

view themselves as embattled anti-Westerners condemning their loss of collective identity or only a universal attention to their concerns. Brownfeld is right that Wisse has fewer reservations about contemporary than about classical liberalism. The old liberalism brought Jews into a European middle-class civilization that she wishes to have them forget. The new liberalism, though sometimes allied with the Palestinians, features the kind of victimology in which Wisse feels most at home.

As for the debate about the feminization of Jewish males, it might be best to pursue it under different auspices. Toughs and softs are both Jewish victimologists wearing interchangeable masks, like feminists and men's rights groups. One even finds the same Jewish figures combining soft and tough stances, e.g., Alan Dershowitz, Abe Rosenthal, and Martin Peretz, all social liberals who are Zionist hawks. Here the affinities to Afro-American nationalism are all too plain. In both cases the most militant and easily offended nationalists feel a natural pull in America toward the victimological left. That pull is subject to change only when the left favors some other victim group at the expense of one's own. But as soon as that sense of slight passes, the militant, alienated majority again aligns itself with the left.

Thus Jewish toughs and black power advocates typically identify themselves with the same political side as gays and feminists. Alienation is a stronger theme in both instances than the cult of masculinity. Both Wisse and Kahane rebuke Jewish liberals for not being sufficiently suspicious of Gentiles. Liberalism, for these toughs, would be fine, so long as it incorporated enough Jewish suspicion of Arabs and their Western Christian apologists. This tough position is entirely consistent with the liberalism it never gets around to criticizing. It is in fact parasitic on that liberalism, like black separatists and Irish American supporters of both the IRA and Ted Kennedy. Behind all these shows of masculine toughness is the same whining by self-designated victims, much of it intended for guilt-obsessed WASPs. And the point of this whining is always the same: certain victims are not getting enough attention and refuse to be Uncle Toms. This may exemplify the proneness to hysteria that Freud believed afflicted only Jewish males.

I close this essay with one critical observation about the best of the works studied in the course of my research: Paul Breines' *Tough Jews*. In a detailed discussion of American Jewish schlock, Breines notes the continuing popularity of tough Zionist novelists like Leon Uris, Gloria Goldreich, Chayym Zeldis, and Joel Gross (the most prototypical of these authors, Ben Hecht, belonged to an older generation). Such novelists appeal to aggressive Jewish nationalists in America, who are always criticizing fellow Jews as "self-hating." Breines observes the cultural resentment abounding in some Zionist novels, which invariably treat German Jews as Uncle Toms and the old Protestantized American Jewish elite as even worse. The aesthetic and moral judgments here are certainly sound, but Breines ascribes too much of a consistent rightist gestalt to his subjects. Are they psychological "fascists," as he seems to suggest, or just too contradictory and too trivial to be assigned ideological labels?

And was that ardent Europeanist and despiser of communism, Zev Jabotinsky, the spiritual ancestor of the tough Jews who read and write hyper-Zionist schlock? The pre-World War I generation of tough Jews whom Breines cites faced real existential and cultural problems: their identification with

Western thought in a society that was largely non-Westernized and the task of transforming that society, to which they felt morally and ancestrally bound, into something that they could admire and that also would survive its enemies. In no sense did Jabotinsky, a multilingual novelist who felt at home in most of Europe, foreshadow the American ghettoized schlepp who reads Goldreich, Zeldis, and perhaps Ruth Wisse: i.e., one who gets macho kicks out of accounts about how Israelis shoot Arabs or capture Nazi scientists before attending meetings of NOW with his opinionated, bleached-blond wife. Breines' genealogy is wrong for at least two reasons: first, he goes too far in demonizing Jabotinsky's and Freud's Jewish self-criticism, and then he assigns too much theoretical importance to those who are better left to satirists. As one Austro-German Jew to another, I would urge Breines to lighten up and take schlepps less seriously.

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## Keeping Up With Political Correctness A Partial Guide for the Socially Perplexed

by Katherine McAlpine

A "drunken Indian," you said? That's worse in polite society than a lewd curse. Instead, "say substance-dependent indigenous person."

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"Gay rights" is non-inclusive. Gay's just guys. One who is conscientious specifies he/she supports gays, lesbians, and bi's.

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Not surgery or flu! Now get this straight: "recovering" can simply indicate somebody's read a self-help book of late.

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"God" is a sexist concept. If you must mention a deity, try to adjust to "Source of All." No one will be nonplussed.

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T-shirts are social suicide when they endorse Old Glory or the NRA. Rainforests, whales, and pandas are okay.

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Don't light a cigarette, don't order steak, do not wear fur or (if you're female) make-up. And no satiric humor, for Christ's sake!

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We know you try to mind your manners, but if the amenities still aren't clear-cut, better stay home and keep your big mouth shut.

# From There to Here—And Back Again

by Richard Lessner

*“All great peoples are conservative; slow to believe in novelties; patient of much error in actualities; deeply and forever certain of the greatness that is in law, in custom once solemnly established, and now no longer recognized as just and final.”*

—Thomas Carlyle

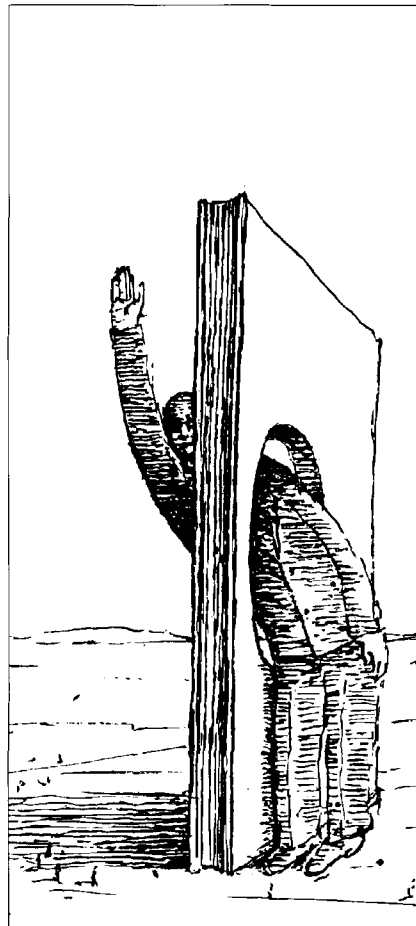
**Reclaiming the American Right:  
The Lost Legacy of the  
Conservative Movement**  
by Justin Raimondo  
Burlingame, California: Center for  
Libertarian Studies;  
289 pp., \$17.95



As the Clintons’ socialist steamroller grinds out new programs, new entitlements, higher taxes, more regulation, and ever larger deficits, conservatives are left scratching their scalps: How is it that, after recapturing the White House and holding executive power for more than a decade, conservatives failed to make a dent in the explosive growth of Big Government and that, after a dozen years of Ronald Reagan and George Bush, the power of the federal government to invade nearly every aspect of our lives through confiscatory taxation, burgeoning social welfare schemes, and invasive regulation is greater than ever? Libertarian Justin Raimondo argues that, unless conservatives are willing to confront the ghosts of their intellectual past, they will fail to understand just where their movement went astray. With the wreckage of the failed Bush presidency littering the political landscape, it cannot be said that there exists today a discrete entity deserving of the appellation “conservative movement.” Conservatives are united in nothing, not even in the traditional credo of limited government, and their ranks are riven by internecine warfare as vicious as that which currently

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*Richard Lessner, formerly deputy editor of the editorial pages at the Arizona Republic, has recently finished a second novel.*



Janusz Kapusta

bathes the hapless Balkans in blood.

Raimondo, a Media Fellow of the Ludwig von Mises Institute, argues that the causes of the conservative movement’s ignominious failure are internal, to be found in successive “invasions” of the Old Right from the left—invasions that so co-opted and corrupted the movement that it ceased to be truly conservative in any fundamental sense. These intrusions altered the *ideology* of the conservative movement, while preserving its *form*.

In Raimondo’s analysis, the Old Right—typified by such stalwarts as the *Saturday Evening Post*’s Garet Garrett, John T. Flynn, Senator Robert A. Taft, H.L. Mencken, A.J. Nock, and FDR’s *bêtes noires*, Colonel Robert McCormick and his *Chicago Tribune*—espoused values of individualism, anti-statism, *laissez-faire*, and libertarianism at home and isolationism and a wariness of foreign entanglements abroad. The first invasion of these ranks, Raimondo suggests, issued from the Trotskyite left. These new recruits, demoralized by the failures and barbarity of Stalinist Marxism, migrated to the Old Right, whose anti-communism was attractive to them; they soon set about rearranging the furniture in their new home. This trend, the first of three invasions of the Old Right roughly following generational lines, began late in the 1930’s—the “Red Decade”—and culminated in the mid-50’s. Led by ex-Trotskyite James Burnham and William F. Buckley’s *National Review* (its early masthead heavily weighted with erstwhile communists), the New Right retained the globalist outlook of its Marxian ancestry as it preemptively sacrificed the fight against the rise of the total state—which the Old Right had waged so gallantly against the New Deal—on behalf of the Manichean struggle against international communism.

The results were catastrophic for the conservative movement, which, cut from its origins, was transmogrified into something unrecognizable. Having identified the fight against communism as the transcendent imperative, the New Right willfully acquiesced in the growth of the omniscient, custodial social welfare state. Its homage to limited government, defined by Mencken as “one