

judgments; the moral sense of man—built into his nature—has not been extinguished, not even in the twentieth century. Moreover, the idea of morality itself does and should have political consequences. Arkes, quoting Lincoln, points out that no one has a “right” to commit a wrong. The case against slavery arose from this very insight.

Arkes is also right to conclude, against the many moral and cultural relativists who say otherwise, that the only form of government that may by right exist is a government of the people founded upon the moral idea of equality. All nations are not created equal, but all men are, and this is the moral truth that at bottom distinguishes the United States from the Soviet Union.

While much of what Arkes says about politics and justice is persuasive, questions do arise in respect to Arkes’s contention that the highest end of politics is justice. This is the ancient teaching, from Aristotle, and there are versions of it that seek to subsume the individual within society, that trample natural rights and majority rule, that give little place to freedom. Arkes plainly would not subscribe to such versions, yet there are passages in *First Things* that suggest the federal judiciary should act purely on the basis of natural or moral law. Such conduct would violate natural rights and majority rule, and the threat to liberty is obvious. Citizens would be unjustly required to behave in accord with the judiciary’s understanding of morality, which may or may not be correct. We have experienced enough judicial activism, particularly in recent years, to understand the dangers posed by a judiciary working on its own, cut adrift from the law as written.

Nevertheless, *First Things* must be judged an exceptional book, brilliant in its theoretical discussion of morals and justice, and brilliant, too, in its analysis of particular issues, which occupy its final chapters. On conscientious objection, Arkes demonstrates that exemption from law cannot be a matter of rights, but is rather one of legislative grace, and that citizens cannot exempt themselves from law merely by invoking their own personal beliefs. On war and the morality of intervention, a discussion that focuses on Vietnam, Arkes shows that there was a “presumptive moral obligation” on the part of the United States to act in Vietnam. On welfare and redistribution, Arkes makes a persuasive case, on moral grounds, against the progressive income tax: “Since there is no ground of principle which can establish the right allotments of income and pleasure, there can be no moral ground for

taking more money in taxation merely because some people have more money or feel less pleasure.”

On privacy and abortion, Arkes is at his best. “Privacy,” he observes, has become “a source of insulation from the law, a shelter in which we become free to do things the law may condemn.” But “privacy cannot be morally justified in the name of a freedom to do things that are unjustified and wrong.” Arkes shows that abortion is morally wrong. It follows that privacy cannot insulate abortion from the law. Still, “the public has not been uniform in its understanding of the grounds on which abortion ought to be regarded as wrong, and this uncertainty about the ground of judgment must complicate the task of the statesmen who would

frame a law that could at once tutor the public and gain its assent.” Arkes understands prudence and statesmanship, not only morals and justice.

*First Things* isn’t light reading, yet it is carefully and elegantly written. And while there are combinations of thought and argument that are new, it is not really an original work. I do not mean that as criticism, but praise, for in regard to morality, there isn’t anything new under the sun, and hasn’t been since the dawn of time. Arkes himself recognizes this when he says that his book is an effort to “remind” readers of things that were once well known but have been obscured in recent years. Arkes is a man who reminds, the supreme compliment for a moral philosopher. □

## EVANGELICALISM: THE COMING GENERATION

James Davison Hunter/University of Chicago Press/\$19.95

Herbert Schlossberg

For a number of years now, and with increased intensity since the 1980 election, we have been flooded by the mass media with an unremitting stream of commentary, both friendly and hostile, on the surge of evangelical influence in the United States. Last year’s Tocqueville sesquicentennial was the occasion for numerous learned disquisitions on the French aristocrat’s view that there was a close connection between the religious values of American society and its moral character and institutions. For those who believed that the evangelicals were animated by the same “traditional” values that had made America great, the ghost of Tocqueville seemed to add his blessing to the current revival, as well as providing a rationale for its continuation.

Herbert Schlossberg is the author of *Idols for Destruction* (Thomas Nelson).

Has all the hoopla about the evangelical resurgence had any substance behind it, or have the media duped us again? I think we always had reason to be skeptical about what they were telling us, even if we didn’t know much about the details. Taking a leaf from the investment adviser’s book, we could have assumed the contrarian position that once the story made the headlines the surge had already reached its peak, and that it was therefore time to take a “short” position on evangelicalism and watch it begin its inevitable plunge. Or we could have taken the evangelicals at their word about the virtues of humility, the sure knowledge that pride goeth before a fall, and, observing the rampant hubris among so many leaders in the movement, begun to write it off. And Carl F. H. Henry, perhaps the most widely respected of contemporary evangelical theologians, ended his 1986 autobiography with a lament that

evangelicalism had wasted its best opportunities.

For those scientific types who take their exercise in other ways than jumping to conclusions, there wasn’t much to go on. Now James Davison Hunter, a sociologist at the University of Virginia, has given us the evidence. In a previous book Hunter addressed the question of why evangelicalism had survived the secularism of the late twentieth century. In this one he considers how much difference it all makes. The short answer, to which his evidence points but which he does not state, is “not much.”

Anybody whose views on this subject are formed wholly by the media will be quite surprised by this conclusion. The publicity has covered the increase in political influence, untold millions given to evangelical ministries, increasing church memberships (along with shrinkage in the mainline churches), burgeoning numbers of day schools, publishers and bookstores galore, thousands of missionaries, and a bewildering variety of expressions, experiences, and personalities—something for almost every taste. Hunter lifts the cover off this bubbling pot and examines what’s inside. What’s inside is a theology weakened by increasing subjectivism; much waffling on such bellwether ideas of the movement as the doctrine of salvation; the growth of “selfist” ideology; and a watered down commitment to work, the family, and economic freedom, among other manifestations of what Hunter with good reason calls “practical theology.” The evangelical growth rate has been slowing for years, and the movement’s cultural hegemony—that was what impressed Tocqueville so—is rapidly disintegrating.

Hunter’s field of inquiry is only one small segment of the evangelical world, but an important one. His surveys focus on a group of nine evangelical colleges which are part of the Christian College Consortium and seven seminaries of similar persuasion. Hence the subtitle of his book—Hunter assumes that the future leadership of evangelicalism is fairly represented by the students and faculty members who responded to his survey. The results of his study are disturbing for those whose religious commitments are tied to orthodox Christianity. Hunter’s data show not only that the evangelical colleges are unable to arrest the encroachments of secularism, but that the students who study in them are prone to slip from the tenets of their faith. In fact, they do so with greater precipitousness than their cohorts studying at the state university that he used as a control!





How does Hunter account for such slippage in colleges that were supposed to provide some insulation from the corrosive effects of secularism? He puts the spotlight on the faculty, which his surveys show to be less orthodox than the students. Someday we ought to have studies done of the effects of graduate study on those who later become college teachers. My hypoth-

esis for such a study—hardly revolutionary—would be that the technical training the graduate students receive affects them less than the values of the graduate faculty. So that the insecurities, the snobbishness, the fear of being thought unsophisticated weigh heavily on them and influence strongly the way in which they react to the world and instruct their own students. The

students, in turn, pick up not information as much as attitudes and values. Hence the erosion that Hunter finds.

One of the book's major themes is the way people within any strong tradition react to social change. Some confront the intruding force and some adapt to it, and Hunter characterizes the Christian college faculty as belonging to the latter camp. Thus the evangelical principle, derived from the New Testament, which decries conformity with the regnant cultural system is quietly (perhaps unconsciously) set aside as the faculty seeks the approval of mentors and peers who are actively hostile to their tradition. Either by their silence or overtly, they make peace with those who are at war with everything for which they stand. That is why they react defensively against any expression of conservative Protestantism that might offend the intellectual establishment. In making this point, Hunter uses the marvelously titled work of John Murray Cuddihy, *No Offense*. As a result of all this, he says, evangelicalism is presently reenacting the old liberal retreat from historic Christianity that began a hundred years ago. It will be interesting to see whether the evangelical academic leadership takes Hunter's findings to heart or begins to circle the wagons.

Not the mere bean counter we expect in an assistant professor of sociology who does survey research, Hunter interprets his material with sympathy and intelligence, and produces from his data a rich and nourishing bean soup. Nevertheless the book has deficiencies. Some of the historical parts display the gassiness of sophomore essays. The chapter on the family, written with a co-author, is especially weak in that respect. The authors permit themselves, against experience, common sense, and a mountain of evidence, to be persuaded by dubious sources holding that such familial attributes as parental love for children are not human constants, but rather are socially conditioned, the product of nineteenth-century bourgeois sentimentality. Presumably when King David, a thousand years before Christ, was said to have wept for the life of his son, that was the work of some Victorian redactor tampering with the text. Yet, when rendered of a book written by a sociologist, the charge of inadequate historical perspective smacks of the ingratitude shown by the owner of a talking dog who complains that the mutt splits his infinitives. Besides, how many historians can write sociology?

More basic to the matter is the way Hunter targets his questionnaires. He defines the subject of his study as theologically conservative

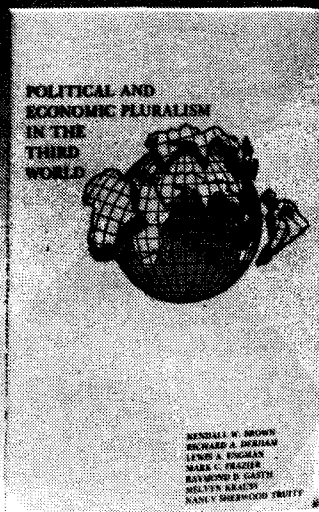
Protestantism, but his respondents all belong to only one segment of that field. Neo-evangelicalism is admittedly an important segment, but so are such groups as the conservative Lutherans (Missouri Synod, principally), Southern Baptists, charismatics, and those among the neo-Calvinists who haven't joined the evangelical meltdown. Of course, some of these groups are harder to locate, let alone survey, than the convenient grouping of the Christian College Consortium and its analogous seminaries. But social scientists are paid to solve that kind of problem.

I find Hunter completely convincing in his conclusions of the value changes undergone by these students under the tutelage of the faculties, especially inasmuch as he shows the changes proceeding year by year from the freshmen to the seniors. But there is at least a possibility that progressing from eighteen to twenty-two years of age could account for part of the change even without the college experience. Someone ought to do this kind of study with a control group of non-collegians. Or, even better, several groups which would show us if, say, laborers, retail clerks, and entrepreneurs exhibit similar transformations of outlook.

The most serious conceptual difficulty I have with the book is Hunter's notion that in the face of challenge to one's world-view the only response is either conformity or ghettoization. That has been the unfortunate assumption of evangelicalism for the last couple of generations. But Tocqueville, could he but rise from the dead and visit the University of Virginia, might say to Hunter, "If you had traveled around your country with me a hundred and fifty years ago, you would have seen the real alternative, the one that is embodied in the New Testament idea that Christians are to be the salt of the earth. That is what informed the culture of the early republic and what explains its health." Such a view expresses the "cultural mandate" that is gaining a hearing among a growing number of conservative Protestants—although evidently not many in Hunter's sampling—and not a few Catholics as well. The liberal establishment has had its own version of this in high gear for much of our century, and that accounts for the social disasters that are in train. If orthodox Christians continue to recover this aspect of their heritage, the apostles of that liberal version of the secular city will be in even more trouble than they are now.

Meanwhile, it's good to have such thoughtful work from a young sociologist. The soup course is over now, and perhaps when Professor Hunter receives tenure he'll leave the bean counting to those still in the nursery and get right to the meat and potatoes. □

## POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PLURALISM



Lewis A. Berman  
Richard A. Berman  
Mark C. Frazier  
Melvyn Krauss  
Kendall W. Brown

\$5.00 PAPERBOUND

Write for our free catalog. All orders include a complimentary subscription to monthly Imprimis essay series.

HILLSDALE COLLEGE PRESS  
Hillsdale, Michigan 49242



WILL ★ BUCKLEY ★ KILPATRICK ★ HARVEY ★ SOBRAN ★ KIRKPATRICK  
EVANS & NOVAK ★ RUSHER ★ HART ★ YODER ★ PODHORETZ ★ RABINOWITZ ★ LAMBRO  
★ SHELTON ★ DE ORE ★ KELLEY ★ WRIGHT ★ LOCHER ★ MAC NALLY ★ STAYSKAL ★

**It's an ALL-STAR conservative cast ...**  
**It's New ★ It's Weekly ★ It's RIGHT ON!**



39  
Issues  
only  
\$23.95

Call TOLL-FREE or Return Coupon  
**800-558-1244**

In Iowa and Alaska Call Collect 515-456-2585

Published by Chronicle Publications, a  
110 year old independent newspaper  
company.

**CONSERVATIVE  
CHRONICLE**

Box 29 SA • Hampton, Iowa 50441

NOW, every week receive a 32 page tabloid devoted to nationally-distributed newspaper columnists, with a conservative appeal. Most of them have every column published in full. Enjoy also, a witty selection from acclaimed cartoonists. Great reading, a handy reference. There's a TOPIC INDEX in every issue. Money-back guarantee.

\*\*\*\*\*  
YES, I accept your Introductory Subscription  
Offer of 39 issues for \$23.95. (Add \$15 for  
foreign postage). I understand I can obtain a  
full refund on unused portion at any time.  
Payment method:  
☐ Bill Me ☐ Check ☐ Visa ☐ M.C. ☐ AMX  
Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
\*\*\*\*\*



## RUNNING CRITICAL: THE SILENT WAR, RICKOVER, AND GENERAL DYNAMICS

Patrick Tyler/Harper & Row/\$19.95

Mary C. N. McConnell

Patrick Tyler is a *Washington Post* reporter and a Bob Woodward protégé. It shows. He has adopted the pseudo-novelistic style of the *Post's* investigative reporting: "The noontime air was crisp on a spring day in 1971 when Hilliard W. Paige pushed through the turnstile into the wind tunnel that was Lexington Avenue."

He has also adopted that newspaper's characteristic perspective on issues. Fights are all about power and personalities; issues provide useful cover. Thus, in Mr. Tyler's account, "the story of [the SSN 688 attack submarine] is a story of ambition, commercial greed, and the exercise of unmoderated power in the peacetime system of defense procurement." Above all, it is a "story of three men."

If this were, say, a novel by Arthur Hailey (add a few scenes with the wives and mistresses, retitle it *Submarine*, and it plausibly could be), the advance posters in the bookstores would profile these three larger-than-life leading characters. Hyman Rickover: the crusty old admiral knew what he wanted and set out to destroy anyone who stood in his way. David Lewis: the easy charm of an old-style Southern gentleman hid a ruthless determination to protect his company and his reputation, even against the truth. Takis Veliotis: the rough-hewn Greek shipbuilder would claw his way to the top of General Dynamics—if his shadowy past did not catch him first.

Their story, or the story of the SSN 688, opens dramatically in 1968 with a race between the U.S. carrier *Enterprise* and a Soviet *November*-class submarine. The CIA had claimed that this class of submarines, the Soviets' oldest, traveled at a speed of only 25 knots. Admiral Rickover and his allies thought this estimate was too conservative, and, when a Soviet submarine was discovered tailing the *Enterprise*, they seized the opportunity to prove it. As the carrier deliberately picked up speed, the unsuspecting Soviet commander brought his submarine to 31 knots, and precipitated a defense procurement crisis. The oldest and pre-

sumably slowest Soviet submarines, it turned out, were faster than anything we had in our fleet.

The United States needed a faster attack submarine, quickly. There were a number of promising developments in submarine technology, but only one completed plan for a new ship: Admiral Rickover's. Mr. Tyler is convinced that the admiral's overweening pride stood in the way of better alternatives to the SSN 688. He may be right. What he cannot deny is the political wisdom of Admiral Rickover's refusal to take a chance on new designs, and the delays they would inevitably produce, at a time when the *Enterprise* incident had captured Congress's fickle attention. Had the decision waited just two years, until 1970, would any new submarine have been built in the decade that followed?

It is of course the duty of a modern-day investigative reporter to uncover conspiracy. Mr. Tyler obliges by revealing the military-industrial-congressional complex's conspiracy to foist a new attack submarine on a Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, who was so determined to reduce defense spending that he cut his estimates of Soviet naval strength to fit his budget cloth.

Hawkish members of the congressional armed services committees thus accepted, with a wink, Admiral Rickover's modest proposal to build a single prototype submarine, recognizing that

a multi-billion dollar request for a new fleet would irresistibly follow. Under David Lewis's leadership, General Dynamics then presented the Navy with a much lower bid for the first attack submarines than the corporation's shipyard engineers considered plausible. When the low bid disarmed the submarine's critics, Admiral Rickover rewarded General Dynamics with a contract to build all of the first eleven attack submarines at General Dynamics' Electric Boat shipyard in Groton, Connecticut.

Eventually the reckoning came due. The inevitable and massive cost overruns, pushed even higher by inflation and the energy crisis, ignited a protracted battle between General Dynamics and the Navy to fix blame and financial responsibility for the submarine's troubles. After much lobbying, and some for-the-record spasms of congressional outrage at defense industry cupidity, a deal was cut. General Dynamics wrote off a \$359 million loss, and the Navy turned over \$639 million in taxpayer dollars to the corporation.

This is to skip lightly over more than two hundred pages of high boardroom drama: David Lewis bribing and browbeating his accountants and managers into disguising General Dynamics' mounting losses at Electric Boat from Wall Street and the SEC; Takis Veliotis bludgeoning the shipyard into reducing costs while collecting subcontractor kickbacks in his Swiss bank account; Admiral Rickover shouting over the telephone and into Mr. Veliotis's tape recorder. These tapes, which were subsequently handed over to Mr. Tyler, are quoted at interminable length. Indeed, no detail of corporate infighting or personal recrimination appears too minor to recount.

But all conspiracies must come to their tragic denouement:

Somewhere in the midst of all the chaos, the United States lost so much ground in the silent war with the Soviet Union that by the early 1980s no one could say with any certainty who was ahead. Only one thing was sure: the Soviets had outbuilt the United States by more than two to one . . .

The implication is that "all the chaos" was to blame for this growing military imbalance. But then, briefly and belatedly, Mr. Tyler adds a crucial point:

The Soviets had spent tens of billions of dollars on submarines, while Rickover had a couple of billion to build a competitive fleet. . . . When he was defeated, he went out swinging at the shipyards, as if they had somehow defeated his destiny. It was not true. Rickover had been defeated by the relative resource commitments of the superpowers in the silent war.

Couldn't some of this so-shocking procurement conspiracy—the useful myth of the prototype, the tacit acceptance of underbidding, the Navy's ultimate willingness to buy peace with the shipyards—be attributed to the uncompromising fact that throughout the 1970s America's defense was costing more than Americans were willing to pay? General Dynamics' low bid reflected David Lewis's understanding of this fact. So did Admiral Rickover's desperate efforts to bully the shipyards into greater efficiency, and successive Navy secretaries' willingness to reimburse their shipping contractors (Newport News and Litton as well as General Dynamics) for some of the cost overruns they incurred after underbidding their contracts. Mr. Tyler sees only the greed and the jockeying for power, but surely his conspiracy was also, in part, a conspiracy to keep the submarine program alive until the American people came to their senses and paid their bills.

Mr. Tyler's vivid storytelling notwithstanding, the story of America's submarine fleet is not really a "story of three men," nor even—at least not yet—a story of heroes and villains. Instead it is preeminently a story of the geopolitical struggle between a great land power that decided to create the world's largest and most deadly submarine fleet, and the great maritime power that could not bring itself to match this effort.

Mr. Tyler concludes: "The shame of the long history of the nuclear attack submarine is the shame of those who helped create the system and those who accepted it, opting for expediency and short-term success at the expense of long-term sanity."

He is right, and he doesn't even know why. □



Mary C. N. McConnell is a free-lance writer living in Chicago.