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## On 'Publishers and Sinners'

Although I admire the "All Booked Up" issue of *Chronicles* (January 1989), I must protest E. Christian Kopff's untrue assertion that "Maxwell Perkins of Scribner's did not just rewrite and butcher Scott Fitzgerald and Thomas Wolfe. . . ."

Whatever Perkins did or did not do to Wolfe's work, he neither rewrote nor butchered Fitzgerald's prose. There is no evidence of Perkins's rewriting on any page of Fitzgerald's surviving manuscripts.

Prof. Kopff should have known—or should have learned—that the textual scholarship on Stephen Crane was done by Fredson Bowers, and that Prof. Bowers's editions of *Maggie* and *Red Badge* were published in the University Press of Virginia Edition of Crane well before the edited *Red Badge* appeared in the *Norton Anthology*.

—Matthew J. Bruccoli  
Jefferies Professor of English  
University of South Carolina  
Columbia, SC

## Dr. Kopff Replies:

By the words "rewrite and butcher" I meant to suggest that (1) Perkins had a significant influence on the novels of Fitzgerald and Wolfe and (2) that influence was not necessarily beneficent. (1) is controversial, (2) is not. Professor Bruccoli tries to deny (1) by telling us that Perkins did not write on Fitzgerald's manuscripts, while forgetting to tell us that he did write on Fitzgerald's proof. (*The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald*, New York, 1963, p. 151. When *Letters*, pp. 149-52 are compared with *Editor to Author: The Letters of Maxwell E. Perkins*—New York, 1950, p. 51—we have a clear case of Perkins' rewriting Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and the Damned*.) Perkins' preferred method of changing his

authors' texts was long editorial meetings with them. Perkins himself describes one such session with Wolfe in *The Carolina Magazine* for October 1938. (See A. Scott Berg, *Max Perkins*—New York, 1978, pp. 7-8.) It ended with Wolfe effectively calling the editor a rattlesnake, but conceding the omissions Perkins wanted. Perkins introduced Fitzgerald to the ideas of changing the point of view of the first draft of *This Side of Paradise* from first person to third person and restructuring the presentation of *Gatsby*. Other suggestions, such as omitting the mutilation of Myrtle Wilson in *Gatsby*, were rejected. These and many other examples of Perkins' influence on Fitzgerald and Wolfe have long been known from the Scribner archives at Princeton and Berg's book. Perkins regretted that he could not talk directly to Fitzgerald about *Gatsby*. I believe that it was precisely to avoid such a situation that Fitzgerald went to Europe to write it.

I said that "Crane's version" of *Red Badge of Courage*, i.e., a reconstruction of Crane's manuscript text before it went through the editorial process at Appleton, was first published in the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Prof. Bruccoli says, "The textual work on Stephen Crane was done by Fredson Bowers." Much, though not all, important work for the text of Crane was made available to scholars through Bowers' critical edition, as well as his facsimile edition of Crane's manuscript, which was dedicated to Prof. Bruccoli. But Bowers did not publish "Crane's version" of *Red Badge* or anything like it. He showed his loyalty to the Appleton text by printing Crane's original chapter 12 separately from the main text. He also emended (or, as Douglas Young used to put it, "immended") the dialogue to remove traces of dialect from Henry Fleming's speeches and introduces dialect into the dialogue of other characters. The omissions alone have been estimated to affect 5,000 words of a short book. All this is well known and can be easily confirmed by anybody with access to a research library.

## On 'Books and Book Reviewing'

Katherine Dalton's article in the January 1989 *Chronicles* overstates both the leftward bias of American book reviewing and the authority of *The New York Times*.

She rests much of her case on the handling of *Veil* in *The New York Times Book Review* and *The New York Review of Books*. No other books get any extended treatment. But even in her chosen case, the truth is more complex than what she presents. In addition to its review by Thomas Powers, *The New York Review of Books* ran an extremely damning column on the book by Murray Kempton. "No legwork here," she says of David C. Martin's review. There was equally little legwork in her review of the reviewing.

And as for the authority of *The New York Times*, it may count for sales, but it was not sufficient to prevent the judges of the National Book Award from giving their fiction prize, two years in a row, to novelists who were not only not from the East (one was from Chicago, the other from Sacramento) but had not even been reviewed in *The New York Times Book Review*.

—Jack Miles, Book Editor  
Los Angeles Times  
Los Angeles, CA

## Miss Dalton Replies:

I did indeed read Murray Kempton's column in *The New York Review of Books*, hoping that he would raise the question about Bob Woodward's *Veil* that seemed so obvious to me. He didn't. Kempton's argument is that Casey's great CIA victory was his conquest of this reporter from *The Washington Post*. Kempton is critical of Woodward, yes, but his criticism stems from his giving full credit to Woodward's story. My point was quite different, and much simpler: merely that there was some question as to Woodward's having met with Casey, and why hasn't anyone really looked into it?

That point still stands. Mr. Miles is perhaps right, however, to say that I

should have at least mentioned the Kempton column, if only to show that Thomas Powers' mostly favorable review of *Veil* was not the only coverage *The New York Review* gave Woodward's book.

As for the National Book Awards, my point was not that *The New York Times* controls every single last bit of literary opinion, and that its "authority" could "prevent" the National Book Award judges from awarding the prize to books the *Times* had not (yet) reviewed. My point was that—whatever the effects of *The New York Review* or the *Chicago Tribune* or the *L.A. Times*—*The New York Times* is far and away the most powerful opinion-maker. By stating that the NYT "may count for sales" (not to mention cachet), I think Mr. Miles is ceding my point.

## On 'All Booked Up'

I very much enjoyed Jane Greer's article in your January 1989 issue, and "The World of the Small Press" by Thomas McGonigle was very informative. But I was irritated by his complaints about the avalanche of submissions and lack of subscriptions. Why don't more people subscribe to small press magazines? Perhaps because of publishers like McGonigle. In his own words, "Over the years *Adrift* was listed in the various guides to the small press world. . . . I did three issues of *Adrift* before I asked myself why. . . . I am still collecting material for the next issue." If I subscribed to a magazine and it was published three times in a period of years, I certainly would not renew my subscription or recommend it to others!

Two years ago I sent for a sample copy of a Canadian small press magazine. After reading the back issue, I subscribed. The next correspondence I received from the editors was a notice that they had "temporarily suspended publication." The only other piece of literature I ever got from them was my cancelled check.

The editors of another fledgling small press magazine asked me to submit a short story, based on an article of mine they had seen in a newsletter.

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Naturally, I subscribed to their publication to help support the new endeavor. After months of editing and revision by mail, they accepted the short story for issue number two to be published in April of 1988. I am still waiting for issue number two.

But, however disillusioning, the small press is still better than the alternatives: trying futilely to get the attention of a major publisher, or never being published at all.

—Jeffrey L. Waters  
Des Plaines, IL

## On Peter Berger's Response to 'Letter From BU'

Peter L. Berger's response (November 1988) to my "Letter From BU" (September 1988) encourages further discussion about the problems of higher education in general and BU in particular. I wrote the piece not just because it is an interesting testimony, but because it illustrates the need for greater accountability in academia. Members of the academic profession, irrespective of their philosophical dispositions, are not above legitimate criticism about their performance in delivering an increasingly expensive service.

The fact that most Ph.D. students, myself included, receive fellowship aid should not stifle this kind of discussion. It is neither "monumental ingratitude" nor "distasteful" (as Berger states) to discuss problems concerning those responsible for administering the education that is the basis for those fellowships. Students should demand high standards regardless of who pays the bill. On the other hand, professors may not be as enthusiastic for high standards because it will entail more work.

The problem is that universities are relatively unaffected by the discipline and accountability imposed by market forces. Not only are most academics biased and out of touch with reality, but large universities, BU included, have increasingly come to resemble inefficient bureaucratic socialist enclaves.

Berger's assertion that "American academia is indeed dominated by liberalism [and that] no administration, whatever its ideological coloration, can alter this within the canons of academic

freedom" is defeatist. John Silber's administration of BU could be facilitated by more active support from faculty members committed to sound curriculum and high standards. More could be done within the canons of academic freedom at BU to alleviate liberal mediocrity if concerned faculty members, like Berger, became more engaged in their own university instead of being preoccupied with their own world.

There is certainly some truth to Adam Smith's observation that "the discipline of colleges and universities is in general contrived, not for the benefit of students, but for the interest, or more properly speaking, for the ease of the masters." But the fact is that America can no longer afford this ease of the masters. Berger is well aware that liberal arts education is largely failing in its basic purpose: to train students' critical faculties for responsible citizenship and leadership. If the future historian looks back to explain the decline of America, he or she will undoubtedly find the universities bearing a large portion of the blame.

Professor Berger states that it is ludicrous for me to suggest that I was given a hard time for my libertarian views at BU. Yet he was present at my dissertation defense in April 1987 when the economist on the committee insisted that I delete favorable references to the success of supply-side economics. Six weeks later, this same economist told Berger's conference on the debate between capitalism and socialism that he was impressed with comparative statistics on East and West Germany, North and South Korea, and Cuba and Caribbean counterparts, that demonstrated relative equality in the economic output of communist and noncommunist countries. This is the economist that Berger refers to as "a very distinguished member of the BU faculty." It was more than his bumper stickers that I disapproved of.

—S. Steven Powell  
Stanford, CA

## On 'Darwin for Sissies'

No question about it: those touchy-feely, pantheistic environmentalists who support human abortion should shut

up. But in his attack on evolution (December 1988) Mark D. Rentz's slashing irony carelessly wounds both reason and religion itself. We shouldn't throw out the condor chicks with the bath water.

Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection in no way implies the nonexistence of God. It's an explanation for why organisms change over time. It's the only theory we have of where different species come from, and it's a pretty good one.

But Mr. Rentz protests that mere natural selection couldn't have made a rational creature like man — instead, God must have. That just begs the question, *how* did God do it? I see no reason why He could not have used natural selection if He chose.

So, Mr. Rentz asks, what's wrong with stamping out condors, pandas, and tsetse flies, if natural selection and extinction are all part of the Plan? To be a conservationist, must one be a godless, Bambi-eyed supporter of Dukakis? Mr. Rentz overlooks the point that it isn't fitting to turn up your nose at the irreplaceability of the Lord's handiwork.

To take the still longer view, God gave man dominion and stewardship over His other creatures. I don't want to be the one who must explain things to St. Peter if we turn the world into a parking lot. Do you?

—Duncan Maxwell Anderson  
New York, NY

## Mr. Rentz Replies:

As I wrote in my article, I no longer believe in the theory of evolution, except to say I agree with C.S. Lewis when he said, "It can even be argued that what Darwin really accounted for was not the origin, but the elimination of species." Too much critical of Darwinism has been written for anyone to say, "It's the only theory we have of where different species come from, and it's a pretty good one."

But the main point I was trying to make is simply this: a Christian is commanded to be caretaker of the earth, including California condors and baby seals; the evolutionist has no similar mandate to be his brother's zoo keeper.

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**SOME STUDIES HAVE** failed to find that executions have any success in deterring homicides. But according to sociologist Steven Stack of Auburn University in the *American Sociological Review* (August 1987, vol. 52, pp. 532-540), those studies have been methodologically flawed by the highly questionable assumption "that the public is more or less aware of executions and that they are well-informed of every execution." They have therefore neglected to test "the thesis that the deterrent effect of executions is a function of the amount of media exposure given to executions." "If the public is unaware of executions," Stack notes, "they can have very little impact on homicide."

Setting out to compensate for that error, Stack compared murder rates in months with highly (and nationally) publicized execution stories with those in months without such stories. Over a period from 1950 to 1980, he found that in 16 different months in which widely-reported executions took place, an average of 30 fewer people were murdered than in an ordinary month. Publicity, as Stack hypothesized, was a vital ingredient. Nearly 600 little-publicized executions in the study had scant effect on the homicide rate. But "[i]n all but four cases, the expected number of homicides in months with [well-publicized] execution stories is greater than the actual number—results we would anticipate from the standpoint of the deterrence view."

Stack cautions against too-high expectations for deterring murder with capital punishment, noting among other things that "as executions become more common, the amount of press coverage tends to decline," and predicting that an expanded number of executions "will perform more of a retribution than a deterrence function." That is not as bad as it sounds. Retribution must be the first object of the death penalty; if it were not the just reward of murderers, then no amount of deterrence would justify its application. But it is also good to know that some 30 American citizens will remain

alive because Theodore Bundy, as of sunrise last January 24, does not. (MK)

**NONE DARE CALL IT TREASON** when a former US President intrigues with the head of an unfriendly foreign government. But when Jimmy Carter met with Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega on February 2, Vice President Quayle had the courage to say: "Obviously, when you have a former President meeting with heads of state we don't meet with, it has a chance of complicating matters." To say the least.

Both Carter and the Vice President were in Caracas attending the inauguration of Venezuela's new president, but while Mr. Quayle was on official business, Mr. Carter was only a tourist playing at diplomacy. It's a game that virtually anybody can play: Jesse Jackson, Jim Wright, Armand Hammer, Dr. Bernard Lown. The only trouble is, it is patently illegal. The Logan Act of 1799 was designed to prevent just this sort of usurpation of executive functions, and it does not matter if the usurper is a Soviet-loving physician, a Soviet-loving businessman, a shifty politician, or an ex-President. This is not Mr. Carter's first offense. Two years ago, he and Gerald Ford arranged a conference in Atlanta, at which they colloqued with Soviet representatives and did their best to portray the United States as the chief obstacle to arms reduction. Carter even openly contradicted Navy Secretary John Lehman's description of Soviet treaty violations. Mr. Carter should be tried, convicted on his own testimony, and given the maximum sentence.

The paltry fine (\$5,000) and prison term (three years) might deter future amateurs from meddling into affairs of state, but beyond that the United States needs to rethink its treason laws, which have always erred on the side of timidity. It is difficult to imagine any great nation in history tolerating such intrigues between leading citizens and the heads of foreign and unfriendly governments.

The great Athenian statesman, Themistocles, was exiled on just such a charge, and in the reign of Charles II the Earl of Danby was impeached on charges of high treason, because as treasurer he had written a letter to his ambassador to France, instructing him to cut a secret deal with Louis XIV. The first charge against Danby was that he had engrossed royal power by conducting affairs of state without the participation of the secretaries of state or the Privy Council.

A more recent and more familiar case is the Norwegian statesman Vidkun Quisling, who as a leader of a party out of power intrigued with the Germans, who eventually installed him as their puppet ruler. Of course, Mr. Carter does not expect such favors from Daniel Ortega or his Soviet friends. It is reward enough to be back on the evening news. (TF)

**"I'M TIRED** of having to go to the office armed," my wife said one day last March. She was not alone in going armed—especially not since the local chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union had entered the case of the "Center City Stalker," a young black man who had committed a series of robberies and sexual assaults between January and March of 1988 in Center City, Philadelphia. Rumors circulated each day of additional attacks that had not been publicized in order to prevent wholesale panic.

Center City was blanketed with police sketches of the suspect, and many a young black man took a trip to police headquarters for questioning because of a resemblance to the man in the sketch.

This was too close to fascism for the comfort of the local ACLU, which sought an injunction in federal court to prevent the police from taking people in just because they looked like the man in the sketch—translation: just because they're black. The police department and the city caved in to this legalistic lunacy, agreeing in an out-of-court settlement not to take in anyone