

Books and Publications

A Question of Conscience

*David Jacoby, S.O.J.
Vatican Press, 2001*

The Vatican's role in the anti-revolutionary struggle of the late 1970s is often overlooked. If they give it any thought at all, most people remember priests of this era—and Jesuits, in particular—as a bunch of liberation theology crazed bomb throwers fomenting trouble and preaching class war to the Third World poor. Few realize that an equal number of Catholic clergy were arguing, organizing, and even taking up arms in defense of property and tradition; in fact, one of the most successful Contra units in the Nicaraguan conflict was composed almost entirely of Franciscan friars. Now, with the publication of this timely and well-written book, we are beginning to see history set right.

In 1980 the author—a Jesuit—was dispatched by the Vatican to report on events in El Salvador. He quickly found himself entangled in the briar patch of Salvadoran politics, with his fellow priests, US Aid workers, and corporate apparatchiks alternately badgering, cajoling, and threatening him in an effort to influence his reports back to Rome. A self-described liberal when he set out on this journey, a few months traveling around the countryside convinced him that Central America was, as many conservatives were claiming, a battleground between the forces of light—embodied in the rightist, populist militias—and the army of darkness, exemplified in the Sandinistas and other left insurgents.

The story's decisive scene takes place outside a prison where Archbishop Romero, a leader of the anti-Enlightenment forces, was being held (and where he would eventually be executed). Jacoby, on his way to dine at the American embassy, happened upon the prison just as a frenzied mob of leftist rabble, trade unionists, and even a few Jesuits were about to overrun the police barricades and attack a much smaller group of individuals picketing in support of the government's preemptive detention of the Archbishop. Jacoby ordered his driver to stop, and without hesitation he took his place alongside the much-outnumbered defenders, where he maintained a solidarity vigil that lasted through the night. This book is a must read for anyone still entertaining doubts as to the appropriateness of America's efforts in the region during the Reagan administration.

Northern Ireland: A Troubled Legacy

*Richard Boatwright
University of Edinburgh Press, 2000*

Boatwright offers a gripping account of a twenty-year career spent assassinating terrorists, intimidating political figures, and defending the right of drunken Orangemen to march in commemoration of long ago happenings. Of particular interest is his description of the 1982 Londonderry fiasco, a daring daylight raid that went terribly awry. A source close to the republi-

can movement—Boatwright is careful not to name the person, but hints that the individual is now a sitting member of the Northern Ireland parliament—informed the intelligence service that an enormous store of C4 explosive was hidden in the basement of a Catholic elementary school. Fearing that double agents within their own ranks would tip off the terrorists, the authorities decided to move quickly, and within hours an operation was underway. An elite anti-terrorist team, backed by SAS regulars, entered the school. Explosive-sniffing dogs raced through the hallways as ninja suited commandoes escorted crying children from their classrooms; tear gas swirled around the building, and the shrill whine of an accidentally triggered community alert siren drowned out normal conversation. Fearful parents and curious gawkers were herded behind hastily erected barricades, while the students were confined to a ‘security zone’ delineated by crime scene tape strung between several police vans. When the announcement came that no munitions were present, an angry exchange erupted between the now agitated crowd and the frustrated security force. Bottles were thrown, riot police were deployed, and tensions erupted into the worst sectarian rioting since 1972.

Boatwright describes in great detail the government’s attempt at damage control in the aftermath of the incident, focusing on his own role as manager of the smear campaign targeting the photojournalist whose gripping images of the raid horrified a worldwide audience. The campaign against Michael Adams sought to portray him as a homosexual pedophile with republican leanings, an individual with an obvious interest in discrediting the security services. Towards this end, the press was provided with expertly doctored images showing the young Irishman engaged in all manner of deviant behavior; when this failed to garner the desired public reaction, members of Boatwright’s team leaked to friendly investigators the theory that Adams, hoping to create an incident which he could then photograph, may have been the source of the original, faulty intelligence. A public already accustomed to cynical exploitation of tragedy received this suggestion more sympathetically than earlier spin attempts, and doubts about Adams’ involvement dogged him until his death in a single vehicle accident on Cyprus a few years later. Boatwright received a royal commendation for his efforts, and he proudly notes that the FBI later employed these same tactics, with little modification, in its campaign against Richard Jewell, the alleged Atlanta Olympics bomber.

Sudan: A First Look

Jonathan Prizle

Franklin Press, 2001

Thoughtful observers have long sought to explain the lack of interest American policy makers have shown in the Sudanese war, the longest-lived conflict anywhere in the world. Until recently, the consensus was that Sudan’s geopolitically insignificant location and lack of oil were equally responsible for this oversight, but now, with the publication of this

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delightful coffee table sized work, a third reason has been identified. Prizle argues that Sudan suffers from a dearth of photogenic sites, people, and rituals, a shortfall that makes the nation wholly unsuited to today's image-focused media environment. There is simply nothing to recommend this desperately poor nation; the cruel desert wind has created a land of desolate plains and bleak, indistinguishable hills, a suitable home, indeed, for a people broken by generations of crushing poverty. Lacking subject matter, photojournalists have opted, instead, to document famine in Ethiopia, environmental destruction in Egypt, and the slave trade in Chad—all of them far more visually appealing stories and places.

Not content to simply explain the situation, Prizle set himself to remedying it. Drawing upon his extensive contacts in the fashion community, he arranged for a dozen of the world's top fashion models to travel to Sudan, where they were met by representatives from Europe's most prominent design houses. Two weeks of shooting followed, and the best work is collected here. The results are fantastic: Sudan comes alive, with Prizle's imagined notion of the spirit of the Sudanese people visible in each carefully staged scene. A culture-less people balanced precariously on the edge of oblivion are transformed into the last remaining descendants of a powerful dynasty whose rule once stretched from the British Isles to the Cape of Good Hope; rags become robes, and distended bellies are hidden by fold and fabric. In a further demonstration of his commitment to the Sudanese cause, Prizle has pledged ten percent of any profits generated by this book to a fund for the assistance of Sudanese refugees pursuing fashion design careers in London.

Factbook 2001: Social and Economic Indicators for the Palestinian People

*United Nations Commission on Refugees
United Nations Press, 2002*

In an attempt to appear "balanced" and "objective," the editors have produced a work that can only serve the interests of anti-Semites and their fellow travelers. When social indicators and economic statistics for the 'Palestinian' people are presented without context, it inevitably makes Israel appear villainous. For this reason, any discussion of these figures must explain the key role that the 'Palestinian' leadership plays in perpetuating poverty and misery in the 'occupied territories'. Unfortunately—and predictably—it's just this sort of context that's missing from these pages. Average lifespan, per capita GDP, infant mortality—all of the usual measurements are cited, the obvious purpose being to slander the state of Israel and undermine the American-Israeli alliance, a relationship which is the cornerstone of American policy in the Middle East, if not the entire hemisphere.

The Coldest Warrior

Catherine Brokencross
Verso Press, 2001

Drawing from archival materials, published speeches, and previously unreleased personal correspondence, the author reconstructs the autobiography that William Casey never wrote. While the unorthodox methodology is certain to stir controversy, there can be no doubt that this book is a valuable addition to both the intelligence and policy-making literatures. The portrait that emerges is of a complex figure, one whose later, often questionable policy decisions are inextricably bound up with a troubled childhood. Casey's own father died when Casey was an infant, and his stepfather was, by all accounts, an emotionally distant individual preoccupied with efforts to construct a free energy device. Casey's mother entered a tuberculosis hospital when he was fourteen and passed away six months later, leaving him effectively orphaned. Shortly thereafter World War II began, Casey lied about his age in order to enlist, and his lifelong affiliation with the military-industrial complex began.

And what a career it was! If Brokencross writing as Casey is to be believed, Casey played a role in nearly every high-profile intelligence operation of the past four decades. The Bay of Pigs, Watergate, and Iran-Contra are all accounted for, as are a host of other, lesser-known affairs, most of them reading like a fantastically exaggerated first draft of the next Bond movie. Here's Casey racing through Monaco on a motorcycle, a copy of the Soviet Union's nuclear control codes in his vest pocket; six months later, he's working with a squad of green berets in Angola, helping the insurgents set up their own counter-intelligence service; two years after that, he's sitting before a congressional committee, defending the Nixon administration's decision to employ nerve gas against American defectors in Laos—truly, a man for all seasons.

German Tobacco Shop Collectibles, 1910-1930

John Gage
Cambridge Press, 2001

Every field of study passes through three stages of development: first, an initial flurry of activity, with established scholars and precocious laymen racing to stake out positions. Then comes a consolidating period during which conventional wisdom congeals, and priests and heretics are identified. Finally, the field is accepted as a legitimate subject of inquiry, a fact confirmed when college deans grow willing to fund faculty travel to far off conferences.

After nearly two decades of infighting, 'Holocaust studies' is now ready to enter the third stage of institutional integration, and evidence of the field's acceptance can be found in the growing number of Holocaust related books being published, many of them intended for crossover mass-market

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audiences. This attractive volume is just such a work, and it will be a welcome addition on any bookshelf. Gage examines the Weimar era policies that made the rise of Hitler inevitable, couching it within an extended photo essay documenting the collectibles offered by the various chains of tobacconists operating in Germany during the period in question. Tobacco products played a key role in the semiotics of early twentieth century European political theater—think, for example, of Churchill's ever present stogie, or the Kaiser's famous ivory cigarette holder—and Gage does a fine job of unraveling the many linguistic, psychological, and even historical links between these strong oral-connoting signifiers and the growth of anti-Semitism among the German people in the years following World War One.

AIDS and the Death of Cultural Significance

Neil Montgomery
Cornell Press, 2000

In this well researched work, Montgomery argues that the emergence of AIDS was responsible for the triumph of the post-modern ironic voice. He notes that, given the prominent role gays have always played in the arts, it only stands to reason that the bitter fatalism which arose in homosexual circles in the early years of the epidemic should have found its way into the larger culture. It's an interesting thesis, and Montgomery is to be commended for the huge mass of citations that he marshals in support, many of them drawn from regional gay newspapers and sex trade journals often overlooked by academic researchers. One criticism: Montgomery gives short attention to the response of lesbian artists to the epidemic. Though many Americans still fail to distinguish between gay and lesbian cultures, Montgomery is obviously innocent of such a charge, and it is disappointing that he chooses to give only passing note to the lesbian performers and artists whose work was informed by an awareness of the disease just as deep as that of their gay associates.

Netizens, Nation Building, and the Promise of Cyber-Liberation

By Katherine Murray, M.F.A.
Wired Press, 2000

Avoiding the too-common tendency among writers reporting from the front lines of the Internet revolution to engage in cyber-boosterism and tech-stock cheerleading, the author builds a well-reasoned case for the recognition of virtual Net-based states as legitimate actors in the new world order. Central to Murray's thesis is the fait accompli nature of this recognition, as many of these virtual domains already offer passports, name ambassadors, and claim embassies in Western capitals—all they lack is formal membership in the community of nations. The situation is, as Murray correctly notes, eerily similar to that of the first wave of post-colonial Asian states, 1950-1955. Historians will recall the absurdity of that era,

a time when government appointed commissions in London and Paris purported to make policy for territories that had declared their independence months, even years prior. If we are to avoid an equally ridiculous situation in our own age, it is essential that the international community promptly recognize this wholly new dimension to the public sphere.

Survival Guide for a Neo-Liberal World

Amanda and Jeff Ames

Nolo Press, 2000

This eminently useful book is intended for the silent majority who failed to reap huge rewards during the dot-com frenzy. The authors—both of whom are career counselors by training—pursue two separate but related themes: first, the book presents a clear-headed strategy for prospering in the coming post-boom years, one based on the time-tested techniques of diversification and risk management; second, and just as important, the authors seek to reassure those readers feeling distress over their failure to cash in during the largest market run-up in history. Yes, even individuals with a five-figure net worth can be decent human beings—they simply need to work a little harder at it! Like many recent releases, the hardcover edition includes a multimedia CD-ROM; this one features several self-awareness building exercises and profiling tools to assist the individual in gauging her level of risk-adverseness.

American Policy and the Balkans, 1990-1996

Maxwell James III

Harvard Press, 2000

James argues that American policy in the Balkans can be understood only as a cruel practical joke, one begun by the Bush administration and gleefully continued under Bill Clinton. The target of the joke was, of course, the European Union, which was forced to repeatedly confess its political and military dependence upon the United States. According to James, American policy makers, while publicly pressing for peace, were privately pursuing a strategy intended to foster confusion among the warring parties and undermine any unilateral European effort in the region, with the most promising EU initiatives thwarted by the careful coordination of American military and intelligence resources. Srebrenica was one of the most successful of these operations: images of crying Dutch peacekeepers watching helplessly as residents of the town were loaded into buses for transportation to the killing grounds where thousands would be massacred dealt a severe blow to EU prestige and set European integration efforts back by at least a decade. Destined to be a classic of diplomatic history, this book is a must-read.

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In My Own Words

Augusto Pinochet, as told to Norman Olsen
Santiago Press, 2001

This book offers a fascinating encounter with one of the most engaging minds of our time. Eschewing the currently fashionable practice of fact checking, the interviewer allows Pinochet to tell his own story, and the portrait that emerges is of a man tormented by second-guessing over his role in the tragedy that befell Chilean democracy. Pinochet wonders: had he acted differently, could the fiasco of 1998, when a Spanish judge prompted the British government to seize the former head of a sovereign nation, have been avoided? Unhappily for future political leaders, Pinochet's concludes that the PC climate—which he believes to have become a permanent fixture of Western culture—made this unfortunate event inevitable. Though the book is primarily meant as a history, Pinochet does offer a chapter of policy proscriptions and musings meant to serve as a starting point for efforts intended to prevent a repeat of this incident. While many of his remedies would be difficult to implement—there is little political will to repeal the UN charter on torture, though it would undoubtedly be a step in the right direction—they do provide an insightful basis upon which to begin the discussion.

***State & Citizen*, Nov/Dec 2001**

"Viaticals: What's a Conservative to Think?"

April James turns her keen intellect to the question of viatical settlements. On the one hand, viatical settlements are a market-spawned opportunity with the potential to increase the sum total of human happiness, particularly among the terminally ill and others in need of a boost. On the other hand, beneficiaries of these settlements are disproportionately homosexual, suggesting that this may be an instance in which government regulation is needed in order to prevent the possibility of an economically efficient yet morally unacceptable outcome.

***The Public Interest*, September 2001**

"Red Men and Green Dollars"

Lisa Marshall argues that casino gambling is a necessary stage in the evolution of the Native American historical project. By placing tribal gaming within an historical context, Marshall shows that the hysteria surrounding the proliferation of tribal gaming is nothing more than puritan (and probably racist) anxiety.

Reason, September 2001
"Reading, Writing, and Reengineering"

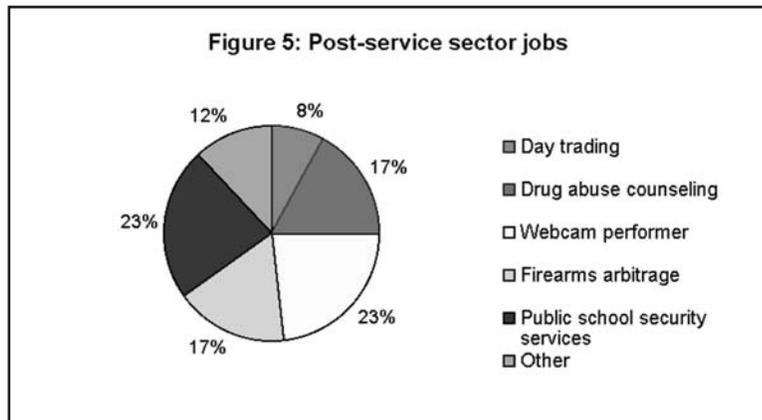
Thomas Spenser shows how Wisconsin's nascent effort to introduce market discipline into the Head Start program is already showing results. Traditional, inefficient, cost-center schools are being transformed into profit-center "enterprise academies," and the taxpayer is the biggest winner of all. Of particular interest are the job-training aspects of the program: Wisconsin's successful integration of piece-rate production facilities into its Head Start units is sure to become a model for reform efforts in other states.

The Nation, October 4, 2001
"Abortion: Life Affirming Ritual at the Nexus of the Generations"

Katha Pollit succinctly states the left's case for abortion, and in doing so she provides our side with all the ammunition we'll ever need.

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Speaking of the new economy, Figure 5 gives the latest Department of Labor figures for the emerging post-service sector:



Firearms and fiber optics—it appears that the long promised 'digital convergence' has finally arrived. Glimpsing the future, investors are already trying to marry traditional health services with the individually targeted marketing made possible by new technologies: advertiser supported, free psychotherapy services have begun trials in several Southern California communities.