Acknowledgments:

The publication of *Utraque Unum* was made possible by the generous support of Bill Mumma, Georgetown University Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service Class of 1981. The Tocqueville Forum on the Roots of American Democracy additionally wishes to acknowledge the generous support of The Veritas Fund as administered by the Manhattan Institute, the Lehrman Institute, the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, and the Jack Miller Center.

The Tocqueville Forum promotes events and activities devoted to furthering and deepening student understanding of the American constitutional order and its roots in the Western philosophical and religious traditions. The Tocqueville Forum sponsors these activities solely through the contributions of generous supporters of its mission. If you would like further information about supporting the Tocqueville Forum, please e-mail tocquevilleforum@georgetown.edu or visit http://government.georgetown.edu/tocquevilleforum.

As always, we welcome your thoughts and comments regarding this journal. If you are a Georgetown University student, professor or staff member we would welcome the opportunity to review your work for publication in Utraque Unum. In addition to writers we are looking for section editors, artists, graphic designers and savvy web-designers. Please e-mail the editors at utraque.unum@gmail.com for these inquiries.
The Tocqueville Forum on the Roots of American Democracy

http://government.georgetown.edu/tocquevilleforum
Tocquevilleforum@georgetown.edu

Georgetown University
# Table of Contents

The Editors’ Desk

About the Tocqueville Forum

The Tocqueville Forum: Seeking Self-Understanding, *by Professor Patrick Deneen*...........................5

The Forum


Liberal Education: Missing Many Allusions, *by Father James V. Schall, S.J.*...................................17

The Chamber

The Renewal of Federalism, *by Matthew J. Engler* .................................................................23

Freedom: More Social than Political, *by Grant Morrow* ............................................................27


The Altar

The Christian Populism of G.K. Chesterton, *by Anthony Carmen Piccirillo* ...............................37

Pope Benedict XVI, Father of Unity, *by Timothy Lang* ............................................................41

The Parlor

Barbara Mujica’s *Sister Teresa*, *by Amanda Marie Murphy* .......................................................45

Amazing Grace: How Sweet the Sight, *by Katherine Boyle* ......................................................49

Rocky Balboa’s Honor, *by Paul D. Miller* ..................................................................................51

The Cellar

Lincoln and McClellan, *by Dallas Woodrum* ............................................................................53

The Observatory

Reflections on Georgetown’s Campus Buildings, *by Jack Carlson* ...........................................59

Promoting a Georgetown Aesthetic, *by Eric Wind* ..................................................................61
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
The Tocqueville Forum:
Seeking Self-Understanding

Professor Patrick Deneen

The journal before you represents the culmination of a great deal of work by an extraordinary group of students. Their hard work – particularly that of its editor-in-chief, Eric Wind and its editor, Matthew Engler – is to be commended and admired: not undertaken for credit or grade, the journal represents the basic grounds for a University education, namely, the effort to strive for deeper understanding of the answers to the permanent questions, and above all, the effort to acquire self-understanding.

The journal is yet one more concrete example of the appeal of a now one-year old campus organization, The Tocqueville Forum on the Roots of American Democracy. Formed in 2006, The Tocqueville Forum is an initiative whose aim is to advance the study and understanding of American constitutional democracy and its roots in the Western philosophical and religious traditions. It has sponsored campus events such as colloquia, conferences, lectures, and roundtables and has sought to promote and support other activities that advance a deeper understanding among undergraduate students about America and its Western sources. The Tocqueville Forum has sought to highlight especially Georgetown University’s historic, and current, strengths in the field of political philosophy, that is, the field devoted to the study of those ideas and beliefs that underlie political institutions, constitutions, and politics itself. With a tradition of superb faculty ranging from Jeane Kirkpatrick to George Carey, from Father James V. Schall S.J. to Jean Bethke Elshtain, it is appropriate that an organization be formed that draws from the resources of this fortunate collection of remarkably talented and thoughtful professors.

Perhaps the best way to describe the impetus behind the Tocqueville Forum is to reflect for a moment on the tradition according to which students step around, and avoid treading upon, the seal of Georgetown University that lies on the top of the steps of the main campus building, Healy Hall. I, for one, admire traditions such as these, and praise Georgetown and its students for observing, transmitting, and celebrating them.

However, traditions can be, and often are, double-edged: they can often obscure the very thing that they seek to preserve. In this case, the habituated automatic avoidance of stepping upon the seal can in fact serve to blind us to the reasons that lie originally behind the very creation of this tradition. What do we enact when we avoid stepping upon the seal? What does the action represent?

As with any tradition, its origins have been obscured by time and the passing from this place of the people who began its practice, and
began it *not* that it become a tradition, but because it was a conscious and reflective act. We can only surmise the grounds for the practice by the practice itself, and in this instance, an educated guess leads us to one obvious conclusion: to step on something is to treat it with disrespect. “Don’t Tread on Me” was the watchword of our revolutionary forbears in demanding respect from the British Crown. Not to tread on the seal is most obviously a reflection of the respect accorded to that symbol by our forbears at this University.

A further question then comes to mind: *what* about the seal is deserving of respect? We see the seal almost constantly on this campus – even now, it occupies a place of esteem on the cover of this very journal. If familiarity, in this case, does not breed contempt, it can all too easily result in inattentiveness and neglect. It sits in the background, emanating legitimacy and authority without any reflection upon its meaning on our part.

The seal, which symbolizes Georgetown’s self-understanding, is really quite remarkable. It portrays an American eagle surrounded by 17 stars that represent the number of States at the time of the Seal’s creation, and, below the Eagle, the number 1789 – the year of Georgetown’s establishment, as well as that of the ratification of the American Constitution. In one claw the eagle holds the globe, emblazoned with calipers – an instrument used for precise mathematical measurement. In the other, it holds the cross. The motto above the eagle reads, “*Utraque Unum*” – “both one,” drawn from Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians, 2:14.

What the seal reflects is Georgetown University’s deep and fundamental identification with the United States of America, and especially America’s founding and its roots in the Western philosophical and religious traditions. Drawing upon reason and faith, upon the Jewish and the Christian Bible, and later, seeking to reconcile the Blue and the Grey, Georgetown’s self-understanding is that of a synthesis of the great traditions of the West that together form the roots of America’s constitutional order. The seal of the University located here, in this nation’s great capital city, is a reminder, and promise, that Georgetown will attend to preserving and deepening our understanding of the American regime with which it was simultaneously born.

The tradition of stepping around the seal is at once praiseworthy and worrisome. As a tradition, it represents a mechanical act that no longer draws upon the original sources of reverence for Georgetown’s own self-understanding as an American institution devoted to a deeper understanding of America and the West. The daily repetition of this tradition is practiced amid a growing and widespread decline of civic literacy and a deeper understanding about American institutions and America’s founding ideals among many of today’s students.

The Tocqueville Forum on the Roots of American Democracy was conceived as an initiative to redress this decline, and, in effect, to make us conscious of the grounds for stepping around the seal. It does not seek whatsoever to overthrow this tradition as in any way antiquated or laughable, but rather to foster vibrant and conscious understanding, and an embrace of, the very grounds for this tradition.

Growing evidence of unfamiliarity with American and Western political, philosophical and theological thought represents less an indictment against our young people than a failure of an older generation who have not only neglected to attend to an education in this tradition, but have become increasingly hostile toward what is our own inheritance. A conscious decision has been made in America’s leading academic institutions that an informed knowledge about American institutions and the political philosophy that informed the founders of this nation is no longer what Universities should be in the business of providing. This
decision takes the appearance of a kind of benign neglect, but in fact in many instances serves simply as a mask for a widespread hostility shared among academics and administrators toward mere parochialism in the form of an emphasis upon one’s own nation. The buzzwords today on college campuses are multi-culturalism, globalization, and cosmopolitanism. The quaint tradition of stepping around the University’s seal continues even amid the hollowing out of the more substantive tradition, at Georgetown and elsewhere, of requiring as a part of a university education the knowledge of American political thought and its roots in the Western philosophic and religious traditions.

I could write at greater length about why this decision represents a deep disservice to our students, but I will limit myself to the following observation: the apparent benign neglect of an education in American ideals and institutions, and their sources in the Western tradition, is often implicitly made under the assumption that students already know what is their own. We urge our students to look outward, beyond their ready and limiting familiarity with America and the Western Tradition. If, in fact, our students lack any such easy familiarity, if in fact they have not been provided a deeper encounter with their own tradition – a fact that survey after survey, and anecdote after anecdote all attest to – then we, the caretakers of America’s Universities, are actively depriving our students of self-understanding. At the entrance of the oracle of Delphi were inscribed the words *gnothi seauton* – “Know Thyself.” Before one seeks the wisdom of the cosmos, one must know oneself. Appropriately, all too often, those who sought out the counsel of the Oracle of Delphi misunderstood its counsel because they lacked self-knowledge, often with catastrophic results. If knowledge and wisdom begin with self-understanding, can one hope to understand anything if one is ignorant of whom one is?

One cannot simply take for granted that students can or will acquire a deeper knowledge of their own tradition and its sources during the normal course of a University education, even – or especially – at our elite institutions. The Tocqueville Forum thus seeks to sponsor events such as the one that brought Justice Antonin Scalia (C’57) to campus in the Fall of 2006 and whose reflections on civic education appear in this first issue; it seeks to support other colloquia, lectures, and workshops; it strives to inculcate in students a deeper understanding of their own tradition; and it will endeavor to support faculty and student research and sponsor courses – all in an effort to defend and extend the teaching and exploration the American democratic order and its roots in the Western tradition.

This journal represents an extraordinary effort on the part of students to begin the hard work of acquiring this knowledge that they imperfectly possess even as their exploration deepens their desire for that knowledge. It represents enormous fortitude and motivation to seek what, in many instances, has been withheld from them. The students who have written these essays and articles deserve admiration and encouragement, and it is the ambition of the Tocqueville Forum to afford opportunities such as this journal for a rising generation of future leaders of this nation and the world. We have been given much, and it is with gratitude, humility and honor that we should approach the gifts of our forbears who bequeathed to us a singular nation and a great university. I am grateful for the presence of the students whose words grace these pages, and invite our readers to join us in this difficult but rewarding task of self-understanding.

Professor Patrick Deneen is a professor in the Georgetown University Department of Government and founding director of the Tocqueville Forum on the Roots of American Democracy.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
Liberal Education: “Missing Many Allusions”

On Why Not to Study the Bible and the Classics

Father James V. Schall, S.J.

In 1960, the Editors of Delta: The Cambridge Literary Magazine asked C. S. Lewis about a comment he had made on the presuppositions of a liberal education. An objector to Lewis’ view observed that one could understand, say, the Graveyard scene in Hamlet without, as Lewis implied, knowing the Bible or the Classics. In his reply, Lewis made the following remark:

The complaint that many modern undergraduates know the Bible and the Classics so little that they miss many allusions and conscious echoes is a very old one. I have seldom, if ever, heard it contested among those who have had a wide experience of undergraduate work over the last thirty years. I said, apparently, that “most” European literature presupposed the Biblical and Classical background. There are, as you justly claim, some works and parts of works that do not. What is this in the purpose?¹

That many undergraduates, even today, know little about the Classics or the Bible is not, as Lewis said, news to anybody. The most common answer I get to the question “who wrote the Gospel of Luke?” is “I don’t know.” And even if some alert, logical soul replies to my bemused question “Luke,” he will not know that Luke also wrote the Acts of the Apostles. Usually, he will not know even whether there be an Acts of the Apostles, let alone, like the Ephesians, “whether there be a Holy Ghost,” both of which are worth knowing about and both in the Bible.

The last academic reason anyone should offer for studying either the Bible or the Classics is the one most commonly given. Namely, students are to study the Bible and the Classics in order to appreciate, in modern philosophy and literature, the “many allusions and conscious echoes” originating from these famous sources. No one denies the truth of the original propositions that most literature, including most atheist or agnostic literature, is largely unintelligible without the Bible or the Classics. “The fool knows in his heart that there is no God,” as the Psalmist wrote long ago (#53). We are not, hopefully, in the business of encouraging fools. But on this point, E. F. Schumacher had it right: “To read such literature (the Classics) – even the Bible! – simply as literature,’ as if its main purpose were poetry, imagination, artistic expression with an especial-

ly apt use of words and similes, is to turn the sublime into the trivial.”

The only reason to study either the Bible or the Classics is that both claim to be true.

Moreover, it is not just “literature” that will be unintelligible without biblical and classical knowledge. Science itself, as any serious student of the history of scientific thinking knows, will not be intelligible without knowledge of the Bible and the Classics. Already, in Science and the Modern World, Whitehead said that the very possibility of science depended on the “belief that every detailed occurrence can be correlated with its antecedent in a perfectly definite manner, exemplifying principles.”

From whence did this idea, that implied stable secondary causes and a cosmos from which something could be learned, come into the European mind? “It must come from the medieval insistence on the rationality of God, conceived as with the personal energy of Jehovah and with the rationality of a Greek philosopher.” Needless to say, this is exactly the position of Benedict XVI in his Regensburg Lecture.

The Bible and the Classics are thus not to be contrasted to science as if the latter deals with reality and the former with dreams or illusions.

The danger of modern epistemological theory is such, in fact, that it is more likely to leave science in “dreams and illusions” than it is to leave students of the Classics or the Bible in never-never land. This eventuality that reality would require, that it be known, an act of faith is what the end of Chesterton’s book, Heretics, was about.

Whatever their methods and groundings, all three — science, the Bible, and the Classics — deal with the same world, the only real excuse for anyone’s paying attention to any of them. They all three claim and intend to explain what is, reality. A given explanation may be right or it may be wrong, but there can be no doubt that what it intends to do is to explain reality, to explain the truth of what is. These three — Bible, Classics, and science — do not deal with three different worlds in which each approach randomly floats around in its own separate sphere.

The Bible is to be studied primarily and honestly for what it maintains about reality, the reality of God, of the cosmos, of ourselves. No doubt there are things in the Bible that are poetic and intended to be poetic. But who ever said that, knowing what it is, that poetry did not deal with our reality? Likewise, the Classics are to be studied for what they tell us about reality. The Classics and the Bible both seek to describe the whole. Eventually both are intended to address each other. Faith is addressed to reason, reason to faith. They are not opposed to each other as “rational” and “irrational.” Both, from different starting points, conceive themselves to be rooted in reason.

Neither of these sources, faith or reason, the Bible or the Classics, is to be read as if it was a version of modern philosophy that denies that either source could tell us anything about the truth we need to know to live. Moreover, accepting the notion that anything modern can be understood by beginning only with what is modern — the problem of Descartes — is, at the same time, not to know where moderns themselves began. They began with an attempt in the name of science to reject both the Bible and the Classics as sources of real knowledge about real things. They may well, in order not to go where science seems to want to go, end by denying that

---

4 See James V. Schall, The Regensburg Lecture (South Bend, IN.: St. Augustine’s Press, 2007).
5 “We shall be left defending, not only the incredible virtues and sanities of human life, but something more incredible still, this huge impossible universe which stares us in the face. We shall fight for visible prodigies as if they were invisible. We shall look on the impossible grass and the skies with a strange courage. We shall be of those who have seen and yet have believed.” G. K. Chesterton, Heretics (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, [1905] [1986], 207.)
the mind can know anything but itself. Not a few modern philosophies begin with the idea that the only world that exists is the one we project out there, not the one that is out there. Modernity, in this sense, is a long series of rejected initiatives, themselves intended to prove that the initial rejection was right. This is what Gilson’s great book, *The Unity of Philosophical Experience*, was about.6

One of the reasons we study Nietzsche so carefully is because he told us, often with great wit, that our modern efforts did not in fact succeed. We are not floundering for no reason.

Henry Veatch, a great man who was once in Georgetown’s philosophy department, remarked that modernity began with rejecting Aristotle only to last long enough to see that the reasons for the original rejection no longer held. In Veatch’s view, in his really good book on *Aristotle*, this rejection of the rejection, as it were, means that it was worthwhile to take another look at Aristotle, a classic if there ever was one.7

And Aristotle is not about to go away if for no other reason that a few inveterate souls still read him in ever improved editions only to find out that on a surprisingly large number of issues, most of those dealing with what is most important to us, Aristotle makes more sense than anyone else writing after him. To discover this truth is one of the delights of being an undergraduate.

The Bible, likewise, is a closed book for most students. Not only do they not read it, or know how to read it, but they do not think they can learn anything from it. They do not really know this, but they take it on authority, lousy authority. Actually, as anyone who tries it will soon find out, it is pretty difficult to read much in say St. Paul or St. John and not learn something fundamental about reality, especially about ourselves. Someone has to work rather hard to prevent himself from learning something from the Bible. Almost any book about anything will teach us something. When a book begins to teach us a lot of things about everything, we have to wonder where it got its information. Why is it, we wonder, that we can find out more about ourselves reading a couple of hours in Aristotle or Plato or Cicero or St. Matthew, or Augustine than we can by reading much written in the past five hundred years?

II. The question comes up then “what do students learn during their college years?” I heard of a student who was assigned in a class a Spanish translation of the *Da Vinci Code*. I figured it could not get much worse. We cannot, and should not, of course, measure in economic terms what we are supposed to learn in school, however over-priced higher education may be for the average household. Still, the question about what we learn is not frivolous. Even if intangible, something is supposed to happen in our souls in college or graduate school, something that makes us more human, more of what we are supposed to be, being what we already are. We are the beings who have to become what we are. We have to choose to be what we ought to be, then take steps to do it. We can systematically teach children how to pronounce words, and in this sense how to read and write, without their ever actually coming to learn anything from their reading. Indeed, this knowing without learning is generally what happens. We learn words and even ideas before we grasp what they mean in a more universal and technical sense.

---


This useful information, however, does broach the question of the place of reading in our education, especially about what was once known as “book learning.” The notion of a paper-less world was once explained to me by one of my nephews. In fact, almost everything today that appears on paper first is formulated and then preserved in an electronic environment. Paper is not where we begin to write, but where we end and not always then. After about ten years of e-mail, I no longer can calculate the number of good letters I have received which have ceased to exist because they were on ephemeral electronic format and not written by hand on paper. I sometimes wonder if someone has yet written a printed book entitled, My Favorite Deleted E-mails. I know I could have printed them out if I knew where to store them.

To be sure, it is almost impossible to eradicate something that once appears on-line. A former Attorney-General remarked that nothing we have ever put in electronic format ever completely disappears. It is the modern version of immortality. Our bodies die; our words do not. Still, we do not usually read whole books on-line unless we have to, and even if we have to, we usually first print them out. Far from the computer eliminating paper, it is one of its primary generators. The growers of trees and other paper pulp products must love the computer.

Books irradiate their own mystique. What we mean by education, that strange word, still has mostly to do with books, books we possess, keep. A friend of mine was recently in London. There he came across Maurice Baring’s Lost Lectures, a book published by Peter Davies in London, in 1932. The Preface begins: “These Lost Lectures are for the most part talks delivered to imaginary audiences.” What other words does anyone need but this enticing invitation to make him hasten to join this “imaginary audience!”

After a certain relatively early age, one begins to suspect that the world is full of books that he will never get around to read. One of my definitions of a noble life, well lived, is one in which, on the occasion of death, the man in question still has many books on his shelves not yet read or completely read. This is not to deny that a man wants to reread also the books that he once read. Tell me what you read, and I will tell you what you are. The same principle would hold if we put it negatively, “Tell me what you don’t read, and I will tell you what you are.” On the other hand, the dividing line between those of us who are good and those of us who are bad does not correspond with those who do and those who do not read books. Both saints and criminals were illiterate. Both saints and criminals have written learned tomes and fascinating novels.

III. But whether in the technical sense someone is able to read or not is not the central question. To be able read is important, to be sure, but what a person reads when he is able and free to read is more important. The world is full of people who can read but who, in fact, have read little or nothing. It is also full of others who constantly read but read nothing that is noble, nothing elevating, nothing that really might move their souls. But to read well and accurately, we need grammar, we need to know the parts of speech, how things fit together. These rudiments seem basic, even when spellcheck and grammar-check are on our standard computer software.
We must also possess what Dorothy Sayers once called the “tools” of learning, which she said, in a famous essay that can still be easily found on Google, were in fact “The Lost Tools of Learning.” She meant logic and dialectic, rhetoric and composition. Still, the most important thing that students can possess in their young souls is not just the “tools” of learning, but the desire, the *eros*, the love and passion of learning. Socrates knew what he was talking about when he spoke of “philosophic *eros*.” Augustine talked of his “restless heart” because it was restless and he wanted to know why.

To all of us, there must come, as Plato said in the seventh book of the *Republic*, that awakening of our minds, minds we already have. We encounter someone, something. We “turn around.” We are astonished that something exists that we do not know about but, beholding, we want to know. If our schools or universities conspire, by their theories or by their atmosphere, to prevent us from wondering about the highest things, we are on our own. We can wash our hands and souls of them. We need not be defeated by a very expensive education that teaches us that relativism is true, or by a free education that encourages things that corrupt us. Eric Voegelin said somewhere that no one has to participate in the disorders of his time.

When an academic year ends, we want to say to students, especially to those whom Plato called the “potential philosophers”: “Do not be defeated either by one’s own vices or one’s own ideology or one’s own lethargy.” But we can only act on this advice if we suddenly are alerted by something outside of ourselves, something that is true or beautiful, something *that is*. The world exists so that we know that we are incomplete in ourselves. We suspect that our completion includes, somehow, what is not ourselves. Aquinas called this completion, as it finally ended in us, knowledge, truth. And all knowledge is of what is not ourselves. We even know ourselves, that great Socratic project, by first knowing what is not ourselves.

Fortunately, not a few passages can be found in the Bible and in our literature that serve to alert students, to wake them up. Their souls, one way or another, have hopefully acquired some virtue, some grammar, some curiosity. To these, I would suggest two passages for their wonderment. The first is from the Bible, from the Gospel, about the rich young man, what he must do to be “perfect?” Imagine asking anyone that! Christ admired this young man. He told him to keep the commandments. The young man protested that he had always done this.

Finally, Christ told him that one thing was left, to sell his riches, give it to the poor, and follow Him. In one of the most poignant passages in the entire Bible, in Mark’s Gospel, it simply says that the young man went away “sad,” for he had many riches. The point was not really that there was anything wrong with riches as such or that the young man was violating some commandment. He wasn’t, as he said. It was that there are glories that are offered to us that we can, even without sin, reject.

The second passage is from a modern classic, from Boswell’s *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides with Samuel Johnson, LL.D*. The day was Tuesday, October 19, 1768. That morning Boswell and Johnson breakfasted on the Island of Col. They took leave of “the young ladies, and of our excellent companion, Col, to whom we had been so much obliged.” Finally they land on “that illustrious Island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans
and roving barbarians derived their benefits of
knowledge and the blessings of religion.”

Johnson, in seeing this place, was much
moved by the scene before him. Fortunately for
us, Boswell was there to record what he said,
which was as follows:

To abstract the mind from all local emotion
would be impossible, if it were endeav-
oured, and would be foolish if it were pos-
sible. Whatever withdraws us from the
power of our senses, whatever makes the
past, the distant, or the future, predomi-
nate over the present, advances us in the
dignity of thinking beings. Far from me,
and from my friends, be such frigid philos-
ophy as may conduct us indifferent and
unmoved over any ground that has been
dignified by wisdom, bravery or virtue.
That man is little to be envied, whose patri-
otism would not gain force upon the plain
of Marathon, or whose piety would not
grow warmer among the ruins of Iona.

Should potential philosophers in whatever
college, in whatever place, not know of the rich
young man or of the plains of Marathon or of
the ruins of Iona, they can assume they have
lost much time in what is politely called their
education.

In a footnote to this passage, Boswell adds:
“had our Tour produced nothing else but this
sublime passage, the world must have acknowl-
edged that it was not made in vain. The present
respectable President of the Royal Society was so
much struck on reading it, that he clasped his
hands together, and remained for some time in
an attitude of silent admiration.” We can find
much in local things. If we have never sensed
what it might mean to “go away sad,” or if we
have never stood before something that moved
us to “silent admiration,” we have not begun
our properly human lives.

We can read without learning at all. We can
have read only one book, the Bible or
Shakespeare, but read it well. We can read many
things, none of which move our souls to attend
to what is. Johnson was right. That man is “lit-
tle to be envied” who can come across great,
pious, and noble things but without their caus-
ing a ripple of light in his soul. What makes
education worthwhile are precisely those defin-
ing moments of “turning around.” These are
moments of being struck by something that calls
us out of ourselves. They may be “many allu-
sions” from the Bible or the Classics, or the Lost
Lectures of Maurice Baring, or the “Lost Tools of
Learning” of Dorothy Sayers. It may be the Rich
Young Man in Mark, or, finally, the plain of
Marathon or the ruins of Iona, where our patri-
otism should “gain force” and our piety grow
“warmer.” It is with such experiences that we
begin to wonder about what is, why it is, rather
than is not.

James V. Schall, S.J. is a professor in the Georgetown
University Department of Government.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
In 1849, Herman Melville authored a poorly received romance of Polynesian adventure, which interwove threads of socio-political commentary through the use of thinly veiled fictional countries and personalities. Unabashedly referencing America, Melville reproached his contemporaries and cautioned that, "freedom is more social than political.”

Indeed, freedom is more social than political; it is in the social sphere that the seeds of democracy are sewn. Political science would label this phenomenon civil society—a field that has recently come to popularity in the policymaking circles of Washington, New York, and Brussels.

Contemporaneous with the application of civil-societal principles to developing and democratizing states, a parallel discussion has emerged in America, where many have witnessed the dissolution of the colorful social fabric that has defined this country since its birth.

It was Alexis de Tocqueville, who in his inquiry On Democracy in America, took note of a distinctly American civil society: “Americans of all ages, all stations in life, and all types of dispositions are forever forming associations. There are not only commercial and industrial associations in which all take part, but others of a thousand types—religious, moral, serious, futile, very general and very limited, immensely large and very minute. …Nothing, in my view, deserves more attention than the intellectual and moral associations in America.”

At its inception and throughout its early history, America was the tabula rasa for the Enlightenment philosophies of Western Europe. Where European civil society was colored by its past, America cultivated a distinctively fresh and innovative form so admired by Tocqueville. Where in Europe change could not be engendered but by the powerful few or the revolutionary masses, in America change could arise through the efforts of peaceful and constructive civic organizations integrated into American democracy.

But before delving into philosophical theorizing, it is first necessary to postulate the terms of civil society. As seen through the Tocquevillian lens, civil society is a realm of humanity distinct from the state that functions to, despite the inevitable differences of man, create a shared set of values, norms, and beliefs in support of the democratic tradition.

To take a more demonstrative approach, civil society today can be witnessed in churches of all denominations, the Red Cross, the Boy Scouts, trade unions, PTA meetings, professional associations, sports clubs, and anywhere else where citizens come together in an arena of voluntary collective action. These institutions provide grounds for civic participation on democratic
terms, which in turn educate the citizenry and inculcate a shared set of foundational values regarding democracy and public debate.

At this point, critics and proponents of the individual may jump to conclusions and avow the stance that such institutions represent “destructive cultural conditioning”. Yet such basic civic virtues do not deride the inevitable differences of man, but rather protect such differences through the inculcation of democratic mediating structures such as tolerance and broadmindedness.

While democratic government is defined by its acceptance and moderating tendencies, its survival unavoidably requires a pro-democratically socialized citizenry to meet the demands of democratic citizenship—and the demands are indeed great and the privilege too often taken for granted.

So if then one were to take issue with the necessity of civil society as the underpinning institution of American democracy, then such a critic would, this author contends, necessarily have to take issue with the democratic process and present a more suitable arrangement by which to govern the citizenry and to protect life and liberty. And in the well-known words of Sir Winston Churchill: “democracy is the worst form of government except all the others that have been tried.”

Civil society has other benefits too. In expanding on Tocqueville’s interpretation and introducing the views of prominent American political scientist Robert Putnam, the realm of civil society creates social capital. Akin in premise to financial or political capital, social capital is created by the values and experiences gained from the interaction among citizens and results in various forms of trust that facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit.

In sum, civil society is critical element of American democracy. Instilling the virtues of democratic tolerance, debate, and representation, civil society is a vital force undergirding our republic. Moreover, it creates the social capital and resultant trust of social cohesion and a free, yet ordered democratic society.

But to invoke the imagery of Herman Melville’s literary universe—the vast and uncontrollable seas—America is adrift absent her roots. Contemporary America has witnessed the decomposition of our social fabric. A phenomenon well documented in Robert Putnam’s book entitled Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community, participation in traditional civil societal institutions is on the decline. What is more, no countervailing institutions or mechanisms have cropped up to fill this void.

Solid statistical analysis demonstrates that there has been a marked decline of membership in service groups, professional societies, religious organizations, fraternal groups, and other civil societal institutions over the past 50 or so years.

Even more disconcerting in Putnam’s view is that more Americans are bowling alone than ever before. While more Americans are bowling today than three decades previous, many fewer are participating in organized bowling leagues. In Putnam’s estimation, this is indicative of contemporary America’s trend to be less connected to and less invested in neighbors, friends, society, and American democracy.

If, therefore, freedom is more social than political, and American democracy is predicated on the positive normative functions and social capital of civil society, then some commentators have speculated that America is approaching an impending social crisis. The result? A pathological social order.

Yet for some, the decline of American civil society is a calculated and desired endgame. They see the separation of individual ties to people, places, community, and so forth—the uprooting of civil society—as a precondition for “progressive action”.

In this state of affairs, people are separated from one another and unchecked individualism arises to defy the foundational virtues of a civil,
tolerant, democratic society. Peaceful, organic, democratic change cannot be engendered through civil societal organizations, but only by means of violence, protest, and revolution. In doing this, one flies in the face of the principles of American democratic institutions. Thus, in order to defy the roots of democracy, one must be disposed to argue for a new, superceding system of government protecting the rights that we hold to be inalienable.

To disambiguate the portrayal of individualism stated above, in the traditional scheme of American democracy, the individual is to be highly valued. Indeed, recognition and admiration of the initiative of the individual has been the foundation of American ingenuity and entrepreneurship that has set us apart from other nations and has made the “American experiment” a successful one. Yet an individual severed from civil society, from the moderating democratic virtues of liberty, debate, and tolerance is no more than a tyrant. He is thus because, devoid of democratic civic virtue, he cannot accept an opinion other than his own and he knows of no other way to achieve his goals than through chaotic revolution.

At best, an America absent civil society, in the words of John Rawls, would entail “a voluntary scheme [whose] members are autonomous and the obligations they recognize self-imposed.” At worst, however, an American citizenry unequipped with the basic civic virtues of debate, tolerance, and democratic principle, would be prone to unchecked and unquestioning social movements whose power would be usurped by a tyrannical few.

In the wisdom of Tocqueville: “Despotism, by its very nature suspicious, sees the isolation of men as the best guarantee of its own permanence.” To disengage from civil society, for truly every man to be his own island, is to make America susceptible to the tyrant—whoever he may be, whenever he may arise, and from wherever he may hail.

Indeed, civil society as an arena for learned civic virtue and crosscutting, reinforcing social trust, is the underpinning soul of America’s defense against tyranny. Qualities such as independence, self-reliance, debate and tolerance are molded within the civil-societal sphere—whether through the Boy Scouts, church groups, PTA meetings, or any other institution where men and women come together to comprehend and to confront the vital demands of American citizenship.

“It is not unknown … that in these boisterous days, the lessons of history are almost discarded, as superseded by present experiences.” Herman Melville wrote these words more than 150 years ago. Yet, like a tuning fork rediscovered, Melville’s admonition finds new resonance in an America that has drifted even further from the tonalities of tradition.

In a time of selfish individualism, and eroding social traditions, we could do worse than to return to the American values so admired by de Tocqueville (yet in Melville’s view already slipping away)—to a strong civil society informed by public spiritedness, tolerance, debate, and engagement. Before we plunge headlong into an untested political agenda, let us first understand our social roots, and appreciate the values that have carried our nation thus far.

As a free and united people let us at least comprehend and perhaps revere Tocqueville’s fundamental belief that “if men are to remain civilized or to become civilized, the art of association must develop and improve among them at the same speed as equality of conditions spreads.”

Perhaps then, through a rediscovery of this all-but-forgotten “art of association,” America may come about to meet the winds of change and chart the seas behind her and those to come.

Grant Morrow is a junior in the Georgetown University Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service studying international politics.
Sometimes we take for granted those small instances that have forever shaped the political and governmental landscape of our country. We hope to highlight the history behind some of the events that have defined our present and past by featuring pieces entitled “Our Common Past.” These articles will allow us to learn more about what actually happened to make our country what it is today.

–The Editors

Our Common Past: Marbury v. Madison

Great events in history are often launched off the simplest of facts, such was the case with Marbury v. Madison.

Taylor O’Neill

In the final hours of the Adams Presidency, on the night of March 3, 1801, sixty-eight civil and military commissions were rushed to be signed by John Adams and sealed by his secretary of state, John Marshall. However, due to the last minute rush to pack the newly created District of Columbia with Federalist appointments, the commissions were never delivered. This closing act of partisan politics by the Adams Administration set up the case that proved to define the position of the Supreme Court and their power of “judicial review,” Marbury v. Madison (1803).

In 1800, the newly designated capital of the United States of America, called the “District of Columbia” was a perfectly square swatch of marshland situated on both sides of the Potomac River. The curvy Potomac River brought business to the ports of Alexandria and Georgetown. A naval yard was in the process of being built in the comforts of the Anacostia River, adjacent to the Potomac. Entrepreneurs of the steel and timber industries flocked to the area, recognizing the potential the marshland possessed. The first banks had been set up only a few years earlier and the markets consisted of tailors, shoemakers, printers, grocery shops, stationery shops and oyster shops. The immense Capitol Building and the “Executive Mansion” or “President’s Palace” were under construction. As described by the lead biographer of John Marshall, Albert Beveridge, “[The National Capital] was a picture of sprawling aimlessness, confusion, inconvenience, and utter discomfort.” In 1800, Washington was a “dismal place,” with rough-cut houses and muddy streets through a marsh.

The political environment in 1800 was strained between the controlling Federalists and Thomas Jefferson’s Republicans. The

---

1 The only way across the river was by ferry.
Constitution was ratified eleven years earlier, in 1789. Many of the men who participated in writing the Constitution were still involved with the government. Yet, they were hardly in agreement over the role of the federal government. The Presidential election of 1796 between John Adams and his Vice President, Thomas Jefferson, was decided by a slim 3 votes in the Electoral College, in favor of Adams. The muddled election of 1800 was also decided by a slim margin, in favor of Jefferson.

The Judiciary Act of 1801
The Judiciary Act of 1801 set the stage for the final month of John Adams’s presidency. The Act tried to give the court more power and better organization so it could be a more effective branch of government. The Act created sixteen judgeships for the six new Circuit Courts, which meant that the Supreme Court Justices no longer had to “ride the circuit.” Prior to the Judiciary Act of 1801, a Supreme Court Justice and two District Court judges met for two sessions a year as a Circuit Court. This required the Supreme Court Justices to make long and arduous trips away from their homes. Keep in mind, the trip from the District of Columbia to New York City took more than the hour it does today. Another dilemma the Justices faced prior to the Act was if a case was appealed from the Circuit Court to the Supreme Court, a Justice would sit for both trials and could be biased in his decision. From Adams’s perspective, the sixteen new Circuit Court judges provided the opportunity to make lifetime appointment of Federalist judges.

The “lame duck” Federalist majority in Congress approved Adams’s appointments with haste. The Judiciary act of 1801 passed on February 13 and by February 20 all sixteen appointments were filled. Jefferson subsequently noted that: “The Federalists have retired into the judiciary as a strong-hold…and from that battery all the works of republicanism are to be beaten down and erased.” Because all the nominations and appointments took place in the last month of the Adams presidency, the Circuit Court appointments became known as the “Midnight Judges.”

Needless to say, the Republicans were not pleased with the actions of the Federalists. Adams’s appointments increased the separation between the Federalists and the Republicans and influenced Jefferson’s equally partisan actions in the first days of taking office.

John Marshall
John Marshall was at the center of the conflict between Federalists and Republicans. Marshall served one term in the Sixth Congress (1799/1800) in the House representing the 13th District from Richmond, Virginia. During his term he helped formulate the plans for the Judiciary Act of 1801 and was one of Adams’s greatest allies. Once Marshall’s term ended in the spring of 1800, Adams nominated Marshall to be his secretary of state and he was approved without opposition on May 13, 1800. As secretary of state, Marshall was in the most influential position of the government.

In October of 1800, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Oliver Ellsworth, stepped down due to ill health and took a diplomatic position overseas. John Jay declined to be appointed (again) as Chief Justice because he believed the Supreme Court had failed to “acquire the public confidence and respect which, as the last resort of the justice of the nation, it should possess.” Adams had trouble finding other candidates to fill the position until his friend, John Marshall, agreed to be nominated. Marshall took the oath as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court on February 4, 1801, with one month remaining in the Adams presidency. Adams also asked Marshall to remain as acting secretary of state for the remainder of the term. It is unclear how much input Marshall had in the remaining month, regarding the judicial appointments.
Both Marshall and Adams were in the District of Columbia at the time, close enough so they did not have to correspond through mail.

**Justices of the Peace**

Congress passed a bill on Friday, February 27, 1801 (with only 5 days left in the term) entitled, “An Act concerning the District of Columbia,” which created the new district between Alexandria County, Virginia and Washington County, Maryland. In addition to those created by the Judiciary Act of 1801, the Act created three Circuit Court judgementships, positions which Adams filled with close friends. The Act also gave the President power to appoint justices of the peace to terms of five years. These judges of crimes and small monetary disputes that received a fee for every case tried, rather than a salary. A justice of the peace would deal with crimes such as robberies, pick-pocketing, and other minor disturbances of the peace. While the position was seemingly insignificant, the office had been the starting point of many political careers, including George Washington, James Madison, James Monroe, George Wythe, George Mason, and Thomas Jefferson. (This may be a reason why Marbury wanted to get the position.)

John Marshall had the primary responsibility for gathering the names of the appointments of the justices of the peace. Due to the short amount of time Adams had to bring the nominations to the Senate for approval, many of the nominations made were from a closed circle of elites in Washington and Alexandria. Adams’s Secretary of the Navy, Benjamin Stoddert², provided the list of names for Washington County, and William Marbury was on Stoddert’s list. Marbury worked as a “naval agent,” directly under Benjamin Stoddert, for several years prior to being nominated as a justice of the peace.

On Monday, March 2, among other civil and military nominations, Adams sent 42 nominations for justices of the peace: 23 for the Maryland side of the Potomac River and 19 for the Virginia side. William Marbury, Robert Townsend Hooe, Dennis Ramsay, and William Harper were 4 of the 42 justices of the peace nominated by Adams and confirmed by the Federalist majority. There was a rush to get all the nominations through the Senate so the commissions could be signed by Adams, sealed by John Marshall and delivered to the 42 justices by midnight of the next day.

**Marbury and Friends**

William Marbury came from a modest upbringing in a tobacco farming family of Charles County, Maryland. Tobacco proved to be an unprofitable staple in the 18th Century as tobacco was overproduced and the markets were controlled by British monopolies. Marbury moved to Annapolis, Maryland in 1781, at age 19, to work for the Auditor General of the State; his career away from farming and in business began. By 1796, Marbury was wealthy and one of the most powerful men in the state as the Agent for the State of Maryland. He worked for the state of Maryland for a number of years before moving to Georgetown. Marbury was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Bank of Columbia in 1798 (where he later became the Director) and the following year was appointed to be the agent to the Washington Naval Yard, to work directly under Benjamin Stoddert. Marbury’s connection with the social elite in Washington grew as he moved to the west end of Georgetown (a block from Stoddert’s home).³

---

² Stoddert’s home, now known as the Halcyon House, is located at 3400 Prospect St, NW.
³ Marbury’s home is now home to the Embassy of Ukraine at 3350 M St, NW.
His unwavering Federalist support truly showed when he named his last son Alexander Hamilton Marbury.

Robert Townsend Hooe was from Alexandria and was the wealthiest of the four men. Hooe was involved in business with Marbury in the winter months of 1799 and 1800 when Marbury and Stoddert attempted to build-up the naval yard in the Anacostia River before Jefferson came into office. Hooe was one of the perspective suppliers of the timber needed to build the docks and gun-ships. Jefferson stopped the construction of the docks and ships (claiming the construction was a partisan action) when he came into office, letting the overpriced timber rot. Hooe was one of the original boosters, as many landowners were, of Alexandria-Georgetown becoming the site of the national capital. Hooe remained in Alexandria until his death in 1809.

Each of the men had ties to the Federalist government and their nominations would have been beneficial to their careers as an opening into the political sphere.

The Case of the Undelivered Commissions

A story that had been passed down orally through the Jefferson family gives one account of what happened at midnight on March 4, 1801. According to this version of the facts, Levi Lincoln entered the White House at midnight on March 4 and ordered John Marshall to put his pen down and stop signing and sealing the final commissions. Levi Lincoln, the Attorney General under Jefferson, served as Secretary of State while James Madison was in Fredericksburg, Virginia attending his father’s funeral.

Other stories of the first hours of the Jefferson presidency involve less conflict. The most likely sequence of events involved Lincoln entering the state department on the morning of March 4 and finding a stack of commissions left on a table by the prior administration. When Lincoln approached Jefferson about the remaining commissions, Jefferson ordered Lincoln not to deliver the commissions. On March 18, John Marshall corresponded with his brother regarding the commissions:

I did not send out the commissions because I apprehended such as were for a fixed time to be completed when signed and sealed and such as depended on the will of the President might at any time be revoked...I should however have sent out the commissions which had been signed and sealed but for the extreme hurry of the time and the absence of Mr. Wagner [Clerk of the State Department] who had been called on by the President to act as his private secretary.

Jefferson believed that 42 justices of the peace were too many for the newly formed District of Columbia, specifically too many Federalists. By March 13, less than 10 days after taking office, Jefferson appointed 30 justices of the peace, 15 for each county. Jefferson recognized that the newly formed city did not have a basic judicial system, so it was necessary that the commissions be distributed immediately. 9 commissions were omitted (from the original 23) from Washington County and 1 was added by Jefferson. 8 commissions were omitted (from the original 19) in Alexandria County and 4 were added. Most of the prominent Federalist supporters were among the 17 that Jefferson denied commission. Due to Marbury’s (and the other 3) history of association with Federalist politics and perceived involvement in government cost overruns, Jefferson did not feel compelled to keep them as appointments. The other 25 commissions originally made by Adams were moderate enough for Jefferson to accept as his own nominations.

Jefferson’s action of appointing 30 justices of peace was equally partisan to the actions of Adams in his final days. Jefferson had two...
main reasons for withholding the appointments: 42 were too many for the District of Columbia and the positions were too expensive for the cost-cutting Republicans. However, later in Jefferson's presidency, he received letters and petitions from citizens of the District of Columbia asking for more justices of the peace. Also, the positions finance themselves! The offices received a fee for each case that was heard, so they were not paid directly by the government.

Charles Lee and Marbury v. Madison
Because the District of Columbia was such a small town, we can assume Marbury must have known going into the final days of the Adams presidency that he was nominated and confirmed as a justice of the peace. On Wednesday, March 13, 1801 the National Intelligencer, the most prominent newspaper in the area, published the names of Jefferson's 30 justices of the peace. Since the names were published in the paper and the commission did not arrive, Marbury knew the position was no longer his. Sometime thereafter, Marbury approached Charles Lee, the Attorney General under Adams, to take his case to the Federalist Supreme Court. Lee was a cousin by marriage of the Chief Justice John Marshall and had plenty of experience arguing in front of the Supreme Court from his years as the Attorney General.

The case was filed in December of 1801. The Supreme Court did not hear the case until February 1803, however, because the Republican Congress repealed the Judiciary Act of 1801, which cancelled the 1802 term of the Court. One of the greatest cases in history took place in “Committee Room 2,” in the basement of the Capitol Building; the site of the Supreme Court from 1801 to 1808. The room measured 30 to 35 feet and had two windows. The chamber was heated by a fireplace set in the wall. The bench, where the Justices sat when the court was in session, was not elevated, unlike today. The Capitol architect, Benjamin Latrobe, described the room as noisy, "a half-finished committee room meanly furnished, and very inconvenient."

Starting on Thursday, February 10, 1803, Charles Lee needed to prove to the Court the plaintiffs were in fact commissioned by Adams. The problem was the commissions had never been delivered and Jefferson administration refused to help find them. Lee's case would need to rely upon the testimony of people who had seen the original commissions. The first witness should have been Chief Justice Marshall, who as the acting Secretary of State sealed and was supposed to have delivered the commissions. But Marshall was not called as a witness. Instead, Lee read affidavits of James Marshall, brother of the Chief Justice, and a clerk of the state department. The trial, completed on February 11, thus established to the satisfaction of the Court that the commissions did exist.

Marshall’s presence in the courtroom was not what was expected of a Chief Justice. Marshall’s modest appearance disguised his intelligence, which was described as “vigorously powerful” by Joseph Story, a lawyer who argued the landmark case Fletcher v. Peck (1808) and later an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. Ironically, Marshall had less than 3 months of formal legal training. In the winter of 1779-1780, while on leave from the army, Marshall attended lectures of Professor George Wythe at the College of William and Mary. Wythe was Thomas Jefferson’s law professor and later sat with Marshall on the bench of the Virginia Circuit Court. At the same time, Marshall met his future wife and his notebook shows that he thought as much about the future-Mrs. Marshall as the curriculum.

On the morning of Thursday, February 24, 1803, the opinion of Marbury v. Madison was read in the lobby of Stelle’s Hotel to an audience of congressmen and other political figures. The 11,000 word opinion took Marshall almost 4
hours to read. The opinion methodically explained the constitutional issues embedded in Marbury v. Madison and captivated the audience with the greatest suspense. He concluded that the commissions of Marbury and company were signed and sealed and that the commissions did not need to be delivered. However, Section 13 of the Judiciary Act of 1789, which gives the power of mandamus to the Court, was considered unconstitutional. Marshall recognized that the position of Justice of the Peace was relatively meaningless and Marbury’s case would be the case to give the Supreme Court power and make it a formidable branch of the government.

The Judiciary Act of 1789 was an odd statute to declare unconstitutional. It was written by the first Congress, just two years after the Constitution had come into existence. The majority of the members of that Congress had either participated in the drafting of the Constitution or were members of the Constitutional Congress. In addition, one member of the Marshall Court, Justice Patterson, was one of the principle drafters of the Judiciary Act of 1789. So, one must conclude that if any Congress understood what the Constitution meant as it was drafting a law, it was the first Congress of the United States.

Marbury loses, Madison wins, the Supreme Court wins. Thus, the case that would articulate the principal of judicial review was not based on momentous set facts, such as direct confrontation between two branches of government. Instead, it was based on the request of a disgruntled office seeker for a job at the bottom of the government food chain: a justice of peace for the District of Columbia.

Taylor O’Neill is a senior in the Georgetown University College of Arts and Sciences studying Economics and English.
“The modern world has retained all those parts of police work which are really oppressive and ignominious, the harrying of the poor, the spying upon the unfortunate. It has given up its more dignified work, the punishment of powerful traitors in the State and powerful heresiarchs in the Church. The moderns say we must not punish heretics. My only doubt is whether we have a right to punish anybody else.”

- from The Man Who Was Thursday

The Christian Populism of G.K. Chesterton

By Anthony Carmen Piccirillo

In the world of academia there is a strong temptation to latch on to an ancient and persistent mindset that glorifies the intellectual class while doubting the intelligence or even morality of those who are less educated. Such a philosophy may in its most dangerous manifestation even tend to discount altogether the worth of the common man and seek to deny him the right to govern himself autonomously. One of the greatest enemies of this malignant variety of elitism was G. K. Chesterton (1874-1936), himself a man of intellectual brilliance who made prolific contributions to prose, poetry, political commentary, philosophy and apologetics. An Anglo-Catholic turned Roman Catholic, Chesterton’s general view of humanity was rooted in the Christian emphasis on the dignity and righteousness of the meek and the humble. Contrary to the prominent academic reasoning of his time, Chesterton was always willing to condemn the prudish errors of sophisticated heretics and radicals while giving the benefit of the doubt to the sometimes misguided masses.

Much like our own times, the early twentieth century was a period marked by the presence of diverse and often conflicting ideologies ranging from atheism and eugenics, to colonialism, pacifism, socialism, capitalism, nationalism and anarchism. Chesterton’s steadfast advocacy of a kind of Christian populism led him to reject every one of these flourishing intellectual fashions. Chesterton was especially critical of the cult of progress, the general philosophical attitude from which many of these ideologies sprung. Indeed it is impossible to associate Chesterton’s thought with any one particularly ideology. Instead, his philosophy may be best described as Christian or more specifically Catholic. After all, adherence to the Gospel requires at least the partial rejection of all ideologies.

Chesterton’s work Orthodoxy offers perhaps the best glimpse into his philosophical approach...
to the world as expressed in his trademark paradoxical style. While Chesterton described himself as an ardent democrat, he argues in *Orthodoxy* that democracy must ideally be based on tradition: “Tradition may be defined as an extension of the franchise. Tradition means giving votes to most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is democracy of the dead.” Chesterton also considered himself a liberal but again in a more nuanced and profound sense especially in contrast to the so-called “liberal” freethinkers. Chesterton points out that “a freethinker does not mean a man who thinks for himself. It means a man who, having thought for himself, has come to one particular class of conclusions, the material origin of phenomena, the impossibility of miracles, the improbability of personal immortality and so on. And none of these ideas are particularly liberal. Nay, indeed almost all these ideas are definitely illiberal” In spite of the frequent criticism that the teachings of the Church are restrictive and opposed to human nature, Chesterton came to the conclusion that in fact Christianity is extraordinarily liberating and wonderfully compatible with humanity. Paradoxically, the poor illiterate Catholic peasant enjoys more freedom than the wealthy, highly educated anarchist “freethinker.”

Chesterton’s populism did not lead him to take an indiscriminately anti-elitist stance. His praise of the common people was not necessarily meant to be a condemnation of the intellectuals, but rather was intended to demonstrate that a philosopher or philologist could learn a great deal about the human condition from a simple peasant or porter. In his biographies of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Francis of Assisi, Chesterton points out that while the brilliant academic and the simple beggar may follow different routes, they may both come to intimately know God. For Chesterton both of these saints could properly be called humanists “because they were insisting on the immense importance of the human being in the theological scheme of things. But they were not Humanists marching along a path of progress that leads to Modernism and general skepticism; for in their very Humanism they were affirming a dogma now often regarded as the most superstitious Superhumanism. They were strengthening that staggering doctrine of Incarnation, which the skeptics find it hardest to believe.” For Chesterton, Man finds his greatest meaning in the God who became Man. The complex logic of St. Thomas and the simple songs of St. Francis were expressions of the same simple yet profound desire of every man to know himself and the Creator.

Having established a basic sketch of Chesterton’s Christian populism it is worthwhile to return to the opening quote from the novel *The Man Who Was Thursday*. In the novel, the quote is spoken by a policeman who recruits the protagonist into an effort to thwart the plans of a secret international cabal of anarchist terrorists, the kinds of “traitors” and “heretics” to whom the policeman makes reference.

The prospect of prosecuting “heretics” for their beliefs is considered anathema in modern society since it is accepted that no one should be punished based solely on what he or she believes. Chesterton contends however that the real dangers to society lie not in the vices of the downtrodden but rather in the prideful and poisonous ideas of elites who have drifted away from the truth and in so doing have also separated themselves from humanity.

---

Indeed, Chesterton above all detested pride. Chesterton once wrote that if he had the opportunity to preach one sermon it would have been against pride. For Chesterton pride is the worst of all evils because it causes one to seek no other standard of reference besides oneself. Chesterton therefore saw more potential for evil in the looking glass of an ambitious scientist than in the wine glass of a poor drunkard. Because the elite have been endowed with many blessings, they have the power to both produce a great amount of good, but also to produce the worse kinds of evil. While St. Thomas Aquinas was humble and content with his role as the “Dumb Ox” of Christ, another equally brilliant man may decide to use his intellect to conduct irresponsible genetic experiments on oxen. The difference is pride.

At one point in The Man Who Was Thursday, the protagonist and his allies are surprised to find themselves being chased by a mob of peasants who seem to have inexplicably converted to the anarchist cause. The possibility that even the simple peasants could be seduced by such an insane cause leads the protagonist to despair in humanity. He soon realizes, however, that he was mistaken and the mob was actually incited to such rage because they had mistaken the protagonist’s group for anarchists. Faith in humanity is restored as one of the protagonists’ comrades observes “Vulgar people are never mad.” Of course to say “Vulgar people are never mad” is not to say that they are never bad. While vices are to be expected because we are human, greater evils arise when we forget about our humanity.

There is indeed much that can be learned from Chesterton’s Christian populism, which may just as well be called his humanism or humility. Chesterton reminds those of us who have been blessed with intellect or education that we should never forget our common humanity and that we can indeed learn a great deal from the simplest among us. As Chesterton writes in Orthodoxy we should remember that “Angels can fly because they can take themselves lightly.”

Anthony Carmen Piccirillo is a junior in the Georgetown University Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service studying international history.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
Barbara Mujica is a professor in the Georgetown University Department of Spanish and Portuguese. Her latest work, Sister Teresa, is a novel available in hardcover and is published by Overlook.

Barbara Mujica’s Sister Teresa: A Vivid, Yet Enigmatic Portrait of Spain’s Beloved Saint

Amanda Marie Murphy

Barbara Mujica’s Sister Teresa reveals a world much overlooked by contemporary historical fiction and popular history writers. The idea of writing a novel set almost completely in the cloistered convents of sixteenth century Spain is seemingly not the most attractive idea for a work of modern fiction, a genre which has lately been inundated with highly sensationalized, almost histrionic works of dubious historicity like Dan Brown’s The Da Vinci Code. Mujica must be applauded for her bravery in the creation of this fascinating portrait of the lives of women that history has forgotten.

I feel that our modern popular imaginations would like to imagine Tridentine convents as stifling and mundane as prisons, where women were forced into lives of seclusion and deprivation by their misogynist relatives. As Mujica illuminates in Sister Teresa, this simply was not the case. There were two choices for women in the era of Saint Teresa of Ávila: marriage or religious life. For many the first choice ended in an early death in childbirth or, in the case of most noblewomen, a life of idleness. In a convent, however, women had the chance to become educated, literate, participate in the fine arts and have a chance manage their own lives. Most women freely chose this vocation and many, like Saint Teresa, chose it over their family’s objection. The women of Mujica’s convents are not all staid, solemn individuals but real, vibrant characters. The convents of the novel are certainly not portrayed as paradises; on the contrary, they can be just as full of scheming, politics and discrimination as the outside world. Nevertheless, Mujica gives the reader an honest, authentic portrait of Spanish women religious in the sixteenth century. The reader not only can understand why young, beautiful Teresa chose to be a nun, but also can realize the need for Teresa’s convent reform.

Although most of the plot takes place within the cloistered walls of various Spanish convents,
the tumultuous events of the sixteenth century find their way to penetrate the lives of Mujica’s protagonists. The sixteenth century was one of the bloodiest in Western history. Catholics were being slaughtered in England, Protestants were being slaughtered in the Netherlands and the Turks were threatening the very heart of Europe. It is the period of Spain’s greatest wealth and prestige, called *la Edad de Oro* (*The Age of Gold*), when the sun never set on the Spanish Empire.

Another reality of the time that Mujica deals with in *Sister Teresa* is the fascinating yet tragic story of the Jewish population in Spain. After the expulsion of the Jews in 1492, those who wished to remain in Spain had to convert to Christianity. These people, called *conversos*, were not trusted. Society prized *Pureza de sangre*, or possessing blood untainted of Jewish heritage. Suspected of being *judaizantes*, or those who still secretly practicing the Jewish religion, many *conversos*, disparagingly referred to as *marranos*, were brought before the Inquisition. In one of the most riveting scenes of the novel, Sister Angélica, the narrator of Teresa’s story, is imprisoned by the Inquisition in Sevilla and encounters two Jewish women in her cell. “One of them whispered almost inaudibly: ‘Chemá’ ‘Yisroel’ I responded automatically. Suddenly, I panicked. Why had I said that word? … Now they could testify against me. They could confirm that I was a Judaizer, that I prayed like a Jew. I’d just condemned myself to the stakes without even appearing before an inquisitor.”¹ Although Angélica does not have Jewish blood, she was the life companion of someone who did: Saint Teresa. The paternal grandfather of Saint Teresa, Juan Sánchez was a successful Jewish cloth merchant in Ávila’s lucrative textile industry. Sánchez converted to Christianity but continued to practice Jewish customs in secret and educated his sons to do so as well. This was the charge levied against him by the brother of his wife, who came from an “Old Christian” family. Sánchez voluntarily denounced himself in 1484 and was forced to walk through the streets of his native Toledo wearing a bright yellow knee-length tunic called a *sambenito* that labeled him as a “Judaiser.” Teresa’s father, who was six years old at the time, walked with his own father during this humiliating punishment. Although the family avoided bankruptcy due to the voluntary nature of Sánchez’s confession, the shame they experienced as a family of Jewish heritage drove Teresa’s grandfather to move to Ávila. There he attempted to erase any traces of the family’s Jewish identity. In Ávila, Juan Sánchez became rich, placing him in the city’s burgeoning commercial class. With this wealth he was able to purchase a certificate of pure blood, a document that allowed him to become a nobleman. Teresa’s *converso* past is heavily alluded to in Mujica’s *Sister Teresa* but is noticeably absent from the saint’s contemporary hagiographies, including her own famous autobiography. This, however, is completely expected: Teresa’s *converso* blood would have been the juiciest gossip at the time and something her allies would have undoubtedly suppressed in written chronicles of the saint’s life.

The most important stylistic tool that Mujica employs is the method of narration. Instead of making *Sister Teresa* an autobiography, she tells the saint’s story through the perspective of the more grounded daughter of a seamstress: Sister Angélica. Through the eyes of Angélica, Teresa is a mysterious, captivating figure. The reader, along with Angélica the narrator, grows to understand Teresa’s character as the story progresses however Mujica cleverly leaves the secrets of the inner-workings of the saint’s mind unknown. This makes her character all the more tantalizing. It also provides a more secular perspective, allowing the reader to make their own conclusions about Saint Teresa and her actions.

The extensive research that Mujica mentions in her Author’s Note is certainly put to good use as *Sister Teresa* realistically portrays Spain during *la Edad de Oro*, dispelling many biased inac-
curacies perpetuated by the Protestant tradition of the English language. The Spaniards of this novel are not all the severe, draconian, cruel figures that *la leyenda negra* would have us believe, but are just as joyful, colorful and bawdy as any of Shakespeare’s Elizabethans. In fact, the reader is able to see the opposite side of the Spanish Armada and view England the way the Spaniards saw it: a bloodthirsty land with a priest-murdering ruler as cruel as any Inquisitor. More deeply, it conveys the explicit violence of an age where someone from the wrong religion could lose their head by merely crossing a border and the utter helplessness of the individual in their wake.

Another refreshing aspect of Mujica’s novel is her unapologetic use of the Spanish language within the text. In so many works of fiction set in non-English speaking countries, authors try too hard to translate concepts or idioms that do not need to be translated. Mujica does not cave to this convention, but tries to employ the Spanish language wherever possible to add to the flavor and authenticity of the story. Although the text appears in English, the characters are thoroughly Spanish. For example, instead of using vapid translations like “holy woman” or “local saint,” Mujica uses the words *beata* and *santa*. Although it may seem a rather subtle difference, it contributes immensely to the comprehensibility and visualization of the story. The characters express themselves in a culturally authentic way, which makes the reader’s experience not only more instructive, but far more enjoyable.

Overall, *Sister Teresa* is a truly delightful read. It is a frank, yet loving portrait of one of the greatest saints in Catholicism told from the perspective of the woman who knew her best. Although Sister Angélica is fictional, most of the vast cast of characters actually lived. Indeed, Saint Teresa’s protégé Sister María de San José Salazar was a very real woman who also famously recounted Teresa’s life in her *Book for the Hour of Recreation*. The playful warmth of this biography is certainly mirrored in Angélica’s fictional narrative. Mujica’s synthesis of history and fiction is masterful and it shows in this novel. *Sister Teresa* is a shining work of great passion and real honesty, a work of which this world needs more.

*Amanda Marie Murphy* is a junior in the Georgetown University Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service studying culture and politics.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
Rocky Balboa's Honor

By Paul D. Miller

Rocky Balboa’s story of defeat with dignity first appeared on the big screen the year after Saigon fell. Reappearing in 2006 in the midst of sectarian violence facing U.S. troops in Iraq, Rocky once again teaches us about perseverance through severe trial. Rocky’s struggles mirror our own American story by showing that we have faced trials and still face them today.

Rocky starts his journey as a lazy neighborhood boxer by night and by day loan shark enforcer hampered by a good heart. In fact, this compassionate fighter can’t even bring himself to break a defaulting debtor’s thumbs, rather deciding to lecture him on responsibility. In an intervention of fate, heavyweight champion Apollo Creed randomly chooses Balboa for a shot at the title. This publicity stunt portrays America’s unique status as a land of opportunity. This parallels traditional American thought that as well-meaning and innocent workers, we fell into global hegemony by chance, not design.

Rocky trains diligently knowing full-well that he will lose. Yet the night before the fight, he realizes it isn’t about winning. “I just wanna prove somethin’ – I ain’t no bum... It don’t matter if I lose... Don’t matter if he opens my head...The only thing I wanna do is go the distance — That’s all. Nobody’s ever gone fifteen rounds with Creed. If I go them fifteen rounds, an’ that bell rings an’ I’m still standin’, I’m gonna know then I weren’t just another bum from the neighborhood...”

Fulfilling his own expectations, Rocky loses the match, but is still standing at the end. His dignity in fighting to the finish, in taking a punishment and giving everything he has, resonated with Americans who had just lost the longest war they ever fought but wanted to believe that the sacrifice was worth something.

More than thirty years later, Rocky ends his retirement and America discovers that history has not ended. Rocky, wishing to feel young again, returns to neighborhood boxing. The plot wins no points for originality: the new heavyweight champion Mason Dixon gives Rocky a shot at the old title to revive the sport of boxing and earn some respect. Rocky knows he is a long shot, but once again takes his chances.

Rocky faithfully holds to the same philosophy that won American audiences years ago. “It ain’t about how hard you can hit. It’s about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward, how much you can take and keep moving forward,” he tells his son. Despite losing the match, Rocky keeps his pride by taking his hits and persevering to the last bell.

Rocky embodies defeat with dignity, perseverance through trial, taking life’s hardest knocks and moving forward. The result may not be victory in the contest—but there are rewards nonetheless. For Rocky, the rewards were glory and self-respect, which time cannot dim. St. Paul reminds us, “do you not know that in a race
all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.” (1 Corinthians 9:24-25). The reward for Paul was the honor and recognition from God Himself for faithfulness in the midst of great trial.

On a separate note, Thucydides long ago said wars are fought for fear, interest, or honor. Wars of honor can surely be wicked affairs of vanity and pride—but to seek to preserve one’s honor in a war already underway, to live up to one’s commitments even though they seem a losing cause, is to finish with purpose. Such an act can be one of great courage; it can become a public symbol of those virtues which Rocky embodies so well, of persevering through trial, seeing a difficult and impossible task to the end, fighting to the final bell even through the darkest days—and counting victory according to one’s conscience.

Much may be sacrificed along the way. St. Paul reflected at the end of his life, “For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.” (1 Timothy 4:6-8) Rocky took a beating, fought to the end, lost his duels, and departed the scene. His victory and his crown are still recognized today for what they were: the fulfillment of an honorable purpose.

Paul D. Miller is a PhD student in Georgetown’s Government Department and a veteran of the war in Afghanistan. He received his BA from Georgetown in 1999 and a Masters in Public Policy from Harvard in 2001.
One of the requirements of becoming a Georgetown University John Carroll Fellow is to conduct research on some aspect of Georgetown University history. In the past students could fulfill this requirement by choosing a Georgetown object and writing a research project. More recent Carroll Fellows have been asked to pick a letter or series of letters in the Georgetown University archives for study. The following is the research project by a John Carroll Fellow on correspondence between President Abraham Lincoln and General George McClellan, then the general-in-chief of the Union Army. *Utraque Unum* will be featuring more articles related to Georgetown University history in forthcoming issues.

—The Editors

# Lincoln and McClellan

*Dallas Woodrum*

A vast compilation of original historical documents rests within the archives of Georgetown University located in the Special Collections department of Lauinger Library. In Spring 2002, a single benefactor significantly enhanced this collection and added to its value. Along with a rare copy of Benjamin Franklin’s autograph, this donor provided the Georgetown Special Collections department with original correspondence between President Abraham Lincoln and General George McClellan. At the time of the donation, the two documents were worth $47,000 and were bequeathed without any conditions. Fortunately, Georgetown University did not sell the items and decided to preserve them, giving me the unique opportunity to conduct primary research on the Lincoln letter.

In the letter dated January 18, 1862, nearly seven months after the beginning of the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln asks George McClellan, then general-in-chief of the Union Army, if he would recommend George Patten, a graduate of West Point and a “loyal South Carolinian,” to be an officer in the Union Army. While the role of “Southern Loyalists” in the Union Army is itself an intriguing subject, the letter is even more captivating because it was written at a point when relations between President Lincoln and General McClellan began to decline.

The Sender and Recipient: An Analysis of the Relationship between Lincoln and McClellan

Lincoln wrote at a time when the army was experiencing immense bureaucratic changes in Washington. Only a week before, Edwin Stanton had been confirmed as the new Secretary of War by the US Senate. Along with a change in leadership in the army, state governors were also demanding that the government augment the size of their individual state regiments, creating

---

Utraque Unum — Fall 2007 | 53
a strong demand for an already depleted officer class.\(^1\) Given this scarcity and necessity for officers, one can see why President Lincoln would consider placing a Southern officer in the Union army.

While Lincoln was dealing with large bureaucratic changes in Washington, McClellan received the letter during a time of changing military fortune and strained relations with the President. Graduating second in his class from West Point in 1846, McClellan quickly proved himself as a “twice-breveted hero” in the Mexican American War of 1846-1848.\(^2\) When the outbreak of the Civil War occurred in 1861, the Governor of Ohio recognized McClellan’s military prowess and appointed him as the major general of Ohio’s volunteer units.\(^3\) Unlike most subordinates in the army, McClellan would daringly suggest new strategies and battle plans to his superiors, a bold act that quickly bolstered his reputation as a military commander and provided the impetus for his promotion to General of the Army of the Potomac and, eventually, General-in-Chief of the regular army.\(^4\) While McClellan’s self-confidence and military knowledge helped him gain promotion to his position as General-in-Chief, his arrogance and subtle disdain for Lincoln provided the trigger for his demise.

However, before McClellan became General-in-Chief of the Union Army and until roughly the time of this letter, relations between Lincoln and McClellan were still fairly amicable. As the

\(^1\) Stokesbury, 55
\(^2\) Hassler 3
\(^3\) Hassler 4
\(^4\) Hassler, 5
Chief of the Army of the Potomac, McClellan said that Lincoln would often come to his office unannounced even though “…he [Lincoln] had nothing very particular to say, except some stories to tell, which were, as usual, very pertinent, and some pretty good.”

When Winfield Scott retired as General-in-Chief on November 1, 1861, he assumed the position of General-in-Chief and took control of the Union forces, largely because of Lincoln’s own personal liking of him.

Relations between the two, however, began to wane only weeks before this correspondence between Lincoln and McClellan on January 18, 1862. At a critical point during the formulation of the “peninsular campaign,” (the plan that would bring the Army of the Potomac into Richmond Virginia), Lincoln had to rely on other military elites to command Union forces since McClellan was recovering from extreme illness. Frustrated that “councils of war” were intruding on his duties as General-in-Chief, McClellan, while still ill, confronted the President on January 12 and described to him “in a general and casual way” his military plans. Fearing leakage of his plans to the enemy, McClellan refused to provide specifics during War Council meetings, and only provided information to President Abraham Lincoln directly.

At this point, relations between the two began to harden, as shown by the somewhat cold, formal tone of the letter, which was written only four days after the January 12 meeting between Lincoln and McClellan.

Shortly following this letter, Lincoln began to question the General’s plans for advancing the Army of the Potomac. In February, he sent McClellan a survey that questioned his overall military strategy. Unlike Grant, who in April 1864, operated independent of Lincoln’s oversight, McClellan discovered that his plans for advancing into Virginia would have to receive his superior’s approval. These tensions and differences provoked Lincoln to relieve McClellan of his duties after the Battle of Antietam in September 1862 prompted in part by the General’s extreme aversion to risk in military strategy.

Context, Significance, and Content of Letter
As stated before, Lincoln wrote this letter as his relations with the General were beginning to falter and the seeds of discontent were planted. By examining the diction of the correspondence, one senses a tone of rigid formality between the two—a tone in marked contrast to the amicability that they shared months before.

Besides the change in relations, the letter also comes at a time when the frontier of the war was shifting from Missouri and Kentucky to the border of Tennessee and the region of West Virginia. The Battle of Mill Springs, Kentucky, which occurred the day before the letter was written, not only helped the Union secure Kentucky, but also provided extensive popular support from in the citizens of both Kentucky and eastern Tennessee. Given that this effort to boost Southern support occurred a day prior to the letter, it is not surprising that both Lincoln and McClellan paid particular attention to George Patten’s identity as a “Southern Loyalist.”

What makes this letter distinguishable is that this particular “Southern Loyalist” hailed from the most unlikely of places for one to be an offi-
cer in the Union Army. Patten, the West Point graduate mentioned in the letter, was distinct from other Union officers in that he came from South Carolina, the only Confederate state that did not officially provide troops to the Union. Thus, not only does the letter raise questions about the relationship between McClellan and Lincoln, but it also invites the reader to question why President Lincoln and General McClellan placed particular emphasis on Patten’s status as a “Loyal South Carolinian.”

With both the historical and relational contexts established, a detailed analysis of the letter is now in order.

Letter Transcription

Executive Mansion
Jan. 20, 1862
Majr. Genl. McClellan
My dear sir,

George Patten (1) is now with me saying he graduated at West Point (2), is a loyal South Carolinian (3), and wishes to enter our services. He says you know him (4). Would he make a good officer? (5) And can we find a place for him? (6) Please answer below.

Your Truly,

Abraham Lincoln

I have never served with Mr. Patten & can only say that he graduated well in his class at West Point (7). I presume he would make a good officer. I do not know of any other place that could be provided for him than a commission in the Reg. of Volunteers, as he probably would expect something more than a Lieutenant’s Commission in the regular army (8). I think a loyal South Carolinian deserves consideration (9).

Very respectfully,

Gen. McClellan
Maj. Genl

Letter Explanations

(1) According to military records compiled by the U.S. Government, Patten enrolled in West Point Military Academy on July 1, 1843 and graduated on July 1, 1847. Immediately after his graduation, Patten was made a second-brevet lieutenant in the third artillery division of the U.S. Army and served in the Mexican War from 1847-1848 at Jalapa. In August 1847, he was promoted to second-lieutenant in the third artillery division of the U.S. Army and served in the Mexican War from 1847-1848 at Jalapa. In August 1847, he was promoted to second-lieutenant in the third artillery division of the U.S. Army and served in the Mexican War from 1847-1848 at Jalapa. In August 1847, he was promoted to second-lieutenant in the third artillery division of the U.S. Army and served in the Mexican War from 1847-1848 at Jalapa.

(2) Cullum 186

(3) Cullum 186

(4) Campbell 18

(5) Current, 107

(6) Cullum 186

(7) Cullum 186

(8) Campbell 18

(9) Cullum 186

(10) Current, 107

(11) Cullum 186

(12) Cullum 186

(13) Campbell 18
had developed in the corps of engineers during the Mexican War to become the chief engineer of the Illinois Central Railroad in 1857, Patten used his military experience to pursue a career in military academia.

Nearly a year after the letter was written, Patten became the assistant adjutant-general of the volunteers on March 11, 1853 until he resigned again in March 1863. On February 10, 1864, he became a lieutenant in the Regimental Commissary of Subsistence of the New Jersey Cavalry until he permanently resigned on May 15, 1865, a month after the end of the Civil War. He died on December 20, 1890.  

(2) According to the Biographical Register of Officers for the U.S. Army, Patten’s class included 38 cadets, many of whom joined the Confederate army after South Carolina’s secession.  

(3) The fact that both Lincoln and McClellan use the phrase “Loyal South Carolinian” to describe Patten is noteworthy. Also known as “Unionists,” the small group of loyal South Carolinians feared that secession would bring declining economic and social conditions to South Carolina.  

In total, about 100,000 white Southerners served in the Union army, with Tennessee contributing a large portion of the force—42,000 soldiers. South Carolina, however, was the only confederate state that did not provide regiments for the union cause. Known as “Tories” to the majority in South Carolina who supported secession, “Loyal South Carolinians” had to join other states’ regiments to fight for the union.  

Since only 98 South Carolinians had joined the First Alabama Cavalry, one of the main regiments that permitted South Carolinian loyalists to join the war, the sight of a South Carolinian loyalist would have been a rare experience for Lincoln.  

(4) General McClellan graduated in 1846, a year before Patten’s graduation from West Point. While McClellan does not explicitly state that he knew Patten, McClellan may have come in contact with him given the size of the West Point military class. On average, only fifty to sixty officers graduated from West Point each year before the Civil War.  

(5) While McClellan’s endorsement would have had a large impact in Lincoln’s decision to appoint Patten to an officer position, Patten’s status as a West Point graduate would have also served as a major factor for his appointment. According to Lincoln’s correspondence to Secretary of War Cameron, “Of the Civilians appointed as regimental commanders, all except one are either graduates of West Point or have before served with distinction in the field....” On this note, it is not surprising that Lincoln mentions that Patten is a graduate of West Point.  

(6) Lincoln is referring to a surplus of officers that the Union had at the beginning of the war. About 1,200 West Point graduates were living at the time of the war, but there was only room for 1,100 officers in the Union army, some of whom were not West Point graduates. Given these constraints, finding an officer position for Patten in the regular army would have been a difficult pursuit.
Patten did indeed graduate “well in his class.” Out of a class of 39, he graduated tenth. McClellan himself had graduated second out of 60 students, a rank that earned him the position of brevet second lieutenant of engineers immediately after graduation. McClellan puts emphasis on Patten’s rank because it provided “an odd pecking order” for assigning officer positions in the U.S. Army during the Civil War. “…Graduates chose their branch of service in order of their class standing, and habitually the top of the class went to the engineers, then the artillery, and finally the cavalry and infantry at the bottom.” In this system, McClellan’s rank placed him in the corps of engineers after his graduation from West Point, while Patten’s slightly lower rank placed him in the artillery regiment.

At the time of the letter, the Union force could be effectively divided into two parts: the regular army and the volunteer regiments. Because the number of officer positions in the regular army was quite scarce, the military command would often appoint West Point graduates to officer positions in the state volunteer regiments to “avoid clogging the regular system.” According to historian James Stokesbury, “Most of the Union army therefore consisted of what were officially called ‘United States Volunteers,’ and commissions in these forces were heavily influenced by the separate states, which were responsible for raising the regiments to fill their quotas for the federal government.”

Thus, it comes to no surprise that nearly a year after Lincoln wrote this letter, Patten received an officer’s commission not in the regular army, but in the U.S. Volunteers. By becoming an officer in the Volunteers rather than the regular army, Patten was able to receive the prestigious title of adjutant-general, a position with more authority than a “Regular Lieutenant’s Commission.”

Patten did indeed become an adjutant-general of the volunteers nearly a year after this letter. However, neither the Biographical Register of the U.S. Military Academy nor the Historical Register and Dictionary of the United States Army indicates that his appointment was a result of this correspondence.

Works Cited:

Dallas Woodrum is a junior in the Georgetown University Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service studying international politics.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
This article is unavailable for public access at this time.
Promoting a Georgetown Aesthetic

By Eric Wind

Spread around the Georgetown University campus are some beautiful buildings and spaces. These spaces range from the well-known (Gaston Hall and Old North) to the relatively unknown (Riggs Library and the Hall of Cardinals), but all combine to help define this institution’s character, reminding us of our university’s past while encouraging us to do more in the future. Georgetown’s unique institutional history is seemingly mirrored by the mélange of style exhibited in the architecture and interior of its buildings.

It was this profound respect and appreciation for these places that led Jack Carlson and me to apply for a Reimagining Georgetown grant this past January. The Reimagining Georgetown grant program is run by a group of students representing The Corp, The Hoya, and the Georgetown University Alumni and Student Federal Credit Union. These groups support projects that help our university. Previously supporting the Run for Rigby, they were gracious enough to provide funding to our proposal for helping promote the Georgetown aesthetic across campus.

Our proposal focused on four areas: Leo O’Donovan S.J. Dining Hall, Sellinger Lounge, the McShain Large and Small Lounges, and Copley Formal Lounge. The past few months have been filled with meeting various University administrators and laying the groundwork for change in these important areas. While there have been some roadblocks, there has also been great success. Dr. James O’Donnell, the Provost, and Dr. Todd Olson, the Vice President of Student Affairs, have been especially supportive of our work. Dr. O’Donnell was able to lead the charge in getting funding to restore the decrepit shields in Copley Formal Lounge. These shields represent important clubs, legacies, and people to Georgetown University and were in feeble condition after 70 years of water and environmental damage. Fortunately, they are currently being restored so that many generations of future Hoyas will be able to see and enjoy them.

Axiomatically, the aesthetics of campus are not the main priority for Georgetown University. This university is geared towards training students to be virtuous leaders while producing research that will have a positive impact on humanity. However, it remains important for us to understand our heritage. Our students should know that Father White’s arrival to Maryland in 1634 was the spiritual founding of Georgetown University and led to its establishment 155 years later. Tragically, many Georgetown students today probably imagine that White, Gravenor, Copley, and Poulton were rich alumni that bequeathed vast
sums of money to Georgetown in order to name those buildings after them, but of course, nothing could be further from the truth.

It remains important for Georgetown University administrators to strive to remember tradition and beauty when making decisions that physically affect our campus. As Georgetown University students it is important for us to remember our institutional history and that we do, indeed, have our own history. This history, although far from perfect, has been preserved and can be recalled. It is our own.

Ensuring that we have visual reminders of our heritage remains critical to maintaining a legacy for future Hoyas. They must never forget the efforts of those heroes that have come before them. They should observe that Georgetown University is much more than just another college campus. Rather, they must both see and know that it is a holy place.

Eric Wind is a junior in the Georgetown University Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service studying international politics.
2007-2008 Tocqueville Forum Events

2007-2008 LECTURE SERIES:
“Tocqueville and the American Tradition”

Modernity and its Prospects:
Tocquevillian Thoughts
   September 20, 2008, 5 p.m.
   Joshua Mitchell
   (Georgetown University)

Questions about Tocqueville
   November 8, 2008, 12 p.m.
   John Lukacs
   (Historian and Author)
   Location: Leavey 338 (Club Room)

Tocqueville’s New Political Science—
A Theory from Practice
   December 7, 2008, 5 p.m.
   Harvey C. Mansfield
   (Harvard University)

Tocqueville on Greatness and Justice:
Reflections on the Realistic Christian
Correction of Classical Magnanimity
   January 26, 2008, 5 p.m.
   Peter Augustine Lawler
   (Berry College)

Tocqueville and America -
A View from France
   March 27, 2008, 5 p.m.
   Chantal Delsol
   (Université de Marne-la-Vallée)

FALL 2007

A Re-Orientation: How to Make the Most of the Core Curriculum
   September 21, 2007, 12 p.m.
   Mark C. Henrie
   (Director of Academic Affairs of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute)

Natural Rights, Constitutionalism, and the Law
   October 12, 2007, 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
   A Roundtable Featuring:
   Hadley Arkes
   (Amherst College)
   J. Budziszewski
   (University of Texas at Austin)
   Charles R. Kesler
   (Claremont McKenna College)
   Location: Tocqueville Forum/ Berkley Center Conference Room
   3307 M Street, 3rd Floor

A Religion for Liberals?: Benjamin Constant’s Other Lectures
A Political Theory Colloquium co-sponsored with the Georgetown University Department of Government
   October 25, 2007, 4:30 p.m.
   Bryan Garsten
   (Yale University)
Revisiting “The Regensburg Lecture” of Pope Benedict XVI
November 26, 2007, 5 p.m.
A Roundtable Featuring:
Jean Bethke Elshtain
(Georgetown University)
Daniel J. Mahoney
(Assumption College)
Marc Guerra
(Ave Maria University)
With Concluding Remarks By:
Father James V. Schall, S.J.
(Georgetown University)

How Could Anyone Defend Slavery?:
Moral Crisis in Antebellum America
March 13, 2008, 5 p.m.
Andrew Delbanco
(Columbia University)
Location: Alumni House Seminar Room

Public Theology in America:
A Conference
April 17, 2008, 1 p.m.—5 p.m.
Confirmed Participants:
Stanley Hauerwas
(Duke University)

Father Richard John Neuhaus
(President of the Institute on Religion and Public Life)

The 2nd Annual John Carroll Lecture
April 24, 2008, 5 p.m.
Robert P. George
(Princeton University)
Location: Copley Formal Lounge

SPRING 2008

Abraham Lincoln’s Invention of Presidential War Powers
February 12, 2008, 5 p.m.
James M. McPherson
(Princeton University)
Location: Copley Formal Lounge

The Culture of Enterprise in an Age of Globalization
A Lecture co-sponsored with the Intercollegiate Studies Institute
February 26, 2008, 7 p.m.
Tyler Cowen
(George Mason University)

For more information on upcoming Tocqueville Forum events, please visit: http://government.georgetown.edu/tocquevilleforum