

what Billy Bob Thornton is really up to is found in Dr. Wilson's piece: the events upon which *Sling Blade* is based took place in Northern California. The reason the movie is set and filmed in Benton (Saline County) Arkansas is not because audiences can't believe in non-Southern accented retarded murderers, but because Hollywood is ever vigilant in its zealous quest to demonize Christianity and that evil of evils, the White Southern Man.

Native Arkansan Thornton knew exactly what he was doing by changing the venue of this tale to his home state. Karl Childers represents Idiot Savant Number 2, following in the footsteps of Forrest Gump. And oh, what he had to endure! His loving mother, he tells us, read him Bible lessons. And how does she live her Christian faith? She permits him to live in a dirt hole in the tool shed, says nothing about her completely demonic husband's infanticide of their second child, and commits adultery as her final living act. But of course this monstrous behavior *can't* happen in Northern California, only somewhere in Dixie.

The film does what it intends to do well, as the audience, even an audience in the Deep South, grits its teeth and roots for Karl to do the deed. But has anyone stopped to consider why Doyle deserves to have his brains chopped up with a lawnmower blade? Yes, he is a loud-mouth, reprobate, drunk, self-centered thug (but not so much of one that he is incapable of running his own construction company) who desperately needs some tough Christian love to see the evil of his ways. But, as Hollywood reminds us, Christianity never did anything but repress us. And so when Karl, the only man tough enough, uninhibited enough, and "brave" enough, slings his blade into Doyle's head, Southern Man is finally, *rightfully*, put to death as well. It seemed to me that most of the audience left the theater convinced that Doyle deserved to die.

I would argue that Clyde Wilson and other Southerners have been duped on this one.

—James Hunter
Atlanta, GA



BILL CLINTON's triumphant return from Africa is a bad omen for the next two years. Temporarily liberated from the shackles of Paula Jones's allegations, the President will now be free to run the country exactly as the First Lady sees fit.

During the President's tour of Africa, we got a glimpse of what lies in store for us: a symbolic visit to a slave-trading emporium, symbolic embraces and hand-holding with retired terrorists like Nelson Mandela, a not-so-symbolic promise of hundreds of millions of American taxpayers' dollars to improve education in Africa.

Most Americans figured out that the President's denunciations of slavery had nothing to do with history or morality and everything to do with domestic politics. After betraying his blue-collar supporters on the trade issue, after Paula, Monica, and Kathleen unmasked his real interest in "women's issues," virtually the only secure block Clinton can count on are black voters. Since he cannot do anything tangible for them—more affirmative action, more welfare, more set-asides are temporarily out of the question—he expects to buy them off with tears and lamentations that will cost us no votes and him no taxes.

While some Americans professed to be shocked by Clinton's public display of affection for Mr. Mandela, it was black South Africans who should have been shocked. Communist terrorist that he was (or is), Mandela has proved to be an effective national leader. The interest of our own beloved leader has never risen above broads and boodle, and some South Africans carried signs warning their fellow-citizens to lock up their daughters.

The master stroke of Clinton's African adventure was the promise of \$182 million in aid for education. Education is the liberal answer to everything. Education undermines religious superstition, liberates women and children, and inspires class envy. Even conservatives now think that education is the key to solving all problems: teach a kid a little arithmetic, have him memorize the Gettysburg Address, give him the habit of a regular schedule, and by the age of 16 he'll be ready to clock in at the Ford factory in Kinshasa and spend his \$200-a-month paycheck on Levis and Cokes.

We don't even have to come up with the money ourselves. The bankers—those kindly international philanthropists—will be happy to lend the money. All they want are loan guarantees from the IMF and, ultimately, from the American taxpayer, and the master politician who has successfully sold his administration—inch by inch of White House bedrooms and minute by minute of presidential access time—has managed simultaneously to curry favor with international banks and poor black voters.

That is the nature of politics, of course, and if support for education in Africa could help those suffering nations, even some Republicans would be willing to bite the bullet. But will it? What foreign aid has done to African nations is a subject better left undiscussed. Unfortunately, Graham Hancock, in *Lords of Poverty*, has detailed disaster upon disaster of Western aid: it is the same old story of all government welfare programs—a history of boondoggles, rip-offs, and screw-ups. Above all, it is a story of countries like Somalia and Tanzania, whose economy and culture were devastated by the "help" given by the World Bank and the "development assistance" provided by European and North American businesses.

If colonization weren't bad enough, the great colonial powers cut their losses and pulled out, leaving Third World countries to fend for themselves in a competitive world. Then to compound the crime, the Western powers strong-armed these newly created nations into modernization schemes whose only real object is to provide international business with new markets and cheap labor.

Clinton's next brilliant move is to complete the destruction of Africa by saddling its people with the American public education that every sane person over here would like to demolish. Twenty years from now, some naive neoconservative policy analyst will get his 15 minutes of fame pointing out the "unintended consequences" of the policies of this great man (a second Harry Truman). But we already have the advantage of hindsight, and we know that foreign aid to the Third World is a nasty scam. If Bill Clinton is not actually plotting the further ruin of the continent, he has no

more concern for the welfare of its people than he has for the happiness of the women he invites into his office.

—Thomas Fleming

“REMEMBER JONESBORO” is the latest rallying cry of the “If it can happen here, it can happen anywhere” crowd. In one sense, of course, they’re obviously correct: no town is immune to the evil influences that convince an 11-year-old and a 13-year-old to shoot and kill their fellow students. But the Jonesboro groupies are disingenuous: Why devote so much attention to an extraordinary event in a sleepy Southern town when every day far more children are killed by other children in America’s inner cities? It’s not hard to figure out the answer: the killers in Jonesboro were white, and their weapons were legally owned by the grandfather of one of the children. In other words, Jonesboro just proves what the gun-control lobby has argued all along: legal weapons guarantee violence, and Southern rednecks are the greatest threat to peace in America.

The gun-control lobby took up the rallying cry, and undoubtedly President Clinton’s decision to release an executive order banning the importation of a Chinese-made copy of the AK-47 was a response to Jonesboro, even though the kids used hunting rifles (invariably described by the media as “high-powered semiautomatic assault weapons”). Mr. Clinton’s response was predictable. More disturbing was the rapidity with which “counselors” descended like vultures on Jonesboro. The day after the shootings, 50 grief counselors—some from as far away as Houston—arrived in town. By the time the slain students were buried, over 100 counselors had set up shop. (And once they’ve set up shop, don’t expect them to go away: one year after the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building, parents in Oklahoma City complained that counselors were still hounding their children at school.)

Granted, the good folks of Jonesboro had never experienced anything like this. But were 100 counselors—who did not live in Jonesboro, who had no real understanding of life there—really necessary? Perhaps it would have been better to let the people of Jonesboro struggle with their grief on their own, to let parents—rather than strangers—explain to their children that evil is part of the human condition.

At one time in America, most people would have agreed, and sent the meddlers packing. But today, the therapeutic mentality reigns supreme. Americans are afraid to engage in the most natural actions—cooking, rearing children, treating a cold—without consulting an “expert.” And increasingly, they turn their children over to strangers to provide them with sex education, drug and alcohol education, early childhood education. After all, the counselor knows best—but does he?

Last year, both *U.S. News and World Report* and the *New Republic* published stories critical of one of the most far-reaching school counseling organizations, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE). DARE has come under fire for encouraging students to turn their parents in if they suspect them of using drugs, but studies have also shown that students who participate in the DARE program are more likely to use drugs than those who don’t. DARE, of course, claims that the solution is to implement its program at *all* grade levels, not just in elementary schools. But the real clue to the DARE-drug use connection lies in the philosophy of DARE itself, which was summed up nicely by Floyd Hall, Kmart chairman and CEO, when he announced the Kmart Kids Race Against Drugs Tour this spring: “It’s important for these kids to realize they can have fun without drugs.” Until Mr. Hall and DARE suggested otherwise, most children probably assumed that they could.

A high school student here in Rockford, making a presentation on alcohol abuse at a school board meeting, referred to herself as a “student leader and potential drug user.” The drug and alcohol “counselors” who put that thought into her mind both robbed her of her innocence and provided her with a convenient excuse for personal irresponsibility. We tell our children that they are potential drug users, and then when they live up to their potential, we shake our heads, hold out our hands, and ask for more money so that we can send the same message to more children more often.

Meanwhile, down in Jonesboro, a town grieving over an evil act can look forward to a trial that will provide them with no sense of closure, since the 13-year-old killer has realized that his rage and its consequences were not his fault. He has “recovered”—no doubt under the guidance of a counselor—a memory of sexual abuse while in daycare seven

years ago. Now he is just as much a victim as the schoolmates he murdered.

—Scott P. Richert

“THE POOR you always have with you” is a law that the best efforts of all the king’s social workers have failed to revoke. The most ambitious welfare scheme to date may be the Comprehensive Child Development Program (CCDP), a research project involving some 4,000 households across the country. After nearly a decade and 300 million tax dollars, the project is an utter failure.

The CCDP is not exactly a household acronym. The Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, which has run the program since 1989, has made little effort to publicize it, and with good reason: the results do nothing to enhance the reputation of the social work trade. On the contrary, social work’s most sacred cow, “case management,” has been slaughtered by the nine-year program.

In “case management,” a social worker guides a household (almost always a single-mother household) toward the wealth of services offered by the modern welfare state: everything from medical care to Food Stamps to “parenting” classes to “job training” to government-subsidized housing. It’s a mystery why anyone would conclude that helping people help themselves to handouts is a recipe for getting them on the right track. Nevertheless, case management has been the *modus operandi* of the social work industry for decades.

But for almost as long, the evidence has mounted that case management does not scare off any of the demons it purports to exorcise: poverty, illiteracy, drug abuse, etc. In fact, the authors of the executive summary of the final report on the CCDP (available on the web at www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/rde) cite as failed case-management models the federal Even Start Family Literacy Program (kids in the control group saw their test scores go up, too), and the Army’s Fort Bragg Child and Adolescent Mental Health Demonstration, an \$80 million “substance abuse” prevention program that showed “no positive effects on a wide range of child-level outcome measures” compared with children in the control group.

Nevertheless, CCDP was to be the

mother of all case-management tests. Staffed and planned by a "who's who" of social work, "it is the largest test of the currently popular model of case management." And it came at the highest price: "the total cost of CCDP averaged \$15,768 per family per year . . . or about \$47,000 for each family in the evaluation, given an average length of participation of more than three years." (Head Start, by comparison, costs roughly \$4,500 per family per year.)

What happened when the best and brightest of the social work world were assembled and given more money than ever to devise and test a scheme to help "extremely at-risk low-income young children and families"?

"Exactly the same changes observed in CCDP families occurred in control group families." The bottom line: over 4,000 low-income households received the special attention of a social worker and roughly \$16,000 a year in benefits and services *above and beyond what they had been able to obtain for themselves* (subsidized housing, food stamps, Medicaid), and at the end of three years they had nothing to show for it. While it's true that "children's vocabulary and achievement scores" increased over time in CCDP families, "vocabulary and achievement scores increased for children in the control group just as they did for children in CCDP."

Clients of the welfare state do not

need to be tutored on how to exploit government programs. After all, the welfare riders who collect checks in Wisconsin and return on the same bus to Chicago have demonstrated their resourcefulness. The authors of the CCDP evaluation wonder whether "the case-management model is an ineffective approach," but there is no sign that other welfare bureaucrats are willing to learn the lesson.

There is one form of case management that does work. Dorothy Day proposed it: let everyone go out and find his own private pauper. Don't expect the Department of Health and Human Services or its Administration on Children, Youth, and Families to endorse Day's plan. If they did, Donna Shalala might have to find a real job.

—Christopher Check

BLACKS are moving back to the South by the thousands. This is not supposed to happen, not if you trust the mythology of the mainstream media. How can this be? Affluent black families leaving Chicago to go back home to Mississippi, back to the land of church burnings and redneck sheriffs?


But according to a study by the Population Reference Bureau, this is exactly what is happening. In the first half of the 90's, the Northeast lost 233,600 black residents, the Midwest lost 106,500, and the West lost 28,700. This reverses a

trend that has prevailed since World War I. And the migration back to the South includes professionals and the affluent—a fifth of returning blacks are college graduates.

It would seem the times have changed. The day is long gone when all racial problems could be confined to the South, and a righteous nation could make a pretense of solving them by offering correction and coercion to backward Southerners. It should be obvious to anyone who travels the country today that there is much less racial tension and much more good will between the races throughout most of the South than there is in any big liberal Northern city. And it should not be surprising that blacks feel inclined to return to where nearly all have their roots.

My Southern hometown was the scene of major protests and riots during the civil rights era. Today, things seem peaceful and prosperous. Except in one respect, where things have changed for the worse in a way that hurts white and black Southerners both. Thanks to the criminal irresponsibility of our ruling elite, we now have a huge and growing Hispanic underclass as well as Vietnamese and Iranian gangs. I can remember when the biggest conflict was between the Baptists and the Methodists.

—Clyde Wilson



John Lukacs, *The Passing of the Modern Age* (Harper & Row). Includes a masterful discussion of the perils and pitfalls of foreign policy in a democratic (and increasingly bureaucratic) age.

Robert A. Taft, *A Foreign Policy for Americans* (Doubleday). In the early years of the Cold War, the Senator from Ohio presented an alternative battle plan, based upon preserving American liberty rather than fighting communism.

Russell Kirk and James McClellan, *The Political Principles of Robert A. Taft* (Fleet Press). The classic political biography of Mr. Republican.

Patton. Memorable 1970 movie in which George C. Scott exclaims, "This is what happens when Americans stop thinking like Americans and begin thinking like Allies."

EPICYCLES:

- Don't You Dare Feel My Pain: As President Clinton, touring Africa in March, geared up for his apology-that-wasn't-an-apology for **slavery**, Reuters reported that Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni found the whole thing ridiculous. "I don't have time for that diversion or rubbish," Museveni stated. "African chiefs were the ones waging war on each other and capturing their own people and selling them. If anyone should apologize it should be the African chiefs. We still have those traitors here today."

- And They're Off: With the next **New Hampshire primary** two years away, Democratic and Republican presidential candidates are busy jockeying for position. First out the gate on the Democratic side was Dick Gephardt, who, in a previous run for the presidency, **renounced his long-held opposition to abortion**. Now, fresh off a victory

against fast-track approval of future trade treaties, Gephardt has switched colors again: in a speech to the Council on Foreign Relations in March, Gephardt argued that he was "misunderstood and misrepresented" as an isolationist and a protectionist. According to the *New York Times*, he assured the CFR that he is a "progressive internationalist," and that he supports the Clinton administration's request for \$18 billion in new funding for the International Monetary Fund. Gephardt's misstep left only one candidate in either party who is willing to run the race against the free-traders: Pat Buchanan.

- **Get Big or Get Out:** In recent years, as Borders, Barnes & Noble, and other mega-chain bookstores have expanded into mid-size markets, **independent bookstores**—at least those that didn't immediately throw in the towel—have found that publishers and distributors were less interested in dealing with them. For some time, there have been rumors that the mega-chains receive preferential treatment—and cheaper prices. Now, the American Booksellers Association hopes to prove those rumors true. In March, they filed an antitrust lawsuit against Barnes & Noble and Borders. According to the Associated Press, Avin Mark Domnitz, executive director

of the ABA, argued that the lawsuit is a struggle for "the existence of independent booksellers." Look for the cappucino-sipping lovers of liberty to denounce the lawsuit, and to rally to the defense of the economic imperialists.

- **Hands Across Yugoslavia:** Former pop idol **Cat Stevens**, who gave up singing when he converted to Islam 21 years ago, has relented and released his first CD, *I Have No Cannons That Roar*. Its 11 tracks are performed by Stevens (who now goes by the name Yusuf Islam) and Bosnian Muslims. The proceeds will be sent to charities ministering to Muslims in Bosnia. Judging by the tracks, however, this is no anti-war album. The title song was written by the Irfan Ljubijankic, foreign minister for the Bosnian Muslims, who was killed when his helicopter was shot down by a Serbian rocket. Sung by Bosnian Muslim Dino Merlin, the track includes the words, "I'll surrender you to no one else, my mother Bosnia, my love."

OBITER DICTA: Randolphians (and fellow travelers), start making your plans. The Ninth Annual Meeting of the John Randolph Club will be held in Dallas, September 18-20. Watch this space for more details.

Chronicles contributor **Janet Scott Barlow** has launched a website featuring her commentary on current events. Entitled "Out Here: Commentary from Middle America on Politics and Culture," the site can be accessed at www.Out-Here.org.

The poetry of **Emanuel di Pasquale** returns to our pages this month. His work has appeared in the *American Poetry Review*, *The Nation*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and the *Sewanee Review*, and has been collected in a volume entitled *Genesis*. We are also pleased to reprint **Rudolph Schirmer's** "Stanzas in the Valley of the Fallen." This poem, engraved on a bronze plaque, was presented to the Basilica of Santa Cruz del Valle de los Caídos, the great monument to all who died in the Spanish Civil War. Mr. Schirmer also presented a copy of the poem to Pope Paul VI at a special audience. In accepting the poem, the Pontiff told Schirmer, "I shall pray for your poem and for peace."

Our art this month flows from the creative hands of **Igor Kopelnitsky**, a Russian artist living in Brooklyn. Since coming to the United States in 1990, Mr. Kopelnitsky has illustrated for the *New York Times*, the *Daily News*, and the *Washington Post*, as well as for *Chronicles*.

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Igor Kopehinsky

Put Out More Flags

by Thomas Fleming

*Do I contradict myself?
Very well then I contradict myself.
(I am large, I contain multitudes.)*

Illyria Americana

Walt Whitman was a bad poet, but he might have made an excellent American statesman, something like an effeminate Madeleine Albright, who can switch from one basic principle to the next with a duplicity that even the dewy-eyed fairy godmother of the battlefield would have admired. In the course of a day, she can be lecturing the Republika Srpska of Bosnia on the rights of Muslim and Croat minorities; then, without batting a reptilian eye, she can champion the right of the Albanian majority in Kosovo to gain autonomy, which will inevitably entail the right to expel (or exterminate) the Serb minority that has clung to its ancient land in the face of over half a millennium of persecution and ethnic cleansing.

Perhaps in their hearts, many statesmen are really bad poets: they prefer lies to truth and rely on poetic license as an excuse for incompetence and incoherence. I have been trying to figure out American foreign policy in the Balkans for six years, and the best I can come up with is that we are hostage to special interests—the Croatian and Albanian lobbies obviously, Arab oil interests, and (strange as it seems) the Israelis, who have found a way of doing something to please the Muslims. The United States and Israel, in other words, are making the Serbs pay the price for what we are doing to Muslims in the Middle East.

But even bribery and cowardice do not fully explain the zeal of the American foreign policy establishment and the media it controls. Their minds are already formed in globalist categories to see nationalism, Christian piety, and attachment to tradition as the last vestiges of a savage old world that must be

rooted out, no matter what the cost, and although the Albanians and Croats are, each in their own way, as atavistic as their Serbian neighbors, it is the Serbs who have historically been predominant in the region, and it is the Serbs who sing the loudest songs about their heritage and their destiny. The globalist elites hate the Serbs for the same reason that they hate all real Americans who wish to preserve their traditions, their religion, their identity. This point was rammed home to me on the SFOR base in Sarajevo, where American soldier-girls lugged their lard-bellies, huffing and puffing, up the steps to the cafeteria—an oasis of bad cooking—where the bulletin boards featured (on paper of U.N. blue) advertisements for Black History Month.

The Balkans were heating up again early this year: riots in Kosovo followed by a Yugoslav crackdown followed by an American crackdown, renewed talk of Montenegrin independence, Bosnian Muslim threats over the postponed Brcko decision. By March, Boris Yeltsin's intoxicated hints about World War III breaking out over Iraq seemed more likely to be realized in Europe.

In tripartite Bosnia, the Muslims are no longer content with the cards they were dealt in the Dayton Accords: so far, they have been disappointed in the expectation that a liberal interpretation of the agreement would improve their hand. The Republika Srpska remains divided between the old warlords of Pale, who exploited their political ineptitude—they never devised a tax system, much less a strategy for victory—as an excuse for massive corruption, and the democratically elected government of President Biljana Plavsic, a staunch Serb patriot whose