

Washington Times

More Desperate Truths from the Cornpone Canoodler of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue:

"The central lesson I have learned in three years as your president is that we desperately, desperately, desperately have to face the fact that we must go forward together. If we do, there is no stopping us—the best is yet to come and your future will be the glory of all American history."

[FEBRUARY 12, 1996]

New York Times

Columnist Bob Herbert again sounding like a reject from the *Times* correspondence page:

You have to wonder about the Republicans. From what region of exceedingly bad karma did they recruit their latest crop of Presidential candidates and Congressional leaders?

The party is dominated by characters like Phil Gramm, Pat Buchanan, Bob Dole, Newt Gingrich, Dick Armey and Alfonse D'Amato. When they gallop across the national landscape they remind you of the Wild Bunch. You couldn't extract a half-pint of compassion from the entire assemblage. Small children run at the first sight of them....

It's anybody's guess where the voters will lurch next. The Republicans could win with a candidate who is cheerful, moderate and willing to exhibit a dollop of compassion. Maybe they should draft Bill Clinton.

[FEBRUARY 9, 1996]

Washington Post

The sad plight of an American he-man in this, the twilight of the Sexual Revolution:

My husband feels and rearranges his private parts in public. I've pleaded and begged him to go to the restroom for this. He refuses. Please advise me how to prevent more shocks, humiliations and desperately unhappy incidents of this nature.

[FEBRUARY 18, 1996]

Publishers Weekly

The unconscionable buildup of yet another wholly fictive account of the private life of the most widely maligned president since Grover Cleveland:

News of her existence first surfaced a few months back in an item that ran in *Esquire*, but **Dolly Kyle** of Dallas, Tex., is ready to go public in a big way via the book business...assuming, that is, that a publisher bites.

This month, Kyle's agent, **Lucianne Goldberg**, will begin shopping around a bombshell roman à clef that could knock *Primary Colors* right out of the headlines. Titled *Purposes of the Heart*—and written originally as a "therapeutic" journal during her many years in group therapy—Kyle's novel thinly veils her alleged nearly lifelong affair with **President Clinton**, whom she says she has known and "loved on and off" since they first met when they were preteens growing up in Hot Springs, Ark. Their last encounter, which kicks off the book, was in 1994 at their 30th high school reunion.

During a recent telephone interview, Kyle told PW that she was motivated to novelize and publish her journal shortly after Clinton's 12-year affair with **Gennifer Flowers** was made public; outraged, she had apparently assumed that she was the only "serious" other woman in his life. Names, dates, and places have been changed in her book (Hillary's character is named **Mallory Cheatum**) to "protect the guilty!" said Kyle, who is a practicing attorney and a moderate Republican.

[FEBRUARY 5, 1996]

New York Times

R.W. Apple, Jr., on the front page of America's newspaper of record, awards former Secretary of Education Alexander another cabinet post, perhaps in acknowledgment of the great man's campaign walks:

Not that the candidates are ever shy about claiming victory. Tonight Senator Bob Dole, Patrick J. Buchanan and Lamar Alexander, the former Transportation Secretary...

[FEBRUARY 13, 1996]

Chronicle of Higher Education

The crafty Professor Donald N. McCloskey of the University of Iowa demonstrates a simple low-cost way for the menfolk to maintain their faculty positions at a great cow college in these historic days of affirmative action:

Just a few days after Donald N. McCloskey began the process of becoming a woman, female academics welcomed the prominent economist as one of their own.

At a meeting of the Social Science History Association last November, a small group of women threw a dinner party for Professor McCloskey, with toasts to his decision to change his gender and pink balloons that proclaimed, "It's a Girl!"

That week, Donald McCloskey legally changed his first name to Deirdre. Since then, he has had facial surgery and undergone a procedure to alter his voice. Next would come a sex-change operation, but Professor McCloskey is unsure whether he will take that step. He now prefers to be known as a she, and is taking female hormones and wearing dresses and skirts instead of suits and ties.

In the staid world of economics, the transformation of one of its well-known members has stunned the profession. At a meeting of the American Economic Association last month, Deirdre McCloskey caused a stir when she appeared on several panels wearing a red dress and a blonde wig. Still, she says, the response she has received from a profession not known for its unconventionality has been overwhelmingly positive.

"I expected to lose my job," says Ms. McCloskey, who has been a professor of economics and history at the University of Iowa since 1980. "I was prepared to move to Spokane and become a secretary in a grain elevator, but I didn't have to."

Professor McCloskey was divorced in November from Joanne McCloskey, a professor of nursing at Iowa and his wife of 30 years.

[FEBRUARY 16, 1996]

The Great Books Series

Proof from the quill of Prof. Doktor Stanley Fish (no joke) that further cutbacks in higher education could be highly beneficial to the Republic's mental health:

Being sequestered in the academy has its advantages as well as its liabilities; many who wished for increased public attention to their labours got it in the past few years of the right-wing backlash and found that, rather than bringing respect and influence, it brought danger and the elimination of progressive programmes. Perhaps it is not so bad a thing after all that in the United States those who operate the levers of commerce and government do not give much heed to what goes on in our classrooms or in our learned journals.

[from *Professional Correctness: Literary Studies and Political Change*, by Stanley Fish, Oxford University Press, \$19.95—overpriced]

New York Times

How our liberals produce the *Kultursmog*: Another fatuous statist from the Old Order assumes room temperature and his genius is solemnized on the front page of one of the *Kultursmog*'s most offensive smoke stacks. Moreover, the Great Man's departure from politics is presented as an unfortunate accident of history ("a growing conservative mood," "divisiveness within his own party"), a tragedy in which an obscure figure—"a conservative Republican, Ronald Reagan"—played some obscure part:

BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF., Feb. 17—Edmund G. (Pat) Brown, the former Governor of California who fathered the state's modern economic boom with expansive government programs to build freeways, vast water systems and public universities open to all at low cost, died on Friday at his home here. He was 90....

The burly and ebullient Mr. Brown, a Democrat, served two terms as Governor, from 1959 until 1967, turning back a challenge from former Vice President Richard M. Nixon in 1962. But a growing conservative mood and divisiveness within his own party over student unrest and the Vietnam War led to his defeat by a conservative Republican, Ronald Reagan, in 1966.

[FEBRUARY 18, 1996]

Toronto Globe & Mail

More blubber-blubber-blubber from HRC's claque:

The timing of the book is exquisite. It's not every author who must interrupt a book tour in order to testify before a grand jury; it's not every witness who is asked by a grand juror to autograph her book. Clinton has forced into the open the kind of issues—ideals and ethics—that will be at the heart of the presidential campaign that has just begun.

And just as Clinton is calling for Americans to rethink their priorities, she's getting her own lesson in what's uppermost in the public's mind. A television interviewer grilled her recently on the scandals plaguing her presidency. Then, he concluded, "let's talk about those disadvantaged children for a couple of seconds."

[FEBRUARY 2, 1996]

San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle

More dirty tricks—a Republican attack team smuggles idiotic poesy onto the correspondence page of a great American Sunday gazette in another attempt to portray the children of Eleanor Roosevelt as mental defectives:

Notes on the Republican
Primary Hopefuls—1996

There's Newt, Newt, rooty-toot-toot,
All dressed up in his Republican suit,
About you and me—doesn't give a hoot!
Newt, Newt, rooty-toot-toot!

And Dole, Dole, merry old Dole,
Wants to take on the presidential role.
Life in the White House—that's his goal.
Dole, Dole, merry old Dole.

And Forbes, Steve, let us all grieve,
Has more money than you can believe,
His tax proposals make you want to
just heave.
Oh, Steve, Steve, let us all grieve.

These are the *best* of the Republican group,
Cut those taxes, make the rich folk whoop,
Punish the poor and water the soup,
And look at the *rest* of the Republican group!

[JANUARY 28, 1996]

Vashon—Maury Island Beachcomber (Vashon, Washington)

On the correspondence page of a leading organ of advanced thought, Miss Katrin Fletter raises the furry flag of animism:

I am sorry, but I am really annoyed at all the "oh so careful" language protecting a person's right to hunt.

For the record, I am 100 percent against it—here or anywhere. These rationalizations about too many deer doing so much damage—give me a break.

When was the last time a deer abused a child or got drunk or killed someone? Why don't we have open season on humans since they are overpopulating the entire earth, cause traffic accidents and destroy entire forests?

Have you ever wondered why it's mostly men who hunt? Have you ever asked yourself why such a very small percentage of people bully the majority into accepting that it is their right to kill? Animals are part of my family as much as any human. I believe they have the right to regulate their own populations on the precious little land we humans have left them. And that's how I feel, thank you very much.

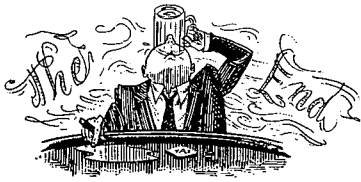
[FEBRUARY 7, 1996]

Newsweek

Jennifer Lynn Weston, lucky not to have been born Chinese:

There's a little computer-printed sign tacked above my desk that says, "Being a Bad Speller Is Not a Moral Failing." I put it there as a reminder to myself, more than anyone else, for I'm still in the process of putting my "failing" into perspective.... A combination of genetic and environmental factors accounts for my difficulties. I've a natural tendency to try to spell words the way they sound. And I was born among a people who speak English, a notoriously nonphonetic tongue.... Most of my spelling flubs can be traced to three idiosyncrasies of English.... My real bugbear is vowels.... I'm not the first to protest the madness.... Perhaps it's time for me and my fellow bad spellers to take the offensive.

[MARCH 1, 1996]



Blasted

I WAS ON THE TELEPHONE talking to a former Foreign Office minister about arms sales to Saddam Hussein when, at 7:01 on the evening of February 9, the IRA ended their cease-fire. Their 1,000-lb. bomb seemed to explode just outside the windows of the offices at London's *Sunday Telegraph*. The shock wave hit me in the stomach. I ducked. From the corner of my eye, I saw one of my colleagues, a veteran of foreign wars, dive to the floor. I dropped the receiver and did the same. Nothing happened. There was no secondary blast. I stood up, feeling foolish. No doubt I had looked foolish. Many of the reporters, being inquisitive, had rushed to the (shatterproof) windows. The bomb had gone off in South Quay Plaza, a couple of hundred yards from our offices in the Canary Wharf tower. But nothing was visible from the tower: no smoke, no fire. All was apparently quiet out there. Inside, the picture on the newsdesk television was breaking up because the satellite dish on the roof of the tower had been damaged in the blast. A news reader gave some sketchy details, but there was no indication of the full horror of what had happened—two dead, more than 100 injured—until much later.

ADRENALINE WAS PUMPING AMONG the Atex terminals. There was a lot of laughter and a lot of cursing. By the time we had been evacuated from the building, we were buzzing. A distinguished member of the *Daily Telegraph's* editorial team was striding about in his camel hair coat, back straight, chin thrust forward, seizing women by the shoulders and kissing them on each cheek. We moved east, like a column of refugees, except that we had mobile telephones, and gathered outside a 24-hour McDonald's which had sustained minor bomb damage and was closed for business (only in England). A pretty girl from the *Observer* came by and said that, actually, she was, you know, doing a story, and could anyone tell her what was going on? She wore a black coat and a sheepish grin. She tapped a ballpoint pen nervously against her thigh. Someone took her by the arm and pointed back towards the tower: "Over there, love, that's where you want to be. But the police won't let you through." She would not have been any the wiser if the police had let her through, but perhaps Gerry Adams could have told her what was happening. He tipped off the White House that the cease-fire was at an end. He did not bother to ring Downing Street, but that may be because he has fewer friends there.

STUART REID is associate editor for comment at London's *Sunday Telegraph*.

AS READERS OF THE *WASHINGTON POST* will know, Adams is president of Sinn Féin, the political wing of the IRA. In a self-serving article in the *Post* a week after the bombing, Adams wrote: "The responsibility for the tragic explosion in London rests squarely with the IRA, but the blame for the breakdown in talks can only be claimed by the Major government." In other words, it was all John Major's fault. Here is how the argument goes. The Mitchell report on decommissioning had proposed that the IRA should surrender their weapons *during* all-party talks on the future of Ireland. That was not acceptable to the IRA, who at best might have agreed to turn over some weapons *after* talks, or to the Protestant majority, who wanted the IRA to disarm *before* talks. Impasse. Major therefore made a counter-proposal: that elections should be held in Northern Ireland as a route to all-party talks. The IRA saw that as a betrayal of the peace process and reacted by planting the bomb. If Major had not threatened the IRA with democracy, they would not have planted the bomb.

THE IRA FEAR THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE, because they do not have the support of the people. Sinn Féin seldom gets more than 10 percent of the vote in parliamentary elections. Yet Adams struts and frets and protests his (injured) innocence, just like a regular politician. Only hours before the second bomb went off in London, he was telling his fans in West Belfast: "We say to John Major, 'Pull back from the abyss, we want to talk and we want peace but we must have justice and we must have freedom and we must be treated as equals.'" Not even the Liberal International could buy that. Perhaps Bill Clinton is now regretting having seized the Adams paw. No doubt they still ♥ Gerry in some of the more backward parts of Boston and Philadelphia, but the man's stock is low in the civilized world, and even Clinton has to take notice of what the civilized world thinks. No man who has a decent respect for the opinion of mankind can afford to be caught in bed with Gerry Adams.

A LAST WORD ABOUT THE TWO MEN who died in the Docklands bomb. They were mutilated almost beyond recognition. They worked in a newspaper shop. I sometimes went there at lunchtime to buy Bassett's Liquorice Allsorts. The younger of the men, a 29-year-old Muslim, used to give a shy, conspiratorial smile when I, a seemingly responsible and mature adult, bought a bag of children's candy. At 7:01 on the evening of February 9, 1996, that smile vanished, and so did the face. ☹