

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

# The Clinton Legacy: A Scherzo



As the great political parties of the Republic excite the faithful and tempt the dubious to make world history this November, it is fitting that this monthly intellectual review take

the longer view. Let us turn from the two proffered presidential messiahs and assess what in contemporary parlance is called Bill Clinton's Legacy, while bearing in mind that only the present narcissistic generation of politicians would think in such terms. No past president would so publicly fondle his "legacy," and the only journalist who might muse over a passing president's "legacy" would be one comfortably situated in said president's back pocket.

Strictly speaking, this president leaves no legacy, or at least not much of one. A legacy is an inheritance, almost always considered beneficent. What Boy Clinton is leaving is not a beneficence but what the computer-savvy might call a series of corrupt files, possibly even a computer virus. Rather than appraise a legacy from the forty-second president we might more appropriately evaluate the contamination he leaves.

The contamination appears to be lavish. Political scientists tell us that a president's impact on the country is intimate and far-reaching. I, after serving for over seven years as the Boy President's unflinching presidential biographer and daily polygraphist, have come to the conclusion that

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the political scientists do not know the half of it. The impact of a presidency is felt everywhere, bearing upon tastes, styles, normative standards, humors, even the average citizen's use of language—as when said citizen appears in a court of law to defend himself against yet another charge of indecent exposure. Since Roosevelt II gathered such vast power and prominence around the modern presidency, each of his successors has cast a particular glow on the land; in Roosevelt's regime, sanguinity mixed with energetic government; in Eisenhower's, welcome reassurance, steady-as-she-goes, and golf; in Kennedy's the glow was boldness, heedlessness, and hatlessness. Once a modern president bids the citizenry adieu, the glow passes; sometimes abruptly, as with President George Bush, sometimes slowly, as with President Ronald Reagan. So what about the Boy President's glow? Well, as aforementioned, the Clinton glow is more the glow of contamination than anything else, and it could, in some areas, last a long time.

I say that it could last a long time because this president and his servitors have contaminated the rule of law, a fundamental element in the American polity. To be sure he has contaminated other areas of the polity, as I—biographer and polygraphist—will relate below. He trivialized foreign policy and domestic policy. Policy, however, is but policy, and bad policy can be replaced by good policy. Reaganism rectified Carterism: Morning in America following insomnia. Yet corruption of the rule of law is more damaging than implementation of bad policy. America prides itself in being a "nation of laws." Our rule of law radiates throughout society, wherever contending parties seek redress. Its strength has been its integrity, its insulation from finagling or from partisan politics, in sum, its hold on the people's trust. With that integrity fractured, the judiciary and the

Justice Department open to political pressure, the rule of law is seriously impaired. Once lost, the people's trust is difficult to regain. When the president tampered with the rule of law he threatened the ethics of the country and contorted fundamental principles of discourse. The contamination of the public discourse is one of the most obvious consequences of the Clinton Administration. Political discussion as heard on television or read on the nation's op-ed pages now needs a translator, preferably a linguist who has taken the vow of no-politics.

The Boy President's energetic mendacity has rendered the public discourse mostly incomprehensible. Imagine taking issue with the meaning of "is" as he did in sworn testimony? It worked for him but at a cost to us. Sure, people laughed; but months later his understudy, Al Gore, during an interview with federal investigators about his fundraising, made a similar issue over the meaning of "raising." Now almost no one laughed. Under the glow of the Clinton presidency the public discourse has descended to the domain of the naughty adolescent caught *flagrante delicto*. That key figures in the public discourse—editors, writers, and news directors—have come to accept this sort of pettifoggery as merely amusing bodes ill for future political discourse and for all the sensible liberal principles associated with it.

Not surprisingly the Clinton critics whom I have enlisted elsewhere in this issue to comment on the Clinton "legacy" for our nation of laws, Theodore Olson and Congressman Bob Barr, are already infamous within the public discourse. They come to us besmeared as "Clinton-haters" and spooks in a "Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy." Here we see another example of how the Clintons have contaminated political debate.

**Great Performers**

**Plácido Domingo:** "Se quel uerrier io fossi" from Verdi's *Lida* 1000  
**Nicco Caruso:** "Spirto ientil" from *La Favorita* (Jonizetti) 1001  
**Anna-Maria Bach:** Toccata nd Fugue in D minor 1002  
**Ehud Menuhin:** Bach: onata No. 1 in G minor 1003  
**Arvid Krumpholtz/Lauritz Felchior:** Love Duet from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* ive from Covent Garden, 939) 1004

**20th-Century Music**

**Barber:** Adagio for Strings 1021  
**Prokofiev:** "Classical" Symphony, Allegro 1022  
**Copland:** Fanfare for the Common Man 1023  
**R. Strauss:** Four Last Songs: Ill. "Beim Schlafengehen" (Elisabeth Schwarzkopf) 1024  
**Gershwin:** Rhapsody in Blue (with George Gershwin)\* 1025  
**Britten:** "Moonlight" (Interlude from *Peter Grimes*) 1026  
**Bernstein:** Overture to *Candide* 1027  
**Stravinsky:** "The Firebird" 1028

**Maria Callas**

"Casta Diva" from Bellini's *Norma* 1032  
 "Vissi d'Arte" from Puccini's *Tosca* 1033  
 "O rendetemi la speme... Qui la voce" from Bellini's *Puritani* 1034  
 "Il dolce suono" (Mad Scene) from Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* 1035  
 "Printemps, qui commence" from Saint-Saens' *Samson et Dalilah* 1036  
 "Suicidio" from *Ponchielli's La Gioconda* 1037  
 "Libiamo" from Verdi's *La Traviata* — LIVE 1038



**All-American Classics**

**Copland:** "Appalachian Spring" 1041  
**Bernstein:** "West Side Story" (orchestral highlights) 1042  
**Bernstein:** "Tonight" from *West Side Story* (Roberto Alagna/Angela Gheorghiu) 1043  
**Scott Joplin:** "Maple Leaf Rag" 1044

**Gottschalk:** "Ojos Criollos (Danse Cubaine)", Caprice Brillante" 1045  
**Samuel Barber:** "Knoxville, Summer of 1915" 1046  
**Traditional:** "Shenandoah" (Paul Robeson)\* 1047  
**Traditional:** "Ain't That Good News" (Barbara Hendricks) 1048

**Basically Baroque**

**Albinoni:** Adagio in G minor 1142  
**Pachelbel:** Canon 1143  
**Handel:** Menuet from *Water Music* (Sir Neville Marriner/ Academy of St Martin in the Fields) 1144  
**Bach:** Violin Concerto No. 1, Allegro (Anne-Sophie Mutter) 1145  
**Bach:** Suite for Unaccompanied Cello 1, Prelude (M. Rostropovich) 1146  
**Bach:** Air on the G String (Mariss Jansons/Oslo Philharmonic) 1147  
**Handel:** Bouree from *Water Music* (Riccardo Muti/Berlin Philharmonic) 1148

**Songs Of Schubert**

Der Tod und das Mädchen (Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau) 1060  
 Die Forelle (The Trout) (Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau) 1061  
 Nacht und Traeume (Ian Bostridge) 1062  
 Erkonig: (Ian Bostridge) 1063  
 Der Lindenbaum (from *Winterreise*) (Thomas Hampson) 1064  
 An die Musik (Margaret Price) 1065  
 Die Allmacht (Margaret Price) 1066

**Classical Romance**

**Ravel:** Bolero 1082  
**Wagner:** Prelude and Liebestod from *Tristan und Isolde* 1083  
**Prokofiev:** "Love Dance" from *Romeo and Juliet* 1084  
**Liszt:** "Liebestraum" 1085



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**Jacques Offenbach:** Barcarolle (orchestral version) 1086  
**Grieg:** Solveig's Song from *Peer Gynt* (Sir Neville Marriner) 1087  
**Mozart:** Piano Concerto No. 21, Andante ("Elvira Madigan") (Annie Fischer) 1088

**Cole Porter:** "Night and Day" (Yehudi Menuhin/ Stephane Grappelli) 1105  
**Sondheim:** "Send In the Clowns" (Maurice Andre) 1106

**Classics For A Summer Night**

**Mozart:** "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" (Herbert von Karajan/Vienna Philharmonic) 1110  
**Debussy:** "Clair de Lune" 1111  
**Beethoven:** "Moonlight" Sonata 1112  
**Berlioz:** "Villanelle" from *Les nuits d'ete* 1113  
**Vivaldi:** "Summer" from *The Four Seasons*, Allegro (Anne-Sophie Mutter/von Karajan/ Vienna Philharmonic) 1114  
**Mendelssohn:** Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* 1115  
**Handel:** Music for the Royal Fireworks, Overture 1116  
**de Falla:** Noches en los jardines de Espana (Nights in the Gardens of Spain) 1117

**Brava Opera**

**Puccini:** "Nessun dorma" from *Turandot* (Jose Carreras) 1121  
**Mascagni:** Intermezzo from *Cavalleria Rusticana* 1122  
**Rossini:** "Largo al factotum" from *The Barber of Seville* 1123  
**Verdi:** "La donna e mobile" from *Rigoletto* (Nicola Gedda) 1124

**Wagner:** The Ride of the Valkyries from *Die Walkuere* 1125  
**Bizet:** Toreador Song from *Carmen* (Nicola Ghiaurov) 1126  
**Puccini:** "Ch'Il bel sogno di Doretta" from *La Rondine* (Luba Organosova) 1127

**Best Of The Classics**

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**Mozart:** O Symphony No. 41 in C Major, "Jupiter" 1132  
**Tchaikovsky:** 1812 Overture 1133  
**Mahler:** Adagietto from the Fifth Symphony 1134

Anne-Sophie Mutter



**Haydn:** Symphony No. 101, "London": Adagio — Allegro 1135  
**Grieg:** "In the Hall of the Mountain King" from *Peer Gynt* (Sir Thomas Beecham) 1136

**Great Choirs**

**Handel:** "Hallelujah" from *Messiah* 1153  
**Orff:** "O Fortuna" from *Carmina Burana* 1154

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Such terms and formulations in earlier times would be seen as the squawks of self-pitying hysterics and political extremists. Adults at the center of events would shun them, and they surely would never come into popular usage. In the 1990's the Clinton Administration coined them, and mainstream political commentators use them without blush. A Clinton critic must be a "hater"; and two or more in a room amount to what Hillary has identified as a "Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy." When she first used the term there were snickers, then assent. Again we see the Clintons' corrupting standards. Consider how their humbuggery has deposited fantasy on the public record.

Conspiracy theorists heretofore have been viewed as comical cranks. Scholarship has found them to be extremists with two wheels off the ground. All knowledgeable Americans, left and right, are aware of the distinguished historian Richard Hofstadter's research into the country's conspiracy theorists. He concluded that they were the adepts of the "paranoid style of American politics," which he found mainly among right-wing zanies. How does one explain two alumni of the Ivy League practicing "the paranoid style" from a famous locale where such fierce partisans as Harry Truman and Richard Nixon remained free of its delusions? And can you imagine the uproar in the press had Truman or Nixon complained of a conspiracy against them? Again the Boy President's "legacy" is more like a contaminant. *Après* Clinton, mainstream editorials ventilate ideas once contemplated only in the ideological boondocks and in mental hospitals.

Olson is one of Washington's finest legal minds, a judgment verified by his frequent appearances before the Supreme Court, where he has won a reputation for being one of the Court's finest litigators. Pre-Clinton he would have been numbered among the capital's "wise men." Yet, having criticized the administration, given legal counsel to one or two of its victims, and remained happily married to Barbara Olson, author of *Hell to Pay: The Unfolding Story of Hillary Rodham Clinton*, he stands identified as a conspiracist. Clinton apologists and law enforcement goons actually argue that Olson served as a conspirator in the Bait

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**As each charge was  
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raised their threshold  
for impeachment.**  
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Shop Junta, one of the key elements in the "Vast Right-Wing Conspiracy." According to the Clintonistas, the Junta is an insurrectionary group, opulently endowed by *The American Spectator*. From a remote Arkansas bait shop (Dozhier's Rainbow Landing) it fomented the greatest threat to the American presidency since Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. Two yokels writing in a book entitled *The Hunting of the President* dreamed up Olson's adventures. The president recommends their work. His Justice Department urged a government investigation of the Junta. The Hon. John Conyers and the Hon. Robert Toricelli seconded the motion. After the government spent God knows how many million dollars to investigate (remember the Clintons' complaints about the cost of the independent counsel?) and the Junta spent hundreds of thousands to defend, the Junta was cleared. Over 160 persons had been interviewed, still the Clintonistas' charges were dismissed as "unsubstantiated" and "in some cases, untrue."

To the Clintons that only demonstrates the vastness of the Conspiracy. To the American press it is no milestone or portent. No media watchdog or journalist has ever sounded the alarm. The *Washington Post's* ever-vigilant media reporter, Howard Kurtz, did not even report the magazine's exoneration. The use of the smear and of government investigations against political critics and the press are further contaminants the Clintons leave.

From 1993 on, journalists here at the *Spectator* and elsewhere have continuously published exposés of Clinton's irregularities, all pretty much following a fixed cycle: liberals and Democrats are incredulous and outraged at the exposé; the

exposé is thumpingly vindicated; the liberals and Democrats are reproachful of their Boy President; then amnesia... then another exposé—usually more lurid. In other words, the same rising level of tolerance for Clinton's mendacity has accompanied his scandals. These news cycles ended with Monica's story, a vindication of all the previous exposés with perjury and contempt of court thrown in. The refusal of the liberals and the Democrats to impeach, and their alacrity to attack Clinton's vindicated critics as well as duly appointed prosecutors, revealed yet another contaminant in the Clinton "legacy," to wit, erosion of practically every principle of political fair play. As each charge against the guilty president was proven, the Democrats raised their threshold for impeachment and lowered the credibility of their double talk until it was apparent that the only principle they still adhered to was the preservation of power.

The impeachment proceedings revealed something more. The irrational rancor displayed by the guilty president's friends (and by some of his most disagreeable enemies) revealed American politics to be a gathering point for the *enragés*. From the spectacle of Boy Clinton's impeachment I have concluded that many of the country's politically involved use politics as a place to satisfy some innate rage that escaped their therapists' expertise. If people such as James Carville ever gain control of the Congress, I would expect legislation making it a hate crime to vote Republican.

**I**n the early days of the Clinton Administration, I anticipated his presidency with an enthusiasm verging on the idealistic. I beheld him as a modern version of one of my favorite presidents, Warren G. Harding, another handsome, amiable pol, with an eye for the fair sex and a bossy wife. Bill golfed; Hillary had temper tantrums. So what? The Cold War was *terminé*, and an efficient White House staff saw to it the lights were turned off at night and the windows closed. Far from being a "Clinton-hater" I was, after the manner of Mencken and Nathan before me, a chuckler, a "Clinton chuckler." In fact, far from being what the national press now calls "the Clinton-hating *American Spectator*" (viz. the

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—Hugh M.

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—Duncan M.

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—Edward S., MD

"As a cancer patient who has been battling lymphatic cancer on and off for almost three years now, I was very pleased to stumble across *How to fight Cancer and Win*. The book was inspiring, well-written and packed with useful information for any cancer patient looking to maximize his or her chances for recovery."

—Romany S.

"I've been incorporating Dr. Budwig's natural remedy into my diet and have told others about it. Your book is very informative and has information I've never heard about before (and I've read many books on the cancer and nutrition link). Thanks for the wonderful information."

—Molly G.

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*New Republic*, December 2, 1996; the *New York Times*, August 15, 1999; *Time*, March 16, 1998), this magazine has been a Clinton-chuckling magazine. We have thought this presidency an extended horse laugh. Even when some of us were being hauled before a Fort Smith grand jury the joke around the office was “They’ll never take us alive.” And they did not—quoth the Office of Special Review: “many of the allegations, suggestions and insinuations regarding the tendering and receipt of things of value were shown to be *unsubstantiated* or, in some cases, *untrue*” [emphasis added].

Someday the laughter will have to be adjourned. If there is a Cromwell in America’s future, he will judge us harshly. For we were wrong about Clinton in this respect: Clinton is a Harding with a “dark side.” Harding never lied so brazenly or broke the law; Clinton is a certifiable sociopath, and as the *Wall Street Journal*’s Paul Gigot recently noted, he will spend the rest of his life attempting to prove that he was framed. The disgraced president stated his case in a press conference on June 28, saying “a lot of these so-called ‘scandals’ were bogus.”

Unto death he will enlist every willing liberal to his cause. For years he will excite enmity in a debate that should not even exist. During Monica Lewinsky’s historic coming out party through which her fellated friend indignantly protested his innocence, I joked that he would become liberalism’s next Alger Hiss. Alas, another Clinton joke has become chill fact; but unlike Hiss’s guilt, which was known to but a few Soviet and American intelligence officers, Clinton’s guilt is known to all. Still Alger Clinton will protest, and you can be sure that a certain number of quarrelsome liberals will side with him. Ken Starr, the impeachment managers, the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal*, even the Bait Shop Junta will live in their infamy.

Harding was a rascal, but he was never the threat to civil liberties that the Boy President became. Warren never had access to Bill’s vast executive branch bureaucracy, the modern presidency’s police forces (FBI, CIA, FEMA, the Secret Service), its IRS, executive orders, politicized Justice Department (see Olson),

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**Harding was a rascal,  
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and docile mass media to boom its smears, its spins, the president’s whines.

Every other modern presidency has marshaled its powers toward advancing policy or winning wars. Consider the Fair Deal, the Great Society, or the Reagan Revolution. History will remember that it was this president’s unique contribution to the presidency that he directed all of its powers to protecting the White House from the consequences of his wayward erections and of Hillary’s gratuitous lies. The conventional understanding in Washington is that the Clinton Administration engaged in “the permanent campaign,” inflating every humdrum achievement into something *spectacular*, campaigning anew each day merely for the sake of staying in power and to cover the First Family’s gluteus maximus.

More energetically than any of his predecessors, this president campaigned day after day not to advance a great vision but to stay in office and avoid prosecution. Hence, he and his wife laid hands on the federal bureaucracy early, for they knew about the “complications” that lay in their past and were apt to endanger the president’s future. Immediately upon coming to office they installed their crooked sidekick Webb Hubbell to oversee the Justice Department. They fired all U.S. Attorneys; and, we now know, gained access to any grand jury proceedings they might need to see. This last matter we now know about thanks to the publication of a Justice Department memo reported in the May 29, 2000 issue of *Newsweek*. It is another revelation that the mass media ho-hummed. The Clintons installed their servitors in every other bureaucracy, which was not

unusual, except that these lackeys were unusual. Notwithstanding the president’s claim to being a New Democrat, a large number of his appointees were, like him, Coat-and-Tie Radicals from their 1960’s student government days. They brought their aged left-wing fatuities with them.

This explains the “legacy” of security breaches that will be left to the next president to remedy, unless he be President Al Gore. As *The American Spectator* reported last year, the Clintonistas who took over the Energy Department thought security procedures passé. The same sloppy complacency took hold in the Commerce Department and at State. Not surprisingly, the Clinton Administration suffered more technology losses to foreign governments and more stolen military secrets than any previous presidency. The lost secrets at Los Alamos and the lost laptop computers at State should have been anticipated in the laid-back atmosphere of the Boy President’s administration. Spies were not only active at our research and military installations as *The American Spectator*’s Michael Ledeen and Kenneth Timmerman frequently reported, they were frequenting Clinton fundraisers, where laws against foreign campaign contributions were violated.

**T**he foreign policy “legacy” is also troubled. It was during the first Clinton Administration that former U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick noted that this former war resister had committed American troops abroad more frequently than any post-World War II president. Troops were committed to such hellholes as Haiti, Bosnia, and Somalia. We now know this was the consequence of a balmy strategic design thought up in an early 1990’s seminar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace by such prodigies as Madeleine Albright and Richard Holbrooke. A new geopolitical strategy was thought up for the post-Cold War that would send American forces to intervene in the civil wars of other nations. Amazingly the same people who as students in the 1960’s protested America’s becoming “policeman to the world” now transformed our armed forces into an international gendarmerie, further low-

ering the morale of a military already demoralized by the administration's efforts to make it co-ed and low-budget.

Sacrificed to the rhetorical requirements of the permanent campaign Clinton's State Department botched foreign policy initiatives in Northern Ireland, the Middle East, and the Balkans, leaving yet more problems for the next president. Previous presidents occasionally undertook foreign policy initiatives for domestic political considerations, but most such initiatives constituted nothing more than bilateral tete-a-tetes or foreign junkets. Clinton precipitated ill-conceived summit meetings and atrocities that thitherto only Hollywood script writers had envisaged, to wit, bombing foreign jerkwaters for domestic political gain. Every time impeachment threatened, Clinton bombed Islam. On no fewer than three occasions Clinton sent the Air Force into action to protect the White House from the consequences of Monica's big mouth. The day before he faced an impeachment vote he bombed Iraq. Seventy-two hours after his August 17, 1998 grand jury appearance he hit Afghanistan and an aspirin factory in the Sudan that was almost certainly blameless.

How is that for a "legacy" that contaminates? And what about future presidents' chances of getting off the political hook by bombing what is left of Islam or perhaps taking on Buddhism? This will not be so easy. Since 1990, the military has shrunk by 40 percent. Moreover the military has been forced to forgo much of the new technology of the Information Age. Not only is our military a house divided—the girls against the boys, the homos against heteros—but the roof leaks and it has yet to purchase indoor plumbing.

Of all the institutions that Clinton has left weakened and contaminated, no institution has suffered more than the presidency. His challenges to Starr's subpoenas left the presidency's historic privileges diminished. His reckless behavior left its prestige in decline. Even as his party's leader Clinton has been burdensome. He leaves office with the Democratic Party weaker at the state and national levels than at any time since 1930. Nor was it the independent counsel or his pursuers in the press who brought on

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this "long national nightmare." Clinton brought every humiliation upon himself by lying when he did not have to lie and abusing power when it was unnecessary. His misbehavior fashioned his own downfall. He corrupted all he touched. Despite all his boasts to being a direct descendant of John F. Kennedy and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in the end the equivalent of a Clinton Brain Trust would be a grand jury witness list or, better yet, a police line-up.

And so, you might protest, have you nothing good to say about the Clinton "legacy"? Well, he has to his credit welfare reform, free trade, and balanced budgets. Yet note: They are all Republican policies passed by Republican legislative majorities. Clinton, the sentimental liberal, now seeks praise for implementing Republican policies. He is a policy kleptomaniac. Would that the Republicans had the combativeness to point this out.

There is some reason to hope that aside from his contamination of the rule of law the rest of his corrupt legacy will not endure. It is likely that the next president will be a Republican. The Democrats would never let a Republican get away with conduct as corrupt as Clinton's. The Republic might be delivered from the contaminations of Boy Clinton not by the Democrats' commitment to principle but by their demonstrated commitment to a double standard. And as for *The American Spectator's* trials, the Clintons turned up the heat in the kitchen; but it was their goose that was cooked. ☘

Wlady Pleszczynski's

## Monday Thoughts

...with an eye on the campaign

it's a new season  
and we're covering it...

with a voice



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# Boastful Genome Science

## Journalists decline to play an adversary role.

At the time of the White House announcement about the human genome, we were reminded that when it comes to science, the press doesn't play "watchdog." If it's government funded—and more and more of science is—every claim is waved through the editorial checkpoints without scrutiny. When President Clinton, Francis S. Collins of the National Human Genome Research Institute, and J. Craig Venter of Celera Genomics orchestrated a burst of publicity for themselves in June, the media focused on political controversies rather than the science. They discussed "the race" between public and private sectors, genetic discrimination, privacy, and the patenting of genes. The point that this cozy get-together was artfully contrived at a time when the project was still far from complete was tactfully ignored. Hey, it was science, so the media printed the press releases without a murmur. Theirs was not to reason why.

One who did raise a question, in a weekend talk show, was the columnist Charles Krauthammer. But Jack Germond waved a hand and said, in effect, "Aw, who understands this stuff?" If the scientists were impressed, that was good enough for the man-of-the-people. That is the usual attitude. A few years ago I called a reporter in the Bay Area who was forever printing science press releases without taking thought and I asked him why he never questioned anything. "Let me tell you something," he said, very much on his high horse. "I don't have a license to practice medicine."

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Notice that journalists do reserve the right to question national security policy, the CIA, defense issues, tax cuts, and so on. It's a good thing they do, too (not that they do it enough). But when it comes to science, the adversary press is a no-show.

With the genome project, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and indeed *Science* magazine managed to present the scientific claims at two levels. At the front-page, propaganda level, the Heroic Deeds of Science were presented uncritically. They are state-approved, the bandwagon is rolling, and the reporters know they are not expected to raise doubts (just as they didn't question national security claims before 1971). Network television exists solely at this level.

On the inside pages, however, you could find facts that undermined the headlines. But few readers ever get to the fine print, and that is the way science reporting works. The publicity ensures that the flow of public funds continues; Congress is reassured that "the people" support this bold initiative. It's something like the *Pravda* of old, with stale propaganda in the headlines, and, sometimes, useful information popping up inside.

The "inside" accounts, plus a little checking I did on my own, make me wonder whether the genome project amounts to much, so far. A few illustrations: An op-ed in the *New York Times* by David Baltimore, the president of Caltech, was headlined "50,000 Genes, and We Know Them All (Almost)." A few days earlier, the July *Scientific American* appeared. One story said: "Now that all the 100,000 or so genes that make up the human genome have been deciphered...." At the Cold Spring Har-

bor Laboratory, they were making bets on the final number of human genes. Estimates ranged from 27,462 to 200,000. Why did the range increase even as more and more of the genome was "decoded"? Rick Weiss of the *Washington Post* said the problem is that "it can be difficult to tell where a gene begins and ends in the three billion letter sequence of human genetic code."

Yet Baltimore had begun his article: "Humans have no more genetic secrets; our genes are a book open to all to read." He knew that wasn't true, of course. Here he was in the approved Bandwagon mode. (And if Nobel Prize winners can do it, why not humble journalists?) A couple of days later the same Baltimore was quoted in the *New York Times* as saying: "Complexity is the word on everybody's lips these days when they see what the genome really looks like. We've got another century of work ahead of us, to figure out how all of these things relate to each other." No more genetic secrets, then, and a century will be needed to figure things out.

I phoned a scientist with two years experience at the genome institute headed by Francis Collins. (It is one of the 25 divisions of the NIH.) Why was everyone so hazy about the number of genes, I asked. Off the record, he was candid. He wasn't sure of the answer himself! Which told me what I had suspected—that the genome people are much closer to the beginning of this project than they are to the end. Baltimore may well be right when he says that it may take another 100 years.

The gene today is thought of as a compromise between the classical "factor" of Mendelian genetics (a hypothetical construct, invisible yet controlling an outward trait of the organism) and the DNA molecule of Watson and Crick. Genes are said to be specific segments of the 3.15 billion-unit chain of DNA, and each gene is said