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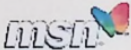
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Lost Star - Patricia
 Lauber

diary A weeklong electronic journal.

Jonathan Ames

This Week's Entries

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Subject: Entry 2

Tuesday, July 15, 2003, at 10:31 AM PT



Portrait of the author as a meaningless youngish man

Yesterday was Bastille Day. But I didn't do anything French. Well, maybe one thing, but I'll get to that.

So what *did* I do yesterday? How Proustian—a fitting allusion for Bastille Day—can I be in my recall? Of course, I haven't actually read Proust. Or Freud. Or Jung. Or Marx. Or Darwin. And yet I inform my worldview with ideas from all these men. When I try to remember things, I think of Proust. When I get annoyed with my father, I think of Freud. When I think that another human being—a female—will complete me, I think of Jung. When I think of the soul-crushing ennui of most jobs, I think of Marx. When I try to understand why I'm bald, I think of Darwin.

I have an idea of their notions from what I've picked up in culture,

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but I'm sure that I've got everything all wrong. I've played the intellectual version of the telephone game: I've received their theories completely distilled and distorted. No wonder I'm screwed up. My whole philosophical foundation is based on rumor, innuendo, and insinuation, not to mention hearsay.

I do take consolation in the words of one great thinker, Neil Young: "Though my problems are meaningless, that don't make them go away." So I have no idea what's going on, my worldview is completely flawed and my life is meaningless, but it doesn't go away and here's a slice of it, my Bastille Day 2003:

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1) Woke up at 6:30 a.m., after a night of lurid, violent dreams, to write my "Diary" entry for *Slate*. Finished at 9 a.m. Staggered about the apartment for a few hours.

2) At 1 p.m. went out to buy fruit, thinking that I needed more fruit in my life. Purchased grapefruits, mangos, blueberries, and plums.



BookCourt, my favorite bookstore

3) Stopped at my favorite book store, BookCourt and was stunned anew by the sheer number of books. It looked like there were more books than human beings and I wondered if the publishing industry wasn't some kind of money-laundering scam.

4) Stopped at my coffee place. The coffee is expensive, but they always have a *New York Times* lying about, so that evens things out nicely. My whole adult life I've been trying to get free newspapers. In the early '90s, I used to drive a taxi in Princeton, N.J. Across from the taxi stand was a Burger King that opened at 6 a.m. Around 8 a.m., I'd go in there and make a sweep of the papers: *Trenton Times*, *Trentonian*, *Newark Star Ledger*, and the three NYC papers. All these old-timers would be in there. They gathered every morning to study the horse races before going to OTB. I'd come through, grabbing papers, and this one ancient fellow, the group's leader, would say to his comrades, "Hold your papers, hold your papers, here he comes." That senior citizen and I did battle for several years.

5) After coffee, worked for about two hours on this article I'm writing for a men's magazine. The magazine sent me to Club Med for a week in the Caribbean; a sweet gig, but I'm off booze and in a relationship. I don't think they knew this when they gave me the assignment. I think they're expecting a scandalous tale of alcohol and sex. I hope they don't make me pay them back for the trip.

6) In the late afternoon, my girlfriend and I lay down for a nap. At some point the nap turned rigorous, and I'm not yet 40, but I had an understanding of how men could have heart attacks while exerting themselves romantically. I think I made more of an effort



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than usual, and the old heart could have easily exploded like a cheap balloon.

7) Went to the gym for 20 minutes to work on preventing heart attacks. An attractive woman lay next to me on the stretching mat and she assumed the missionary position and began thrusting her hips into the air. I considered the wisdom of the Muslim approach to separating the sexes.

8) Had dinner with my girlfriend and my friend David Leslie, who told us of his plans to become a professional boxer. He's 45 and been having a midlife crisis for some time now. He and I had a boxing match three years ago in front of 600 spectators and he beat me up quite thoroughly. Broke my nose, dislocated my jaw, and gave me a concussion. This was done in the name of performance art. (See www.boxopera3.com.) If I ever get mugged, I'll be sure to call it art and apply for a grant from the NEA.

9) My girlfriend and I watched Bergman's *The Seventh Seal*. Young Max Von Sydow's face was incredible to look at. Luminous and deathly. At the end of the film, the knight dies, and the fool lives. That's the kind of story I like.

This Week's Entries

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Jonathan Ames is the author of *I Pass Like Night*, *The Extra Man*, *What's Not To Love?*, and *My Less Than Secret Life*. His new novel, *Wake Up, Sir!*, will be published by Scribner in 2004. He is the winner of a Guggenheim Fellowship and performs frequently as a storyteller—his one man show, *Oedipussy*, debuted off-off-Broadway in New York. His work can be found at www.jonathanames.com.

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A TRIBUTE TO GEORGE PLIMPTON

George Plimpton died on September 26, 2003. He was an amazing human being. He was intrepid, gleeful, generous, funny, silly, brilliant. He was a father, a husband, a brother, a writer, an editor, a performer. He was very kind to me, and I will always be wildly grateful that I had the good fortune to know him.

The following is an excerpt from my book, *My Less Than Secret Life*. It is from the chapter, "My Jewish Cousin, George Ames Plimpton." The time period in which this was written was October of 1999, a few weeks before my first and only boxing match. In preparation for this match, which is briefly referred to in this excerpt, I read George Plimpton's great book, *Shadowbox*, which I highly recommend. I also recommend subscribing to his beautiful magazine, *The Paris Review*.

My Jewish Cousin, George Ames Plimpton

Just a few weeks ago I had a particularly good escapade at Joe's Pub on Lafayette Street. I was the host for a night of storytelling put together by this group called The Moth, which has storytelling nights every two weeks or so at different locations -- it flits around -- though Joe's Pub with its clubby, candle-lit atmosphere seems to be The Moth's favorite venue. The theme of the night I was hosting was "icons." So the performers told stories about icons in their lives, and in addition to my hosting duties, I also told a story -- about my dear childhood pal, Jonathan "Fat" Eder, who for me is an icon of friendship and inspired, nutty behavior.

All in all, there were six storytellers, including myself, and the last performer of the evening happened to be one of New York's -- and perhaps the country's -- best raconteurs: George Plimpton. To introduce Plimpton, I launched into the following monologue:

"Our next storyteller is George Plimpton, but before I bring him on stage I want to tell you something about him. A few months ago, at a Moth event at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, George was the host and this time he was calling me on stage to tell a story and he said, 'Many people don't know this but my middle name is Ames. George Ames Plimpton. So I think Jonathan Ames is a long lost cousin. So please welcome my cousin Jonathan Ames.' This surprised me a great deal, but I recovered my wits quickly and when I got on stage I then said, 'What many people don't know is that my middle name is Plimpton. I'm Jonathan Plimpton Ames. And I guess George doesn't use the Ames part of his name because the initials wouldn't look very good on towels -- G-A-P, which is not very classy.' Well, that whole little speech got a big round of applause, and then after the show George was hounding me on this issue of our being related. 'So are you of the Boston Ames's?' he asked me. I kept sidestepping the question and trying to move us on to another topics. I didn't want to tell him that I was Jewish, that there was no chance in hell that we were of the same blood, and so I shamefully retreated into Jewish insecurity and secrecy.

"In my defense, I have to say that it was thrilling that he seemed to be taking an interest in me, even if it was only because he thought we might be cousins, which is why I didn't want to disabuse him of his cousin fantasy. You see I've always admired George Plimpton's work. As a young writer and as an ardent sports fan, I put him on a pedestal. He combined both my passions. Here was a writer who got to play pro football and hockey and he climbed into the ring with Archie Moore! And what did I write about when I finally became a journalist? Enemas, colonics, and hemorrhoids. My action journalism all took place around my ass! I even self-deprecatingly called myself in one of my *NY Press* articles 'the George Plimpton of the colon.' And now here was the man himself, this icon of American letters, liking me and thinking we were related.

"Well, after that show at BAM, we all went to a party and again George cornered me and inquired as to whether or not I was a Boston Ames. Now for years, I've often masqueraded as a WASP. It's sort of a hobby of mine. A fascination. I comb back my thin blonde hair and put on blazers and khaki

pants and infiltrate WASP society. I call it religious cross-dressing. But now I had gone too far. A high priest of the WASP world was ready to take me in as one of his own. And I should have said to him at the party, 'I'm an Austro-Hungarian Empire Jew named Ames. I'm sorry George, but we're not related!' But I was too weak and irrational. It was absurd, but I thought he wouldn't like me if he knew I was Jewish, and so all I said was, 'There are no Boston Ames's in my family.' And shortly after that, having turned my back on my heritage, I left the party. I was acting like Shylock, but with less self-esteem.

"Anyway, I've been thinking about all this, and I realize that George and I might be related after all. The Boston Ames's, I bet, were originally German-speaking, Austro-Hungarian Empire Jews who ended up in England. But then because of religious persecution, they came over with the Puritans on the Mayflower. And since they were Jews and most likely rich merchants they could pay to get on the ship. Then once they were on Plymouth Rock, they probably -- like the Jews in Spain during the Inquisition -- thought it best to hide their Judaism in the New World. And this kind of secrecy or assimilation isn't done out of Jewish self-loathing, but for reasons of survival.

"Anyway, these Mayflower Ames's, these Boston Ames's, like the Spanish Jews, kept their secret so well, that over time they forgot that they were originally of the Hebrew faith, that they were children of Abraham. And so I believe that of one Boston's oldest families -- the Ames's -- is actually Jewish. Now George's middle name must come from his mother -- in WASP families the middle name is often the mother's maiden name. So George's mother was probably an Ames, which means she was most Jewish. And since one's Jewishness is passed on through the mother, George Ames Plimpton is actually a Jew!

"So ladies and gentleman, please welcome my cousin and Jewish-icon, George Ames Plimpton!"

Well, there was general pandemonium at Joe's Pub when I publicly outed George as a semite. People were howling. If they had yarmulkes they would have tossed them on the stage with joy, which would have made an interesting image. Instead, they merely screamed and laughed, while George gracefully made his way through the crowd and then onto the stage, where he threw a left-jab at me because he knows of my upcoming fight. I then retreated to the wings and George stood silently in front of the microphone, collecting himself and bringing the audience to the edges of their chairs. So we waited. And then stooping to the mike from his considerable height, bending at the waist in his WASP-issued blue blazer, he bowed his head and said in his great mid-Atlantic accent, "I've had some introductions in my day, but never one . . . Well, thanks, cuz."

And the audience roared its approval. It was all very pleasing. In one fell swoop, I had reembraced my heritage and had converted George Plimpton back into the Hebrew fold.

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Battle of Adowa Timeline

Significant events of the Battle.

Battle of Adowa, 1 March 1896

29 February

Night

During the night four brigades, totalling 17,700 men (10,600 Italian infantry and 7,100 *Askari*) and 56 guns, advance the nine kilometres from the Italian base camp at Sauria to a line of three defensive peaks overlooking the Ethiopian camp near Adowa.

1 March

2:30

The Italian commander, General Oreste Baratieri, and Brigadier General Giuseppe Ellena's reserve brigade halt near Mount Eshasho.

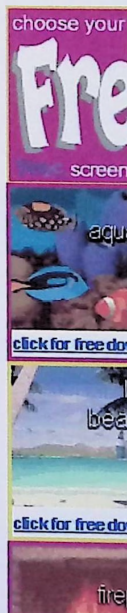
4:00

Brigadier General Giuseppe Arimondi's brigade (Italian infantry) halts its advance to allow Brigadier General Matteo Albertone's Native brigade (*Askari*) passage, the two brigades have become entangled in the dark and the unfamiliar terrain.

5:30

A Shoan horseman arrives at Adowa and informs Emperor Menelik II that *The Ferangi*

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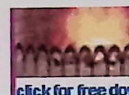
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- (the foreigners) have been spotted north of Abba Garima. Menelik II, Empress Taitu, and the royal Shoan forces ride out to the church at Abba Garima to observe.
- 6:00 Albertone's brigade, now well in advance of the rest of the Italian army, encounters the Ethiopian right wing, commanded by *Ras* Tekla-Haymanot, which had been camped near to Edna Chidane Meret.
- 6:15 General Baratieri, based near Mount Eshasho with the reserve brigade, sends out runners to discover the location of Albertone's brigade.
- 7:45 Baratieri issues orders to Brigadier General Vittorio Dabormida to support the centre. Dabormida actually turns away and heads down the valley of Mariam Shavitu. *Ras* Makonnen and *Ras* Alula, joint commanders of the 30,000 strong Ethiopian left wing, take advantage of Dabormida's isolation.
- 8:15 Albertone sends a message back to Baratieri urgently requesting reinforcements.
- 8:30 Albertone's brigade begins to fragment. Baratieri observes battle smoke from the top of Mount Eshasho.
- 9:00 Menelik II has kept his 25,000 Shoan reserves back from the fight at Abba Garima. Empress Taitu seizes the initiative and encourages Menelik to release them by sending out her own bodyguard (3,000 infantry and 600 cavalry) into the fight. Albertone is overwhelmed and then taken prisoner. His remaining *Askari* attempt to flee back towards the camp at Sauria.
- 9:15 Baratieri finally receives Albertone's message and moves forward with reserve brigade. He observes the retreating *Askari* from Albertone's Native brigade running down the valley to the right of his position. Unfortunately he does not notice that Ethiopian troops are also amongst them.
- 10:00 Dabormida's brigade encounters the Ethiopian left wing in the narrow valley of Miriam Shavitu. Meanwhile the northern spur of Mount Bellah has fallen to the Ethiopian centre, commanded by *Ras* Mashanga and *Ras* Mikail: Arimondi's brigade crumbled when his left flank was stormed. Arimondi is killed in ensuing battle.
- 11:30 Baratieri, on the southern side of Mount



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- Bellah, orders retreat. It almost immediately becomes a rout.
- 14:00 Dabormida realises his brigade is surrounded in the valley of Miriam Shavitu. He consults his brigade staff: *"It is a serious thing, a serious thing. No message, nor order, no reinforcements – nothing."*
- 15:00 Dabormida begins orderly retreat northwards.
- Late Afternoon Albertone's surviving *Askari* and remaining Italian soldiers from Baratieri and Arimondi's brigades retreat to Sauria and then to Adigat. Most don't stop until they reach the border.

4 March

A telegram from Baratieri describing the armies defeat in Ethiopia is published by the Italian government. Baratieri is made a scapegoat and tried before a military court in Asmara. He is acquitted but considered unfit for command.

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Plessy v. Ferguson

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537 (1896), was a landmark case in the jurisprudence of the United States, approving racial segregation in public facilities.

Table of contents

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Background

Plessy v. Ferguson is often incorrectly seen as *the* case that was chiefly responsible for segregation in the United States before 1964. In fact, it was not. The Supreme Court had previously ruled, in the *Civil Rights Cases*, 109 U.S. 3 (1883), that the Fourteenth Amendment did not apply to actions taken by "individuals" that abridged other citizens' rights, only to actions by the federal or state governments. The Court had also invalidated most of the Civil Rights Act of 1875, which had been an attempt by Radical Republicans in Congress to protect the civil rights of African Americans from infringement. This series of cases received much attention in both the black and white press and were, in fact, primarily responsible for the spread of segregation in the United States following Reconstruction, in the late 19th century.

The ruling in the case *Plessy v. Ferguson* is one of the most studied in U.S. Supreme Court history. It is often thought to be the case that formally established, on legal grounds, the policy of racial segregation in the United States. In actuality, it merely "went with the flow" of the tide towards separation of blacks and whites in the United States under the doctrine of "separate but equal."

The Case

In 1890, the State of Louisiana passed a law that required separate accommodations for blacks and whites on railroads, including separate railway cars. Concerned, several black and white citizens in New Orleans formed an association dedicated to the repeal of that law. They eventually persuaded Homer Plessy, an octoroon (someone of seven-eighths Caucasian descent and

one-eighth African descent), to test it. On June 7, 1892, Plessy purchased a first-class ticket on the East Louisiana Railway from New Orleans to Covington. The railroad company had been informed already as to Plessy's racial lineage, and after Plessy had taken a seat in the whites-only railway car, he was asked to vacate it and sit instead in the blacks-only car. Plessy refused and was arrested immediately.

Plessy was remanded for trial in Orleans Parish, despite his objections that the Louisiana law was in violation of the Constitution of the United States. He was convicted and sentenced to pay a \$25 fine.

Eventually the case made its way to the U.S. Supreme Court, where Plessy was represented by Albion Tourgée, a prominent lawyer of the day, and Samuel F. Phillips, while the defendant, Judge John Ferguson of the Louisiana court, was represented by Alexander Porter Morse.

Tourgée built his case upon violations of Plessy's rights under the Thirteenth Amendment, prohibiting slavery, and the Fourteenth Amendment, which guarantees the same rights to all citizens of the United States, and the equal protection of those rights, against the deprivation of life, liberty, or property without due process of law. Tourgee argued that the reputation of being a white man was "property," which, by the law, implied the inferiority of African-Americans as opposed to whites.

The Decision

Announced on 18 May 1896, the 7-1 decision, with one abstention, was in favor of the defendant, John H. Ferguson. Justice Henry B. Brown delivered the opinion of the court, while Justice **David J. Brewer** abstained, and Justice John Marshall Harlan made his famous dissent.

In essence, the court rejected Tourgée's argument based on the Thirteenth Amendment, seeing no way in which the Louisiana statute violated it. In addition, the majority of the Court did not see how the Louisiana law fostered any supposed inferiority of African-Americans, in violation of the Fourteenth Amendment, as opposed to merely separating them. The justices also ruled that, while the Court could find in favor of and actively promote political equality, it could do nothing to ensure social equality between the races. Moreover, it affirmed the rulings of the *Civil Rights Cases* and other preceding Supreme Court and lower court decisions.

Justice Harlan, himself a former Kentucky slaveholder, on the other hand, disagreed with the opinion of the majority. He opined that the U.S. Constitution is color-blind and should not make such distinctions based on race, and that such distinctions did, indeed, imply the inferiority of one race to the other. His words dripped with anger at the system that was, piece by piece, denying African-Americans the privileges and rights of citizenship to which the laws of the United States entitled them.

The case helped cement the legal foundation for the doctrine of "separate but

equal," which permitted separation of the races, but only as long as facilities for both races were of equal quality. The failure to provide African Americans with genuinely equal facilities and resources worsened in the years after the *Plessy* decision, thereby depriving African-Americans of their rights, particularly under the Fourteenth Amendment, as citizens of the United States, entitled to the same treatment as any other citizens.

In this sense, while *Plessy* is a highly significant and deservedly infamous U.S. Supreme Court case that enforced segregation and thus deprived African-Americans of their rights as citizens, it was not the primary reason for segregation, that having already been established as the law by the *Civil Rights Cases* and other contemporary events. Rather, *Plessy* merely ratified and continued the move towards segregation begun earlier. While the case received notice in both the black and white presses, the reports of the case were not viewed at the time as particularly significant, especially compared to the attention given to the *Civil Rights Cases* thirteen years earlier.

As to the case's immediate aftermath, in January 1897 Homer Plessy pled guilty to violating the Louisiana statute and paid the \$25 fine.

***Plessy* in the Twentieth Century**

This ruling was not eventually overturned by the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* 347 US 483 1954, as is commonly thought. *Plessy* dealt with accommodations in railway cars, not schools, and the Warren court ruled that in education separate schools are inherently unequal. However, the spirit of the Warren Court's decision in *Brown* was contrary to the reasons set forth by the Fuller Court justices in *Plessy* for their ruling.

Eventually, in the wake of the Civil Rights movement, *Plessy* was formally overturned by provisions outlawing racial discrimination in public accommodations in Title II of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. These laws did not directly challenge the previous decisions of the courts that the Reconstruction amendments did not authorize the federal government to pass these laws, but rather were passed on the basis of an expanded reading of the Commerce Clause of the United States constitution.

See also:

- List of United States Supreme Court Cases
- *Civil Rights Cases* 109 US 3 1886
- *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* 347 US 483 1954
- Civil Rights Act

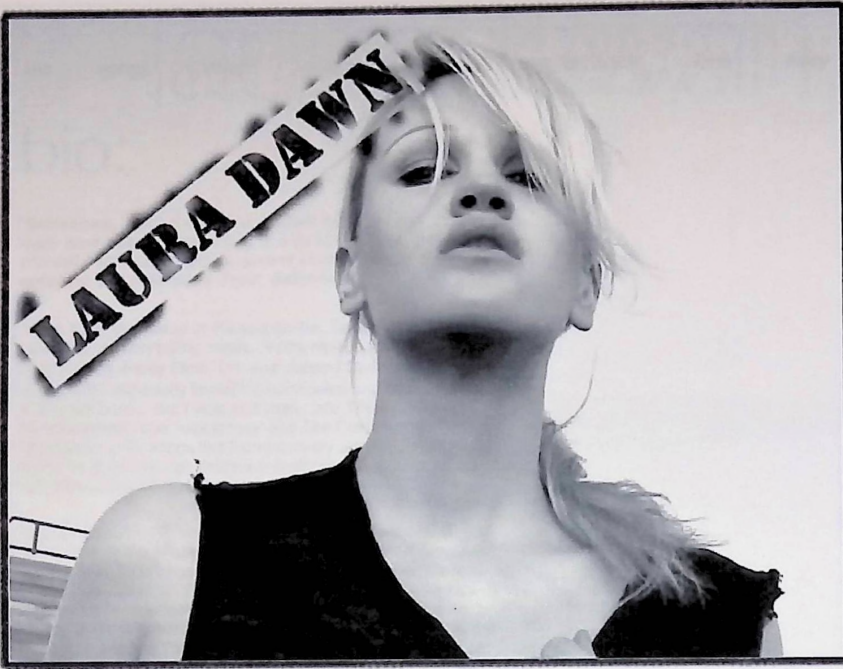
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bio:

"Sometimes, I think the juiciest, sexiest thing you can do is to really have belief in something, to submit to a force greater than yourself," says the singer/songwriter Laura Dawn, of her seductive and passionate debut, *Believer*.

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All she needed were some stories to tell. But Pleasantville just didn't provide the proper inspiration. At 21 years old, Laura Dawn packed her bags and moved to New York City. *Believer* is the soundtrack to her roller coaster life of the next few years. "I showed up in New York, straight from Iowa, with almost no money and not knowing a single soul. I started out living at the Lexington Avenue YMCA, and then graduated to a lower East Side squat on 13th St., where I was sleeping on a board on top of my suitcases. And within a couple of years, I'd become the singer in an all-girl art-punk band that ended up being a toast of the town for a while. We were going to all these decadent parties, drinking a lot, doing drugs for the first time. Hell, in Pleasantville, Iowa, the heaviest drug I'd ever seen was Budweiser! And now I'd gotten involved in this crazy scene. It was fun at first, but after a while, I really lost my way. I had to deal with some very intense personal trials—some serious heartbreak, a very close friend dying—and it just threw this life I was living into a new light. By the time that band broke up I felt so far away from the person I was when I came to New York in the first place, the one who wanted to be a real artist. So I just started writing, by myself, for the first time. I wrote so many songs, 50 or so. I had so many stories to tell from all those years of wrong turns and poverty and mayhem, trying to make it in New York City. And writing those songs saved me. I felt like I found myself again. I called my album *Believer* because I emerged with a faith that there had to be some purpose to my life, that there was some future ahead I couldn't possibly foresee that would explain everything."

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bio:

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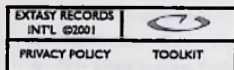
From the sexy punk edge of "Delicious," to the timeless, melancholy pop of "Useless in L.A.," to the innovative, gothic hard rock of the title track, *Believer* is an eclectic musical journey, brought together by Laura Dawn's consummate auteur songwriting and unique, infectious vocals. "People have told me

I sound like a cross between Kim Deal and Dusty Springfield," says Laura, of a voice that goes from a breathy purr to a soulful wail. The album's sonic landscape is rich and varied, fusing rock guitar, bass and drum sounds with ethereal effects, drum loops, and textural instruments like electric cello and piano.

"I was inspired, in part, by Moby's *Animal Rights*," says Laura. "I wanted to make a pop album that was extreme, that could go from the most beautiful, sparse love song to the most solid, traditional pop songwriting, and then on to the most pounding punk rock. In a way, it's kind of a woman's version of emo-core. We worked very hard to keep it intimate and real, yet when it came time to blow your head off-well, I think some tracks rock very, very hard."

Laura enlisted producer Ted Niceley (Fugazi, Shudder to Think, Girls Against Boys), and a varied group of musicians, including legendary Replacements bassist Tommy Stinson, drummers Josh Freese (A Perfect Circle, The Vandals), Kevin March (Shudder to Think, Dambuilders), and guitarist Richard Fortus (Psychedelic Furs, BT, Love Spit Love), to work on the LP. Laura also had the chance to work with Yoshiki (Extasy Records CEO and President and former leader of the legendary Japanese rock group, X-Japan), who produced his favorite track "I Would," the album's lead single (written by Laura and Linus of Hollywood).

"In the best of all possible worlds," says Laura, "people will hear this album and realize that a woman can be sexy, smart, funny, vulnerable, foolish and bad-ass - sometimes, all at once. The song "Believer" kind of says it all for me, in a way. Being a believer, keeping the faith that there's purpose to your life, is certainly a double-edged sword. Faith is sexy, it's silly, it's moving and real and elusive. But it can be dangerous and destructive if it's not tempered with some experience and wisdom. I guess the main thing I learned from all my adventures is that sometimes it's important to just keep going on, whether you can find a reason to or not. No matter what life throws you, you gotta stay a believer, you know? We need more of them."



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Join Laura Dawn's Street Team and help spread the love.

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Check out the Laura Dawn Listening Spot

NEWS

Laura Dawn's new video "Wasted" filmed in NYC, check out the reviews on glittergrrrls.com and Starstruck-mag.com

Rawtime.com from Austin, TX brings you great video of Laura Dawn. Check out the Real Video of The Old You and this Interview

Album in stores now!!

You can find "Believer" at Virgin Megastore, HMV, Best Buy, Sam Goody, Tower Records, and more, or buy it here

IN THE PRESS!

Check out these articles about Laura Dawn and her new album, "Believer"

- Ink19.com interview w/ Laura Dawn
- Read The Big Takeover review of "Believer."
- Ink19.com review of Believer.
- The Journal (VA) review "Believer" page 1 page 2
- Tour announcement from Pitch Weekly
- The Western Sun review of "Believer"
- This week in New York review of "Believer"
- Laura Dawn live show review
- Laura Dawn named one of 2002's "Daring Debuts" by Kyle Munson, DM Register Music Critic
- Spin magazine features Laura Dawn on the Hit List!
- www.glittergrrrls.com review of Believer
- Read this great album review from the Des Moines Register.
- Believer gets an A+ from The Gateway
- Generation 4 star review
- AOL review
- Popmatters.com review of "Believer"
- Read about Laura in Time Out NY HERE
- "Believer" reviewed in Drake University's Times-Delphic
- Windy City Times review of "Believer"
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- Here is a great review by Suite 101.com of Believer



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From the issue dated October 24, 2003

HOT TYPE

An Intellectual Superstar in France Gains an Audience in the U.S.

By SCOTT McLEEMEE

COGITO ERGO ZOOM: In the late 1990s, the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu published a scathing critique of public intellectuals who not only spoke in sound bites, but thought in them as well. It was such a noxious development that it could only be named in Franglais: Bourdieu called them "les fast-thinkers." He did not explicitly name **Bernard-Henri Lévy** as an example; but then, he didn't have to. The man widely known as BHL has been a fixture of French life for the past quarter century, commenting in newspapers and on talk shows about Marxism, ethics, cultural history, and current affairs.

The intellectual substance of BHL's work may be open to debate, but his status as a celebrity is not. His wife is a movie star. He looks marvelous on television. His books are all best sellers, and his haircut is a national monument. But BHL has never had much of an audience in the United States, until now.

In August, **Polity** issued a translation of BHL's *Sartre: The Philosopher of the Twentieth Century*, first published in France in 2000, on the 20th anniversary of the existentialist's death. Things went much faster for *Who Killed Daniel Pearl?* (**Melville House**), which electrified readers in France last

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spring with its thesis that the *Wall Street Journal* reporter was executed for discovering links between Al Qaeda and Pakistan's intelligence agency. When it appeared in English in September, it quickly became one of the top 20 books sold on Amazon.com. (By early October, it was ranked 669th, while the Sartre volume hovered in 10,498th place.)

The ease with which BHL shifts from analyzing Sartre's relationship to theoretical antihumanism to doing investigative journalism among Pakistani jihadists makes American public intellectuals look rather timid. "My position is an atypical one," says Mr. Lévy in a telephone interview from his estate in Marrakech, Morocco. "I am not a typical leftist or radical. I am not at all rightist, of course. I am not a typical philosopher or writer. I have a role that would seem strange to many. It would be very difficult to explain."

American reviewers have for the most part ignored BHL's study of Sartre. Those who have commented on it at all usually describe the work as a biography, which only proves that they have not read it. But Mr. Lévy himself says that the newly translated volumes are closely linked. "The book about Sartre," he says, "draws the theoretical aspect of things: What is an intellectual, what is his task, what is his role in global history? Pearl is a concrete actualization of the model." He writes of Mr. Pearl as someone "standing in solidarity with the downtrodden, detached and engaged ... who made it his duty, if needed, to think counter to himself." It is a passage with distinctly Sartrean overtones -- including an allusion to the philosopher's remark that he tried to "think against himself."

The American audience for Mr. Lévy's own

cogitation expanded considerably during a media blitz in September, thanks to the efforts of **Dennis Loy Johnson**, who started Melville House in early 2002. He published *Who Killed Daniel Pearl?* in an edition of 50,000 copies -- seven times the print run of anything the small literary press had published before. "It was a big roll of the dice," he says. Next spring, Melville House will issue an English translation of *Reflections on War, Evil, and the End of History*, a book of essays inspired by BHL's sojourns in what he calls "the theaters of forgotten wars," such as Afghanistan and Somalia.

In the course of his recent book tour, Mr. Lévy's English improved dramatically, says Mr. Johnson. "At the large media outlets," he says, "we found that there were a lot of people who already knew who he was, and just wanted to meet him." One prominent radio announcer flew to New York for an interview. "I thought, 'This is strange. Why doesn't he just do it by phone?'" recalls Mr. Johnson. "But I think that the reason is that his wife is French. He brought her along."

Besides his charisma, Mr. Lévy offers the interesting spectacle of a French intellectual who considers anti-Americanism a serious political problem. "We had a lot of invitations from universities for him to appear on panels on whether Europe and America are drifting apart," says Mr. Johnson. The author spoke at such an event in Washington, D.C., that was sponsored by the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

At his hotel, says Mr. Johnson, Mr. Lévy found himself in an elevator "surrounded by Pakistanis who were part of the contingent that had come over with

Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali," who happened to be staying there. It was an uncomfortable ride down, since Mr. Lévy's book has provoked much indignant discussion in Pakistan. "We changed hotels after that," says Mr. Johnson.

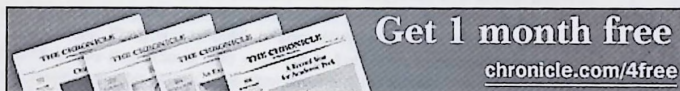
Now back home in Morocco, Mr. Lévy has moved on to a new project. "The last two books were 'traveling' books," he says; he spent much of the past two years in Africa and East Asia. "I promised my wife that my next book would be a 'sitting' book," he says, "a book in a chair. So it will be a work of philosophy."

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Section: Research & Publishing

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THE HUFFINGTON POST

DELIVERING NEWS AND OPINION SINCE MAY 9, 2005

June 2



Larry David

06.28.2005

The Roving Thoughts of a Liberal Insomniac

The other night I was awakened by my nine-year-old. I remained in the room with her for ten minutes, whereupon she fell back asleep. Unfortunately, I had no such luck. I did manage, however, to keep a record of my brain activity. I present it herewith, strictly in the interest of science.

I wonder how long I've been up. It feels like at least forty minutes. Maybe I should look at the time. No, don't look at the time. How's that gonna help? I'm just curious. Don't look. DO NOT LOOK...three-thirty. Are you happy? Idiot. I told you not to look but you know everything...I can't stand this quilt. The comforter inside always slips down. I'm grabbing at nothing here! I haven't had a good quilt in a long time. Where'd this quilt come from anyway? Tomorrow I'll mention the quilt. She's not gonna like that. She'll say there's nothing wrong with the quilt and that'll be that. It's sad I can't have a quilt I rove...Rove, damn it, that's the second time today I've done that. God, I hate that man. See, this is what he wants. He wants to get in your head. He wants to keep you up. You're giving him what he wants! If he keeps us all up, we'll be too tired to fight them. That's their strategy, and you're playing right into their hands. We have to start keeping them up. But how? The only things that bothers them enough to keep them up are fetuses. They love that fetus. The fetus and Jesus. Sounds like a comedy team. "Ladies and gentlemen, give a warm welcome to Fetus and Jesus..." Stop thinking about them. I can't. Try! ...Okay, I'm going to think of something else. How about that juicy nectarine I had today. Yum-my. That was dee-licious. The problem is fruit is so inconsistent. When you get a good one, it's all luck. Fruit is like blackjack. The casino wins most of the time. But at least the casino's not fixed. I trust the slot machines in Vegas more than the voting machines in Ohio. Even sleazy casino owners in Vegas have more credibility than this bunch...I have to stop killing insects in front of the kids. Am I setting a bad example? What's my option? Am I supposed to start ignoring flies and ants and let them wander around like they own the place? I guess liberals aren't supposed to kill insects. See, Rove? I kill them and I rather enjoy it. Maybe you want to sign me up. I like how if you criticize the war you don't support the troops. You're the ones sending them over to die, so how is it I don't support them? If the army was made up of child molesters, then I'd support them. If we went to an all child molester army, I would be their biggest supporter. "Please don't bring the troops home. Stay the course. Keep them there a long time." But they're not child molesters. And they're not the Twins, that's for sure. Where are the Twins? Send in the Twins. I'd like to hear that scene. "Jenna, Barbara...Daddy and I have talked it over and we want you to go fight in Iraq." ...Ah, what's the use? Now I'm all revved up. This is what Rove wants. You're playing right into his hands. Should I take a sleeping pill? Is that a slippery slope? It seems there are a lot more slippery slopes now than there used to be. Now everything's a slippery slope...It's so hot in here. I have to turn the pillow over. Why's it so much cooler on this side? I don't get that. I would think it would be a little cooler, but not this much cooler. No matter how hot it is, the bottom of the pillow still stays cool. One day I'd like to ask a scientist about that. Of course, I never really get to meet any scientists. You'd think I'd run into a scientist at some point. I like how they keep saying the science isn't in on global warming. They just don't know. No proof. But, of course, it's in on God. Lots of proof on that. Tons of empirical evidence. They got God's DNA. And Moses parted the Red Sea. He said, "Open sea," and it opened. And Jesus walked on water. Those are some tricks. People must have been after Moses to do it again until he finally got sick of them and lost his temper. "No, I'm not parting it again, now leave me alone." "C'mon Moses, please?" "I said no, now get the hell outta here!" You'd think anyone who

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believes this stuff would be so embarrassed they'd keep it to themselves. But those maniacs shout it from the rooftops and they're running our country. God talks to Bush all the time. I don't care if you're President, if you say God talks to you, you're a schizophrenic and a menace to society. You should be on drugs in a mental institution, like the Son of Sam. What's the difference between God or a dog talking to you? It's still a voice in your head. That means you're certifiably fucking crazy! ... Look what they're doing to me. Take a deep breath. That's good. Listen to your breathing. That's a meditation technique. Clears your mind. There's a breath, that's good. There's another breath. I guess the science isn't in on evolution either...No, come on, breathe. There's a breath. Of course the planet's only 5000 years old. Breathe, prick, breathe. What about the fucking dinosaurs?! We have the bones. They know how old the bones are! The sad thing is these nuts who founded this country fled Europe because of religious persecution. Good trade for Europe. Breathe. You have to breathe. This is what they want. I'm so thirsty. I've got to start drinking more water. It's so hard to drink, though, if you're not thirsty. You don't eat when you're not hungry. Hey, that's a good point. You actually made a good point. See, you're not stupid. "You don't eat when you're not hungry." I like that. I've gotta try to work that into a conversation. That'll raise a few eyebrows... I'm so cramped here. Look how far over she is. She's on my side. She's way past the middle. Hey, move! MOVE! I need my space, man...If they hate Hollywood so much, maybe they should just start making their own movies and TV shows. In fact, we should just split into two different countries. Then, after our stem cell research gives us the cure for all these diseases, they'll all be trying to get across the border for our medicine, but our minutemen won't let them. And we'll have a lot of minutemen. I think I'll be a minuteman. "Sorry, but our scientists worked very hard to come up with a cure for Parkinson's and there's only enough medicine for our people. So beat it." ...Time to turn the pillow again. No, it's too soon. It's not cold enough. Let's just see. No. Turn it. No. I'm turning it. Okay, go ahead...There. It's not cold enough. Are you happy? ...Well there's only one way I can get to sleep now. It always works. Sure, wake her up. That's just what every Jewish woman wants. Sex in the middle of the night. Go ahead. This I want to see.

"Honey."

"What. What do you want?"

"I can't fall back asleep."

"So why are you waking me up?"

"There's only one thing that'll do it."

"Are you crazy? Why can't you sleep?"

"You know..."

"Because of them?"

"Yeah."

"Come here, honey."

Thanks again, Karl. Keep up the good work.

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event." I said blogging is about linking. In this case it was linking people to the past when they needed it for an assignment in the present.

- Bill O'Reilly and the Paranoid Style in News. (PressThink: October 21, 2003)

One day I found that a famous essay Mailer would know--Richard Hofstadter's *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* (1964)--was online. ("I call it the paranoid style simply because no other word adequately evokes the sense of heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy that I have in mind.") I think this is one of the best short essays ever written about American political life, and so I used it to interpret the style of televised resentment in the performance of Fox's Bill O'Reilly. Mainly I was trying to reach those who might click the link and delve into Hofstadter's ideas from 40 years earlier. The whole post was about the link, which still works. Today if you put the words "Bill O'Reilly" and "paranoid" into Google, this post usually comes up first. (There's the import of being permanent.)

Now through the good offices of the Huffington Post, our common table, I have for Mailer a friendly and practical suggestion. One more time, he should get credentials and do some reporting. I mean White House reporting for the Post. Bloggers do that, you know. And they ask questions others would not.

I suggest it not because the big story of our time comes from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, and Mailer's the man to interpret it for us. No. But if he wants to volunteer for something, don't pick amateur spook. Don't be a Tom Clancy. Don't do two-minutes of paranoia. And no more of this, please.

Say the word and I'm sure Arianna's team will get you a day pass to the White House press room. Go to some briefings, use your eyes and ears, scribble in your notebook, and--linking to the transcripts at whitehouse.gov--tell readers of her blog what you see, and hear, and what happens to you, Mailer, writer with puzzle. Get inside the heads of the participants, including the reporters asking questions they know will not be answered. (On principle, as it were.)

Scott McClellan at the White House podium: who really has a language adequate to *that* event? In rendering things steadily more opaque by talking about them with the reporters, McClellan will often say to the press, "The President has been very clear..." Which is funny, except that he has no sense of humor. (Unlike Ari Fleischer, who gave you a wink.)

If you actually try to listen to McClellan explain something, you almost always know less *after* his answer than you did before he began talking. This type of talent (subtractive) is rarely examined because the normal reaction to it is immediate frustration. A proper job description for McClellan would include: "making George W. Bush less legible." And that is something Mailer might, by blogging from the White House, manfully try to reveal.

Manque means: *unfilled or frustrated in realizing an ambition*. Don't be a blogger manqué, Norman Mailer. Do something you do well, journalism with an interior life, and do differently than other correspondents: describe, describe, describe on the big canvas you got from wanting to be a big novelist.

Finally, I admit my purposes are sentimental, and not entirely realistic. Mailer's first two tries at the Huffington Post I choose to call practice swings. Mailer the blogger has not yet appeared with a bat in his hand. Of course he was correct in 2002: writing seriously for the Internet (and learning to think with a link) "would use up what I have left."

I can think of worse ways for him to go.

MaxSpeak
Media Matters
Memeorandum
Metafilter
Micah L. Sifry
MyDD
Mystery Poister
News Hounds
Noam Scheiber
Obsidian Wins
Oliver Willis: Like Kryptonite To Stupid
OpTruth Blog
Orcinus
Outside the Beltway
Pandagon
Peek
Plastic
Political Animal
Popgadget
PowerLine Blog
Ragged Thots
RedStats.org
Roger L. Simon
Romenesko
SCOTUS Blog
shirky.com
Sirotablog
Slashdot
Stay Free Magazine
Stephen Elliot
stevenberlinjohnson.
Teagan Goddard's
Politics! Wire
Talking Points Memo
TalkLeft
TAPPED
The Becker-Posner B
The Bleat
The Blogging of the President
The Corner
the Decembrist
The Moderate Voice
The Mudville Gazette
The Talent Show
The Volokh Conspiracy
The Washington Note
Think Progress
This Modern World
Tim Blair

Posted by: Martin Breau at June 28, 2005 10:36 AM

Larry-
Pure genius.

Posted by: reyonthehill at June 28, 2005 10:58 AM

I (heart) Larry David. Whatever happened to "Curb Your Enthusiasm"?

Posted by: nicky at June 28, 2005 11:08 AM

Maybe this is why I love Curb. Larry David is a genius and this proves it. My only advice to Mr. David is that Karl isn't worth losing any sleep over.

Posted by: brsb78 at June 28, 2005 11:13 AM

I love Larry David. I miss "Curb Your Enthusiasm."

Posted by: nicky at June 28, 2005 11:19 AM

Larry,

Whichever God is real, if any, I thank him for you! And when the hell is Curb coming back?

Posted by: Michael Groetken at June 28, 2005 11:56 AM

Mr. David, as a fetus loving, embryonic stem cell skeptic, Jesus loving, red state voter (living in a deep blue city), I still found your post funny enough to make me laugh out loud at work. Thanks, MZ

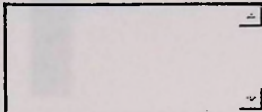
Posted by: Mark Alan Zelden at June 28, 2005 12:07 PM

Come on Larry...God won't let you sleep until you believe in Jesus...then you can do whatever you want...please...this is America...you want some advice on how to get a good night's rest?...buy a yellow ribbon, adopt an abandoned fetus, and develop a seething hatred of science and homosexuality...only then you can sleep soundly on the side of the righteous...

Posted by: I Heart Oprah at June 28, 2005 12:28 PM

I gotta say I am a big fan of Larry David, I bet we would be best friends, two Jews complaining about everything, but what gives? I mean, ok fine be a liberal, thats the hollywood way, and yes his story was funny, but we can't actually believe that crap? At least not all of it. Was Ohio rigged? No, enough already, the country voted for Bush and Bush won. He got tons more votes then Clinton ever did. Lets stick to facts and not black helicopters

UM Dispatch
Vodkapundit
War and Piece
Warblogging
Winds of Change
Wonkette



Send

Comments

Right on Larry!

Posted by: Ranando at June 28, 2005 09:42 AM

Too funny. What, does the thought of Condi give you nightmares?

On another note, that "Fuck Hugh" line is still getting a lot of mileage with my wife and I. Uncle Miltie lives.

Posted by: Steve Rogers at June 28, 2005 09:42 AM

LMAO! Larry your hilarious.

Posted by: The Oklatexan at June 28, 2005 09:44 AM

Uh Larry, if I've heard them correctly the earth is 6002 years old, not 5,000.

See, it all makes sense now.

Posted by: allan at June 28, 2005 10:13 AM

I am profoundly disappointed. I want to be careful to not sound like a idiotic zealot of some kind, but I have suffered a loss today. I like Larry David. I think he's a comic genius; a belief that was only strenghtened when I recently purchased the first season of Curb on DVD. Its hilarious. But as of today, I'm through with Larry. I think I may even reluctantly throw away the DVDs. I can't imagine that someone's life has been so starved for hope that they can't accept that God cares about having relationships with people. When you label someone a lunatic because they claim to communicate with God, you're too far gone for me. I know you don't care about my opinion, and truthfully I'm not one to share it that often in such forums, but I had to do so today. If for no other reason, to allow my own self to vent over the loss of someone I admired. I'm sorry you don't understand anything about God, I take partial responsibility for that. Sincerely.

Posted by: Shane Speers at June 28, 2005 10:17 AM

I have to be Larry David's biggest fan, and I was in terminal withdrawal, waiting for the return of Curb your Enthusiasm. This is so funny, I am now good to go for awhile longer. Arianna, you could charge for posts like this! Larry, you are the greatest!

MaxSpeak
Media Matters
Merneorandum
Metafilter
Micah L. Sifry
MyDD
Mystery Pollster
News Hounds
Noam Schreiber
Obsidian Wings
Oliver Willis: Like
Kryptonite To Stupi
OpTruth Blog
Orcinus
Outsida the Beltwa
Pandagon
Peek
Plastic
Political Animal
Popgadget
PowerLine Blog
Ragged Thots
RedState.org
Roger L. Simon
Romenesko
SCOTUS Blog
shirky.com
Sirotabloq
Slashdot
Stay Free Magazine
Stephen Elliott
stevenberlinjohnson
Taegan Goddard's
Political Wire
Talking Points Mem
TalkLeft
TAPPED
The Becker-Posner
The Bleat
The Blogging of the
President
The Corner
the Decambrist
The Moderate Voice
The Mudville Gazett
The Talent Show
The Volokh Conspir
The Washington Me
Think Progress
This Modern World
Tim Blair

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**While reporter sits in jail,
hubby sets sail**

L **BY LLOYD GROVE** **W D O W N**

Famed editor **Jason Epstein**, husband of jailed New York Times reporter **Judith Miller**, has lately been making himself scarce at the federal facility in Virginia where his wife has been incarcerated for the past three weeks.

Miller has been married to Epstein - who was the longtime editorial director at Random House and a founder of the New York Review of Books - since 1993. She chose contempt of court and imprisonment over revealing her sources to the independent counsel in the CIA-Karl Rove-Robert Novak leak brouhaha.

And Epstein's choice?

In a frothy social column yesterday about a celeb-glutted Mediterranean cruise, featuring everyone from Isabella Rossellini to **J.K. Rowling** aboard the ocean liner Silver Shadow, the New York Sun's A.L. Gordon revealed:

"One passenger with his mind soberly on home is the literary icon Jason Epstein. ... Ms. Miller would have been on the cruise had she not gone to jail."

His wife's in the slammer and he cruises the Med?

"We all serve our time in our own way," quipped Miller's attorney **Robert Bennett**.

My pal Christopher Buckley, comic novelist and editor of Forbes FYI,

imagined what Epstein might have said to Miller prior to his departure.

"Darling, I'm sure it's not going to be a very *nice* cruise. I hear they don't even have beluga caviar, just a slightly inferior grade of osetra, and I'm sure the Champagne will be, well, not too warm exactly, but probably not as chilled as I normally like it. And I'm sure people will get seasick and there won't be anyone interesting to talk to, nor any beautiful unattached women.

"Darling, I wouldn't be able to enjoy myself even if it *were* a nice cruise. While I'm dining on foie gras, I will be thinking only of you, sitting behind bars in 110-degree heat, eating baloney and being brutalized by prison matrons."

Epstein, said to be somewhere in Spain, couldn't be reached yesterday.

But for the record, Bennett told me that Epstein "was very reluctant to go, but Judy wanted him to go very much. She insisted he go, because there was nothing he could do for her during that period of time."

Rockers get one Lollapalooza of a welcome

Organizers of last weekend's Lollapalooza music festival got a rude surprise when they checked into Chicago's W Hotel.

Sitting in every room was a complimentary copy of Giant magazine, featuring the article "Lollapathetic," which trashed the festival's co-founder, **Perry Farrell**, accusing him of turning the famed rock tour into a crassly commercial cash cow.

The piece quoted bass player **Lou Barlow** of Dinosaur Jr. - which performed with **the Killers**, **Arcade Fire** and **Ben Kweller** - as grouching: "Perry had this idealistic vision, but everything became designed to take kids by their ankles and shake all the cash out of their baggy jeans."

Yesterday, Lollapalooza marketing guru and surfing icon **Jonathan Paskowitz** told Lowdown: "The whole hotel is full of people who have supported Lollapalooza, and this is put in their hotel room to welcome them to Chicago? It was like a kick to the [testicles] on a personal level. ... The last thing Perry wants to do is rape the music consumer."

Paskowitz demanded that hotel management promptly remove the magazine - which has a distribution deal with the hotel chain - and then complained to Giant's president and publisher, **Jamie Hooper**.

Yesterday Hooper told Lowdown: "I invited him to write a rebuttal. I want to hear his side of it."

The briefing

CHAD & SOPHIA ON THE ROCKS? Is the honeymoon already over for "One Tree Hill" stars **Chad Michael Murray** and **Sophia Bush**, who

said "I do" just three months ago? A Lowdown spy reports: "The marriage is all but done. They are separated, and she is going to file for divorce imminently." Rumors have been swirling about Murray's allegedly naughty behavior in L.A. while the missus was out of town filming "Stay Alive," a teen horror flick. Reps for the couple did not respond to detailed messages by deadline yesterday.

SEAN & SIENNA? Lowdown hears that before **Sienna Miller** was two-timed by fiancé Jude Law, she'd planned to do a movie with **Sean Penn**, who happens to co-star with her caddish beau in "All the King's Men."

Now it's unclear if the project is still a go. Yesterday, Penn's rep said, "There is no truth to this as far as I or his agent are aware."

But a flack for Miller left an opening or two: "That's not confirmed. It's just a rumor. She's in the theater [playing Celia in the London production of "As You Like It"] till the end of September."

With Hudson Morgan

Originally published on July 26, 2005

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Kathrin Perutz

LEFT

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suitcase insulting these days, he decides. Nor does she offer to drive him in her car to the station which is, after all, only a few feet away and probably more accessible on foot. They wave goodbye as she goes to her Mercedes, without having to go through the awkward business of shaking hands or even embracing. He calls out quite sincerely what a pleasure it was to talk to her. He walks off alone carrying his suitcase filled with books. He finds he is already swaying a little back and forth from the movement of the ferry which he has hardly noticed during the trip, and he sways even more when he hears his friend has won the prize.

Kathrin Perutz

Excerpt from *The Woman Upstairs*

Gala

There's always a story, the ones we choose to tell and those we don't. Among the latter we have a selection of moments, anecdotes, secrets that help convince us we're "interesting" because we felt passion of some sort or we happened to be in a certain place when something memorable occurred, or because we met famous people or had a few wild

nights. It's the photo-op sense of "interesting."

And then there are the other stories we don't tell because they hurt too much or because we've buried them so deep we don't notice their existence except in our migraines and shortness of breath, in cancer (my mother said it was "psychological," the multiple myeloma that spread through her marrow) and all the hundreds of little balancing acts we do to make sure attention is paid and not-paid, that people show their concern but don't look where we don't want them to.

I have tried for many years not to tell my story. Who knows and who cares has become my mantra. Why should I waste my time (my time? What could that be?) writing down that I was born in the town of blah-blah, in the year blah-blah-blah, of these particular people, and I did x, y, z until so-and-so came along, and then maybe I shifted gears a little, a lot, or not at all; and after that there are children, grandchildren, and somewhere in the piece the requisite death-and-resurrection theme and then inevitably, the notes on my Sickness, bringing the reader along to the new youngish doctor and his experimental ways with cancer. There it is: the novel, the memoir, the attempt at justifying what is completely without cause, meaning or direction, except for the descent.

My mother's name was Gala (pronounced with a soft "a," as in Allah), not the name she was given at birth but one she adopted, ridding herself of the stodgy Germanic syllables of her parents' choosing (Gustavina) by the time she first went to school,

when she was fourteen. Before then, she'd been tutored at home, English governess, French teacher, the tennis coach and the others who saw to it that Gala would acquire all the charming skills and studies considered suitable to a girl like her. After Hitler came and they found their way to America, my parents bought a house in Queens, a place name appropriate for Gala, though not at all a place to her liking (how could it be?) and there I was born.

"You see here?" She would point to the wound inflicted on her neck when I had lurched unexpectedly in the womb, thereby upsetting the tray she was carrying and causing a piece of glass to cut her. The scar was small, deep rose in color and vaguely in the shape of a "y" or a delta. "You did this," she would always add, at the different times or stages in my life when she brought it up. There are people who can go through the worst of tortures, through war, the death of their children, solitary confinement in prison, and come out obsessing about a scratch on the skin. This, too, is a way of telling a story.

"You did this to me in my belly. Cut my neck." Gala's English was tenuous, despite the governess. She mistrusted words in all languages and tried to wrest them into meanings and shapes of her own. She was, as it happened, an excellent sculptor, forming animals out of her imagination to signify more than she could put into words. She spoke four languages by the age of seven, but she lived in America, in English, and it grated on her, the strangeness, the preponderance of long vowels, the refusal of Americans to understand words other than their own. She resisted the absoluteness of Word as

Fact, a word as the encapsulation of one particular event and no other. Gala's own vocabulary was diffuse and scattershot. "Neck," for instance, was a synonym for "throat," as "head" was for "hat," and "New York" for "America." She was self-conscious about her accent and didn't like speaking to officials or functionaries. She wouldn't come to my school for any reason whatever, not for P.T.A. meetings of course, and also not to meet my teachers or for conferences on my schoolwork, which thankfully was good enough not to need much alteration.

Mainly, she was not the sort of person who would attend anything that had to do with the upbringing of children or the training of servants. She was an artist. In Prague, her only paying job had been a kind of debutante position at the haute couture house of Rosenbaum. And when she came to America she designed handbags for a short while. Then I was born, we lived in Queens – first in Forest Hills, near the tennis courts – and by the time we moved to Kew Gardens, when I was almost three, she had a studio of her own, up in the attic.

She began with painting, which would turn out not to be her medium. The paintings were too conscious in a way, too much of an attempt to find meaning on canvas. Her drawings, by contrast, were light and full of animation, the fly-away charcoal attached firmly to the paper by fixative she blew onto the finished sheet through a thin golden rod she held between her lips like a cigarette, leaving the imprint of her coral lipstick behind. Her watercolors showed a lightness of spirit that revealed her definite talent and a lack of inhibition. In painting she was held back, I think, by the heaviness of the

oils, by a sense of the long history of European painting, by the weightiness of it. Later she would turn to graphics and eventually to sculpture and in both of these found expression for her particular genius in the inventions of animal forms, part observation, part dream, that would make up figures in the bestiary of her feelings, animals in place of words: a two-headed turtle (of two minds, no doubt); a shy little creature called Nobody, the Fowl Owl, a Lamb of God covered by a shaggy coat, his head hanging down. She did a series of color lithos of owls, the animal she appropriated as a symbol of herself. Many of them had double heads, one on top of the other or the two side by side. The owl was wise, gray-eyed Athena's bird, but Gala claimed it for other reasons. Partly it was that her eyes had a tendency to puff up during the night (particularly in sleeping cars), and she would refer to herself in the morning as "*eine Eule*," partly also, I believe, it was that the owl comes to life at night when there is no one to observe it. And too, she admired the owl's ability to turn its head all the way around and see what was behind her.

But this work would come later. In Kew Gardens in the forties, she painted. Upstairs, in her Provencal-yellow smock, her thick auburn hair hidden by a kerchief, her profile pure as Nefertiti's, her strong hands professionally manicured with pale half-moons at the base of gleaming coral nails, she worked all morning, frowning, stepping back, removing the Chesterfield from between her lips when it came close to the end and stamping it to death in an ashtray. A few crumbs of tobacco would adhere to her lower lip, and she removed them with

the tip of her tongue first, securing the flecks until she could pick them off with the tweezers formed of her thumb and forefinger, flicking them to the air. The smells of turpentine, oils, fixative and cigarettes (and sometimes a trace of "Femme" that she'd not washed off from the night before) marked the room as so territorially hers that no sign was needed to keep us out.

She was not like other mothers, and I adored her in so many ways there may not have been room left for anyone else. Of course I fought her and hated her, and grew up in spite of her, out of sympathy as much as I was hopelessly implicated with, in and by her, often unable to tell the difference between us. *Ich bin dich/Und du bist mich* was the first poem I composed in my life, according to her. I was three and the grammar is bad. It means I am you and you are me.

The symbiotic love poem. A preview of my dreams at sixty.

She worked in her studio, the front room of the attic, overlooking our block. The attic held three other rooms, all tiny. In the back, a bedroom faced the yard, flowerbeds, bushes, my sand box and little log cabin from Macy's. The roof sloped so steeply that even at three I couldn't stand up at the sides. In that room old women would stay for periods of uncertain length, the European refugees who were perhaps Gala's age but seemed ancient, old women dressed in blacks and grays like my grandmother, German-speaking and grateful to the point of cringing. To me their apologetic stance seemed natural, given the constrictions of space in the little room. I don't remember them as individuals, and

probably they stayed with us when they first arrived in America, before their own relatives or talents could place them somewhere else. Gala, who was willing enough to share her space and food with them, did not want them cluttering up her salon. She assigned them the job of looking after me to explain their position in the household, though I remember them being as reluctant to enter into that relationship as I was. Uninteresting, Gala called them. She liked people to be talented, glamorous, *mondaine*. Good was irrelevant. She had contempt for people who were known for having "a good heart." Especially women. She referred to all women as "females."

After the war the old ladies were gone and her youngest brother, Rudy, sometimes stayed up there. He had come to America with my father's help at the outbreak of the war, on a student visa. He then joined the Navy, which speeded up his naturalization, and became a radar man in the Pacific. He came home to us in Kew Gardens wearing a pea jacket, the real thing, which Gala immediately claimed. On her it looked *echt* Chanel, long and lean and a bit risqué, her hair pulled in an upsweep, the navy blue of the sturdy wool contending with the peppery auburn. She was built like a boy, the opposite of me: her shoulders were broad, her hips narrow, the kind of figure that never ages. The side rooms of the attic were for storage, one of them not much bigger than a crawl space. The other, facing the side of the house onto our neighbor Mr. Styne's property, held steamer trunks from the S.S. Normandy, on which they'd sailed to America, and which thereafter housed the summer

clothes in winter, the winter clothes in summer. There were also cartons and bales containing letters and books, photos and news clippings, whatever they salvaged and brought along, the leftovers of Central and Hapsburg Europe. It is the room that inevitably comes to mind whenever I hear about a hanging. Teenage suicides in Westchester (a fad in the 70's or 80's), political hangings, a friend's father, even the hangings in literature: I picture the rafters of the side room in the attic and see the lifeless body swinging there.

The forties was a time of death, families wiped out, the heart of Europe left bleeding. But it wasn't that, not anything grandiose. I think it had more to do with a woman, or female, as Gala would have called her, someone I learned about comparatively recently, whose existence, or the end of it, probably changed the course of my life. Certainly it must have influenced me in those years, growing up in Kew Gardens, unaware and complicit.

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Eva Kollisch

Stealing

"Fev" is the name the old woman uses when she talks to herself as a child. Fev had been her



~~3/4-55-60~~
~~1-10~~

1

FROM THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION JOURNAL 2 SEPT 2002

The president's real goal in Iraq

By Error Bookmark not defined.

The official story on Iraq has never made sense. The connection that the Bush administration has tried to draw between Iraq and al-Qaida has always seemed contrived and artificial. In fact, it was hard to believe that smart people in the Bush administration would start a major war based on such flimsy evidence.

by Jay Bookman

Bookman
is
the deputy
editorial
page
editor
of The
Atlanta
Journal-
Constitutio
n

The pieces just didn't fit. Something else had to be going on; something was missing.

In recent days, those missing pieces have finally begun to fall into place. As it turns out, this is not really about Iraq. It is not about weapons of mass destruction, or terrorism, or Saddam, or U.N. resolutions.

This war, should it come, is intended to mark the official emergence of the United States as a full-fledged global empire, seizing sole responsibility and authority as planetary policeman.

It would be the culmination of a plan 10 years or more in the making, carried out by those who believe the United States must seize the opportunity for global domination, even if it means becoming the "American imperialists" that our enemies always claimed we were.

Once that is understood, other mysteries solve themselves. For example, why does the administration seem unconcerned about an exit strategy from Iraq once Saddam is toppled?

Because we won't be leaving. Having conquered Iraq, the United States will create permanent military bases in that country from which to dominate the Middle East, including neighboring Iran.

In an interview Friday, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld brushed aside that suggestion, noting that the United States does not covet other nations' territory. That may be true, but 57 years after World War II ended, we still have major bases in Germany and Japan. We will do the same in Iraq.

And why has the administration dismissed the option of containing and deterring Iraq, as we had the Soviet Union for 45 years? Because even if it worked, containment and deterrence would not allow the expansion of American power. Besides, they are beneath us as an empire. Rome did not stoop to containment; it conquered. And so should we.

Among the architects of this would-be American Empire are a group of brilliant and powerful people who now hold key positions in the Bush administration: They envision the creation and enforcement of what they call a worldwide "Pax Americana," or American peace. But so far, the American people have not appreciated the true extent of that ambition.

Part of it's laid out in the National Security Strategy, a document in which each administration outlines its approach to defending the country. The Bush administration plan, released Sept. 20, marks a significant departure from previous approaches, a change that it attributes largely to the attacks of Sept. 11.

To address the terrorism threat, the president's report lays out a newly aggressive military and foreign policy, embracing pre-emptive attack against perceived enemies. It speaks in blunt terms of what it calls "American internationalism," of ignoring international opinion if that suits U.S. interests. "The best defense is a good offense," the document asserts.

It dismisses deterrence as a Cold War relic and instead talks of "convincing or compelling states to accept their sovereign responsibilities."

"Rebuilding America's Defenses,"

a 2000 report by the Project for the New American Century, listed 27 people as having attended meetings or contributed papers in preparation of the report. Among them are six who have since assumed key defense and foreign policy positions in the Bush administration. And the report seems to have become a blueprint for Bush's foreign and defense policy.

Paul Wolfowitz

Political science doctorate from University of Chicago and dean of the international relations program at Johns Hopkins University during the 1990s. Served in the Reagan State Department, moved to the Pentagon during the first Bush administration as undersecretary of defense for policy. Sworn in as deputy defense secretary in March 2001.

John Bolton

Yale Law grad who worked in the Reagan administration as an assistant attorney general. Switched to the State Department in the first Bush administration as assistant secretary for international organization affairs. Sworn in as undersecretary of state for arms control and international security May 2001.

Elliot Cohen

Harvard doctorate in government who taught at Harvard and at the Naval War College. Now directs strategic studies at Johns Hopkins and is the author of several books on military strategy. Was on the

In essence, it lays out a plan for permanent U.S. military and economic domination of every region on the globe, unfettered by international treaty or concern. And to make that plan a reality, it envisions a stark expansion of our global military presence.

"The United States will require bases and stations within and beyond Western Europe and Northeast Asia," the document warns, "as well as temporary access arrangements for the long-distance deployment of U.S. troops."

The report's repeated references to terrorism are misleading, however, because the approach of the new National Security Strategy was clearly not inspired by the events of Sept. 11. They can be found in much the same language in a report issued in September 2000 by the Project for the New American Century, a group of conservative interventionists outraged by the thought that the United States might be forfeiting its chance at a global empire.

"At no time in history has the international security order been as conducive to American interests and ideals," the report said, stated two years ago. "The challenge of this coming century is to preserve and enhance this 'American peace.'"

Familiar themes

Overall, that 2000 report reads like a blueprint for current Bush defense policy. Most of what it advocates, the Bush administration has tried to accomplish. For example, the project report urged the repudiation of the anti-ballistic missile treaty and a commitment to a global missile defense system. The administration has taken that course.

It recommended that to project sufficient power worldwide to enforce Pax Americana, the United States would have to increase defense spending from 3 percent of gross domestic product to as much as 3.8 percent. For next year, the Bush administration has requested a defense budget of \$379 billion, almost exactly 3.8 percent of GDP.

It advocates the "transformation" of the U.S. military to meet its expanded obligations, including the cancellation of such outmoded defense programs as the Crusader artillery system. That's exactly the message being preached by Rumsfeld and others.

It urges the development of small nuclear warheads "required in targeting the very deep, underground hardened bunkers that are being built by many of our potential adversaries." This year the GOP-led U.S. House gave the Pentagon the green light to develop such a weapon, called the Robust Nuclear Earth Penetrator, while the Senate has so far balked.

That close tracking of recommendation with current policy is hardly surprising, given the current positions of the people who contributed to the 2000 report.

Paul Wolfowitz is now deputy defense secretary. John Bolton is undersecretary of state. Stephen Cambone is head of the Pentagon's Office of Program, Analysis and Evaluation. Eliot Cohen and Devon Cross are members of the Defense Policy Board, which advises Rumsfeld. I. Lewis Libby is chief of staff to Vice President Dick Cheney. Dov Zakheim is comptroller for the Defense Department.

'Constabulary duties'

Because they were still just private citizens in 2000, the authors of the project report could be more frank and less diplomatic than they were in drafting the National Security Strategy. Back in 2000, they clearly identified Iran, Iraq and North Korea as primary short-term targets, well before President Bush tagged them as the Axis of Evil. In their report, they criticize the fact that in war planning against North Korea and Iraq, "past Pentagon wargames have given little or no consideration to the force requirements necessary not only to defeat an attack but to remove these regimes from power."

To preserve the Pax Americana, the report says U.S. forces will be required to perform "constabulary duties" -- the United States acting as policeman of the world -- and says that such actions "demand American political leadership rather than that of the United Nations."

To meet those responsibilities, and to ensure that no country dares to challenge the United States, the report advocates a much larger military presence spread over more of the globe, in addition to the roughly 130 nations in which U.S. troops are already deployed.

More specifically, they argue that we need permanent military bases in the Middle East, in Southeast Europe, in Latin America and in Southeast Asia, where no such bases now exist. That helps to explain another of the mysteries of our post-Sept. 11 reaction, in which the Bush administration rushed to install

U.S. troops in Georgia and the Philippines, as well as our eagerness to send military advisers to assist in the civil war in Colombia.

The 2000 report directly acknowledges its debt to a still earlier document, drafted in 1992 by the Defense Department. That document had also envisioned the United States as a colossus astride the world, imposing its will and keeping world peace through military and economic power. When leaked in final draft form, however, the proposal drew so much criticism that it was hastily withdrawn and repudiated by the first President Bush.

Effect on allies

The defense secretary in 1992 was Richard Cheney; the document was drafted by Wolfowitz, who at the time was defense undersecretary for policy.

The potential implications of a Pax Americana are immense.

One is the effect on our allies. Once we assert the unilateral right to act as the world's policeman, our allies will quickly recede into the background. Eventually, we will be forced to spend American wealth and American blood protecting the peace while other nations redirect their wealth to such things as health care for their citizenry.

Donald Kagan, a professor of classical Greek history at Yale and an influential advocate of a more aggressive foreign policy -- he served as co-chairman of the 2000 New Century project -- acknowledges that likelihood.

"If [our allies] want a free ride, and they probably will, we can't stop that," he says. But he also argues that the United States, given its unique position, has no choice but to act anyway.

"You saw the movie 'High Noon'? he asks. "We're Gary Cooper."

Accepting the Cooper role would be an historic change in who we are as a nation, and in how we operate in the international arena. Candidate Bush certainly did not campaign on such a change. It is not something that he or others have dared to discuss honestly with the American people. To the contrary, in his foreign policy debate with Al Gore, Bush pointedly advocated a more humble foreign policy, a position calculated to appeal to voters leery of military intervention.

For the same reason, Kagan and others shy away from terms such as empire, understanding its connotations. But they also argue that it would be naive and dangerous to reject the role that history has thrust upon us. Kagan, for example, willingly embraces the idea that the United States would establish permanent military bases in a post-war Iraq.

"I think that's highly possible," he says. "We will probably need a major concentration of forces in the Middle East over a long period of time. That will come at a price, but think of the price of not having it. When we have economic problems, it's been caused by disruptions in our oil supply. If we have a force in Iraq, there will be no disruption in oil supplies."

Costly global commitment

Rumsfeld and Kagan believe that a successful war against Iraq will produce other benefits, such as serving an object lesson for nations such as Iran and Syria. Rumsfeld, as befits his sensitive position, puts it rather gently. If a regime change were to take place in Iraq, other nations pursuing weapons of mass destruction "would get the message that having them . . . is attracting attention that is not favorable and is not helpful," he says.

Kagan is more blunt.

"People worry a lot about how the Arab street is going to react," he notes. "Well, I see that the Arab street has gotten very, very quiet since we started blowing things up."

The cost of such a global commitment would be enormous. In 2000, we spent \$281 billion on our military, which was more than the next 11 nations combined. By 2003, our expenditures will have risen to \$378 billion. In other words, the increase in our defense budget from 1999-2003 will be more than the total amount spent annually by China, our next largest competitor.

The lure of empire is ancient and powerful, and over the millennia it has driven men to commit terrible crimes on its behalf. But with the end of the Cold War and the disappearance of the Soviet Union, a global empire was essentially laid at the feet of the United States. To the chagrin of some, we did not seize it at the time, in large part because the American people have never been comfortable with themselves as a New Rome.

Now, more than a decade later, the events of Sept. 11 have given those advocates of empire a new opportunity to press their case with a new president. So in debating whether to invade Iraq, we are really debating the role that the United States will play in the years and decades to come.

Are peace and security best achieved by seeking strong alliances and international consensus, led by the United States? Or is it necessary to take a more unilateral approach, accepting and enhancing the global dominance that, according to some, history has thrust upon us?

If we do decide to seize empire, we should make that decision knowingly, as a democracy. The price of maintaining an empire is always high. Kagan and others argue that the price of rejecting it would be higher still.

That's what this is about.

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CONTRIBUTORS TO 2000 REPORT

The deal on Dr. Child

He is located at Cape Opticians on 132 out near the CCMall. He does low-vision enhancement device consultation ONLY on Thursdays because this is a two-person effort with his expertise PLUS a occupational therapist to do the job properly.

First available is Thursday July 28, either 9am or 1pm. However, the fellow answering is NOT Dr. Child's secretary (who still hasn't shown up at noon—she's probably starting her holiday weekend early)

Thought—getting up early enough to be there at 9 is the pits, I know, but being tired might be all to the good when testing out these various vision aids—there'll be times at work when your eyes are tired too. Testing them when you're feeling your best might not be as effective.
