

if you listen to the Rumsfeld coterie, and if you consider what we actually *did* in Afghanistan, you realize that the State Department is just being stately. Where our serious interests are engaged and when time is a factor, we can't possibly act through NATO: too much consultation, too much difference in capability. Henceforth, in urgent matters we'll assemble a "coalition of the willing" and just move in, while State assembles a cheering section.

Everybody in the NATO orbit is, of course, buzzing about Iraq. Top commanders assured me that action by NATO as such was not now contemplated, and that's very easy to believe. I found agreement that, if necessary, we could carry off the campaign solo. The big reason is simply that while it took 10 sorties to kill a tank in the Gulf War, thanks to improved munitions, one sortie killed up to two tanks in Afghanistan, making an Iraq air campaign possible with our carrier wings plus flights from Insirlik. Saudi bases would not be essential. First would come flak suppression, then killing Iraqi tanks if they concentrated. After that, we hope, a Northern Alliance-style advance from the South and the North, covered, as in Afghanistan, by our airpower. Our generals seem remarkably confident. On the other hand, the Palestine uproar seems to have thrown off our timing very seriously.

The Europeans ask why we are so excited about Iraq and North Korea. There is little risk of another Gulf War, or a Korean War, nor will Iraq lob a missile at London and get obliterated for its pains. So why fret? The reason is that both of them are ready, willing and able to leak weapons of mass destruction to terrorists, of which many are already based within our borders. As Bush told Putin, our cardinal foreign policy aim is stopping that from happening. Since Putin has the same problem, thanks to the Chechens, he understands perfectly. Thus, *de facto*, we and the Russians are in the same boat, as is solemnized by our inviting them to the NATO conference table.

Does a U.S. combat division lose its

fighting capability during an extended peace-keeping mission? You sometimes hear this denied by high-level Army spokesmen, but not on the ground. As General Huber, our commander in Macedonia, put it, "the troops learn leadership skills, but degrade mechanical skills." Playing cop or schoolteacher to a civilian population is uplifting, but using an armored unit for the purpose costs too much. The 10th Mountain Division, part of which is covering Kosovo, is preparing for extensive retraining when its deployment ends.

Interestingly enough, the *process* of enlarging NATO, quite aside from the fact of its expansion, has a tremendous effect on those concerned. To enter, a country enlists in the Partnership for Peace, and eventually may be considered as a possible candidate. Then begins the MAP—Membership Application Process. To get through this phase, the applicant has to reform its military, to bring it under civilian control and make it an efficient fighting force. It has to settle quarrels with its neighbors and internal minorities. And it must develop interoperability with the rest of NATO—including introducing English in the armed services—and, in general, shape up. This can take years. Recent successful applicants are detailed to coach the petitioners, like getting an upperclassman to tutor you in college. The whole procedure has a highly invigorating effect on the applicants.

Once inside the alliance, the member country can be relatively relaxed about local threats, since there is a ring of increasingly compatible neighbors to calm things down. Countries that look both east and west, like Turkey, become more directed toward Europe. (Greece and Turkey might well have gone to war already if they'd not both been NATO members.) They're all in the same fraternity, as it were.

So NATO most assuredly has a purpose, just not the original purpose. It creates a lake of stability in what had been an area so turbulent that for centuries it engendered horrible conflict after horrible conflict, two of which America entered to restore the balance. It's better this way. ↘



J. Gordon Coogler Award Worst Book of the Year

BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

It is that time of year when critics in various fields of intellectual endeavor bestow their awards for "the best." There are the Pulitzers, the Emmys, the Oscars. Perhaps less well-known, but surely more exacting in their standards, are the Cooglers. Critics of a contrarian cast of mind also suffer the urge to solemnize.

Pulitzers, Emmys and Oscars are the awards conferred by conventional critics responding to that mainstream American quest, "Why not the best?" We contrarians sitting on the committee that confers the J. Gordon Coogler Award pursue a different quest, namely, "Why not the worst?" and so we confer Cooglers upon the worst: the worst book, the worst journalism. In our January/February issue, we conferred our first Coogler for shabby journalism to *The Washington Post's* Michael Grunwald for his reporting on PCB phantasms in deepest Alabama. Now we have settled on a Coogler for the worst book.

I have served on the Coogler panel for years and endured some excruciatingly bad books, both fiction and nonfiction. This year the Coogler

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr. is editor in chief of *The American Spectator*.

A floor lamp that spreads sunshine all over a room

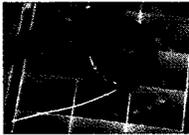
The VERILUX® HappyEyes® Floor Lamp brings many of the benefits of natural daylight indoors for glare-free lighting that's perfect for a variety of indoor activities.



The VERILUX® HappyEyes® Floor Lamp will change the way you see and feel about your living or work spaces.

Ever since the first human went into a dark cave and built a fire, people have realized the importance of proper indoor lighting. Unfortunately, since Edison invented the light bulb, lighting technology has remained relatively prehistoric. Modern light fixtures do little to combat many symptoms of improper lighting, such as eye strain, dryness or burning. As more and more of us spend longer hours in front of a computer monitor, the results are com-

Use the VERILUX® HappyEyes® Floor Lamp...



...for hobbies...



...for reading...



...for working...



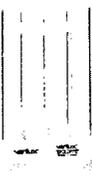
...and when you need a good source of light for close-up tasks.

always shine. So to bring the benefits of natural daylight indoors, VERILUX, The Healthy Lighting Company™, created the VERILUX HappyEyes Floor Lamp that simulates the balanced spectrum of daylight. You will see with more comfort and ease as this lamp provides sharp visibility for close tasks and reduces eyestrain. Its

VERILUX®
You don't need the Sun to get many of the natural benefits of daylight

- Replicates the balanced spectrum of natural sunlight
- See with comfort and ease
- Creates natural, glare-free light
- Provides sharp visibility
- Uplifting, cheerful and bright
- Flexible gooseneck design
- Instant-on, flicker-free light

Technology revolutionizes the light bulb



- 5,000 hours bulb life
- Energy efficient
- Shows true colors

27-watt compact fluorescent bulb is the equivalent to a 150-watt ordinary light bulb. This makes it perfect for activities such as reading, writing, sewing and needlepoint, and especially for aging eyes. For artists, the VERILUX HappyEyes Floor Lamp can bring a source of natural light into a studio, and show the true colors of a work. This lamp has a flexible gooseneck design for maximum efficiency, and an "Instant On" switch that is flicker-free. The high fidelity electronics, ergonomically correct design, and bulb that lasts five times longer than an ordinary bulb make this product a must-see.

This light can change the way you live and work

I love it! Reading is so much easier on my eyes. It's also great for doing crafts. The lamp's light weight allows me to bring it anywhere.

—Karen R. CA

It really brightens up my office, Thank you.

—Jan L. GA

I use my computer all the time and WOW what a difference. I just put it up and I can see!

—Kathy N. CA

It is really nice and eliminates the glare!

—Nita P. CA

It is a nice sunny product for a windowless office.

—Edith L. NJ

Try this manufacturer direct special offer.

The VERILUX HappyEyes Floor Lamp comes with a one-year manufacturer's limited warranty and TechnoScout's exclusive home trial. Try this product for 30 days and return it for the full purchase price if not satisfied, less shipping and handling.

VERILUX® HappyEyes® Floor Lamp
ZZ-1777 **\$129.95** + S&H
Please mention source code 22943.

For fastest service, call toll-free 24 hours a day

800-399-7853

To order by mail with check or money order, or by credit card, please call for total amount plus S&H. To charge it to your credit card, enclose your account number and expiration date.

Virginia residents only—please add 4.5% sales tax.

Verilux and HappyEyes are registered trademarks of Verilux, Inc.

LATEST...GREATEST...NEATEST...COOLEST
You can see hundreds of high-tech products at

www.technoscout.com

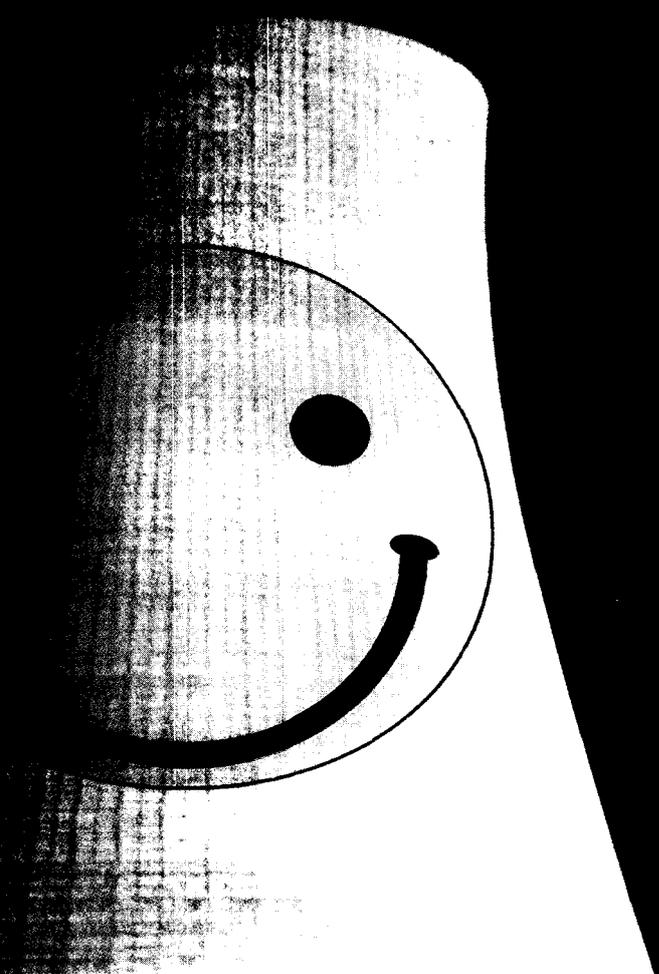


1998 Ruffin Mill Road
Colonial Heights, VA 23834

Use the force. Subscribe.

One Year=\$39
Call 1-800-524-3469

The American Spectator



Award for the Worst Book of 2001 breaks new ground. Usually my colleagues and I have conferred it in recognition of ghastly prose or imbecilic analysis or a preposterous thesis or all of the above. Cognizant, however, of an emerging trend in American intellectual life, we have wanted this year to go beyond mere bad writing and give especial consideration to America's intellectual trend-setters, the elite intellectuals who are on the cutting-edge of literary technique. That is to say we have focused on our country's growing number of talented plagiarists and hoaxers.

All sensitive readers of the public prints must know by now that many of the most celebrated writers in the land steal other writers' material and often simply make things up—for instance, footnotes, archival evidence and even their own biographies (remember Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Joseph Ellis' apocryphal revelations of his Vietnam and civil rights exploits—he also lied about his high school football days—and what he has told his shrink about his sex life is not to be imagined). News stories and feature articles in our most prestigious publications have often seemed larded with nonsense, but now many renowned editors are admitting to having published as fact stories that are almost total fiction.

Just a few months back *The New York Times* admitted that one of its prized writers, Michael Finkel, published as factual reporting a story in *The New York Times Magazine* that was sheer fabrication, a tearjerker about an impoverished Ivory Coast laborer. Thus the *Times* joins the ranks of such venerable publications as *The New Republic* (Stephen Glass and Ruth Shalit), *The New Yorker* (Rodney Rothman) and *Slate* (Jay Forman) in admitting to having published stories that were humbug—and I might add obvious humbug to any readers haunted by a skeptical mind. The *Slate* story was a beaut, claiming that in the Florida Keys outdoorsmen cast fishing lines into trees and reeled in shrieking monkeys. That was the on-the-scene report of Mr. Forman. Where is he now?

