

Full of such intimate anecdotes, this is a wonderful biography. It is detailed, informed, and vivid. Its subject led a long, richly-peopled life, and Anne Chisholm and Michael Davie do an admirable job of explaining Beaverbrook's often murky role in events like Edward VII's abdication (the King once called Beaverbrook at the offices of the *Daily News* in New York to seek advice).

An assiduous friend to the great, Beaverbrook had his own retainers. Chief among these was the suave glutton, pathological spendthrift, and femme fatale—bait nonpareil Valentine Castlerosse, son of the relatively impoverished Catholic Earl of Kenmare. Lord Castlerosse met Beaverbrook during World War I, and later became his procurer and court jester. His appealing mixture of the abject and insolent was calculated to appeal to the Presbyterian playboy. (Chastened for regularly arriving late to work at his uncle's bank, Castlerosse replied "Yes, but think how early I leave.") Beaverbrook later made him gossip columnist for the *Sunday Express*, and on the eve of World War II sent him to Paris to suss out the French attitude towards war. "I haven't got much further than the bar at Fouquet's," was his response, "but no one at the bar at Fouquet's is going to fight for Danzig." He died of a heart attack in 1943, having told Beaverbrook, "I don't suppose any man owed so much to another as I do to you."

Beaverbrook had little use for the postwar world, for imperial decline, American pre-eminence, or the Labour government. There are few people, not even soi-disant anachronism Evelyn Waugh, whom one can see prospering less in the nitrogen-rich socialist chill of Clement Attlee's postwar Britain. Beaverbrook made a slow yearly orbit from London to New York to New Brunswick to Nassau to the South of France, where he entertained Churchill, by then a drooling octogenarian. He wrote several histories, and in 1963 he married the half-Greek widow of his Canadian friend Sir James Dunn, a woman who had parlayed an 8-to-1 payoff in a horse race into a sizable fortune, and with her inheritance had a bank balance to rival Beaverbrook's own. He died in 1964, and the greater portion of his ashes are apparently secreted inside a statue of him in Fredericton, New Brunswick. □

## PROMISE AND POWER: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF ROBERT McNAMARA

Deborah Shapley

Little, Brown/734 pages/\$24.95

reviewed by FRANZ M. OPPENHEIMER

In the days of Camelot the name Robert McNamara was a synonym for administrative genius. Now Deborah Shapley has written a magnificent book about him. With the readability of a Raymond Chandler mystery, it brings alive not only Robert McNamara but also twenty traumatic years of American history. Shapley's research is meticulous, but after 700 pages we are still left wondering about her subject: Is he a latter-day Don Quixote, shaped not by knightly romance but by case studies of the Harvard Business School, tilting against demons to redress the ills of the world? Or a latter-day Mrs. Jellyby, feeding her ego with missionary zeal for African heathens while neglecting to feed her children? Or none of these, but just an ambitious careerist, devious and mendacious in climbing to titles, awards, and publicity, groveling before his masters while bullying his subordinates? Or is there, as David Halberstam put it, "no gentler word" for him than that he is "a fool"?

McNamara emerges as a most complex man, uncomfortable except among the few—like the Kennedys, Tom and Joan Braden, and Katharine Graham—in whose prominence he can reflect his own. No matter how his conduct looks to himself, when it is seen from the outside, lying, lust for power, servility, and bullying are constants in his life. Another constant is blind faith in the capacity of an elite of top managers to achieve results in large organizations, which, he thought, were "all the same, whether . . . the Ford Motor Company, the Catholic Church or the Department of Defense. Once you get to a certain scale, they're all the same."

*Franz M. Oppenheimer is a Washington lawyer.*

For someone with that conviction, listening to individual or institutional experience is superfluous. As president of the Ford Motor Company, McNamara gave short shrift to engineers; as secretary of defense he ignored the views of soldiers, sailors, and airmen; and as president of the World Bank he held the "old hands" of Eugene Black's Bank in scorn. This arrogance seems to have been the principal cause of the havoc he wrought with every one of those institutions. The highlights are widely known: the Edsel at Ford, the TFX and Vietnam at the Department of Defense, and the wages of megalomania at the World Bank.

Shapley tries to exculpate McNamara when possible. She describes how, at Ford, McNamara thought the plan to produce the Edsel "absurdly risky" and "a bad idea." But McNamara's sound judgment was never translated into timely dissent. The Edsel was Henry Ford II's baby, and McNamara, on becoming group vice president in 1957, with direct authority over all Ford cars including the Edsel, had to give the appearance of nurturing it for a while.

McNamara cannot be similarly exculpated for the TFX, eventually known as the F-111. That project was his baby, and his alone. He could brook no opposition to the logic that to build one type of plane meeting the requirements of both the Navy and the Air Force was more efficient than building two. "Commonality was the key to efficiency and profits in manufacturing automobiles at Ford," and so it had to be the same in the Catholic Church and the Department of Defense. No matter that the secretaries of the Navy and the Air Force reported that a plane meeting the requirements of both services "is not now technically feasible and would place severe operational penalties

upon the Air Force and Navy," and that the Navy's assistant secretary for research and development thought that the "risks of attempting a common Navy-Air Force fighter were not consistent with national defense interests." McNamara, "with no feel for the physical problems of advanced engineering," rammed his project down the experts'—and ultimately Congress's—throats.

It is in the cover-up of cost overruns and the deficiencies of the TFX that McNamara's resort to lies becomes most apparent. Already during the Cuban missile crisis, senior commanders in the Navy had concluded that "McNamara was a 'liar' in his dealings with them." McNamara's defense before the Senate Government Operations Committee of his decision to award the TFX contract to General Dynamics rather than Boeing was riddled with inaccuracies and manipulated data. McNamara even fostered lying by his subordinates, intimidating them to the extent that they preferred giving him cooked-up reports that pleased rather than true ones that displeased him. Messengers bearing bad news had short lives under McNamara.

The really big lies came with the Vietnam war. In February 1968, McNamara untruthfully told the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations under oath that there had been "no plan for the bombing of [North Vietnam]" in 1964. In 1965, when the decision to send another 100,000 men had already been made, McNamara told Congress, "We have no desire to widen the war." Throughout his watch in the Pentagon McNamara kept on lying—about the plans for escalation, about the rising estimates of the costs of escalation, about the military realities in Vietnam, and, worst of all, about his policy of seeking a negotiated solution. As had been the case at Ford, McNamara's judgment was often better than that of his bosses, Kennedy and Johnson. For instance, he became convinced early on that the war could not be won without calling up reserves and increasing taxes. But in the end he always settled on being his master's voice in insisting that victory was in sight.

In 1967, LBJ allowed McNamara, then apparently near a nervous breakdown, to escape from the war to the presidency of the World Bank. He arrived not chastened by failure but bent on remaking the bank and the world in his

own image. When he left the bank in 1981, he had succeeded in the former.

Shapley does a superb job in detailing the reign of terror, the explosive bureaucratization, and the bad projects for which the McNamara regime was responsible. But she gives him too much credit for such achievements as seeing that "smallholder agriculture could multiply the Green Revolution and raise incomes of the poor." McNamara's only real innovation was to turn the bank's sound policies into gigantic, megalomaniacal schemes with which to rush ahead without leaving time for analysis or listening to the staff or to local authorities. The misguidedness of such methods should be measured not only by the miserable rates of return they produced but also by the damage they inflicted on their supposed beneficiaries: destruction of thousands of square miles of rain forest in Brazil and Indonesia, and the brutal displacement of native tribes.

Shapley's judgments are liberal, and occasionally naïve. She is unsparing in her vituperation of McNamara for one of his great achievements: establishing in record time a crushing superiority over the Soviet Union in nuclear intercontinental missiles. She attributes the subsequent Soviet military buildup to the Soviets' fear of a strong United States, oblivious—as McNamara was not—to the fact that the Soviets had embarked on an enormous program of constructing medium-range missiles with which to blackmail Europe. Shapley gives McNamara credit for going to meet Fidel Castro in Havana in early 1962, even though she criticizes him for having made World Bank loans to wicked regimes. She endorses Shawcross's blaming Nixon and Kissinger for the atrocities of the Khmer Rouge, and with Paul Kennedy she seems certain that "the sun [is] lowering on American world hegemony."

But these opinions are unintrusive and do not make *Promise and Power* any less an achievement. McNamara's failures are not just individual ones but failures of our corporate and governmental culture—impersonal and obsessed with efficiency and quantifiable objectives. Upon leaving a demoralized World Bank, McNamara was elected a director of the *Washington Post*, the Bank of America, Corning Glass, the TransWorld Corporation, and Royal Dutch Petroleum. Just

as the collapse of the Evil Empire and the unmasking of the realities within it have not dampened collectivist enthusiasms in our universities, the failures of McNamara did not prevent him from being the darling of corporate America, of whose bad judgment he was such an exemplar. □

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CORRESPONDENCE  
(continued from page 10)

to privacy. In a 1980 ruling in favor of the discharge of gay Navy personnel, Kennedy had briefly observed that some such government regulation of homosexual conduct might face constitutional hurdles and cited liberal Harvard Law School Prof. Laurence Tribe for support.

This fear that Kennedy might not be a true believer was enough to knock out his nomination, at least until after President Reagan's unsuccessful attempt to nominate Judge Douglas Ginsburg. When the Ginsburg nomination went up in smoke, these same aides decided that Kennedy might be all right after all.

Of course, Kennedy had not changed one bit throughout this process; it was only the politically correct view of his 1980 opinion that had changed. Indeed, a short time later he told the Senate Judiciary Committee that he believed in the existence of a constitutional right to privacy.

As for Greenhouse, if she deserves even a fraction of the credit (blame) she is now receiving for reshaping the Supreme Court, perhaps the legal history books should refer to the period from 1981 to 1993 as the Greenhouse era, not the Reagan-Bush era.

—Stephen Wermiel  
Associate Professor of Law  
Georgia State University  
College of Law  
Atlanta, Georgia

Terry Eastland replies:

Rowland Evans and Robert Novak wrote that Justice Kennedy changed his conference vote in *Casey*. Linda Greenhouse wrote that this was not the case. True, neither Evans and Novak nor Greenhouse names their sources. But as I indicated, my central problem with Greenhouse's journalism was its cryptic manner (which Stephen Wermiel does not defend). As I wrote, she disputed the Evans and Novak account in a

mere subordinate clause. In my view, this matter deserved at least one complete sentence if not several paragraphs, whatever the nature of the sourcing employed (and on a story like this, as Wermiel knows, sources are quite reluctant to be named).

As for the Greenhouse Effect, I explained what the term, as coined by Thomas Sowell, means: "the impact activist Court reporters . . . can have upon the decision making of judges like Kennedy." Wermiel, a former colleague of Greenhouse's who until recently covered the Supreme Court for the *Wall Street Journal*, scoffs at the idea. Obviously, we differ on that. Just as we differ on the nature of Kennedy's career on the Court. My argument is more complex than Wermiel allows. It is that when appointed to the Court, Kennedy already had activist tendencies that in the environment of Washington have become more prominent, as indicated especially by his work in *Casey*.

I agree with one point in Wermiel's tendentious account of the decision to nominate Kennedy: the then Ninth Circuit judge was hardly the first choice of many Justice Department officials, myself included. As for whether Kennedy is today "the same person" he was then (and before), Judge Kennedy never wrote an opinion so intellectually vacuous as Justice Kennedy's contribution to the joint opinion in *Casey*. The man has "grown"—which perhaps explains Kennedy's appeal to Wermiel, who I understand is writing a biography of that gifted but most activist of recent justices, William Brennan.

### The View From Amontillado

It should have been a warning note to Erik Rieselbach that if Poe maintains his appeal to adolescents, there may be something to him that is due more than grudging respect (Book Reviews, *TAS*, March 1993). Mr. Rieselbach diddles on and on about Poe's personal life, but nothing about his poetry nor his short stories. Are we to take it that personal behavior is the yardstick, rather than political position? Why were Baudelaire and the finer poet, Mallarmé, so taken by Poe? I know why, but I won't tell you. Same reason for his appeal to "adolescents." It is not the Morals, nor the Politics, nor the Economy. And there is much to be said for Poe's attitude to the

literary lions of his day: Can you imagine spending an evening with Longfellow telling you to go (in bad Latin): "Excelsior."

T.S. Eliot envied Poe, quoting "one of the most beautiful lines in our language." I wonder if it is quoted in the two biographies reviewed.

—Gabriel Austin  
*New York, New York*

*Erik Rieselbach replies:*

As Mr. Austin notices, I was reviewing *biographies*, hence the emphasis on Poe's personal life. Eliot hardly "envied" Poe; see his essay "From Poe to Valéry." Baudelaire and Mallarmé saw in Poe what they wanted to see, as I suppose Mr. Austin does. They had the excuse of not knowing English well.

### Any Which Way

Movie critic James Bowman described as preposterousness Madonna's latest cinematic offering, *Body of Evidence* ("Alive and Dead," *TAS*, March 1993). He holds this movie up as an example of Hollywood's neglect of the truth of life.

If only Mr. Bowman had been in the theater when I watched *Body of Evidence*! He would have been treated to an all-too-real-life example of the gullibility of the American people. The theater showed the movie's reels in the wrong order, and my companion and I were the only ones who noticed. The manager of the theater even had trouble believing me when I brought the problem to her attention, because "we've been showing the movie all day and no one else has complained. You must be mistaken."

I was not mistaken. Not only did I know that the sex act—even when perpetrated by Madonna—must occur in a certain, natural order, but I had also deduced—undoubtedly from my years of exposure to Hollywood's depiction of real life—that opening statements must precede the recalling of witnesses in a murder trial. . . .

—Janice L. Molnar  
*Upland, California*

### My Word

Edward Conlon's Fanoosh story in the February issue ("Fight to the *Fanoosh*") reminded me of a similar lexicographic investigation of my own, but one which took fifty years to solve.

Sometime, it must have been around

1940, I heard the term *pastafazool*. It may have been a spoken interjection during a jazz vocal by one of the Italian-American musicians of the era. I'm a reference book freak anyway, so I spent the intervening decades trying to find the word(s) and a definition. Occasionally I asked someone familiar with the north-eastern U.S. Italian idiom. I never got anything but an uncomprehending shrug, although I admit to having spent as little time as absolutely necessary in the north-eastern U.S.

One day in the last two or three years I found myself staring, unfocused for several long seconds, at a listing on a restaurant menu. I finally realized that my long-sought *pastafazool* must have been some routine, regional 1930s corruption of *pasta e fagiole* (pronounced past' eh fah-ZHO-leh and meaning pasta-and-peas or, more broadly, pasta with vegetables).

My singer must have been goomba to *Daily News* columnist Reel's fanoosher.

—Jerry Dorbin  
*Santa Fe, New Mexico*

### Does This Mean We Have to Be Kind to Clinton?

In response to Wladyslaw Pleszczynski's remarks about Billy Graham's Inaugural prayer in your March issue, remarks that at first seemed to support those "principles" of "Holy Scripture," may I simply remind Mr. Pleszczynski as well as any person who has the unmitigated nerve to try to confine Jesus Christ to the "religious right" and their corresponding positions and tactics, of a few words from the Holy Bible. "If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar." (I John 4:20)

Likewise, in response to Mr. Pleszczynski's remarks about the "unrepentant self-righteousness" of certain individuals, including President Clinton, consider these words of Jesus Christ: "Do not judge, or you too will be judged. . . . Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:1,3)

Let me suggest that all of us who espouse the cause of Christ should be very careful that we don't get in the way and misrepresent His life, His truth, and His love for all the world.

—Kimberly L. Hyatt  
*Washington, D.C.*

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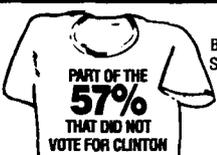
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"REAGAN — THE GREAT COMMUNICATOR, CLINTON — THE GREAT FABRICATOR" \$3.00, 2/\$5.00, 5/\$10.00. Check, cash, or MO to Clinochio, 728 Stonebridge Way, Pleasant Hill, CA 94523.

"IMPEACH CLINTON" or "IMPEACH HILLARY" bumper stickers. \$3.00 Each or 10 for \$20.00. Cash or Check + SASE to Performance Packaging, 3705 Norma, Garland, TX 75042-7058.

"A RELIABLE SOURCE HAS JUST CONFIRMED THE NEWS MEDIA SUCKS!" \$3.00 each or 6 for \$10.00, Island Sign Service, 875 Waimanu St. #319, Honolulu, HI 96813-5264.

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9305



**New York Times**

Arkansas chic sweeps Manhattan:

Judge Patricia M. Wald and Robert L. Wald of Washington have announced the engagement of their daughter Frederica Nora Wald to Roger Sherman, a son of Justice and Mrs. Burton Sherman of New York. A September wedding is planned.

Ms. Wald, 35, is a senior marketing manager at Time Warner Inc. in New York. She graduated cum laude from Wesleyan University. She and her fiancé received MBA degrees from the University of Pennsylvania.

Her mother, who was President Clinton's first choice for Attorney General but declined the appointment, is a judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia and was the first woman to serve as chief judge of that court. Ms. Wald's father . . .

[February 28, 1993]

**APA Newsletters**

(American Philosophical Association)  
A typical university cosmopolitan, one who knows the ways of the French gourmand, brings her merkin to the barricades:

I am a white lesbian, forty-eight years old and I have a beard. Sort of a double goatee affair that grows on either side of my chin. I have had it for about sixteen years. When I first realized I was growing a beard, not just a few chin hairs, I was shocked. I identified strongly as a feminist, but was not ready for this test of my will and resolve not to appear at least moderately feminine in this world of strict masculine/feminine dichotomies. Besides, until the beard came, I did not realize what deep recesses of desire to be "pretty" in a traditionally feminine way I harbored. The beard, if let grow, would certainly end the possibility of a purely feminine appearance for me. It took me over a year to stop shaving it altogether. By then I had moved to liking it a lot and putting some effort into seeing to it that it appeared neat and not unkempt by, for instance, keeping crumbs out of it when I ate croissants.

[Fall 1992]

**News-Leader**

(Springfield, Missouri)

Miss June McGaughey—apparently a political scientist or historian at some small college—pipes up on behalf of National Salvation:

The almighty God has lifted up William Clinton to lead this country through the most perilous times in its history. Every one of us must help our courageous young president with everything he wants done.

The vision he unveiled to America the night of Feb. 17 must never be forgotten. It will become a reality. We have been called to take up arms. We dare not fail in the terrible battle that has begun.

President Clinton is America's last hope for liberation from its cruel bondage.

[February 24, 1993]

**Harvard**

The official house organ of Harvard gets another puritanical bull from the morally incontinent Thurston Smith:

I feel obliged to respond to the full-page photograph on page 76 of the January-February issue, showing Thomas Kershaw, M.B.A. '62, tailgating before the Harvard-Yale football game, eating a chicken leg and holding out his Bloody Mary glass for a refill.

. . . As one who is concerned with educating Harvard-Radcliffe men and women about responsibility in drinking, I find the glorification of Kershaw as a "partygoer par excellence" extremely distressing. As long as he does not break the law (and I hope he was not driving that day), Kershaw of course has the right to behave as he wishes. Your magazine, however, should refrain from presenting this picture as the ultimate way to enjoy "The Game."

I will leave my other reactions to the fur coat and to the overall promotion of Harvard's unfortunate and incorrect image as an elite and snobbish institution for another time.

—Thurston Smith, C.A.S. '71  
Associate Registrar,  
Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Harvard University

[April 1993]

**Federal News Service**

In the aftermath of the bombing of the World Trade Center, the Hon. Mario Cuomo suffers a gruesome case of logorrhea right there in the "safest" city in the world—safer even than Beirut or Washington, D.C.:

As far as apprehension is concerned, we all have that feeling—that feeling of being violated. It is still true that this is the safest place in the world, that you have the best law enforcement people, the best fire service people, the best public employees, the best federal investigative unit in the whole world. All of them working together. You will have now a heightened security in every way that it can be heightened. You have on the state side—I assume this will happen with other governments as well—all state officials working harder to enforce codes, working more diligently at every security measure that you can take. All of that will be done.

And so, what used to be the safest place in the world will be safer still. . . .

[February 27, 1993]

**San Francisco Chronicle**

Beyond the devilry of R. Limbaugh! With poetry and svelte syllogism Miss Susan Margolis (author of *Fame!*) exhorts all Americans to follow Him:

Remember, near the end of *Casablanca*, when Ingrid Bergman and her husband ask Humphrey Bogart to give them exit visas so they can escape to safety and keep working to defeat the Nazis?

. . . Right now, according to recent polls, three quarters of Americans are Ingrid Bergman and her husband. We've all got our personal fights and fortunes to consider, but Bill Clinton, our Bogart, holds everybody's exit visas—his economic plan—which could free us from dictatorship of the deficit and possibly lead to a happy ending. . . .

Maybe, just maybe, Clinton is everything he seems to be: a man disciplined and smart enough to have figured out what he