

is the perfect antidote to the sort of crisis-to-crisis revisionism one finds in the histories of our time written by such leading public relations agents as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and James MacGregor Burns—not to forget Barbara Walters and her fellow slick-and-shine trendies in the news media.

Lasky's demolition of the myth of Camelot was all the more infuriating to the image-makers because the author of *JFK: The Man and the Myth* dug up Kennedy's own words as a congressman and a senator to raise doubts about JFK's credentials as a liberal saint. It was even worse when he cited—by news account, page, and date—the trendies' own critical comments about Kennedy's record and his pre-1960 qualifications for the presidency. To remind Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. that, before being starstruck on the road to Los Angeles, he worshiped at the temple of Adlai Stevenson and ridiculed Kennedy as an opportunist—that's hitting a man low. It was the same with Lasky's post-Watergate book: To go into the stacks and dig out accounts of FDR's imperial abuse of power and of the shady tricks practiced by JFK and LBJ prior to the Nixon Reign of Terror—that is the foul technique, as the *Times's* critic was quick to point out, of a literary hit man.

So, too, with Henry Ford II, the playboy (now grown to playelder) who would be remembered in history as American industry's pioneer

statesman, opening new frontiers of civic responsibility and social consciousness for twentieth-century capitalism. Once again, Lasky has gone to the stacks, delved into the records, but more: He has sought out those who not only know the Ford behind the public relations chrome but, for their own reasons, are willing, even eager, to render eye- and ear-witness accounts of his battles with his business associates, stockholders, wives, and family members.

The result is a biographical bull's eye, as fascinating in its revelations regarding the mythology of Detroit and the ego-magnetic auto industry as Lasky's previous books were in dealing with Washington and the libido-driven political industry. For those who like gossip of the broad-gauge historical variety, the book is a trove: Here are young Henry the Second, outgoing Ford Motor Company president Harry Bennett, and Henry's aide, John Bugas, all packing rods, not because of labor-management problems, but in the heat of a stockholder fight that would result in Bennett's being pushed out to make room for the future statesman-of-industry; there is Henry, recipient of a laudatory letter from the Americans for Democratic Action for proposing "a lasting contribution to the unity of the free world," privately calling Charles Revson, the cosmetics czar, "Le Beau Kike"

because of Revson's attentions to Ford's separated wife, Cristina; or Henry again, arrested for driving under the influence while in California, dismissing the incident with the four-word axiom that encapsulates his life's mode and gives this book its title.

But behind these revealing glimpses, the plumbline that runs throughout the story of Henry Ford II is that of a man born, as George Bernard Shaw once wrote of the dynastic heirs of another generation,

with too much of the world's money and too little of its brains. A failure in private life, ultimately a failure in running the business formed, indeed invented, by his grandfather and nurtured by his father Edsel, Henry the Second would seem to be living, breathing evidence of the shortcomings of public relations and image-making. There is, it would seem, just so much even the most resourceful PR-man can do with a cross between Charles Foster Kane and Mad Ludwig. □

BLUE SMOKE & MIRRORS

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Alan L. Miller

I stood amidst the thousands milling around Faneuil Hall on that afternoon in 1979, expecting to experience a moment of history. The Kennedy campaign choreography was executed with an assurance that comes

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with years of practice. The candidate's appearance was preceded by a procession of relatives and confidants whose entrances bespoke their celebrity. They strode through the heavily cordoned walkway while the crowd buzzed with mounting anticipation. A girl to my left sighed; a drunk on my right belched. Finally, there was the senator with wife Joan. They were propelled by a phalanx of secret service men and the euphoria of the



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celebrants—one of whom penetrated the flying wedge to press a rose into the candidate's hand. The moment was indelible for it was my first visit to Boston and Edward Kennedy's last hurrah. Yet at the time I was certain that he was to be the Democratic presidential nominee.

Such was the ephemeral nature of Campaign '80. And if Jack Germond and Jules Witcover haven't written the best account of that election year, they have certainly captured its essence in their clever title.

Election retrospections have several strikes against them from the outset. Since Teddy White cornered the market twenty years ago, most other efforts have seemed pale facsimiles. And because everyone knows the ending, these political sagas have the soggy impact of yesterday's newspaper. Yet we are drawn to them to verify our sense of history and because we are fascinated by the crucible of power. Victory favors but one. The loser becomes a trophy in another man's career—a mere historical footnote.

The authors, whose combined journalistic experience totals sixty-three years, are two of the best in the business. Their acute analysis underscores the paradox of political insiders being upstaged by a congenial California gentleman who specializes in being underestimated by his electoral opponents.

From the start Ronald Reagan seemed more a curiosity than a campaign presence. When he stumbled in the Iowa caucuses, the media were quick to concentrate upon his Republican challengers. But as the authors remind us, there was little question Governor Reagan would capture his party's nomination when the GOP assembled for its July convention in Detroit. The ease with which he dispatched his primary contenders was but a prelude to the November deluge when the Reagan juggernaut inundated Jimmy Carter and the Democratic Party.

It is fashionable to credit Mr. Reagan's stunning victory to the ineptitude of the Carter presidency and to the Democrats' own bloodletting that culminated in their tepid New York City convention. The authors, however, concentrate upon the Reagan campaign organization that was carefully calibrated to take advantage of every situation. While the Democrats were self-destructing throughout the primaries and the presidential contest, the Reagan campaign kept gaining momentum by turning momentary misfortunes into advantages. Whether it was George Bush

being ambushed on a high school stage in Nashua, New Hampshire, John Anderson sputtering platitudes during the non-debate in Baltimore, or President Carter shrinking behind a podium in Cleveland, it was obvious that no one could match either Mr. Reagan's *persona* or his unfailing instinct for tapping the national discontent.

To many pundits, Ronald Reagan was an innocent abroad—a nice guy who possessed neither the savvy nor the stamina for a sustained campaign. Germond and Witcover reveal, instead, a man with a keen sense of political sophistication.

The Iowa setback is a case in point. It would have been expedient to cashier campaign manager John Sears in the wake of that embarrassing defeat. According to our authors, Sears had already proved to be a campaign liability. He was unwilling to cooperate with Governor Reagan's confidants and had an unnerving habit of patronizing the candidate. Yet Mr. Reagan waited until the New Hampshire primary victory to unload Sears and then bring Stuart Spencer aboard a campaign that was clearly back on track. The manner in which Sears was dismissed is a study in political pragmatism.

So too was the resolution of the vice presidential melee in Detroit. Germond and Witcover contrast Reagan's subtle overtures to Gerald Ford against the frenzied television coverage that saw Walter Cronkite launching a "co-presidency," while Barbara Walters made a fool of herself grovelling for an exclusive interview with Mr. Ford after his CBS "summit" with Walter. When the smoke finally cleared in Detroit, the "dream ticket" was quite unnecessary. Mr. Reagan's cultivation of Ford healed the 1976 rift, steadied the party for the coming campaign, and demonstrated a candidate clearly in control.

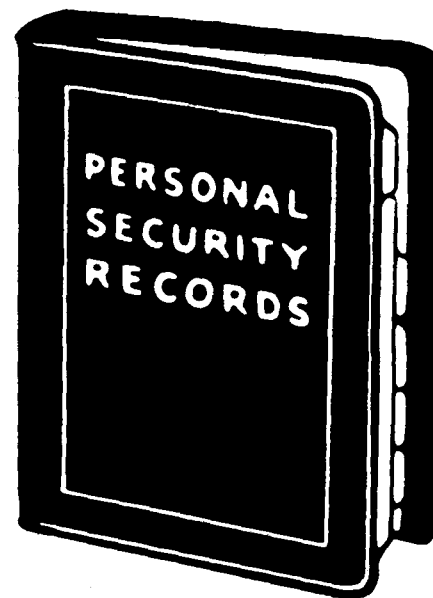
By comparison, Jimmy Carter's renomination was highlighted by: a squeaky acceptance speech during which he honored Senator Humphrey's memory by ridiculing his name; an awkward attempt to keep the convention delegates applauding for twenty minutes after his forgettable speech while everyone wondered where in the hell Kennedy was; and finally, the pathetic sight of the president following the Massachusetts senator around the stage like a lost puppy.

The campaign was anti-climactic and the authors are unable to build toward a suspenseful ending simply because there was none. For a fleeting moment it appeared that Jimmy

Carter might pull the hostages out of Iran for an eleventh-hour comeback. But the Reagan strategists had that base covered as well. Media cynicism over the president's selective use of the hostage crisis as a defense against Kennedy's challenge during the primaries allowed the Reagan campaign to condition the electorate for an "October surprise." The Carter people were so defensive about appearing duplicitous that when word finally came from Tehran on Sunday afternoon, the president

scrupulously avoided waiting until evening, opting instead to interrupt the football games to announce that the release was imminent. By then the voters were convinced that the job was too big for him and they turned in record numbers to the Republican Party.

Blue Smoke & Mirrors is not definitive history but it is a fascinating narrative. The Democrats won't enjoy the book because it highlights their foibles. But then they didn't care for the election returns, either. □



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ON BEHALF OF HADLEY ARKES AND LESLIE GELB

I am seldom moved to respond to reviews of books, even reviews of my own books. Thoughtful persons know that important works can only be judged in their fullness and that unimportant ones needn't be reviewed at all. For me, then, the chief function of such essays is to alert me to the level of understanding attained by the reviewer as he discusses a work I have found fit for study. In the November issue of *The American Spectator*, Edward Banfield displays his understanding of Hadley Arkes's *The Philosopher in the City*, a book of genuine significance, and records so clear and so alarming a set of misapprehensions as to summon this reply. However, since Mr. Banfield's comments never rise to the level of a critical review, perhaps it is not out of place for me to apprise *Spectator* readers of the actual aims and general character of the book.

I shall comment only briefly on Mr. Arkes's "style" as a writer, although Mr. Banfield devotes much space and passion to it. *The Philosopher in the City* is intended to establish the moral boundaries within which justifiable political actions occur. The writing is never "pretentious," though it is elegant, and the only "gibberish" associated with it is what Mr. Banfield has had to say about it. The thesis Mr. Arkes defends no longer commands the loyalty it once enjoyed and so he must be very careful in arranging arguments in its behalf. Mr. Banfield seems to think that this care is merely ritualistic. "I am aware," he says, "that many people think this is the way academic books should be written." What Mr. Banfield apparently is not aware of is that this is the way significant issues must be analyzed, and that "academic books" are written as they are because of the requirements imposed on them by consequential issues. Having written quite a number of "academic books" myself, and as one who reads and contributes to the major journals in philosophy, I can only admire Mr. Arkes for his ability to make such issues accessible to a general audience. To create the illusion that the book is "pretentious," Mr. Banfield indulges in the sorts of lexical

gymnastics that gave the Medieval grammarians such bad reputations. Yet, unlike the Scholastics, Mr. Banfield does not celebrate but violates logic in his playful and pointless parsings. He chastises Mr. Arkes for the expression, "inescapably implies," and asks, "... are some implications escapable?" Yes, Mr. Banfield, some implications are escapable and some are called the *as-of-now material implications* (*consequentiae ut nunc*). Thus Mr. Arkes employs the correct and informing adverb where he wishes to note the formal implications of his argument, and Mr. Banfield employs "gibberish" where he would have readers respect his lexical purity.

The Philosopher in the City examines a wide range of contemporary political issues and problems. Mr. Arkes cautiously explores the assets and liabilities resulting from purely pragmatic and "utilitarian" approaches to these, and leads the reader to an appreciation of how such approaches nearly invariably result in contradictions or counter-intuitive consequences. He proceeds to defend, in quasi-Kantian terms, an alternative approach grounded in a rational analysis of competing moral claims. Through this analysis it becomes clear that even the most prosaic and sentimental objectives of government—such as Mr. Banfield's search for "... the terms on which we can live together in society"—proceed from a *moral* point of view. Once the reader respects the sense in which all significant legislation reflects the quest for justifications, it is only a small step to the recognition that much recent law stands in contradictory relation to its own justificatory language. A principle, for example, that declares the murder of a non-threatening human being to be wrong cannot be the *same* principle that allows genocide or infanticide once it is shown that the intended victims are in fact non-threatening human beings. Thus, when Mr. Arkes refers to the *necessary* conclusions yielded by an analysis of justifications, he is simply acknowledging the syllogistic char-

acter of the analysis. I might note that it is in just this sense that John Locke—scarcely a Kantian!—recognized the *axiomatic* status of moral reasoning and described it as a kind of geometry.

I leave it to readers of *The Philosopher in the City*—and there should be many—to determine Mr. Arkes's success in his explorations of today's highly charged social issues. He is, of course, and *contra* Mr. Banfield, quite right in noting that neither the logical form nor the major premises of moral arguments are in any way affected by the merely contingent facts gathered by "social scientists." If it can be shown that "X" is categorically wrong and that "Y" is an instance of "X," then "Y" remains wrong no matter what its consequences. It will not do, as Mr. Banfield tries to do, to declare that there are no categorical imperatives. It is necessary to show how Mr. Arkes has gone wrong in arguing that there are and then—and here's the trick—to show that if he is wrong we can still find reasons for our system of justice, for our very idea of justice. When Mr. Banfield raises the flag of Utilitarianism, he can only expect a salute from the "policy-maker," for the political philosopher's allegiance is commanded by higher things. Note, by the way, that if it were the case that a given truth could only produce a net increase in the world's suffering it would be necessary on utilitarian grounds to withhold or deny that truth. This is just one reason why seekers after truth must forego the popular enthusiasm for Mr. Banfield's version of consequentialism which can only assess prostitution in terms of its public effects. I should say, however, that prostitution, on which Mr. Banfield dwells at a length as wearying as it is surprising, is introduced by Mr. Arkes as one of a number of hard cases; cases made hard precisely because they must be understood in the language and within the context of a constitutional order that respects liberty. Far more attention is given to legislation affecting housing, public education, free speech, and "affirmative action." In each instance, Mr. Arkes presents the implicit—and often the explicit

—moral terms adopted by legislators and jurists in framing the reasons behind their actions. And in each instance we discover any number of *formal* inconsistencies between juridical dispositions and moral justifications. Juggled in the tense and often spastic hands of public opinion, the most fundamental precepts of a just state are reshaped into mere "policies." The very concept of justice is thereby traduced into an enlarged parlor-game which holds wisdom and prudence as hostages to clever hacks.

It is merely unfortunate that Mr. Banfield failed to understand the book. But it is alarming to discover the sources of his incomprehension. He notes, for example, that Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas disagree on such matters as slavery, abortion, prostitution, etc., and concludes from this that, "Moral principles turn out to be a good deal less knowable and certain than Mr. Arkes began by saying." It appears to be Mr. Banfield's thesis that unless every axiom of a science is known at precisely the same time, none of the axioms is knowable or certain. In Euclid's geometry parallel lines never converge; in Riemann's geometry, parallel lines are great circles which intersect at two loci. Banfield's conclusion: The axioms of geometry are neither certain nor knowable.

Tied to this logical "howler" is a vexation Mr. Banfield endures at the hands of the concept of *necessity*. It is a concept that figures in Mr. Arkes's analysis in two different ways, neither of which seems to be grasped by Mr. Banfield. There is first what Aristotle was first to call *hypothetical necessity* (necessary on a hypothesis) such that, if I *must* be in New York by 5:00 p.m. *necessarily* I must leave Washington before 4:55 p.m. And then there is the well-known *necessary* relation (the *logical necessity*) joining true premises and a true conclusion. Thus, if the law is to hold me responsible for what I do, then *necessarily* I must be viewed as free in my actions. Thus, too, does the very idea of law *entail* a moral being.