

on the degree to which the Congress could exceed the President's spending recommendations, and Cabinet Secretaries had seats on the floors of Congress, to enhance the process of deliberation beyond the exchange of formal messages, with the intent of increasing economy and accountability in the public business.

So far as the judiciary was concerned, the Confederate Constitution reflected the pure Jeffersonian principles of the early Republic. The right of judicial review was concurrent—shared by the state and federal courts. For the most basic principle was that the people ruled—that government rested upon the consent of the governed, the people, and that this did not mean simply whatever temporary majority happened to get control of the Supreme Court or Congress or presidency. It meant rather the consent of the people acting through all branches of their state and federal governments. At bottom were, as Jefferson had said, two different ideas of government: a national authority with power to coerce obedience to the governing elite (Hamilton); or a system of dispersed power that trusted the rule of the people through diverse institutions of power and consent (Jefferson). The Confederate Constitution represented the second alternative, and therefore, the author writes, “there is much to be learned from the theories that gave life and death to this American constitution.”

DeRosa does not focus simply upon the Civil War, but provides deep background. In every question he gives us an original and illuminating discussion of basic ideas with the agreements, disagreements, and ambiguities at the time of the Founding; follows these ideas through the antebellum conflicts; and shows how the conflicts issued in particular features of the Confederate Constitution. This is a work of interest to all serious students of American constitutional history and political philosophy.

More impressive even than the content of DeRosa's book is the intellectual tone and approach, the spirit. He works in the same spirit as did the Founding Fathers and the Confederate framers. He regards the Constitution as an object of reverence and rationality. This is the true Jeffersonian spirit,

which animated Calhoun, who once observed: “Constitutions are human contrivances, and what man does and his reasons for it, surely ought not to be beyond his capacity fully to comprehend.” This is the proper spirit to approach the Constitution, as an instrument of self-government to be rationally preserved and employed by free men.

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A World Safe for Democratists

by C. Winsor Wheeler

Who Owns the Children?

by Blair Adams

Waco, Texas: Truth Forum;
692 pp., \$26.95

From one point of view, *Who Owns the Children?* is a manifesto of educational freedom, an exhaustively researched broadside aimed at the pseudo-academic pretensions of our federal and state governments. Starting from the premise that all instruction is by its very nature religious, since it necessarily springs from certain assumptions about man and the universe, the author proceeds painstakingly to indict the whole concept of compulsory education as a frontal attack on the First Amendment to our Constitution. Historically, to be sure, mandatory school attendance has not been seen as such, partly because it was pushed into place by Protestants foolishly squabbling with Catholics over educational turf. Nevertheless, under the influence of the followers of John Dewey (who said, “If we have ground to be religious about anything, we may take education [itself] religiously”), the public education system has become one of the most militant destroyers of traditional faith this country has ever seen.

It is no accident that the last twenty-five years have seen a growing decline in the intellects of American children. Replacement of the three R's with

touchy-feely mind games has robbed a whole generation of both knowledge and any moral base from which to apply their tediously acquired ignorance. Some parents, perceiving the foolishness of this course, began to form private church schools or to educate their children at home in the early 1970's. In a number of cases, these people were hauled into court and charged with “neglect,” despite the fact that the removal of their children from the public sties had demonstrably improved the youngsters' brains and hearts. Several parents served jail terms for this heinous disregard of state authority, and at least four families were actually ripped apart by the slaving social services in their concern for the “best interests of the children.”

How a system that willfully undermines and disparages the traditional family through its politically correct textbooks can claim to know anything of the best interests of children is one of the more poignant modern mysteries. But Blair Adams, not content to examine only one facet of this gem of hypocrisy, proceeds to put the acid to many of its other gleaming surfaces. Among these are developments apparently unrelated to education: compulsory immunization, mandatory seat belt laws, attempts to prevent or severely restrict home births, and the explosive growth of a bureaucratic machinery for dealing with “child abuse.” Underneath the veneer of legislative rhetoric, however, the common element in all these matters is the state's effort to assert its authority over, and indeed even *within*, the nuclear family.

In many of our supposedly free states, the mere allegation of “child abuse” is now sufficient completely to suspend the constitutional rights of any parent unlucky enough to be so charged. An anonymous phone call is often all it takes to set social services in motion, and in many scenarios the accused is never allowed to face the accuser. The state's inquisition of experts takes over, at times extracting “evidence” from confused children via cruel brainwashing techniques and dragging families through the dungeons of a psychological hell, regardless whether they are really guilty, merely misunderstood, or entirely innocent.

The State, with its abstract

love—so out of touch with real love that it even defines the “right to privacy” as the license to insert a suction tube . . . into the mother’s womb to kill a baby, now claims only it can provide the covering for this vulnerable child. At the same time, the State offers no protection and support to the family’s claim to privacy against the social suction tubes . . . of the . . . department of Human Services. . . . Instead of . . . protection from [false accusations of child abuse], the State encourages, through promised anonymity and immunity, . . . devastating blows to the family’s sheltered womb of personal and social integrity.

Few people, I daresay, would detect much moral difference between the perpetrators of such “cleansings and healings” and the perhaps more nobly motivated witch-hunters of the past. The ostensible intent to “help” is still there, but now the inexorable coercion of this philanthropy is applied by busybodies who believe ultimately not in eternal salvation, but in temporal “health” and “safety.” As the old Inquisition tried to save people forever spiritually by forcing them to think and to speak in accordance with Catholic orthodoxy, so modern “health professionals” of every stripe attempt to exact conformity to their state-licensed authority in every sphere of bodily and psychological life. The evil of both lies in their denial of the individual’s personal responsibility before God; and thus, in the name of eliminating all risks, they eliminate both the freedom and the humanity of those they purport to save.

The Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution, that beleaguered guardian of our individual liberties, grew out of the assumption that free men would always understand and embrace their personal responsibilities. The amendments were written by Europeans of Christian background who well knew the sinful tendency of majorities to oppress the consciences and persons of dissenters, and it is no accident that the primal liberty of conscience guaranteed by the First Amendment is immediately bolstered by the implied right of self-defense

guaranteed in the Second Amendment. The one thing our Founding Fathers feared more than anything was an all-powerful state operating under the mystical majoritarian authority of “the people.” Ironically, however, the Calvinist belief in general human depravity, which led the Founders to limit the powers of government, has since degenerated into a pseudo-Calvinist assumption of general human incompetence, leading inexorably (unless we repent) to the unlimited social and moral surveillance of Big Brother.

As the traditional nesting grounds of personal responsibility, the Church and the family have been bulwarks against the encroachment of state authority throughout this nation’s history. But now, with the Church increasingly betrayed from within by the acceptance of humanist doctrines and with the family emasculated to a degree unprecedented in any age, little—if anything—remains to protect an individual from the commodious jaws of social planning monopolists intent on making the world very safe for themselves, and very sterile for their subjects.

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Up From the Ashes by Gertrude M. White

Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Very Private Life

by Robert Bernard Martin
New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons;
448 pp., \$29.95

He was unknown and disregarded during the whole of his short life and for years thereafter. But fortune relented. Gerard Manley Hopkins, dead for 30 years, was provided with an editor who had known, admired, and loved him and who had preserved the body of his work until he felt the time was ripe. Once known, his difficult poems found their own way. Good critics considered him the greatest of the great Victorian poets. Now his belated good fortune continues: he has found the biographer for whom any poet might wish: informed, sympathetic, per-

ceptive, judicious. And all readers of Hopkins must hereafter feel themselves in debt to Robert Bernard Martin, professor emeritus of English at both Princeton University and the University of Hawaii.

Gerard Manley Hopkins’ life was short, obscure, and dogged by failure in his chosen vocation. His superiors in the Society of Jesus did their best to find a post where his manifest talents of mind and character might serve their order and bring Hopkins himself satisfaction and peace of mind. They failed. He suffered throughout his life from depressions so deep as to threaten his mental balance and, indeed, seems to have been happy at the end to accept death. The craft to which he applied himself with so many misgivings but with such devotion amid the manifold and trying exigencies of his life brought him neither understanding nor appreciation nor reputation. Only a handful of close friends even knew he wrote poetry. He habitually referred to himself, in letters and in verse, as “Time’s eunuch,” and his sense of sterility seemed the final cruel judgment on his life, his hopes, and his unvalued works.

Behold now how true is the ancient myth of the phoenix! A century ago Hopkins died of typhoid contracted in a filth-ridden Dublin. He was laid to rest among his fellow Jesuits in the Glasnevin cemetery, and a Latin inscription, one among some two hundred carved on a granite crucifix, is his only memorial. Yet from this earth, this grave, this dust, the poetry he wrote so painfully during his short, unhappy life has risen to speak like a trumpet to the modern ear, or like the golden echo of his own title. As the most powerful poet in an era of great poets, Hopkins left the record of his love, his suffering, and his faith in verse which, like the world of “God’s Grandeur,” is charged with energy and sustained by his passionate affirmation of the glory of creation.

Robert Bernard Martin’s biography gives a fully detailed picture of the circumstances and the social and intellectual background of Hopkins’ life: of his family, particularly his mother and father, with whom the poet had all his life a close, complex, and somewhat difficult relationship; of his education at school and at Balliol College, Oxford; of his conversion to Roman Catholicism at the age of 22, in the teeth of