumped pro-American curricula in favor of global villagism. Meanwhile, the culture’s loudest voices—mainstream media and the entertainment industry—often transmit a blame-America-first message, Blyth said, making it more difficult than ever for American children to develop a love for country.

It’s tough to measure patriotism, since to one person it might mean saluting the flag and to another, exercising his First Amendment right to stage a protest. But attitudinal shifts among young people point to a decline in overall optimism about America and its institutions. For example, a 2005 Time magazine survey found that the attitude of young teens toward America had shifted since the turn of the millennium: Almost half, 46 percent, believe that by the time they are their parents’ age, the United States will be a worse place to live than it is now. And, unlike the old days, when lots of children wanted to grow up to be president, 80 percent of kids participating in a 2004 ABC/Weekly Reader survey said they didn’t want the job.

“We saw a kind of cynicism and lack of interest, a depression about America among kids who have grown up in very, very good times,” Blyth said.

Part of the problem may be history and civics curricula in public schools. Many school systems have jettisoned teaching about the pivotal figures and ideas that shaped America in favor of the “anthropological” approach, which looks at the lives of everyday people. The approach often emphasizes similarities with other cultures rather than highlighting what is unique about America, its institutions, and founding principles.

Some high schools tilt overtly anti-American, using Howard Zinn’s dissident history textbook, A People’s History of the United States. The book, which has sold more than a million
copies since it was first published in 1980, summarizes U.S. history as a struggle of minorities and the working poor against a greedy and ruthless elite. Even noted scholars on the left, such as Georgetown University's Michael Kazin, say the book is "bad history."

"The way history is taught today, students often hear what's wrong about America before they hear what's right," Blyth said.

Rich Noyes of the Media Research Center (MRC) said mainstream media stirs that pot, often dwelling on U.S. failures while minimizing or ignoring successes and individual heroism. For example, a 2006 MRC study of terror-war coverage found that over a five-year period, the major news networks devoted just 52 minutes to stories about winners of top military awards such as the Medal of Honor and Navy Cross, but nearly four hours of coverage (in just three weeks' time) to the scandal at Haditha, in which Marines were accused of killing Iraqi civilians.

Since Watergate, Noyes said, reporters seem afflicted by a "Woodward and Bernstein" syndrome, neglecting coverage of earnest public servants while looking under every rock for sexier stories about factions, gamesmanship, and scandal. "If young people are trying to learn about their civic institutions from the news media today," Noyes said, "they are likely to become jaded and cynical."

Meanwhile, Blyth said, celebri-crats like the Dixie Chicks, Michael Moore, and Al Gore also have a big influence on kids' perceptions of America. But nobody, she added, has the influence parents have: "All they have to do is use it—to say we're proud to be Americans, we're proud of our history, and we're part of the American story. It's not hard... in fact it's kind of fun."

The bulk of How to Raise an American is devoted to hundreds of tips and ideas parents can use to help their kids appreciate America and its institutions, history, and traditions. Ideas include:
- Volunteering together in a political campaign;
- Taking your kids with you when you vote;
- Observing patriotic holidays with visits to historic sites or fun activities like making a flag cake;
- Sending a letter or care package to a soldier;
- Inviting an immigrant family to Thanksgiving dinner, and asking them why they came to America;
- Participating with your kids in community service projects that help the poor;
- Through arts and crafts, helping your kids explore important

- Visiting cities rich in American history such as Washington, D.C., Boston, and Philadelphia (Blyth and Winston list 250 domestic destinations "your kids will love").

The Sluga family of Randolph, N.Y., began by teaching their kids to appreciate military veterans. "My husband is a Vietnam veteran," said Vickie Sluga, 54. "That has been a biggie in our son's life. He always mails his dad a thank-you card on Veterans Day."

The Slugas took their kids to patriotic parades and ceremonies, and now they take their grandkids. "We collect the state quarters," Sluga said. "We study the map of the USA and have explained the meaning of the stars and the colors of the stripes."

In addition to their domestic travels, the Fischer family lived overseas during Mike's military career, setting up housekeeping in places as diverse as Germany, Okinawa, Greece, and Italy. "The kids saw firsthand what it was like to live

SPIRIT OF '76: Visitors pose for photos in front of the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia.

American documents like the Declaration of Independence and the Emancipation Proclamation;
- Exposing your kids to great speeches by notable Americans such as Patrick Henry, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Martin Luther King Jr.;
there and they heard stories of people trying to deal with the health care system, homeschooling issues—illegal in Greece, by the way—transportation, strikes, and taxes," Virginia Fischer said.

The experience helped the four Fischer kids appreciate America, she said: Her daughter, Kristina "specifically told me she hopes to raise any children she has with the same love of country."
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Summer of love
Forty years ago Beatlemania peaked by MATTHEW P. RISTUCCIA

WE'RE ALREADY HEARING a lot about The Beatles during this 40th anniversary of the haplessly-called "Summer of Love." With the June 1967 debut of the era-defining album Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band and the simulcast that month of their single All You Need Is Love, John, Paul, George, and Ringo were the reigning princes of pop psychedelia. Such hoopla should not be lost on Christians, especially if we take seriously the call to understand "the times" (1 Chronicles 12:32). The recent release of two books about The Beatles affords an opportunity to know our times today by doing some Christian cultural analysis of yesterday—the '60s. After all, even ardent despisers of Sergeant Pepper cannot deny the enduring influence of The Beatles on contemporary culture.

Of the two books, Steve Turner's The Gospel According to The Beatles (WKJ Press: Louisville, 2006) offers an easier "ticket to ride." Turner is known in Christian circles for his Hungry for Heaven: Rock 'n Roll and the Search for Redemption (Intervarsity, 1995). In his Beatles book, he does comparable analysis. Among other things, he demonstrates convincingly that, while the Fab Four were indifferent to Christianity (and clueless about its Savior), they were nonetheless hungry for transcendence.

It was this hunger, Turner argues, that propelled them to start "looking through" their unprecedented musical success, turn on to drugs, study under the Maharishi, popularize "the inner light" of transcendental meditation (George would actually devote his life to Hinduism), fall in love a second time (most notably John with Yoko) and, after "a long and winding road" eventually decide to "let it be" as a group.

In one of Turner's better insights, he observes that "the love they said could change the world couldn't even keep" The Beatles together. Their gospel, based on a naïve remaking of "the word" love, was a cheap imitation. By it, to quote "Eleanor Rigby," "no one was saved," not even John, Paul, George, or Ringo.

Bob Spitz's The Beatles: The Biography (Little, Brown, 2005) may sound a bit pompous with its subtitle, as if no other biography about the four has been written. But The Beatles actually does have a magisterial authority. It offers a David McCullough-esque biography of epic proportions (nearly 950 pages of text and notes) in which voluminous research and humane common-sense "come together" with a fast-paced transparent style—a must read for anyone interested in the guys from Liverpool.

Nevertheless, as "a ticket to ride" into Christian cultural analysis, it offers a more demanding challenge than Turner's book. Spitz is not a self-identified Christian like Turner and makes no attempt to put his subject in a Christian perspective.

Still, The Beatles provides plenty of material for Christian reflection. For instance, given that human culture, though fallen, partially reflects the image of the Creator, Spitz's well-informed accounts of the ingenuity behind various tracks of Rubber Soul, Revolver, and Sergeant Pepper can't help but prompt "something" like wonder in the Christian reader. Truly man (or men, four of them) with his creativity is the crown of creation.

Or again, as the apostle teaches in Acts 17:27, humanity seeks God "in the hope that they should feel their way toward him and find him" (verse 27). What better display than Spitz's version of the February 1968 retreat to Rishikesh, India, "an answer to The Beatles' prayers" to get away from misery, "the craziness, the drugs, the fame" (750)? And with what pathos one learns of their hope's collapse as one-by-one they depart for England in various states of disillusionment with the Maharishi and God so-called?

If you have time this summer, read The Beatles. But be prepared to "think for yourself" and interpret the story of John, Paul, George, and Ringo from a Christian standpoint. If you don't have that kind of time, then get "help": Read The Gospel According to The Beatles. Why? Because" 40 years later, the Fab Four are still too big for Christians to ignore. —Matt Ristuccia is a pastor in Princeton, N.J.
Scout’s honor

Legacy of Honor highlights the role of Scouting in America’s secret to greatness by WARREN SMITH

ALVIN TOWNLEY WAS A 20-something rising star in an international consulting firm when he reconnected with a boyhood friend and conversation turned to their youthful involvement with the Boy Scouts of America. Over a pizza, Townley’s fellow Eagle Scout said his politics had turned decidedly liberal and he planned to return his Eagle award to protest Scouts’ positions favoring duty to God and opposing homosexuality.

Townley was stunned. Though he remained proud of his accomplishment, he nonetheless started thinking what that Eagle award, and Scouting, really mean—and not just to him, but to America.

The fruit of that thinking became Legacy of Honor: The Values and Influence of America’s Eagle Scouts (St. Martin’s Press, 304 pages, 2007), an elegant and forceful case for Scouting’s positive and unique role in the shaping of 20th century America.

Townley took a year off from his career, depleted his savings, and traveled more than 40,000 miles to interview Eagle Scouts for this book. He profiles famous Eagles such as Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter, billionaire New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, and astronaut Jim Lovell. He also includes the lesser-known Mitchel Paige and Jimmie Dyess, who during World War II stepped into U.S. Marine uniforms and earned Medals of Honor.

Such stories are inspiring, but Townley wants us to understand that the path to Eagle is not about success, but character. South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford makes the point pl influentially. “What’s unique about Scouting,” Sanford told Townley, “is that the Scouting program is a value-based leadership program. There are plenty of people out there chasing success, but they’re missing you get to significance and this is by living a life tied to those core values and principles.”

The interview with Sanford became a turning point in Townley’s story-telling strategy. Legacy of Honor, he decided, would focus on the sometimes dark but nonetheless defining moments of modern American history—World War II, the Civil Rights movement, 9/11, and Hurricane Katrina.

These difficult times reminded us that the American experiment in liberty is fragile, and that its real strength is not the celebrity leaders. Townley says that each of the 100 million boys who have worn the Scout uniform and the 2 million young men who have achieved the rank of Eagle are indispensable threads in the American fabric. Townley also believes something changes in a boy when he is required to memorize—and repeat week after week—the steeley words of the Scout Oath, which begins: “On my honor, I will do my best, to do my duty, to God and my country . . .”

Alexis de Tocqueville, in Democracy in America, noted that the American genius for association was an essential part of America’s greatness. Associations, societies, clubs, and small businesses gave even the tradesman or the yeoman the experience of leadership, and thereby made America a nation of leaders. Scouting, Townley suggests, is the logical end of that genius. Scout troops in church basements across America prepare boys to take their places in this leadership matrix. No other organization has the same broad reach and intentional focus.

“Lord Baden-Powell understood that reality a century ago when he founded the Scouting movement,” Townley writes. “By instilling common values in . . . young men, Baden-Powell truly influenced the path of world events.”

Legacy of Honor successfully tells of the confluence of Scouting and world events, and also writes a new chapter in the story de Tocqueville began—the story of what makes America great. It’s the story, too, of why even Townley’s liberal friend could not ultimately bring himself to return his Eagle award.

—Warren Smith is an Eagle Scout and the publisher of The Evangelical Press News Service
EDEN AND NOAH in Greek Art

"Solid evidence for Noah's Flood and his family as real people."

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THE PARTHENON CODE deciphers a genuine ancient artists' code revealing that Greek myth/art tells the same story as the early chapters of Genesis. Only the viewpoint is different—the Greeks believed that the serpent enlightened, rather than deluded, the first couple in paradise. Rejecting the Creator God of Noah in favor of "man as the measure of all things," Greek myth/art celebrated the re-emergence of the way of Kain (Cain) after the Flood, and the rebirth of the serpent-friendly Eve, whom the Greeks worshipped as Athena.

The Greeks called Noah Nereus, "The Wet One." Here Herakles, the Nimrod of Genesis, brings Noah's rule to a halt.

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Loose lips

STEROIDS: Judge rejects plea agreement for former BALCO attorney by JOHN DAWSON

To the extent San Francisco Examiner reporters mark Fainura-Wada and Lance Williams enjoy the next 18 months, they'll have disgraced attorney Troy Ellerman to thank. Ellerman, who exposed himself on Feb. 14 as the reporters' source for Barry Bonds' grand jury steroids testimony, lost a plea deal on June 14. To get at the source of the leak in the grand jury investigation, a judge had threatened the two reporters with a year and a half in prison each for not divulging their source. The secrecy of grand jury testimony is protected by law.

Once a lawyer for BALCO founder Victor Conte, Ellerman allowed Fainura-Wada in 2004 to take word-for-word notes on the transcripts of grand jury testimony by Bonds, baseball players Gary Sheffield and Jason Giambi, and sprinter Tim Montgomery. The subsequent newspaper reports ostensibly outsed Bonds and Sheffield as dopers. Quotes from Giambi and Montgomery reveal they knew they were taking performance-enhancing drugs.

The grand jury revelations have titillated (or enraged) baseball fans as Bonds fast approaches Hank Aaron's record of 755 career home runs. For many, the grand jury testimony of Bonds only served to confirm what was self-evident: The San Francisco Giants slugger cheated his way to at least some of his 700-plus home runs. The leaks might have had an even larger effect on New York Yankees first baseman Jason Giambi. The FBI investigation and subsequent leaked testimony ratcheted up pressure and attention on Giambi who, unlike Bonds, can't seem to keep his mouth shut. In a May 16 interview with USA Today, Giambi apologized for using steroids, but would not say why he used them. Smelling blood, baseball commissioner Bud Selig ordered Giambi to spill his story before baseball's investigation squad headed by former Senate leader George Mitchell or face disciplinary action.

When Ellerman admitted in February to leaking the explosive story, he and prosecutors had agreed to a plea bargain whereby he would serve up to two years in prison for perpetrating the leak. But U.S. District Judge Jeffrey S. White nullified the deal, saying Ellerman should be held to a higher standard. If convicted of all the charges, Ellerman could face up to 15 years in prison: a high price for helping to break the biggest sports scandal in the United States since the Black Sox.
Missing the rain for the trees

ENVIRONMENT: Global-warming models fail to account for moisture
by DANIEL JAMES DEVINE

COMPUTER MODELS THAT predict climate changes due to global warming are flawed, according to a study published in the journal Science. The study examined two decades' worth of satellite climate data and found that actual rain and snow precipitation was much higher than current models predict. In fact, precipitation increased with temperature at a rate three times higher than expected. Most global warming models forecast a much slower rise in precipitation that would mean drought for many already dry areas of the globe.

The study determined that while many models accurately predict temperature rise, they fail to show long-term changes in moisture levels, or the effects of weather patterns like El Niño.

This summer an internationally supported experiment will study the persisting mysteries of rain cloud formation around Germany's Black Forest—an area where rainfall is often forecast incorrectly.

—Daniel James Devine is a writer in Indiana and editor of GlobeLens.com

Where the evidence leads

ORIGINS: Fossils show dinosaurs had more spine

IN RECENT DECADES, a dominant portion of paleontologists have taught that birds evolved from dinosaurs. The popular theory of bird origins has been bolstered by fossils showing filamentous patterns interpreted to be "protofeathers," or evolutionary precursors to modern feathers. But a controversial new study published in the Proceedings of the Royal Society B challenges this view.

The hubbub centers on a theropod called Sinosauropteryx, a turkey-sized dinosaur related to Tyrannosaurus rex. First discovered in 1994, Sinosauropteryx was hailed as an ancestor to birds after it was observed to sport a mane of fibrous structures along its spine—rudimentary feathers intended to keep the animal warm, as the theory went. But Alan Feduccia, a University of North Carolina professor and co-author of the Proceedings B paper, argues that a microscopic examination of the alleged "protofeather" fibers shows otherwise.

"We found what I would consider to be definitive evidence—based on the structure of these fibers and their position and so forth—to show that they are in fact degraded skin collagen fibers," Feduccia told WORLD. "[They] have nothing to do with feathers or protofeathers."

Feduccia and his colleagues believe the collagen, a connective protein found in bone, once supported a frill along the dinosaur's back and tail. They say their discovery challenges the idea that dinosaurs evolved into modern birds.

Other scientists disagree, claiming the link between dinosaurs and birds has already been firmly established. And some dispute the Sinosauropteryx study itself: "It is appalling that Proceedings B chose to publish this nonsense," Kevin Padian, curator at the University of California's Museum of Paleontology, told National Geographic News.

But Feduccia is sticking by his guns. "There are too many problems with the current dogma of the dinosaurian origin of birds," he said.

"I'm willing to go wherever the evidence leads us." —D.J.D.

Not magic, it's 'WiTricity'

ENERGY: Wireless electricity technology is catching

A RESEARCH TEAM FROM THE Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has successfully illuminated an unplugged light bulb from 7 feet away. It's not magic, it's "WiTricity"—a short name for the wireless electricity technology the team hopes will eventually be used to power devices like laptops and MP3 players. Incorporating two antenna-like coils of wire, one hooked to a power source and another attached to an appliance (in this case a 60-watt bulb), the technology uses low-frequency electromagnetic waves to create "magnetic resonance" between the coils. The resulting transmission is strong and efficient, even when obstructed, and should be harmless to people. —D.J.D.
Cracked foundation

BUSINESS: Builders, investors offer a bleak outlook on the housing market by TIMOTHY LAMER

IT'S SHAPING UP TO BE a cruel summer for the U.S. homebuilding industry, which only a few years ago seemed to be powering the American economy. The troubles are mainly of the economic variety, but homebuilders have also become part of the biggest domestic political fight of this election season—the debate over illegal immigration.

On the economic front, hardly a week goes by without more bad news emerging. Last week, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) said that industry confidence was at a 16-year low. The group's index for rating its members' views of market conditions fell to 28, the lowest reading since February 1991. A rating below 50 shows a low level of confidence; last year at this time the index stood at 42.

Behind the gloom and doom is continued fallout from the reckless lending and borrowing of the past several years (see “ARMs have legs," Nov. 25, 2005). RealtyTrac Inc. reported on June 12 that there were 90 percent more foreclosure filings in May than during the same month in 2006. Interest rates on 30-year fixed mortgages, meanwhile, shot up to 6.74 percent.

“The environment is still very tough for builders,” economist Joshua Shapiro told the Bloomberg news service. “There is still a lot of inventory out there and higher mortgage rates certainly don’t help.”

All of this occurred as NAHB lobbyists turned up the heat on Congress to oppose parts of the Bush-Kennedy immigration overhaul. Homebuilders were specifically worried about provisions that would penalize them for hiring illegal aliens or using subcontractors that hire illegals. They also argued that disruptions in the flow of immigrant workers “would do irreparable harm” to their industry.

Add it all up, and investors had reason to be bearish about builders. Despite strong gains this year for the stock market, stock prices for major homebuilders have dropped as much as 25 percent.

Balance Sheet

CRIME: Kenneth Rice, who once headed Enron's broadband division, is going to jail. A federal judge last week sentenced Rice to 27 months in prison for lying to investors about his division's prospects in 2000 and 2001. Rice had pleaded guilty and worked with prosecutors in their cases against Enron executives Kenneth Lay and Jeffrey Skilling.

BUSINESS: Yahoo CEO Terry Semel stepped down last week amid growing complaints from shareholders about the amount he was paid ($71.7 million) in 2006. Semel was the highest-paid CEO among S&P 500 companies even though Yahoo lost market share to Google during his tenure. Yahoo's share of the search engine market is 21.9 percent, compared to Google's 55.2 percent. Semel will remain on Yahoo's board as chairman.

RICH MEN'S CHEST: Depp (left) and Bruckheimer accept MTV's “Best Movie” award June 3.

CELEBRITIES: A series of pirate films brought enough treasure to its director and star to land them on Forbes magazine's annual list of biggest moneymaking celebrities. Pirates of the Caribbean director Jerry Bruckheimer and star Johnny Depp raked in $120 million and $92 million, respectively, to land 2nd and 5th on the Forbes list. Oprah Winfrey topped the list with $250 million followed by Bruckheimer, Steven Spielberg ($110 million), Tiger Woods ($100 million), and Depp.
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The Christian Academy, Brookhaven, PA, is seeking applicants for the following positions for the 07-08 school year: High School Music & High School Science. The Christian Academy is a fully accredited K-12 Christian school with an enrollment of 450 students. TCA serves the suburban Philadelphia area. Contact Dr. Timothy Sierer at 866-822-5080 or tsierer@tcpa.org. Visit us at www.tcpa.org.

The Cambridge School of Dallas, an 11-year-old Christ-centered, College Preparatory, Classical school is seeking an experienced leader as Head of School. See school distinctive at www.cambridgeisdallas.org. Candidates should send, via email or US Mail only, their vita/resume to Laura Wilkerson, The Cambridge School of Dallas, 3202 Royal Lane, Dallas, Texas 75229 or email: CS@cambridgeisdallas.org.

Orangewood Christian School, Mattland FL, is seeking teachers for HS science and elem/MS art: Orangewood is a SACS & CSF accredited covenant school with 700 students in PreK-12th grade. Please send resume by attachment to Kristen McDonald; kmcdonald@orangewoodchristian.org; www.orangewoodchristian.org.

Christian School Headmaster: Palmetto Christian Academy, a ministry of East Cooper Baptist Church, in Mt. Pleasant, SC, is seeking an experienced K-12 Headmaster to lead continued growth at our school beginning with the 2007-2008 school year. Interested applicants should send a cover letter and resume to david@rebconline.com.

Teaching Position: StoneBridge School, Chesapeake, VA, Biblical-classical Principal Approach K-12, seeking elementary and secondary faculty for 2007-2008. Send resume to carole.adams@stoneridgegsschool.com.

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w/exp. & the vision for the task. Candidates should email cover letter & resume to Chris Hill, Personnel Committee, CCHS School Board at chillal@calvaryhs.com.

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Only the Father

For the first time, I watched a bit of *American Idol* this season to see what it was all about. Thousands had gathered in the contestants’ hometowns to swoon over the new “stars” while teenage girls sobbed at the sight of them. I enjoyed their singing—Jordin Sparks (“Ideal idol,” June 2) was fabulous—but we have got to stand counter to our culture and insist that no one is worthy of that kind of adoration but our heavenly Father. —Haley Long, Gainesville, Fla.

Are you kidding? While this nation and the world watches an intensifying presidential race, a crippling war in Iraq, and mass slaughter in Darfur, you pay cover-story tribute to an irrelevant celebration of pop culture vacuity and musical mediocrity.

—Knox Brown
Tifton, Ga.

An honest look

I appreciated Andrée Seu’s gentle but convicted approach regarding head covering for women (“A symbol of glory,” June 2). Seu’s use of her “high school literary skills” to show that these instructions are still applicable today brings clarity to the question: When push comes to shove, do I go with Christian peer pressure or with God’s Word as I see it? I’m trying to give my life an honest look in answering that question.

—Darla Sautter
Ellensburg, Wash.

Seu is not as alone as she may think. Our congregation of over 600 accepts Paul’s teaching on this subject and practices it regularly. I am also familiar with

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over 100 congregations across several denominational lines that encourage this command for the sisters to be veiled. Her point, “because of the angels,” is an excellent reminder that this teaching transcends and eliminates the so-called “cultural” arguments against it.

—James F. Myer
Lititz, Pa.

Why do people continue to sift through Scripture and only take literally what is convenient? I choose to wear a head covering not because I understand it, and definitely not because it’s popular, but because I love and obey God, no matter what He asks of me.

—Cherie Barkman, 13
Beach City, Ohio

The absurdity of the head covering practice was brought home to me about 10 years ago when I spent an hour in church with a pastor’s 9-year-old daughter wearing a paper napkin on her head, having forgotten more “traditional” head apparel that morning. Wearing ceremonial head coverings in worship does not remove barriers between a woman and God but, rather, creates barriers in the church, something against which 1 Corinthians 10-11, whatever else it is teaching about angels, nature, etc., clearly warns.

—Catherine McCarthy
Holt, Mich.

Exploring at home

Regarding “It’s a big world, after all” (June 2): Not everyone has the opportunity to spend time living in another country, but the opportunities for it are probably greater than ever before. And there are so many immigrants to our country from so many places. Even in our small southeast Iowa community, I work with people from quite a number of countries. Recently I learned that one of my new co-workers is from Nepal. What I need to do, I realize, is make the effort to get to know some of them better.

—Pauline Evans
Muscatine, Iowa

We find it astonishing that Marvin Olasky did not qualify the remark that “Muslims see humans as naturally good and able to attain heaven by following the rules.” The humans they see as naturally good are fellow Muslims of the same sect, and not many others. Non-believers are infidels and to be converted by force if required. Sunni Muslims of the Wahhabi persuasion are disdainful of their more moderate brethren, and all Sunni reserve a special contempt for Shiites.

—Bob & Connie Dillon
Fairview, N.C.

Most encouraging

Joel Belz’s “The new rules” (June 2) is the most encouraging assessment of this premature presidential race this disenchanted soul has received.

—Nathan E. Lewis
Portland, Ore.

No scent?

I have just learned of the torture Ali Khan’s boy Majid is suffering at Guantanamo Bay (Quick Takes, June 2). His deodorant has no scent? How sad. If I only knew what scent he would like I’d send it to him post-haste.

—Patricia B. Hill
Elizabethtown, Ky.
MAILBAG

**Took sides**
- “Deal or no deal” (June 2) took sides in a controversial issue that divides political and religious conservatives. As an advocate of reform, I was given a brief quote, but nowhere does the article consider an alternative to the Heritage Foundation’s wildly exaggerated cost estimates. The Congressional Budget Office, for example, estimated that last year’s Senate reform bill would have produced a $12 billion surplus during the first decade after enactment. Other evidence shows that immigrants are not primarily to blame for increases in spending for health care or public education. As President Bush has argued, immigration reform would bring millions of hardworking people out of the shadows and extend to them the full responsibility and protection of the law. It would establish the rule of law, reduce chaos at the border, help our economy grow, and spread the blessings of liberty.

—Daniel Griswold
Center for Trade Policy Studies
Cato Institute
Washington, D.C.

**Heart-breaker**
- Concerning Mel White’s broken heart at Jerry Falwell not discovering the “truth” about homosexuality (“In their own words,” May 26): It breaks our heart that White, who served in such a prestigious position with Falwell, would openly condone sin and make a mockery of Scripture.

—Don & Venita Rosenow
Clay Center, Kan.

**Credible witnesses**
- As a professor of criminal justice, I found “How many witnesses?” (May 26) most interesting. I agree; at least two witnesses should be the standard and in most cases is. As to what qualifies as a witness, it should be anything that has been determined to be credible. For example, the polygraph has yet to be “proven” as credible and thus is not used in courts of law, but DNA evidence has, so the eyewitness testimony of the victim plus the DNA evidence in a rape case would qualify as two witnesses.

—Jeffrey P. Rush
Monroe, La.

**New creatures**
- As a pastor, I attended a local AA meeting and sensed what Andrée Seu’s friend “D” meant when speaking of the
defeatist “I am an alcoholic” mantra (“AA revisited,” May 19). I often hear the
same mantra when, in relation to our
identity in Christ, Christians refer to
believers as “sinners.” New Testament
writers never address their Christian
readers as sinners. As an alcoholic is
someone who lives for drink, can a per-
son living for Christ still refer to himself
and others of like faith as a sinner?

—RON MOSER
Pratt, Kan.

Still unfolding

● I was disappointed to find only a brief
mention of the tornado that struck
Greensburg, Kan. (The Buzz, May 19).
Perhaps the real story is still unfolding:
Individuals across Kansas are taking
the initiative to donate food and clothing,
organize and collect donations, and
travel to Greensburg to help clear
debris. Christians hope that their loss
will be a means of spreading revival in
the Heartland.

—ESTHER HARMER
Ingalls, Kan.

Impotence without Christ

● Thank you for highlighting presiden-
tial candidates. The article revealing
the division among evangelicals over
the potential of electing a Mormon to the
presidency (“Catching Mitt,” May 19)
is a wake-up call to Christians in the USA.
No amount of human virtue will com-
penstate for the impotence of a person
without Christ attempting to address
critical needs of our country.

—RICHARD & LENNIE B. KNIGHT
Burleson, Texas

Real news

● Our family just discovered your
magazine. We cancelled Newsweek a
couple of years ago in disgust over their
liberal views. WORLD is a great
replacement, similar in style but with
balanced, real news and a Christian
viewpoint—how refreshing!

—BRAD & JAN SCHWARTZ
Romeo, Mich.

Letters to the editor

Email: mailbag@worldmag.com
Write: Mailbag, WORLD Magazine,
P.O. Box 20002, Asheville, NC 28802
Fax: (828) 253-1556
Robert W. Kellemen, Ph.D.
Chairman, MA in Christian Counseling and Discipleship
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God commands us to rejoice, and obedience requires nothing less

I am happy these days, because of a command. One is not supposed to be happy about commands. Commands are a superseding of the will. America was founded on the impulse against that. Why then does the Psalmist exclaim, “I will lift up my hands toward your commandments, which I love” (Psalm 119:48)? Imagine loving a commandment.

“Be joyful in hope” (Romans 12:12). The saying comes to resemble, in 21st-century fatigue, the equivalent of that other empty hortatory leave-taking. “Have a nice day.” Yeah, right. Sure, sure.

In one sense the last three years of my life have been a search for joy. I don’t think this is purely hedonism (although, praise God, John Piper has taken out the stigma with his insistence on “Christian hedonism”): What but my joy can make Jesus delectable and desirable to my neighbor?

Is it not our hard-won birthright? “You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions” (Hebrews 1:9).

I love that. Read around the verse and you will see the man Jesus—strong and sinewy, praying with loud cries and tears—who has made us a band of brothers and is not ashamed of it. He locks arms to praise his Father “in the midst of the congregation.” He casts his lot with us forever and will not relinquish his human clothing for all eternity. The Divinity is now and henceforth human-divinity, or divine-humanity. One should be stoned for such a thing if it were not there in Hebrews.

But I stray. The joy. Who has known joy except for those rare “stabs” in childhood, the siren of a distant country that came over you at play, but only for a split second, and not so anyone would notice? Or less yet in adulthood, of that quickening while you’re minding your own business: “almost like a heartbreak,” “an unsatisfied desire” which is itself more desirable than any other satisfaction” (C.S. Lewis, Surprised by Joy).

One grows up, accrues duties like barnacles, and becomes suspicious of the rumor of joy. “Be worthy of your beard,” they used to say in the late Middle Ages, that darkness before the dawn.

And yet joy is all over Scripture. A concordance will give you an idea of the importance of joy to God. (Should I not be obsessed by what obeseses God?) Of the fruit of the Spirit it comes second, after only “love,” of which stuff God Himself is made.

But the Lord knows this about His child: I need to be commanded to rejoice or I won’t. There are personal reasons for that: 1) Superstition—not let yourself be happy or something bad will happen; jump before you’re pushed; 2) You don’t deserve to be joyful—it is presumptuous and unseemly. Your proper posture is to be abject in your utter sinfulness.

I lived so long in a pit that I thought it was my God-assigned home and I should be content. I was hanging draperies and inviting people in—mostly women. Some of them lived in the same kind of house, and we discussed our living quarters together over tea, and how many years we had lived there. We said how grateful we were that God loved us, anyway—in spite of the fact that we were living totally defeated lives.

But what can I do if you command joy, Lord? If you give me permission, if you tell me I must—as if insisting I take this festive package with the bow on top—and that if I refuse, I am not being humble but disobedient and ungrateful? In that case, I say: “Aye-aye, Lord, I rejoice!” And, “not my feet only but also my hands and my head” (John 13:9).

Joy is no stranger anymore but comes to stay. It has as its content the “yes and amen” promises. It rooms with sorrow but I understand that’s the deal, for now. And comes anon the “breakthrough” joy, the promissory of a distant land where joy is unalloyed with pain. The servant is not better than his master, after all—who offered supplications “with loud cries and tears,” and thus received the “oil of gladness,” rolling off His beard and unto us. ☺

—orAndrée Seu is the author of Normal Kingdom Business and Won’t Let You Go Unless You Bless Me, essay collections available at worldmag.com
BOOKS BY ATHEISTS ARE HITTING THE BESTSELLER LISTS (see p. 58), but defenders of the faith should not miss other new books that are flying under major media radar. One outstanding scholarly work, Richard Bauckham's Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony (Eerdmans, 2006), concludes that "the Gospel texts are much closer to the form in which the eyewitnesses told their stories or passed on their traditions than is commonly envisaged in current scholarship."

Bauckham, a professor at St. Andrews in Scotland, even argues unashingly (within academia) that Mark's Gospel is indeed largely Peter's eyewitness account and John's is also from an eyewitness. One of Bauckham's techniques is to look at the psychology of remembering: He shows that unique, consequential events in which an individual is emotionally involved are those most likely to be remembered well. Along the way he criticizes the theories of James Dunn and others that the Gospels are the result of oral tradition and collective memory-of-sorts.

On to other good books: Stephen Mansfield's Ten Tortured Words (Thomas Nelson, 2007) shows how jurists twisted the First Amendment's assurance of freedom for religion into a method of demanding freedom from religion. Nancy Tischler's Thematic Guide to Biblical Literature (Greenwood, 2007) is a text—usable in secular high schools and colleges—that shows how biblical themes play out in great world and American literature (see Tischler also on p. 50).

On to other theological questions: Gerald McDermott's God's Rivals (IVP, 2007) explains how God has used what was true in largely false religions to help prepare individuals and whole cultures to eventually receive biblical truth. That may be true even in art: Thomas Mathews' The Clash of Gods: A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art (Princeton University Press, revised and expanded edition 2003) shows how Christians took pagan motifs and changed them. For example, Jesus rides in as did emperors, but meekly on a donkey rather than arrogantly in a chariot.

On to applications of theology: Some brave authors refuse to bow before the established public school religion, Darwinism. Michael Behe's The Edge of Evolution (Free Press, 2007) is getting some good press play, and Geoffrey Simmons' Billions of Missing Links (Harvest House, 2007) is also worthwhile. Debating Immigration, edited by Carol Swain (Cambridge University Press, 2007), looks at whether we can have an intelligently designed borders policy.

On to personal applications: John Newton: From Disgrace to Amazing Grace (Crossway, 2007) tells the story of one pastor/hymnwriter whom God redeemed. Jonathan Aitken, a former member of Parliament who became a Christian while serving a prison term, readably tells the story of Newton, the slave ship captain who became a Christian, mentored William Wilberforce, and penned one of the most-sung hymns.

On to the growing Christian commitment to helping the poor of other countries: For a succinct and thoroughly biblical perspective on resources, development, and the right way to offer humanitarian assistance, read The Forest in the Seed, by Scott Allen and Darrow Miller (Disciple Nations Alliance, 2006). It takes the old proverb about teaching a man to fish instead of merely giving him a fish, and extends it: "Empower a man to think about fishing in new ways and his life will be changed forever!"

Some of the projects described in Kay Strom's Harvest of Hope (IVP, 2007) are fish-giving and others are fisher-teaching, but several rise to the third level. For example, she describes how Dalit (untouchable) women in India often have a deeply ingrained sense of worthlessness and hopelessness. That can change when they learn that God created them in His image and that they are capable of starting productive micro-entreprises.

It's hard to rise out of poverty when we pour our efforts into war rather than productivity, but James L. Payne argues in A History of Force (Lynton Publishing, 2004) that coercion, bloodshed, and mayhem are decreasing. It helps when people can be aggressive on a sports field rather than a battlefield, and William Baker's Playing with God: Religion and Modern Sport (Harvard U. Press, 2007) is dry but information-packed. Simon Kuper's Ajax, the Dutch, the War: Football in Europe During the Second World War (Orion, 2003) shows how soccer players continued kicking as the ships of state were sinking.
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