

Book Reviews

America-Lite: How Imperial Academia Dismantled Our Culture (and Ushered in the Obamacrats), by David Gelernter, hardcover, 185 pp, \$23.99, ISBN 78-159403606-4, New York, N.Y., Encounter Books, 2012.

America is being destroyed by a cultural revolution, writes Gelernter, with corruption proceeding from the top—the elite universities. He calls the leaders PORGI: Post-religious, globalist intellectuals. And he states that they are now being followed by the PORGI Airheads or intellectualizers. It is not a conspiracy, he writes. “Do algae conspire to choke a pond?” Intellectuals are just going about their business. Their business is to make theories, and to impose them on people regardless of the facts.

The new establishment is called post-religious in the sense that the Judeo-Christian religion doesn’t strike most of them as being important enough even to bother dismissing. Left-liberalism, on the other hand, is itself a religion, and its faithful are not merely pious, but zealous or even fanatic, writes Gelernter. It turns political ideas into religious dogma.

Barack Obama is a representative of the generation of Airheads, “the first ever to come of age after the cultural revolution.” This is important not because he is exceptional, but because he is typical of the new establishment. More than 30 years of educational malpractice has led to this result. Religion has been replaced by political indoctrination, and left-liberal politics is no longer even a conviction but “built-in mind furniture that you take for granted without needing to think.” In 2008, Obama won 68 percent of the under-30 vote. It was not just a landslide or a supermajority, but “a blowout, a complete Republican collapse.” Gelernter warns that “we have knowingly reared a whole generation in ignorance of history, literature, religion, morality...” The Airhead Generation, together with its leader, has been inoculated with theories against facts. Without history, America loses its identity.

The outlook appears grim. But in the epilogue, Gelernter writes: “We are facing a terrible problem with a fairly simple solution.” He says we need to go back to telling the truth, and suggests that we need an alliance of the old and the young against the corrupt center. His single-point program for curing America is this: “American education is in the hands of liberal airheads. Take it away from them.” Gelernter believes that America has come through much worse. He concludes: “We have barely begun to bloom.”

Gelernter may have the answer. The young whose future is blighted by the cultural revolution need to come together with the old, who can still remember what life was like before the PORGI began the takeover in the 1960s.

Jane M. Orient, M.D.
Tucson, Ariz.

The Idea of America: What It Was and How It Was Lost, second edition, by William Bonner and Pierre Lemieux, hardcover, 345 pp, \$24.95, ISBN-13: 978-0-9835414-0-0, ISBN-10: 098354140X, Baltimore, Md., Laissez Faire Books, 2003, 2011, originally published by Les Belles Lettres.

The Idea of America is an anthology of essays compiled by William Bonner and Pierre Lemieux, who themselves contributed a foreword, introduction, and afterword. Because of the variety of topics and authors, this review describes only a few of the works. These writings date from the founding of America to recent times and are grouped by category. “Part I: Founding Documents” includes the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. “Part II: Revolutionary Ideals” includes works by Murray N. Rothbard, Patrick Henry, Thomas Paine, and Lord Acton (John E.E. Dalberg, 1834-1902). Parts III and IV cover “Self-, Decentralized, and Limited Government” and “Religion,” and contain essays by James Madison and Alexis de Tocqueville. “Responsive Governments” is taken from *The Federalist* No. 45, by James Madison.

Madison examines the roles of state and federal governments and deems it unlikely that the federal government would become more powerful than the state governments. He states, “The powers proposed to be lodged in the federal government are as little formidable to those reserved to the individual states, as they are indispensably necessary to accomplish the purposes of the Union; and that all those alarms which have been sounded, of a meditated and consequential annihilation of the state governments, must, on the most favorable interpretation, be ascribed to the chimerical fears of the authors of them.”

“Part V: Self-Reliance and Character,” begins with a letter, “What Is an American?” by French immigrant J. Hector St. John Crevecoeur (1753-1813), giving his impressions of life in America. In glowing terms, he describes the prosperity of the mostly agricultural society, the opportunity for a comfortable existence, as well as the “melting pot” aspect of America. He colorfully describes the differing character of those Americans who live on the coast, those of the inland areas, and those who live on the frontier of that time. The latter group receives Crevecoeur’s strongest criticism, as he notes their lawlessness and deceptive dealings with the Native Americans. He stresses that hard work is necessary for an immigrant’s success, but that the opportunities are far greater in America than can be had in Europe.

In the following essay, “To Those Who Would Remove to America,” Benjamin Franklin also emphasizes the diligence necessary to succeed in America. An immigrant could likely expect to achieve a comfortable, though not wealthy, situation in life through hard work. His children would have more opportunities than in Europe, through apprenticeships that would educate them in a trade. Franklin views the necessity of work as a positive aspect, as he states that “industry and constant employment are great preservatives of the morals and virtue of a

nation." Two other essays by H.L. Mencken and Ralph Waldo Emerson complete this fifth section of the book.

"Part VI: The Frontier" contains a selection by economics professor John Umbeck about the California Gold Rush, as well as an excerpt from Mark Twain's "Life on the Mississippi." With his usual entertaining, humorous style, Twain details his experiences learning the river pilot's craft.

"Part VII: The Spirit of Liberty" has writings by Thomas Jefferson, Henry David Thoreau, and Voltairine de Cleyre, as well as two fairly recent selections by the U.S. Justice Department and the U.S. Supreme Court concerning the Second Amendment.

"Part VIII: Open America" contains Emma Lazarus's poem on the Statue of Liberty, part of a speech by John Quincy Adams, and an essay by Rose Wilder Lane. The excerpt from Adams's speech, "On Foreign Policy," stresses that America's role is to speak "the language of equal liberty, of equal justice, and of equal rights," to other countries. Adams praises America's non-involvement in other nations' affairs. He states, "Wherever the standard of freedom and independence has been or shall be unfurled, there will her [America's] heart, her benedictions, and her prayers be. But she goes not abroad in search of monsters to destroy."

In the afterword, Bonner presents his views on the loss of liberty in America, government growth, and the economy. He ends with a pessimistic tone, stating: "America is a very good idea; somebody ought to try it."

It was helpful to me to re-read Lemieux's introduction to the book after I was finished, perhaps because too much time had elapsed since I had started the book. He examines individual liberty and the growth of government during the course of American history, tying into the discussion many of the writings in the book. This introduction helps to review the ideas in the selections, and to provide unity for the book.

Sally Christman
Dayton, Ohio

Open Wide and Say Moo! The Good Citizen's Guide to Right Thoughts and Right Actions Under Obamacare, by Richard N. Fogoros, M.D., available free at www.coverrationingblog.com.

This book, written lucidly for the layman, is a call to rise in defense of our lives, and our children's lives. Its thesis seems exactly correct to me; I have scarcely any quibbles.

Chapters 1-5 describe the sorry state of our "healthcare system." Economics is a study of human behavior, which frustrates anyone trying to control it. Medical care was paid for privately until 1965. Availability of taxpayers' Medicare money caused an explosion in research and development, according to Dr. Fogoros. I disagree on that point: Freedom was responsible, and the acceleration of knowledge began much sooner. Taxpayer funding has caused huge increases in medical consumption, and the debt will cause societal collapse. Fogoros debunks the idea that waste is the cause of the problem.

The system's response to limited supply, but unlimited demand, is covert rationing. The clear explanation of covert rationing methods used by HMOs sets the stage for a discussion of the capitulation of the medical profession, and the central authority's drive to control physicians.

Fogoros discusses the collusion of the "insurance" industry with the "Affordable Care Act" ("Obamacare") and the reasons for it. Of the four ways to pay for medical care, the socialist (Progressive) way is at issue here, so Fogoros diagnoses what ails Progressives, and characterizes their programs, including their methods of covert rationing of medical care.

Fogoros skillfully presents an easily understood blend of philosophy, fact, analysis, and conclusion that will clear much confusion from many minds, if only it can reach them in time.

Obamacare's accountable care organization (ACO) is characterized accurately as the final noose around the necks of physicians, who will be practicing "herd medicine" in which they will be interchangeable puppets in a pitiless machine, and their patients will be reduced to anonymous members of a herd. Herd medicine will choke off innovation and lives.

The discussion of age-based medicine will chill your blood. It reminds me of what a former patient, a Battle of the Bulge veteran, told me and his family last January just before he died. He said the U.S. system was becoming like the one ruled by the Nazis. We would all be commodities, and some of us would be considered worthless.

Fogoros explains how Obamacare will stifle medical progress, using examples anyone can readily grasp. He uncovers what has been concealed from many, including major conflicts of interest involving the central authority.

The book is leavened with ironic humor, and sprinkled with light self-deprecation, which will amuse many and annoy a few.

Fogoros's language is direct, even blunt. Obamacare, he writes, was designed to be obscure. He tells us that "insurance" executives love the Act because it will force healthy young people to give them money. He exposes the doubletalk of the ACA and its failed Clinton predecessor, called "HillaryCare." He explains that the central authority determines what constitutes healthcare and what does not; if the government says it's healthcare, it must be covered; if it's not covered, you cannot have it. No physician will actually make a medical decision, and patients will be pieces of livestock on a government ranch (my phraseology and Fogoros's mirror each other here.)

The book is about medical care, but Fogoros makes it clear that medical care is a proxy for central authority by a liberty-erasing, all-powerful government, which does not believe rights are from our Creator, but that they are grants from central authority. This authority views all disagreement as crazy, stupid, or evil. It must be cured by therapy, education, or elimination. He sounds the alarm that any Progressive medical care system will prevent us from spending our own money on our own medical care, and he explains the reason very clearly.

As Fogoros points out, murderers will continue to have personal advocates to help them navigate the judicial system, but innocent sick people have been deprived of their personal advocates in navigating the medical care system. They have been deprived of their physicians principally by lawyers in the White House, Congress, and the Judiciary. In my view, those lawyers treasonously violate their oaths of office, enabled by a citizenry distracted by trivia, and physicians hoodwinked by a poisonous philosophy.

The last part of the book is the prescription for cure, beginning with a discussion of the ethics of individual autonomy. Direct pay and stubborn

refusal, leaving the country, and becoming informed advocates for ourselves, are all addressed.

I recommend that you download this book, read it closely, and give a copy to everyone you can induce to read it.

Tamzin A. Rosenwasser, M.D.
Venice, Fla.

Ron Paul's Revolution: The Man and the Movement He Inspired by Brian Doherty, hardback, 294pp, \$26.99, ISBN 978-0-06-211479-2, New York, N.Y., Broadside Books, 2012.

The Ron Paul Revolution, a peaceful revolution, is alive and growing and changing the shape of American politics. How it happened and what it means for the future of America is explained by Brian Doherty in this interesting and readable history.

Rep. Ronald Ernest "Ron" Paul (R-14-Texas) is a classic American patriot in the grand American tradition of the Jeffersonians. The 77-year-old obstetrician and Air Force veteran has served in the U.S. House of Representatives 1976-77, 1979-85, and 1997 to present.

Though libertarian, he has repeatedly won re-election while promoting the liberal policies of ending the "war on drugs," repealing the USA Patriot Act, and stopping wars in the Middle East. He's the only congressman to win a seat as a non-incumbent three different times. Though he represents an agricultural district in Texas, he always votes against federal agriculture subsidies.

For Paul, each political campaign is an effort to win election, but beyond that, an effort to educate Americans about liberty. As Doherty notes, Ron Paul doesn't change his message; he "changes minds."

Paul lost the presidential race in 1988 as the Libertarian candidate (where he came in third), and was trounced by Sen. John McCain in the 2008 contest for the Republican presidential nomination. But following that, he won the presidential straw poll at the Conservative Political Action Conferences in both 2010 and 2011. And his failed presidential campaign spawned two Paul organizations: Young Americans for Liberty, and the advocacy group Campaign for Liberty, which has 289 chapters, more than 3,000 dues-paying members, and a network of 26,000 activists. Paul's "End the Fed" ideas progressed to a

movement of street protestors by 2009, as more Americans learned that the Fed's printing more dollars allows the government to spend beyond its means.

Doherty tells us that Paul is considered a vital asset by a large national constituency of libertarians and constitution-ists. His central concerns are monetary policy, foreign policy, and civil liberties. He has "introduced legislation to abolish the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, repeal the Gun Control Act of 1968, end the postal monopoly, restrict the IRS's ability to inspect our tax returns, repeal the National Flood Insurance Act, make paper dollars legal tender only for taxes, repeal Selective Service, impose term limits on legislators, audit the Fed (many times), withdraw all the military from Europe and Japan, end the Fed, bar federal teacher certification, [and] legalize hemp."

Paul believes we all should be free to own and use guns. He wants to eliminate illegal immigration; eliminate the departments of Commerce, Interior, Energy, Education, and Housing and Urban Development; abolish the IRS, FEMA, and the TSA; shut down the "drug war"; eliminate the federal income tax, the death tax and corporate subsidies; and repeal "ObamaCare," Dodd-Frank, and Sarbanes-Oxley.

Paul believes that "if you do not protect liberty across the board...we don't have a First Amendment," and we will end up with a government "that is going to tell us what we can eat and drink and whatnot." He believes that all government power is at root both authoritarian and violent.

Paul maintains that actions have consequences and that empire has costs that need to be considered. He believes the United States would be better off minding our own business and following a foreign policy of friendship and trade, not wars and subsidies. He says the way we treat foreigners overseas is the criminal behavior of a decadent empire.

He believes that our government today, instead of respecting and protecting our rights, violates them. He also believes that, because of our fiscal mismanagement, we are a bankrupt empire, and that a severe economic crisis is nearly unavoidable. He asserts that gold as money, instead of paper money, is the only way to solve the problem.

Doherty tells us that Paul has developed his philosophy, his understanding of

the way the world works, after decades of studying economics—in particular Austrian economics as found in the works of Ludwig von Mises, F.A. Hayek, and Murray Rothbard. Paul states that his real opponent is not a politician like Romney or Obama, but rather the dead economist John Maynard Keynes, who asserted that governments should regulate the business cycle by spending money they don't have.

According to the Austrians, free markets and hard money are the essential requirements for prosperity and liberty. They point to two irrefutable facts that the socialists, liberals, progressives, and Keynesians ignore: (1) We as humans on earth are faced with a universal, ever-present scarcity of goods. (2) Because of our human nature (which cannot be changed) we must be motivated in a way that ensures we will produce goods and services and create wealth.

Doherty points out that Ron Paul has not yet become mainstream, but states that his "genuinely radical" ideas eventually will become mainstream. The Paul movement is not just a personality cult but part of a larger movement that will change our culture by educating the public about economics and philosophy.

Although mainstream media and the Republican Party apparatus have temporarily succeeded in silencing him, Ron Paul's Revolution, Doherty believes, will continually progress into a mass constituency for no war, no Fed, no drug war, no regulatory state, and a progressively smaller entitlement state. But before this can happen the American people must renounce their long-held belief in using the force of government to impose their will on others.

Doherty is a journalist who has covered Ron Paul for more than a decade, so it is disappointing to find a few of his statements to be misleading. For example, he describes Paul's political philosophy as "quirky," (p 287) and asserts that the Revolution relies on the ideas of the new Tea Party (p 160). In fact, both Paul's political philosophy and his foreign policy are well grounded in ideas that have been proven to work many times in the past. Finally, Doherty says that Paul's foreign policy puts him outside the normal realms of "not just his party, but any party" (p 259).

Even so, Doherty tells us that Ron Paul is the only coherent, logical politician

around, and in fact is one of the few honest politicians in history.

Paul's ideas of private property and freedom of choice are, in my opinion, the only ones that can lead to the greatest creation of wealth, to increase of our happiness, and to preservation of our liberty. Doherty's book will help educate the American public about these important economic and philosophical ideas.

Jerome C. Arnett, Jr., M.D.
Helvetia, W.V.

Merchants of Despair: Radical Environmentalists, Criminal Pseudo-Scientists, and the Fatal Cult of Anti-humanism, by Robert Zubrin, hardcover, 320 pp, \$25.95, ISBN 978-1-59403-476-3, New York, N.Y., Encounter Books, 2012.

This splendid and intriguing book traces modern murderous and genocidal developments in anti-humanistic ideologies.

Robert Zubrin, Ph.D., is a contributing editor for the online journal *The New Atlantis* (www.thenewatlantis.com). He is an aerospace engineer by training, a fellow of the Center for Security Policy, and president of the Mars Society. According to the description on the journal's website, the book "names the chief prophets and promoters of anti-humanism over the last two centuries, from Thomas Malthus through Paul Ehrlich and Al Gore." Also, it "exposes the worst crimes perpetrated by the anti-humanist movement, including eugenics campaigns in the United States and genocidal anti-development and population control programs around the world."

Zubrin meticulously traces the origins and development of these ideologies over the last two centuries. He often tracked down primary sources, yielding many cogent gems such as "The World Has Cancer and the Cancer Is Man," which the Club of Rome attributes to Dr. Alan Gregg, an official at the Rockefeller Foundation. His analysis exposes the fatal and immoral flaws of Malthusianism and the other ideological offshoots of anti-humanism. It is the most thorough critique of the Malthusian ideology that I have seen.

Each of Zubrin's chapters is filled with a wealth of illuminating data. For example, the "Better Fed than Dead: Green Police for World Hunger" chapter traces and analyzes modern anti-human myths about biotechnology and agriculture. "Agriculture is the art of improving nature. As such, it is not only

the most essential human activity, but the most emblematic. It is through agriculture that man continues the work of creation, quite literally *changing the world* to make it a better place in which to live" (p 204; emphasis in original). Zubrin continues: "All forms of agriculture are unnatural. Watering a plant is *unnatural*. . . . All of our domesticated plant and animal allies are unnatural, intelligently contrived products of an age-old effort by many generations of people to improve upon what Nature had to offer" (p 207).

Bioengineering differs from previous agricultural methods, he explains, only in that it makes use of changes initiated by design, instead of attempting to exploit random mutations and gene transfers (p 208).

Zubrin traces the origins of this food fetish back through the modern German Green Party and Nazi ideology to the early 1800s. A cult ideology celebrated nature and deplored "mechanical and materialistic civilization" and all else that proposed to raise man above nature (p 198).

In the 1930s, leading Nazis embraced some of these food fetish ideas, including restoring a pure race on pure soil with a plan to de-populate Eastern Europe of "impure" Slavs and Jews (p 199).

Although bioengineered foods have been a godsend to many hungry people in Africa, the European Green Movement has invoked the so-called "Precautionary Principle" to forestall agricultural improvements. "According to this concept, no innovation can be permitted which cannot be proven *in advance* to be completely harmless. If accepted, this idea would make all technological progress impossible" (p 203). The "Precautionary Principle" "is nothing less than the pure crystallized philosophy of smothering bureaucratic dictatorship" (p 204).

Zubrin recounts how William D. Ruckelshaus, the first administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), banned the use of DDT in America. Subsequently, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), by prohibiting the funding of international projects that used DDT, turned "the foreign aid programs of the United States and Europe into agents of genocide" by allowing a resurgence of malaria, which now kills more than a million people (mostly children) every year (p 101). After his government service, Ruckelshaus became a board member of the Draper Fund, a

leading population control group (p 163).

Zubrin traces the origins of anti-humanism back to 1800 A.D.; yet, the basis of anti-humanism dates back several millennia. "Man is the measure of all things" has been long attributed to Protagoras of Abdera, the 5th century B.C. sophist. Plato contradicted this with "God is the measure of all things." Although Zubrin references Western Civilization's Judeo-Christian origins twice, he seems to imply that the "dignity of man" has superseded the Genesis vision of man as "the image of God" (p 1).

Ironically, I find the roots of anti-humanism in humanism itself. Some humanists see man as creating the illusion of God. With this ontological inversion, some men have essentially declared themselves omnipotent, at least in the eyes of the lowly beholder, similar to the Wizard of Oz illusions. Philosopher of history Eric Voegelin traces modern anti-human ideologies to the Gnostic heresy of the first century A.D.¹ George Gilder and others refer to some of these modern variants as the "materialistic superstition."²

If human-created "dignity of man" is the basis for our human rights, humans can change the concept and our rights. God-given rights are infinitely more substantial and are not subject to the whims of political leaders or dictators. God-given rights are discovered and based on the laws written on the human heart, as in the natural law tradition. With human-created rights, some have tried to radically change human rights, e.g., by government action, as with Stalin and Hitler. Indeed, these socialist dictators attempted to change the nature of man, sometimes under the guise of science (as with eugenics and cell research) and sometimes by murdering or eliminating unworthy humans. Rights based on the dignity of man (as established by humans or governments) can as easily be taken away.

This is a small cavil in the face of Zubrin's achievement in demonstrating the evil consequences of the modern ideologies of anti-humanism.

Robert J. Cihak, M.D.
Brier, WA

REFERENCES

- 1 Voegelin E. The political religions. In: *The Collected Works of Eric Voegelin, Vol. 5*. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press; 2000.
- 2 Gilder G. The materialist superstition. *Intercollegiate Review* 1996 (spring). Available at: www.imaginativeconservative.org/2012/09/the-materialist-superstition.html. Accessed Sep 29, 2012.