

**Slick Willy**

Re Jeffrey Gedmin's review of *My Life in Politics*, by Willy Brandt (*TAS*, January 1993): Has anyone looked into the possibility that Willy Brandt was a KGB mole? There can be no doubt that his words and actions were consistent with the role.

—R. Ogmundson  
Victoria, British Columbia

**Jeffrey Gedmin replies:**

It is one thing to have been vehemently at odds with Willy Brandt's coddling of East German and other Communists—and I was. It is entirely another matter to suggest that he may have been a traitor. I am not aware of any evidence that could lead one to conclude that Brandt was a KGB mole.

The Soviets didn't need to corrupt Brandt. Consider the declaration by Markus Wolf, the former head of East Germany's espionage service, some six months after the Berlin Wall fell. Regarding the unmasking of master spy Günter Guillaume in 1974—the scandal that forced Brandt's resignation—Wolf told a German interviewer, "It was not a part of our plan to topple Brandt . . . on the contrary, the policy of détente begun by him was in line with our ideas."

The same applies to Germany's former foreign minister, Hans-Dietrich Genscher. Stasi files reveal early considerations to manipulate—or if necessary even discredit—Genscher as a secret police collaborator. Genscher was born in Halle and left the GDR in 1952, but during his career regularly visited friends in his old hometown. Plans were scrapped, though, in the early 1980s, when it was determined that Genscher did not pursue goals that ran counter to GDR interests. When the unrepentant dove heard about this, he "did not look happy at all," a counterintelligence expert told *Der Spiegel*.

**Whose Wake?**

I was absolutely astounded at John Meroney's courageous, and perhaps foolhardy, publication of "The Real Maya Angelou" (*TAS*, March 1993), describing the questionable employment of Ms. Angelou by Wake Forest University. His willingness to have this article appear in

your pages over his signature, despite his status as a senior at Wake Forest, should be applauded as an act of consummate heroism. Please keep us advised as to how many days after your publication date Mr. Meroney remained as a student at Wake Forest before his expulsion. We will also be interested to learn whether any other university will be willing to accept Mr. Meroney as a transfer student to complete his degree requirements, despite his obvious political incorrectness.

—Leonard W. Fromm, Jr.  
Margate, Florida

I just received my first issue . . . and wanted to tell you that reading John Meroney's "The Real Maya Angelou" was worth the price of the whole year's subscription.

Her life is, indeed, as shallow as her poetry. It's refreshing to know, too, that a senior from any university even knows who Robert Frost is, let alone that JFK featured him at his inaugural. If there are people like John Meroney attending America's colleges and universities, there's some hope for us after all.

—Guy Bowman  
Glendale, Colorado

**Steve's Wonder**

Thank you for bringing to light—finally—the unvarnished truth about Gary Sick and the so-called October Surprise conspiracy theory ("Gary Sick's Bald-Faced Lies" by Steven Emerson, *TAS*, March 1993). The crux of the case, as Emerson notes, is that Sick parlayed the veneer of credibility he gained as a run-of-the-mill Carter NSC staffer into "effectively accusing" distinguished public servants like Bill Casey, George Bush, Dick Allen—and, by extension, Ronald Reagan—of "treason."

This of course prompted another colossal waste of taxpayers' money on congressional investigations to disprove the negative. Thankfully (and only after a large investment of time and effort by the accused), the truth emerged. Steve Emerson's contributions to the case in the form of genuine, persistent, and thorough investigative research (as opposed to Sick's shoddy, casual, and willful manipulation of the facts) are laudable.

And I very much appreciate *The American Spectator's* continuing willingness to expose the truth on important political issues of the day.

—Julie Cave Altman  
Arlington, Virginia

**Justice Is Served**

I read with interest Terry Eastland's speculation ("The Tempting of Justice Kennedy," *TAS*, February 1993) about what occurred with respect to Justice Anthony Kennedy inside the Supreme Court in the abortion case of *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. However, I found the essay more polemical than enlightening.

The article takes a pointed dig at *New York Times* reporter Linda Greenhouse. The dig is for failing to identify her sources for a story that disputed the theory of columnists Evans and Novak that Justice Kennedy changed his mind at the last minute in *Casey* and voted to reaffirm the 1973 abortion decision, *Roe v. Wade*.

That this is a cheap shot at Greenhouse is self-evident from Eastland's article. The next line after the dig says, "But my own sources advise. . . ." Where, one might ask, is the identification of Eastland's sources? Their names are nowhere to be found. Moreover, the original report by Evans and Novak named no sources, as is the custom of the two columnists.

There is a larger complaint with the article, besides the cheap shot. There is ample evidence that the Anthony Kennedy who sits today on the Supreme Court is the same person he has always been. The problem is not that the news media and Washington establishment have changed him; the problem is that he is not the Supreme Court justice that Eastland and others wanted.

Eastland is unwilling to come to grips with the fact that after Robert Bork was defeated, the Justice Department of which Eastland was a part engaged in a nearly irrational search for a nominee who would pass muster on pro-life and other grounds. Anthony Kennedy, then a federal circuit judge, was knocked out of contention because some Reagan administration aides feared that he might favor constitutional recognition of a right

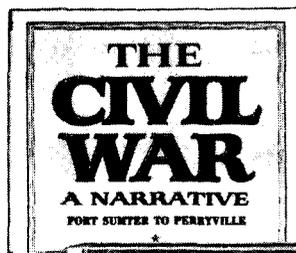
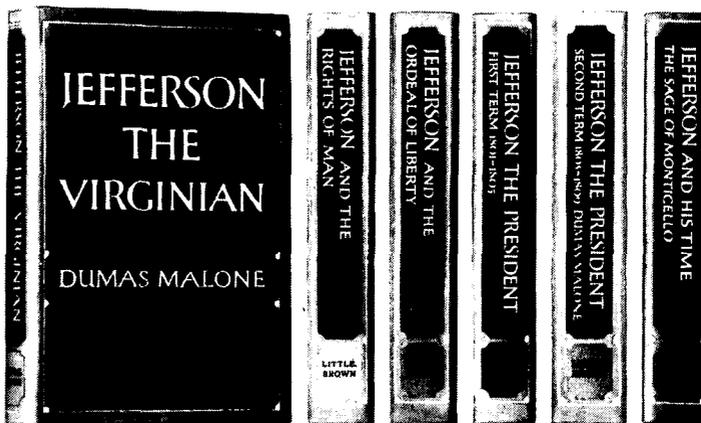
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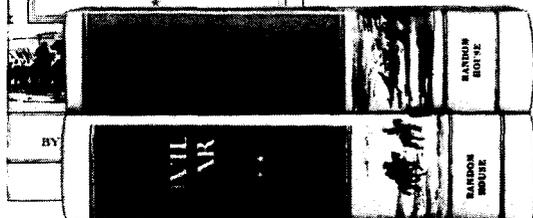
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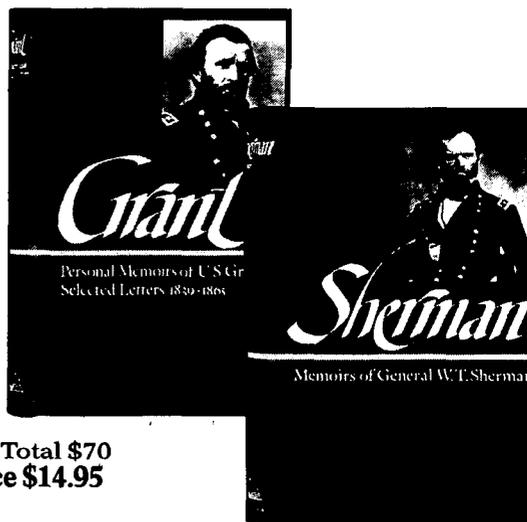


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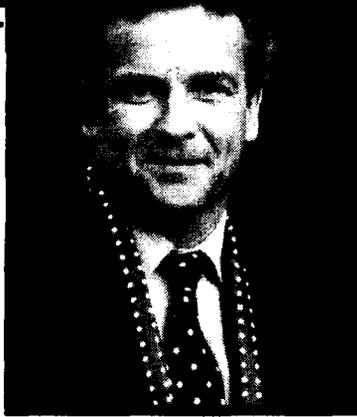
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# The Worst Book of the Year

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

As the citizenry of this great Republic has arrived at that cloying season when its eminences in the arts and communications display the full hugeness of their self-love. It is "awards time"; hold your stomach. "A" pats "B" on the back, and "B" pats "A." At the Oscar orgies, Hollywood insiders rave over the heroism, artistry, and simple humanity of other Hollywood insiders, who happen to be rogues, mediocrities, and people one would not trust to walk the dog. The Grammy awards are equally meretricious, and the awards for the arts and journalism are the worst.

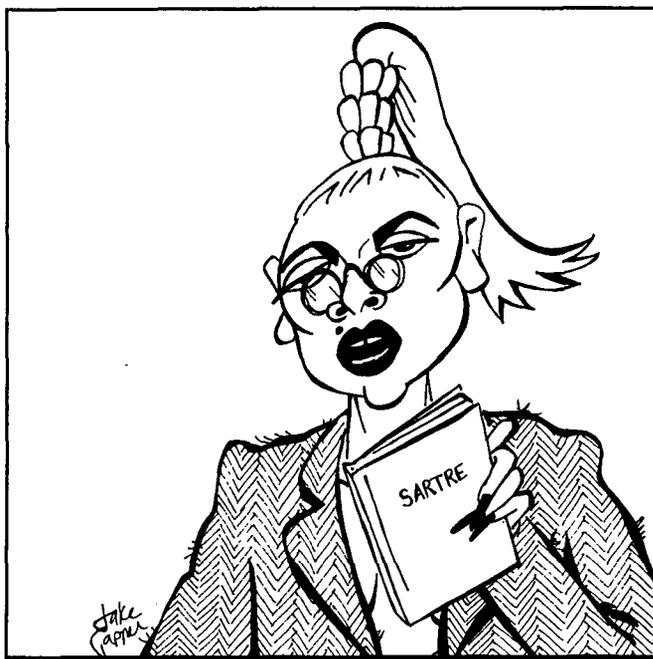
Pulitzer Prizes have been given to authors who are proven plagiarists and humbugs, for instance, Alex Haley, whose 1977 Pulitzer for *Roots* was never withdrawn, even after Haley was forced in 1978 to make a \$650,000 out-of-court settlement on charges he had lifted some eighty passages from Harold Courlander's slave novel, *The African*, and after later evidence revealed that he simply fabricated much of his family's genealogy. Pulitzers have been given to books that were ghostwritten, for instance John F. Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage*. And Pulitzers have been given to journalists who have made preposterous claims, for instance, Janet Cooke in

1981. In this instance the Pulitzer Committee did yank the award when the story was exposed, but it then gave it to another story that also turned out to be faked. The Committee stuck by the second fake.

The problem with these awards is that they are all so useful. They are a source of riches and influence. Hence, vast lobbying efforts go into acquiring them. Alliances are entered. Reciprocal award arrangements are quietly agreed upon. Moreover, that which is true of journalism's so-called "ethical standards" is true of the so-called "standards of excellence" in the arts and communications—there are none. What intelligent reader actually believes that Garry Wills's *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America* is such

a meritorious essay into "criticism" as the National Book Critics Circle claimed the other day? Wills is a writer whose work is riddled with sophistry and contradiction. In reviewing it, the indefatigable Professor Kenneth Lynn discovered that Wills's present praise for Lincoln is "at odds with the preface to Wills's controversial study of the Declaration of Independence, *Inventing America* (1978), into which he packed an explosive 10-page assault on the author of the Gettysburg Address." Perhaps now Mr. Wills is older and wiser, but in a world of serious "standards," he would have acknowledged and explained this contradiction. This he has yet to do.

Today the only literary award of genuine worth and integrity is the J. Gordon Coogler Award. No one lobbies for it or shows up at the awards ceremony to blubber and brag. In fact, no Coogler laureate has ever even attended the charming and highly dignified ceremony, now held here in our nation's capital. The J. Gordon Coogler Award is conferred upon the year's worst books. Imaginative as our publishers and authors are, none has ever figured out how to exploit a Coogler, though this year's winner may. She is Madonna. She is a lady who has made much from little. Her book, *Sex*, was only modestly successful at the bookstores, but do not be surprised if she takes her Coogler and turns it into an avenue to literary influence and still greater wealth. →



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