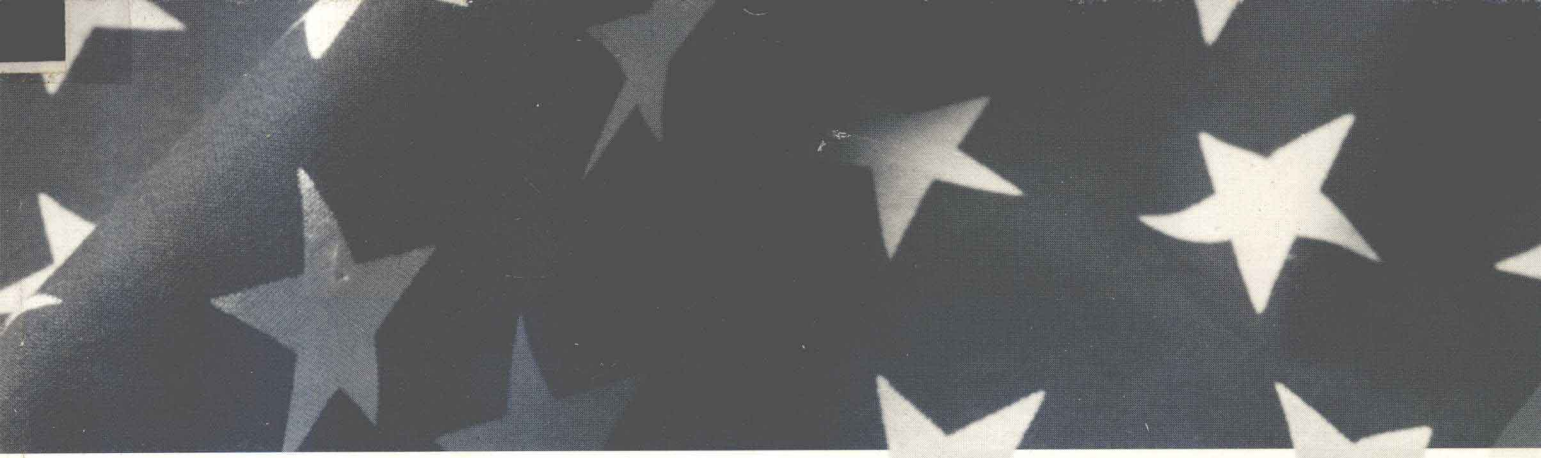
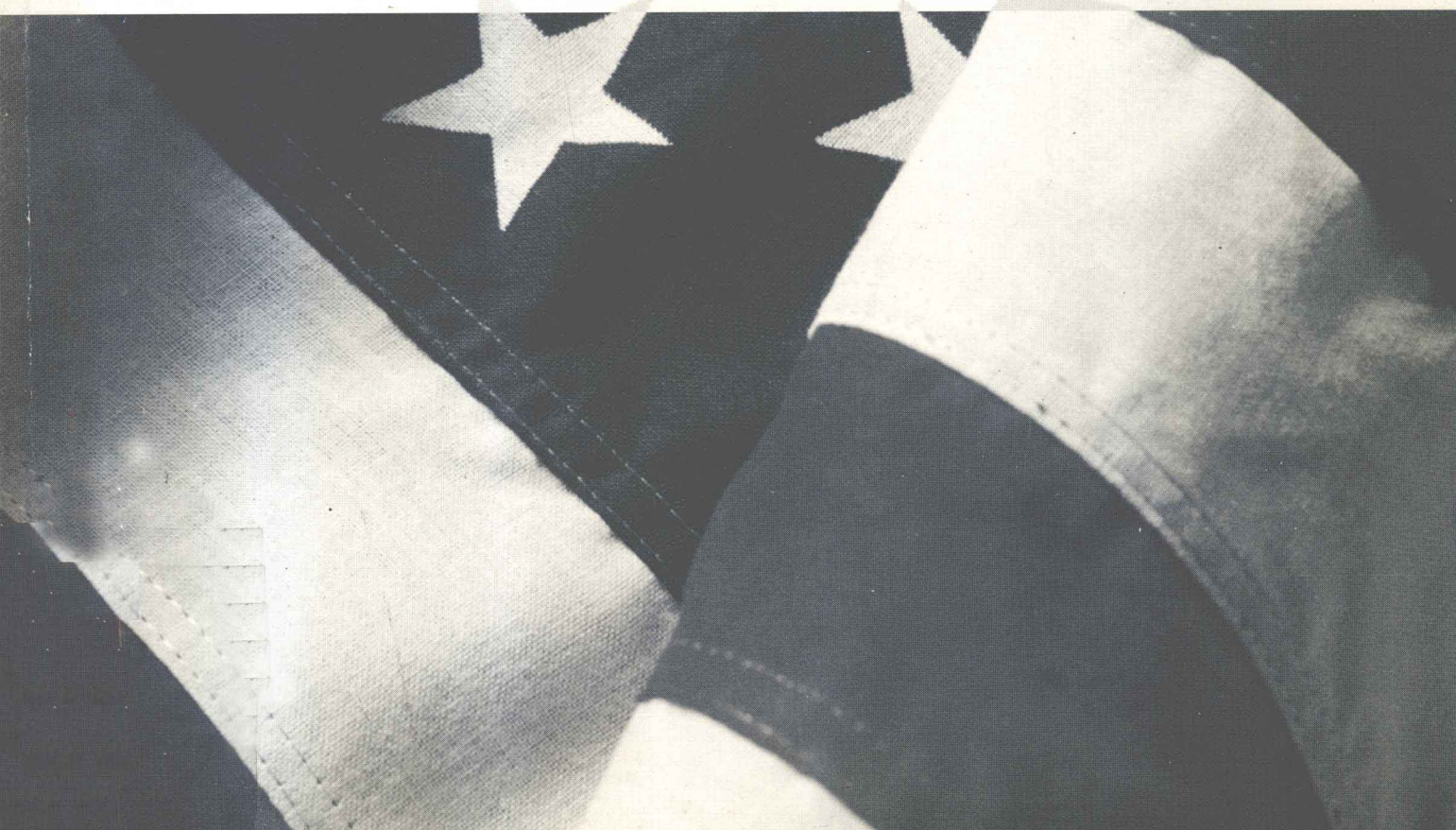


Readings in

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

STEFFEN W. SCHMIDT MACK C. SHELLEY, II



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Preface and Acknowledgments

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We also want to thank Sharon Adams Poore for excellent editorial work and sound advice, and our editor Clark Baxter for his support, humor, good ideas, and inspiration. Our respective pets, children, spouses, parents, and friends who put up with the frantic activities surrounding an enterprise such as this deserve thanks, too.

We especially want to thank our over 300 colleagues and their students throughout the United States and several foreign countries who have contacted us by e-mail, snail mail, phone, or in person at various professional meetings to give us suggestions and constructive criticism of the reader. Your ideas have made this edition the best reader we have ever put together. Please don't stop now! Tell us what you think about this edition.

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Introduction

In the short two years since we edited the last edition of this reader major changes in the American political debate have erupted. This reader reflects these changes and allows you to engage in a vigorous discussion about the significance of these important issues.

We start this reader with a piece by Gary Wills that puts forth the startling idea that American politics may be moving from an "elite"-dominated agenda of what's important in politics to what he calls "rights politics." This is the idea that a host of groups in the U.S. feel left out, are angry, and claim to be neglected or repressed. It is these "culture" groups who more and more seize the attention of politicians, government, and the media.

We are also acutely aware that sex has dominated public discussion over the past two years. This debate has been more extensive and more explicit than ever before in American political history. Parents now have to explain what oral sex is to their children because it is on the evening news and is discussed in connection with the president of the United States. We have tried not to dwell on Monica Lewinski, Paula Jones, and President Clinton's other sex-related troubles. However, we have addressed the issue, and you will need to sort out how Americans should deal constructively with the moral and sexual behavior of politicians.

We also continue to watch carefully the desire by many groups to "carve into stone" their preferred ideas by amending the Constitution. The readings on the Constitution remind you that the Constitution was deliberately written in such a way that it is very difficult to amend.

Another general trend that came to a head since the last edition of this book is the deep divisions inside both major political parties. Democrats are struggling with two trends in their party. President Clinton has taken a center-right position as a means of appealing to centrist public opinion. Activist, progressive, liberal Democrats such a Senator Paul Wellstone of Minnesota or Richard Gephardt of Missouri want to "bring the party home" to the more liberal agenda with which it has been identified for over half a century. The Republicans are faced with their own internal struggle. This pits the conservative right, strengthened by groups such as the Christian Coalition, against a group of "pragmatists," or moderates. These "centrists" believe that the party should be a "big tent" and reach out to moderates, minorities, suburban "soccer moms," and others who do not share some of the more conservative positions.

The Internet, Cyberspace, and especially the World Wide Web were just appearing on the horizon as major forces two years ago when we wrote the last edition of this book. Some of the interesting questions are:

- How should the federal government deal with these new communications phenomena?
- Should there be Internet censorship?
- How can we control net-pornography (so far one of the few businesses to make serious money on the Web)?
- What tools does government need to control Cyber-crime such as illegal hacking or even spying by foreign governments?

These and other complicated subjects suddenly have been thrust on decision-makers and the public. Our selections in this reader attempt to help you think creatively about the tradeoffs of regulation versus complete freedom in this new "virtual world."

Over the past year many of you contacted us asking that we include more issues directly of interest and importance to students. We have done it! You will find numerous readings that deal with controversial issues, legal conflicts, and ethical judgment calls directly related to academia and students such as:

- Should students be forced to live in dorms with people whose lifestyle (alcohol use, premarital sex, smoking, profanity, etc.) may cause them discomfort?
- Should students pay mandatory student activity fees that fund activities with which they disagree or against which they may have moral, political, or ethical reservations?
- What exactly is sexual harassment or inappropriate sexual behavior, and how can higher education discourage this type of activity?
- Is affirmative action a necessary and positive remedy, or is it reverse discrimination, or is it even, as one reading argues, elitist "snobbery"?
- How should a dialogue on race be conducted in higher education? How do we deal with the demand for multiculturalism and the counter movement that opposes "political correctness"?
- How serious a threat to American democracy is the growing political apathy, especially among young people, including high school and college students?

Other issues raised by selections in this reader are:

- Should the military require men and women to train and live together in barracks?
- How tolerant is the middle class on issues of morality?
- Is a citizens' militia constitutional?
- Should we enact campaign finance reform?
- Is welfare reform good, or is it just a way to avoid fixing the root causes of poverty?
- What's the spin on university support for women's sports?
- Is global warming for real, or just a political agenda item?
- How should we interpret the leadership problems of House Speaker Newt Gingrich?
- How should the United States improve race relations?
- Are school vouchers a good idea?
- How should the crisis of unfilled judicial appointments in the federal court system be fixed?
- What is the "multi-racial identity" category on the U.S. census going to mean for Americans?
- Is America's prosperity and economic boom taking place at the expense of the poor?
- What are the military weapons of the future?
- Should the U.S. military plan for a "two-front" war?

We think that these topics will generate an exciting and productive debate on important issues facing Americans—that's us! We also think that these readings will enhance your critical thinking skills, your ability to engage in group or teamwork projects, your active learning motivation, and your communications skills, as well as foster a liberal education and stimulate positive, informed citizenship.

We hope you will enjoy these readings.

Contents

Chapter 1: American Government and Politics: Stability and Change

In "Whatever Happened to Politics?" Garry Wills writes that politics has become culturally directed. After two generations of the government elite defining the important issues related to international and economic policy, culture has taken on that role. Wills says that as the U.S. changes in ethnicity and cultural diversity, "rights politics" will take priority.

Libertarianism is the view that individuals have the right to live their lives in whatever way they choose as long as they respect the rights of others. David Boaz believes that Libertarianism is the philosophy of the future. In "Creating a Framework for Utopia," Boaz argues that as we enter the twenty-first century, with a world of global markets, emerging technologies, and increasing diversity, Libertarianism is the "essential framework for the future."

Whatever Happened to Politics? Washington Is Not Where It's At

by Garry Wills

For two generations, government elites defined the great issues. Now, a tidal change in the culture is sweeping away traditional geopolitics.

Is Bill Clinton our first post-political President? It is hard to find, anywhere on the current scene, a politics of the sort once recognized as serious. There are no great debates on great issues. Party loyalty is down, voter apathy up. The vacuum in political interest is filled more and more by obsession with headline trials—William Kennedy Smith, the Tonya Harding affair, the Menendez brothers, O.J. Simpson, Marv Albert, Louise Woodward, the Unabomber case. What still passes for politics will be absorbed into the vortex of trials when Paula Jones's suit against the President is brought into the courtroom.

Political problems continue to plague our world—the gathering crisis in funds for entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare is one of them—but we seem to lack the political machinery or public engagement to do much, it anything, about them. The welfare problem was put off rather than solved by "devolution." Even the conservative William Bennett says that devolution "has often meant reducing the Federal Government's capacity to monitor and correct." But since many other conservatives do not want the Federal Government to have any regulatory powers, the shifting of the problem satisfies antigovernment ideologues.

The President's only foreign-policy initiatives of last year, NATO expansion and "fast track" negotiating authority on trade, did not stir the public except (in the latter case) to opposition. Republicans in Congress were deserted even more spectacularly by their followers than were the Democrats on fast track by the labor unions. When Congress tried to implement the Gingrich "revolution" of 1995, it found that Congressional popularity ratings "fell like a rock" (in Bennett's phrase). Both the President and Con-

gress seem like sailors in a dead calm. They work the rudder back and forth by nothing happens to make the boat respond. One needs at least some slight breeze of public opinion. But public engagement in politics has been so veering and contradictory as only to flap the sail sluggishly.

Without a stable structure of political debate, the electorate shows mood swings rather than a "climate of opinion." In 1994, Republicans interpreted some sour growling as a deep disgust with government. But by 1996, the swing toward complacency made Clinton so scandalproof that Bennett asked, "Have we lost our capacity for justified outrage?" The current prosperity cannot explain a falling off of political debate that precedes it. Whether the public is disaffected or complacent, the result seems the same—stasis and dead air.

Perhaps we are not finding political life around us because we are looking for it in the wrong places. We may have to redefine politics, not confining it to high policy in foreign and economic affairs. Certainly the old party lines do not give us much guidance. In fact the parties have been changing places in a weird *dos-à-dos*. It was a Democratic president who said that "the era of big government is over"—only to see a whole string of Republicans argue the need for strong central government. William Kristol, Eliot A. Cohen, David Brooks and John DiIulio have joined Bennett in saying that national greatness depends more on the approach of Alexander Hamilton and Theodore Roosevelt than on Reagan's maxim that government is the problem, not the solution. Faced with such role shifts, the public has a right to be puzzled, to say what the detective Philip Marlowe does when challenged to say whose side he is on. He just shrugs, "I don't even know who's playing today."

Confused or fading loyalty to the political parties made the commentator David Broder, long a champion of measures to strengthen the two-party system, give up on his efforts in 1996, when he wrote that Ross Perot was the only figure addressing new realities. I asked him about that at the 1996 California convention of Perot's political party, United We Stand America. He responded with a gesture at the proceedings, "This is the future." Well, it was yesterday's future. Futures, like everything else in today's politics, have a brief shelf life.

The emptiness of modern politics has come home with special force to conservatives, who feel they have won victory after victory with little to show for it. What does victory mean in a political vacuum? That is a question many conservatives are asking. Their discomfort has led to anguished symposiums on the possibility of a "conservative crackup." Contributors to one such discussion, in *The Weekly Standard,* had various explanations of the crisis. Some claimed that in a political situation where little if anything is firmly nailed down, Bill Clinton simply filched the conservatives' slogans and agenda, moving their accomplishments over into his win column.

Others, writing in the religious journal *First Things*, decided that in the absence of electoral impact, the Supreme Court is ruling the nation, unconstitutionally; so conservatives should consider going outside the political system that has no legitimacy. That is a measure of the desperation that can be caused by a "failure of politics."

Pat Buchanan has for a long time been saying that conservatives have won the political war but lost the cultural war. Politics with no cultural impact is a feckless exercise. Neoconservatives agree with that point, if not with other Buchananisms. And the neoconservatives' foe, R. Emmett Tyrell, who started the talk about a "conservative crackup" in an article 10 years ago and wrote a book by that title in 1992, traces the conservatives' feeble cultural impact to a lack of respected elders who could legitimize authentically conservative positions while marginalizing kooks and opportunists:

"There was a hierarchy of conservatives, but it was not acting as a hierarchy. It was not analyzing the younger conservatives' work. It was not pointing to new areas for conservative endeavors. It failed to recognize the charlatans among the younger conservatives and the bright fellows among the dolts....It did not scotch the proliferation of fly-by-night organizations that were draining off the movement's precious funds."

Tyrell said the conservatives needed their own "wise men," who could do for them what Bernard Baruch or Clark Clifford had done for the liberals.

David Gelernter, the computer specialist, has tried to spell out the content of a cultural offensive of the sort Buchanan and Tyrell call for. He says conservatives must erect a counter-Establishment, complete with new universities that will be "apolitical," concentrating on the cultural arena previously abandoned to liberals: "I would put aside politics for a while and plant bushes, attempt to stabilize the culture."

The odd thing is that conservatives are calling for their own Establishment when what used to be called the Establishment has disappeared. It is quite true that there used to be an agenda-setting elite that informally decreed what political positions were serious, marginalizing all others. The tip of this Establishment iceberg was the "wise men," that body of elite corporate lawyers or investment bankers

called in, when crises arose, to authenticate the needed policies. These men—John J. McCloy, Robert Lovett, Dean Acheson, Chip Bohlen, Clark Clifford, George Kennan, Averell Harriman, Douglas Dillon and others—were turned to by Republican as well as Democratic Presidents. Lovett, for instance, was favored for almost any position by Eisenhower and Kennedy. Kennedy called on the wise men for help in the Cuban crisis, and Johnson for his efforts to get out of Vietnam. (Getting in he had handled on his own.)

The wise men had high standards of public service, but their power did not come simply from their own integrity or charm. They had ties to the best universities and law firms, to philanthropic foundations and think tanks, to Wall Street, to the world of international finance, to "responsible" journalists like Walter Lippmann and James Reston. They embodied the shared ideals of these interlocking institutions and radiated their own authority back through what was taught, financed or published as politically *sérieux*.

This Establishment was not liberal but centrist. That was its warrant for bipartisan consensus on the mixed economy (neither socialist nor unbridled *laissez-faire*) and on the international order (anti-Communist, nonisolationist, Eurotropic). From this assurance of centrality the Establishment could marginalize "extremists"—a Joseph McCarthy on the right, a Henry Wallace on the left. Even in the narrow spectrum of presidential politics, noncentrists could be marginalized—Barry Goldwater on the right, George McGovern on the left. So powerful was this ideal of "mainstream" politics that historians at the peak of the wise men's influence read their ideals back through our national life to create the "consensus school" of American historiography. Talk of the "bland" Eisenhower era was a less flattering way to describe the same state of affairs.

This solid center of agreement underwent fission in the late 1960's. Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, who described the Establishment's 50-year reign in their book "The Wise Men" (1986), said that disagreement over the Vietnam War divided the wise men and their cognate academics—a split made highly visible in the disagreement of Establishment journalists Lippmann (against the war) and Joseph Alsop (for the war).

I.M. Destler, Leslie Gelb and Anthony Lake, writing two years earlier in "Our Own Worst Enemy," thought the whole structure topped by the wise men was coming apart even before Vietnam. The wise men were the best representatives of a privileged elite with paternalistic motives of public service. After World War II, a meritocratic professionalism entered the governmental recruiting process. It allowed non-WASP, nonprivileged, nonamateur meritocrats—Henry Kissinger, Stanley Hoffmann, Edward Luttwak, Walter Laqueur, Zbigniew Brzezinski—to achieve an influence that would have been exercised earlier by heirs to a familial and legal "old boy" network. These new professionals did not have the assumed power of people whose carriers rested on status and its presuppositions. Their rank depended on up-to-the-minute information, policy expertise and ambitious maneuvering.

I think one can go deeper, in 1997, than did those books of the 80's. The extraordinary authority of the wise-men structure arose in part from its ability to focus narrowly on what was circumscribed as "politics." Roughly, this amounted to high policy (foreign and economic) and its relation to national elections. Local police matters were not high politics as the wise men understood that. Averell Harriman was looked at askance by his peers when he ran for governor of New York—which was more akin to garbage collecting than to wise-man policy-making.

Other parts of life were not directly political, because they defined themselves as subsidiary to the "real" issues. Religion was a private matter except when seen as a prop for the Establishment. Women, too, were not serious in political terms unless they rose by virtue of their association with Establishment men—married to them like Eleanor Roosevelt or Lindy Boggs, dispensing their wealth to philanthropic and charity events or educating their daughters at finishing schools and Seven Sisters colleges. Though some of the wise men were notable womanizers, they disapproved when Nelson Rockefeller went beyond affairs to get a divorce. The family, like religion, was a civil institution making for stability.

Some of the wise men were racists—not that it mattered, since racial relations were not a part of politics as they defined the subject. Such relations were adverted to mainly to keep them out of the sphere of high politics. George Kennan once wrote that the Founding Fathers would "turn over in their graves at the mere thought of the democratic principle being applied to a population containing over 10 million Negroes." In 1965, Kennan said, "I have a soft spot in my heart for apartheid," and he greeted racial unrest in 1968 by saying it is unrealistic "to suppose that the American Negro is going to find his dignity and comfort of body and mind by the effort to participate and to compete as an individual in a political and social system he neither understands nor respects and for which he is ill prepared."

I do not mean to castigate Kennan individually. He was voicing some of the maxims of his time and upbring-

ing. Most of the wise men were born around the beginning of the century, and they reached their days of glory when they were already becoming anachronisms. But it is important to remember that an earlier form of "political correctness" let elite institutions deal with religion, women and blacks in demeaning ways.

David Gelernter, speaking for the conservative counterculturalists, agrees with the professionalization thesis to explain the downfall of the Establishment. He calls the professionals "intellectuals" and says the social elite committed suicide by admitting the intellectuals into positions of privilege. "Nothing compelled the Harvards and the Yales to change their ways. They did it by volunteering to make room for a new elite." In that sense, the fall of the Establishment was "a bloodless coup inside the generals' tent within the tiny upper stratum that calls the shots and sets the tone.

This view of elite-only actors is "top down" history with a vengeance. Actually, of course, many forces were in play—demography, education, technology, the ideological aftermath of World War II. The work force was altered during that war by women's entry into it and by huge influxes of black labor moving up from the South (1.5 million people in the 1940's). American attacks on Hitler's "racism" (the word was invented during his rise) combined with the morale-boosting egalitarianism professed in the military to stir awareness of our own racial problems. Blacks, pressing for integration of the military under Truman, found it hard, on leaving the military base, to plunge back into segregation in the South.

The business side of the Establishment was, meanwhile, creating the affluence and technology that would erode its own connections with authority. Television brought alternate life styles into every living room. A youth culture grew up from the sale of music, movies, clothes and vehicles aimed at the teen-age market. College students now brought a whole culture of their own onto the campus, eroding the colleges' paternalistic (in loco parentis) role. Students did not go straight from their parents' house to an in-loco college, as before. They passed through an intermediary arena of rock music, youth-culture heroes and—increasingly—drugs.

In the 60's, this culture almost declared its independence from the earlier socialization processes for the young. Radicals were, by their own self-definition, not merely marginal to "the system" but opposed to it—antipolitical in that sense. Hippies were hedonists not to be taken seriously except as symptoms of cultural decay. Yippies said hedonism could be a political act—and they were right. The time of radicals passed, but hippie culture, through all its manifold echoes, helped along the sexual revolution, the women's movement and the changes in the context of marriage.

Conservatives like to treat the 60's as the end of civilization as we knew it, but the right, too, had a role in bringing a "marginal" cultural activity—religion—into politics. If abortion is murder, political opposition to it (or even more direct action) must be promoted. Operation Rescue deliberately imitated the civil rights movement's tactics, with Randall Terry delighting in "street theater." Fundamentalists, neglected by the Establishment (which only had eyes, occasionally, for "mainline" religion), gave up their former passivity to turn electoral politics toward things like school prayer, opposition to sex education and the distribution of condoms, or the denial of rights to homosexuals.

The old Establishment quietly assumed that separation of church from state entailed a separation of religion from politics. But the First Amendment, which forbids the state from establishing a church, also provides for free exercise of religion and of speech, meaning that one can vote and argue from one's religiously formed conscience. There were many "walls of separation" in the old definition of politics. Each of these walls has been swept away in the last three decades. The citadel was not, as Gelernter argues, surrendered. It was engulfed.

The restriction of politics to "the system," which meant primarily the electoral system, can no longer be enforced. The women's movement did not score great electoral victories—in fact, it lost the vote on the Equal Rights Amendment to Phyllis Schlafly's expertly organized opposition. But women's status changed, more than ever in human history, over the last three decades. This is a perfect example of what the conservatives call winning the political war and losing the cultural war. But it no longer makes sense to distinguish the two. Politics in the old sense has been emptied out. The fall of the Soviet Union shattered the cold-war consensus on foreign policy. The paralysis of economic initiatives—temporarily by the deficit, in the longer range by growing entitlement spending—has made "Establishment" domestic policy nonexistent. Real change—sweeping, unprecedented change—has not been taking place because of the electoral system. The electoral system is, instead, a lagging and imperfect indicator of such changes.

Right-wingers call it illegitimate for blacks or women or homosexuals to seek rights in the courts rather than by voting for candidates who agree with them. "Rights" has

become a swear word on the right: we are too concerned with rights. We should go back to just counting votes. Republicans, not Democrats, are our new superdemocrats, the defenders of elections as the sole arbiters of political life. Everything else is "culture," and decadent—feminism, affirmative action, gay rights, rock music, drugs, the whole evil catalogue.

The absurdity of trying to separate our current politics from culture is seen in Gelernter's proposal for counter-Establishment colleges and other institutions.

"The new institutions I have in mind would have no political agenda," he writes. "They would merely promote cant-free history, apolitical art, nonfeminist news reporting for the masses, the teaching of technique and not self-esteem, moral seriousness, ideology-free language—items that today's elite despises and is attempting to destroy."

He advocates ideology-free language in ideology-laden language. Nonfeminism is, for him, "apolitical." "Cant-free history" is the old Establishment history, with George Kennan's politically correct views on women, blacks and religion. Gelernter is admirably candid about wanting to imitate the old Establishment, the one that was destroyed (he believes) by meritocratic "intellectuals." But that Establishment was built up on structures of privilege—the right prep schools and colleges, the right clubs and relatives and law firms, the long experience derived from a semi-monopoly of prestigious positions. These things were not created overnight, and even they had to crumble in a vast sea of social change.

Gelernter cannot build on the kind of silent assumptions that were only "nonpolitical" because they were not, for a long time, challenged. He can find no Burkean subsoil from which to grow his institutions. They would have to be formed from raw and immediate attack on the "culture" he dislikes—formed, in fact, with right-wing money coaxed from "nonintellectual" corporations and foundations on the promise of creating a nonintellectual elite, a new order of right-wing "wise men." Gelernter, to reach his goal, would have to give ideological preference to his weird form of "apolitical" students, just as the old Establishment favored its own kind, excluding Jews or blacks or Catholics or Asians.

It is interesting that conservatives, in order to wrest short-term gains against affirmative action, have become strict meritocrats themselves, considering only the individual's performance in deciding who gets into the right colleges or the right law firms. These superdemocrats ignore the way privilege was indulged in at most of our higher institutions of learning through most of their history. That privilege was justified as socially useful because it built up the shared experience and cumulative wisdom needed to guide the nation's economic and policy-making elite. It produced men like the wise men. If a quota kept out all but a few Jews, that was the price of training wise men.

The "culture" both Gelernter and his conservative fellows despise argues in the same way for socially useful preferences, but to serve egalitarian rather than elite values. It values sexual and ethnic diversity, and hopes to provide stimuli for the economically disadvantaged (as the old system provided cushions for the less-bright boys—but not girls—in the right families). Now goals are set for purposes of inclusion, not exclusion, to bring in more Americans, not to exclude one specific body. The comparison of affirmative action with old Ivy League quotas for Jews is disingenuous. White males are not targets for exclusion under affirmative action. They still make up the vast majority of people in colleges, law firms and corporations. What bothers some is that white males are not given the assured entry that upper-class WASP's used to have to "their" schools.

If culture is no longer neatly walled off from politics, does that mean that a flood of barbarism has inundated our institutions, as Allan Bloom and Robert Bork contend? Is right order falling victim to a "rights" culture? That is one (apoplectic) way of looking at our recent history.

Another way is to see the half-century of the Establishment as a deviation, one caused by the need to respond to a long-continuing crisis (Depression, World War, cold war), in which elites were given emergency powers. The longer-run progress of the nation was interrupted by this arrangement, delaying certain developments that rushed onto the scene when that interruption ended—long-delayed business dealing with women's rights, with race relations, with child-rearing ideals.

The brightest side of American history has been the slow but persistent spread of egalitarianism. That ideal was there, though still nugatory, when Jefferson wrote that all men are created equal. By the 1820's, egalitarianism was pronounced enough for Tocqueville to find in it one of our definitive features—even though slavery still existed in the 1820's, women could not vote and workers had few guaranteed rights. The rest of the 19th century saw the spread of equality. In the struggle over slavery, Lincoln encouraged us to read the Constitution, which lacks the words "all men are created equal," in light of that ideal (to the horror of a constitutional fundamentalist like Robert Bork). Freed blacks and voting women and children protected by child-labor laws still had a long way to go. It

took the martyrdom of civil rights leaders to inch us on again in the unending war on racism. Women and homosexuals were pilloried for advancing their rights.

Some think that attention to different groups' rights is divisive, productive of social "balkanization." But these critics are the ones who speak as if attention to Martin Luther King in history books were a sop to blacks rather than a matter of pride for all Americans. The civil rights movement is our modern epic, the great social achievement of our time. Not to celebrate it is not to be truly alive to our own achievements. The current changes in women's status, unparalleled in the past, recognize the talents and dignity of more than half the human race, a momentous activity that goes to the inmost nexus of society, affecting the relations of wives to husbands, daughters to fathers, sisters to brothers, mothers to daughters. It is one of the most exciting breakthroughs in all of human history. Yet the "nondivisive" and "apolitical" Gelernter wants to set up new institutions to oppose this development by ignoring it, to achieve "nonfeminist" news reporting. Not reporting the advances of feminism now would be like not reporting the Civil War in the 1860's because ending slavery had its unpleasantnesses.

The egalitarianism of our culture affects everyone today, even the right-wingers who deplore many of its aspects. Advanced interactive communication—call-in radio and television programs, the Internet, cellular phones—all these encourage each person to have an equal say in things, to be his or her own expert; and no one has leapt at this opportunity more than conservatives. These right-wingers have taken up Tom Hayden's old concept of "participatory democracy." They won't let the powers that be tell them what to think. Such conservatives are rights-oriented. They think rights are being taken from them by the courts, by affirmative action, by religious discrimination. They propel the culture even as they denounce it.

I go back to my beginning. Is Bill Clinton our first post-political President? If we take "politics" in the old Establishment sense—international and economic policy, along with the electoral system—then he definitely is. The proof is here: his early priorities on taking office were "rights issues"—recognizing gay rights in the military and working for greater participation of women in the Government. Those who judge politics by the old standards said that these actions showed he was not a "serious" politician but a marginalized one, an extremist. Well, perhaps he was premature, and certainly he was not deft in his handling of either issue. But he, not his critics, was recognizing the real world we live in. This, Mr. Broder, and not Ross Perot, "is the future."

Many people continue, if only subconsciously, to treat cultural questions—"rights" issues, "identity politics," "multiculturalism"—as intrusions into "real" politics. They act as if these were fads of the 60's, bits of hedonism or "self-expression" that will pass away when Americans become adults again. But coping with the vast culture of change now at work will provide the challenge of coming years. What is America as a social entity going to make of itself?

The explosion of ethnic diversity guarantees that affirmative action of some sort will be needed so that everyone feels a stake in a country that is literally changing complexion every day: whites will be a minority by early in the next century. What does that imply about the education, cultural heritage and social values of a community also undergoing technological changes of a dizzying sort? Panicky clampdowns on immigration will not put off the basic change in the makeup of our population.

Women will keep changing the shape of family life. Businesses will continue to use affirmative action, to the disgust of many conservatives, to accommodate diversity of customers and workers. (Right-wingers deplore the open recognition of homosexuals, but businesses know that gay and lesbian buying power, at an estimated $100 billion a year, is greater than that of, for instance, far more numerous blacks.)

People who deplore "rights politics" ain't seen nothin' yet. Rights to privacy, access and inclusion will be in play and in question at every level of our changing society and will spill over from the schools, the churches, the courts and the media into electoral politics.

John Kennedy said that a generation tempered by World War II was equipped to handle the cold war. He was describing, though he did not know it, the peak time and the passing of the old politics of the Establishment. Now a generation that experienced the deep social evaluations of the 60's is the one that can cope with the ongoing consequences of that reorientation. Politics in this new sense is alive and well—indeed too lively for some people's nerves. And there are no wise men around to salve things for us. We may have to rely on wise women.