

["Ulf Elkman's Charismatic Conversion"](#)

by Dale M. Coulter

"We have seen a great love for Jesus and a sound theology, founded on the Bible and classic dogma. We have experienced the richness of sacramental life. We have seen the logic in having a solid structure for priesthood that keeps the faith of the church and passes it on from one generation to the next. We have met an ethical and moral strength and consistency that dare to face up to the general opinion, and a kindness towards the poor and the weak. And, last but not least, we have come in contact with representatives for millions of charismatic Catholics and we have seen their living faith."

["Life worth living: Christian faith and the crisis of the universities"](#)

by Miroslav Volf

"Universities are heirs of the morally serious Socrates, but when it comes to the exploration of the life worth living, they have fallen below the level of the appetites satisfying Callicles. Universities are also heirs of the Christian faith's search for understanding, but they have abandoned the pursuit of a central question that animates the faith and its search for understanding - namely, "What is the life worth living"?"

["The intellectual snobbery of conspicuous atheism"](#)

by Emma Green

Conspicuous atheism proposes that "because a group of smart, respected, insightful people thought and felt their way out of believing in God, everyone else should, too. Because intellectual history trends toward non-belief, human history must, too. This is problematic for several reasons."

["Study Theology, even if you don't believe in God"](#)

by Tara Isabella Burton

... and to study the humanities, here's why you should study the "Queen of the Humanities"?

[Review of Benedict XVI, "A reason open to God: On Universities, education and culture"](#)

by Leonard Franchi

"In a society, in a culture, which all too often makes relativism its creed -- relativism has become a sort of dogma -- in such a society the light of truth is missing; indeed, it is considered dangerous and 'authoritarian' to speak of truth." To order the book, click [HERE](#).

["Why scientists should embrace the liberal arts"](#)

by David J. Skorton (president, Cornell University)

Why science alone is not enough to solve the world's problems and needs the humanities.

[Sam Rocha's Strange and Startling Philosophy of Education](#)

by Stephen H. Webb

"[Rocha's] brief introduction to the philosophy of education, is proof that educational heresy is what you get when you begin with theological orthodoxy."

[The end of American Protestantism](#)

by Stanley Hauerwas

"America is the first place Protestantism did not have to define itself over against a previous Catholic culture. ... American Protestants do not have to believe in God because they believe in belief."

[Jester and priest: On Leszek Kolakowski](#)

by John Connelly

How the great Polish philosopher went from being an anticlerical scourge to an apostle of John Paul II.

[Humanities as a way of knowing](#)

by Robert M. Woods

"The modern university characterized by the narcissistic consumerist smorgasbord approach to life and our general contemporary ethos fully shaped by the triumph of the therapeutic, offers less and less in terms of the permanent things and more and more in terms of the momentarily relevant."

[T. S. Eliot's Dry Salvages: "I do not know much about the gods"](#)

by Bradley J. Birzer

"The poem contains so many insights ... that the reader finds something new with each reading: the inability of man to dominate nature; the liturgy of the Church; the safety of Mary, Star of the Sea; the glorious diversity of each individual-forming a symphony in creation; the unrelenting appetite of Kronos; and the horrors of flirting with the occult."

[The war on Christians](#)

by John L. Allen Jr.

The global persecution of Christians is the unreported catastrophe of our time

[Review of *Newton and the Origin of Civilisation* by Jed Buchwald and Mordechai Feingold](#)

by Jonathan Rée

"Newton's biblical lucubrations are just as scientific as his theory of gravitation, and scientific in much the same way."

[Intimations of mortality](#)

by Victor Brombert

"I began to understand that all art and the love of art allow us, according to André Malraux's famous pronouncement, "to negate our nothingness.""

[Pope Francis on how to talk about abortion, gay marriage, and contraception](#)

by Matthew Schmitz

"The Pope's approach is one familiar to any reader of the gospels. Pharisees try to discredit the gospel by trapping its teacher; the teacher refuses the terms of their question and raises the spiritual stakes. The point here is not to compromise on or back away from truth, but rather to reject its caricature."

[A big heart, open to God: The exclusive interview with Pope Francis](#)

by Antonio Spadaro

"I ask Pope Francis point-blank: "Who is Jorge Mario Bergoglio?" He stares at me in silence. I ask him if I may ask him this question. He nods and replies: "I do not know what might be the most fitting description.... I am a sinner. This is the most accurate definition. It is not a figure of speech, a literary genre. I am a sinner.""

[The pope's theology of sin](#)

by William Doyno Jr.

"By now, the Pope's impromptu press conference, on his flight back from Brazil, has been analyzed the world over. But in all the discussion over Francis' comments, very little has been said about the key line in his now famous exchange on homosexuality. "This is what is important," declared Francis to reporters, "a theology of sin.""

[The writer as reader: Melville and his marginalia](#)

by William Giraldi

"In the general rare books collection at Princeton University Library sits a stunning two-volume edition of John Milton that once belonged to Herman Melville. Melville's tremendous debt to Milton — and to Homer, Virgil, the Bible, and Shakespeare — might be evident to anyone who has wrestled with the moral and intellectual complexity that lends Moby Dick its immortal heft, but to see Melville's marginalia in his 1836 Poetical Works of John Milton is to understand just how intimately the author of the great American novel engaged with the author of the greatest poem in English."

[Why teach English?](#)

by Adam Gopnik

"We need the humanities not because they will produce shrewder entrepreneurs or kinder C.E.O.s but because, as that first professor said, they help us enjoy life more and endure it better. The reason we need the humanities is because we're human. That's enough."

[Ten theses for seminaries](#)

by George Sumner

"Almost half a century ago, the Episcopal Church Foundation's Pusey Report foretold, among other things, consolidation and radical change among the denomination's theological seminaries. Such change is finally upon us. Several schools in the United States and in Canada have closed, a number are alive in name only, and others in each country approach their demise. ... The remedies sometimes float about as well-meaning generalizations: diversity, lay empowerment, the missional. True enough, but such themes do not get to the heart of the matter. I offer something more modest..."

[Who ruined the humanities?](#)

by Lee Siegel

"In "Moby-Dick," Melville's narrator, Ishmael, declares that "a whale-ship was my Yale College and my Harvard." Soon, if all goes well and literature at last disappears from the undergraduate curriculum—my fingers are crossed—increasing numbers of people will be able to say that reading the literary masterworks of the past outside the college classroom, simply in the course of living, was, in fact, their college classroom."

[Abortion and Race](#)

by Abortion73.com

"Whatever the intent of the abortion industry may be, by functional standards, abortion is a racist institution. In the United States, black children are aborted at nearly four times the rate as white children and Hispanic children don't fare much better."

[Avery's Ten Rules](#)

by Timothy George

"The need of Christian unity stems from the fact that followers of Jesus bear a divided witness before a watching world. We recognize one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, but we are not yet together at the family meal. ... In response to this situation, Avery Dulles developed what he called an "interim strategy" for Catholics and Evangelicals to work together in the cause of Christ despite—and in the midst of—persistent and important differences."

[The decline and fall of the English major](#)

by Verlyn Klinkenborg

"Studying the humanities should be like standing among colleagues and students on the open deck of a ship moving along the endless coastline of human experience. Instead, now it feels as though people have retreated to tiny cabins in the bowels of the ship, from which they peep out on a small fragment of what may be a coastline or a fog bank or the back of a spouting whale."

[The "skills mismatch" and the myth of the irrelevant university](#)

by Alan Rock, president, University of Ottawa

"Let's never forget that universities are important to society for reasons that can't be measured on a tax return: they are independent sources of reflective thought. Their unique value to an open society is that they offer safe places for free inquiry, encouraging challenges to the status quo."

[Sundown in America](#)

by David A. Stockman

The "state-wreck" lies before us. Stockman discusses the "policies [that] have brought America to an end-stage metastasis. The way out would be so radical it can't happen."

[Edith Schaeffer 1914-2013](#)

by Paul Vitello

""Without L'Abri, [Francis] Schaeffer would never have drawn the audience that made his many books possible." And without [Edith] Schaeffer ... "there would have been no L'Abri.""

[What has gotten into Thomas Nagel?](#)

by Joseph Brean

"Consciousness is not an accidental by-product of evolution, but was somehow written into the universe from the beginning."

[Why Narnia?](#)

by Rowan Williams

"How do you make fresh what is thought to be familiar, so familiar that it doesn't need to be thought about? Try making up a world in which these things can be met without preconceptions,

a world in which the strangeness of the Christian story is encountered for what it is, not as part of a familiar eccentricity of behavior called religion."

[So what if abortion ends a life?](#)

by Albert Moehler

In premeditated candor Mary Elizabeth Williams declares that the unborn child is a human life, but not a human life worthy of respect or protection. ... She candidly calls the unborn child a human life, and then ends her argument with this — "a life worth sacrificing." (For the article to which Moehler is responding, see M. E. Williams, "So what if abortion ends life?")

[God Talk: The Book of Common Prayer at three hundred and fifty](#)

by James Wood

The New Yorker provides a very nice survey of the origins, beauty, and impact of the Book of Common Prayer, whose definitive version is 350 years old this year.

[Loss of the innocents](#)

by Ross Douthat

"Any grown-up knows that ... small-town innocence is illusory, and that what looks pristine to outsiders can be as darkened by suffering as any other place where human beings live together, and alone. But even so, the illusion has real power, not least because the dream of small-town life makes the whole universe seem somehow kinder and homier. ..But if the ideal of the Good Place, the lost Eden or Arcadia, can stir up the residue of religious hopes even in hardened materialists, the reality of what transpired in the real Newtown last week — the murder in cold blood of 20 small children — can make Ivan Karamazovs out of even the devout."

[The myth of universal love](#)

by Stephen T. Asma

"I have to concede that I want cosmic love to work. But ... for my purposes, I'll stick with Cicero, who said, "society and human fellowship will be best served if we confer the most kindness on those with whom we are most closely associated.""

[The decline of Evangelical America](#)

by John Dickerson

"Some evangelical leaders are embarrassed by our movement's present paralysis. I am not. Weakness is a potent purifier. As Paul wrote, "I am content with weaknesses ... for the sake of Christ" (2 Corinthians 12:10). For me, the deterioration and disarray of the movement is a source of hope: hope that churches will stop angling for human power and start proclaiming the power of Christ."

[Has fiction lost its faith?](#)

by Paul Elie

Christian belief figures into literary fiction in our place and time as something between a dead language and a hangover. Forgive me if I exaggerate. But if any patch of our culture can be said to be post-Christian, it is literature.

[Academia: The world's leading social problem](#)

by Michael Strong

"If we can solve the fundamental social problem, the pathology of academic life that prevents constructive thought from coming to the fore, we will enable ourselves to solve all other social problems more quickly and effectively."

[True progressivism](#)

"The right's instinct is too often to make government smaller, rather than better. The supposedly egalitarian left's failure is more fundamental. Across the rich world, welfare states are running out of money, growth is slowing and inequality is rising—and yet the left's only answer is higher tax rates on wealth-creators." Can present leaders come up with "something that promises both fairness and progress"?

[Bloc Heads: Life behind the Iron Curtain](#)

by Louis Menand

"Nazism and Stalinism were dangerous but irrational, inefficient, and, finally, self-destructive political and economic systems. It's not that they were "unnatural" ... It's that they were absurd.

[What is it to be intellectually humble?](#)

by Robert Roberts

"Knowledge comes into us through a variety of channels that can be blocked by our concern for status, and the successful knowledge-seeker will be one who keeps those channels open. The process requires that we be able to "listen," either literally or figuratively, to what others say. ... The process also requires that we be corrigible, that we be open to the possibility that our opinions are in some way misguided."

['Just being human doesn't give you a right to live'](#)

by Hilary White

"[I]t is crucial for pro-life people to understand the bigger picture, that the thing we are fighting is bigger than a single incident, or a single issue. It is not about overturning *Roe v. Wade* or the Abortion Act 1967. It is about defeating an entire new philosophical culture, a system of thought governing all human action."

[An Academic Auto-da-Fé](#)

by Christian Smith

"Whoever said inquisitions and witch hunts were things of the past? A big one is going on now. The sociologist Mark Regnerus, at the University of Texas at Austin ...reported that adult children of parents who had same-sex romantic relationships, including same-sex couples as parents, have more emotional and social problems than do adult children of heterosexual parents with intact marriages. In today's political climate, and particularly in the discipline of sociology—dominated as it is by a progressive orthodoxy—what Regnerus did is unacceptable. It makes him a heretic, a traitor—and so he must be thrown under the bus."

[Scorning the propaganda of fear](#)

by Emma Kate Symons

In his new book, *Fanatisme de l'Apocalypse: Sauver la terre, punir l'homme*, Pascal Bruckner

claims that ecologism "represents a worrying new doctrine of ideological purity that even has totalitarian overtones."

[Does quantum physics make it easier to believe in God?](#)

by Stephen M. Barr

"If the human mind transcends matter to some extent, could there not exist minds that transcend the physical universe altogether? And might there not even exist an ultimate Mind?"

[What ails the Episcopalians](#)

by Jay Akasie

"Episcopalians from around the country gathered here this week for their church's 77th triennial General Convention, which ended Thursday. ... During the day, legislators in the lower chamber, the House of Deputies, and the upper chamber, the House of Bishops, discussed such weighty topics as whether to develop funeral rites for dogs and cats, and whether to ratify resolutions condemning genetically modified foods."

[Reclaiming a sense of the sacred](#) (an essay from *When I Was a Child I Read Books: Essays*)

by Marilynne Robinson

"Science can give us knowledge, but it cannot give us wisdom. Nor can religion, until it puts aside nonsense and distraction and becomes itself again"

[Shamscendence](#)

by David D. Corey

"I'm told that when a man is drowning, just before he succumbs, he sometimes thrashes violently side to side, believing himself to be swimming upward, all the while sinking lower and lower to his death. Something similar seems to be happening with the Episcopal Church today. Its fundamental purpose is to transcend the limits of life on earth by orienting souls upward toward God, but instead of transcendence it deals in "shamscendence," thrashing sideways from one earthly fad to another as it sinks into decline. Its end must be near."

NB: The Easter talk by Jefferts Schori, to which Corey refers in his article, echoes in an eery way significant elements of the de-Christianizing paganism present in [this speech](#), which was to be presented to the National Socialist party in Germany on Easter 1944.

[A double-minded man](#)

by Gerald Bray

"Christian truth is not decided by balancing acts or majority votes but by the teaching of divine revelation. As [the Archbishop of Canterbury] Dr. Williams knows only too well, Arius had the majority of the church on his side, but he lost out to Athanasius and the orthodox because he was wrong and his opponents were prepared to suffer for the truth. That was a long time ago, but the basic principle still holds good."

[In praise of leisure](#)

by Robert and Edward Skidelsky

What is wealth for? How much is enough? Now that we have achieved abundance, the habits bred into us by capitalism leave us unable to enjoy it properly. (Excerpt from their new book *How Much Is Enough? The love of money, and the case for the good life*)

[Future Tense, IX: Out of the wilderness](#)

by Charles Murray

"... when artists do not have coherent ideals of beauty, their work tends to be sterile; when they do not have coherent ideals of the good, their work tends to be vulgar. Without either beauty or the good, their work tends to be shallow. Artistic accomplishment that is sterile, vulgar, and shallow does not endure. These observations are especially relevant to our era because in the twentieth century, truth, beauty, and the good were outright rejected in the culture."

[The weakness of the churches](#)

by Ross Douthat

"American evangelicalism is culturally stronger, in many respects, than it was fifty years ago, but if you look at overall trends in church membership and participation and activity, the growth in the evangelical churches hasn't been substantial enough to compensate for the collapse of the Mainline and the institutional weakening of Roman Catholicism."

[Teach the books, touch the heart](#)

by Claire Needell Hollander

"Franz Kafka wrote that "a book must be the ax for the frozen sea inside us." I once shared this quotation with a class of seventh graders, and it didn't seem to require any explanation."

[How highbrows killed culture](#)

by Fred Siegel

"It is one of the foundational myths of contemporary liberalism: the idea that American culture in the 1950s was not only stifling in its banality but a subtle form of fascism that constituted a danger to the Republic. ... And yet, from a remove of more than a half century, we can see that the 1950s were in fact a high point for American culture—a period when many in the vast middle class aspired to elevate their tastes and were given the means and opportunity to do so."

[The flight from conversation](#)

by Sherry Turkle

"We are tempted to think that our little "sips" of online connection add up to a big gulp of real conversation. But they don't. E-mail, Twitter, Facebook, all of these have their places — in politics, commerce, romance and friendship. But no matter how valuable, they do not substitute for conversation."

[Plato's body, and mine](#)

by Bill Hayes

"If only I had read Plato. ... "Excessive emphasis on athletics produces an excessively uncivilized type, while a purely literary training leaves men indecently soft.""

[The book of books](#)

by Marilynne Robinson

"The Bible is the model for and subject of more art and thought than those of us who live within its influence, consciously or unconsciously, will ever know."

[Do the classics have a future?](#)

by Mary Beard

Are the classics in decline? Yes, or better said, 'twas ever thus. But this is because of what "the classics" really are: "the study of the classics is the study of what happens in the gap between antiquity and ourselves. It is not only the dialogue that we have with the culture of the classical world; it is also the dialogue that we have with those who have gone before us who were themselves in dialogue with the classical world".

[Pass the books. Hold the oil.](#)

by Thomas Friedman

"Moses arduously led the Jews for 40 years through the desert — just to bring them to the only country in the Middle East that had no oil. But Moses may have gotten it right, after all. Today, Israel has one of the most innovative economies, and its population enjoys a standard of living most of the oil-rich countries in the region are not able to offer." Why?

["Abortion is as American as apple pie": The culture of death finds a voice](#)

by Albert Mohler

According to Merle Hoffman, abortion is the ultimate act of empowering women: "The act of abortion positions women at their most powerful, and that is why it is so strongly opposed by many in society."

[Fame: a P & L](#)

by Mark Harris

Fifty years ago, the historian Daniel Boorstin rang in 1962 with a scowling doomsday jeremiad. American culture had entered the age of the celebrity as "human pseudo-event," he argued. Instead of looking up to heroes, Americans were now valorizing "a new kind of eminence": "a person who is known for his well-knownness." Boorstin decried the passing of a perhaps imaginary era in which accomplishment or moral fiber was a prerequisite to fame, and he shook his professorial fist at the new breed of superstar, whom he dismissed as nothing more than synthetic "receptacles into which we pour our own purposelessness." (The reference is to D. Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*)

[Review of Niall Ferguson's *Civilization: The West and the Rest*](#)

by Steven Pearlstein

"Instead of presenting himself as the well-read and widely traveled polymath he genuinely is, Ferguson comes off as an intellectual showoff who couldn't be bothered to edit his own ideas."

[God is in the basement of the Empire State Building](#)

by Andrew Marantz

An update on Dinesh D'Souza's term as president of New York City's only Evangelical college.

[Their noonday demons and ours](#)

by John Plotz

An ancient diagnosis and solution for a very contemporary problem.

[Cities are making us more human... and smarter](#)

interview with Edward Glaeser

Cities are not only better for the environment, but they are making us smarter: "cities ... allow the creation of new ideas. Chains of collaborative brilliance have always been responsible for human kind's greatest hits. We have seen this in cities for millennia."

[Two brains running: A review of Daniel Kahneman's *Thinking: Fast and Slow*](#)

by Jim Holt

"So impressive is its vision of flawed human reason that the New York Times columnist David Brooks recently declared that Kahneman and Tversky's work "will be remembered hundreds of years from now," and that it is "a crucial pivot point in the way we see ourselves." They are, Brooks said, "like the Lewis and Clark of the mind."

[Taking out the neurotrash](#)

by Marc Parry

"Raymond Tallis likes a fight. His target: a rash of pseudo brain science that purports to explain behavior as varied as believing in God and falling in love. Tallis, a former clinical neuroscientist who devoted years to studying stroke and epilepsy, considers such claims trash. Neurotrash."

[Varieties of irreligious experience](#)

by Jonathan Rée

Persuasive though the rationales for atheism may be, the idea of God is still a reminder that as clever as you are, there will always be a lot of things you do not understand.

[Bankers need a moral compass](#)

Stephen Green, interviewed by Renee Montagne

In *Good Value: Reflections on Money, Morality, and an Uncertain World*, the chairman of HSBC and Anglican priest, Stephen Green, proposes a "new capitalism" that brings good business and good ethics together. He says moral and spiritual values should take precedence over immediate profit.

[The history of violence](#) (EDGE Master Class)

by Steven Pinker

"Believe it or not—and I know most people do not—violence has been in decline over long stretches of time, and we may be living in the most peaceful time in our species' existence. The decline of violence, to be sure, has not been steady; it has not brought violence down to zero (to put it mildly); and it is not guaranteed to ... but it's a persistent historical development, visible on scales from millennia to years, from the waging of wars and perpetration of genocides to the spanking of children and the treatment of animals."

[What happens when a leftist philosopher discovers God?](#)

by Peter Berger

"[Juergen] Habermas has looked at the world and concluded that secularization theory—that is, the thesis that modernization necessarily leads to a decline of religion—does not fit the facts of the matter."

[From scroll to screen](#)

by Lev Grossman

"Something very important and very weird is happening to the book right now: It's shedding its papery corpus and transmigrating into a bodiless digital form, right before our eyes. We're witnessing the bibliographical equivalent of the rapture. If anything we may be lowballing the weirdness of it all. ... Scrolls were the prestige format, used for important works only: sacred texts, legal documents, history, literature. To compile a shopping list or do their algebra, citizens of the ancient world wrote on wax-covered wooden tablets using the pointy end of a stick called a stylus. Tablets were for disposable text — the stylus also had a flat end, which you used to squash and scrape the wax flat when you were done. At some point someone had the very clever idea of stringing a few tablets together in a bundle. Eventually the bundled tablets were replaced with leaves of parchment and thus, probably, was born the codex. But nobody realized what a good idea it was until a very interesting group of people with some very radical ideas adopted it for their own purposes. Nowadays those people are known as Christians, and they used the codex as a way of distributing the Bible."

[It's science, but not necessarily right](#)

by Carl Zimmer

""There are many hypotheses in science which are wrong,' the astrophysicist Carl Sagan once said. 'That's perfectly all right: it's the aperture to finding out what's right. Science is a self-correcting process.' If only it were that simple."

[The significance of the ascension](#)

by Ted Schroeder

"the theology of WWJD: "What would Jesus do?" ... turns Jesus into a teacher of fixed moral ideas which must be imitated, i.e. a moralist not a Savior. Even with a little help from the Holy Spirit, it sounds like a religion of obedience to moral laws. This is to define Christian activity as something we do in Jesus' name. But the Gospel is the good news about what Jesus does, not what we do."

[Why the King James Bible endures](#)

by Charles McGrath

"Not everyone prefers a God who talks like a pal or a guidance counselor. Even some of us who are nonbelievers want a God who speaketh like — well, God."

[To uncover the true nature of literature, a scholar says, don't read books!](#)

by Kathryn Schulz

On a virtual trip to the Stanford Literary Lab, Schulz discovers literary scholars mutating into computer scientists, and vice versa.... and discovering "the theology of the 21st century".

[Where Did Western Civilization Go?](#)

PRINCETON, NJ (May 18, 2011) -- The National Association of Scholars has released a detailed study on the near extinction of Western Civilization survey courses in college curricula. The report, *The Vanishing West: 1964-2010*, covers 125 institutions in all 50 states and looks at requirements in 1964, 1989, and 2010. The data confirm the growing indifference, and often scorn ... for the Western experience as an integral subject of study. World History courses, and

courses taught through the politically correct lenses of multiculturalism, are on the rise as alternatives.

[Why bother? Review of Terry Castle, *The Professor and Other Writings* \(Harper, 2010\); Louis Menand, *The Marketplace of Ideas: Reform and Resistance in the American University* \(Norton, 2010\); Martha Nussbaum, *Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities* \(Princeton, 2010\)](#)

by Nicholas Dames

"...the first paradigm shift in the humanities since the emergence of theory and the culture wars of the preceding two decades. If the question of the '80s and '90s was, "What should we be reading, and how?," the question that dogged the opening years of our new millennium was of a vastly more dismal kind: "Why bother?""

[Bloodlust: Why we should fear our neighbors more than strangers](#)

by Russell Jacoby

"The proposition that violence derives from kith and kin overturns a core liberal belief that we assault and are assaulted by those who are strangers to us. If that were so, the solution would be at hand: Get to know the stranger. Talk with the stranger. Reach out. The cure for violence is better communication, perhaps better education. Study foreign cultures and peoples.

Unfortunately, however, our brother, our neighbor, enrages us precisely because we understand him. Cain knew his brother—he "talked with Abel his brother"—and slew him afterward. We don't like this truth. We prefer to fear strangers. We like to believe that fundamental differences pit people against one another, that world hostilities are driven by antagonistic principles about how society should be constituted."

["In praise of Marx"](#)

by Terry Eagleton

"... Marx was no more responsible for the monstrous oppression of the communist world than Jesus was responsible for the Inquisition. For one thing, Marx would have scorned the idea that socialism could take root in desperately impoverished, chronically backward societies like Russia and China. ...Marxism is a theory of how well-heeled capitalist nations might use their immense resources to achieve justice and prosperity for their people. It is not a program by which nations bereft of material resources, a flourishing civic culture, a democratic heritage, a well-evolved technology, enlightened liberal traditions, and a skilled, educated work force might catapult themselves into the modern age."

["So's your old man"](#)

by Stanley Fish

"...valuing process over substance is the essence of liberalism, a form of thought and political organization that begins with a strong sense of the intractability of disputes at the level of belief and proceeds to turn everything it can into a question of procedure: Were all voices heard? Was the decision made on neutral grounds and without taking into considerations matters of race, gender, economic status, ethnicity, etc.? (Sounds good, doesn't it?)"

[Review of Stefan Collini's *That's Offensive!: Criticism, Identity, Respect*](#)

by Isaac Chotiner

"Very few "progressive" forces... would have shown any "understanding" of hurt Christian feelings if Jesus had been mocked in a Danish newspaper. The entire force of the argument against the offensiveness of the Danish cartoons was based on the concern that Muslims were somehow less powerful than other religious believers."

["Lower education: Sex toys and academic freedom at Northwestern"](#)

by Joseph Epstein

"One of the most important things that departed from higher education with the old ideal of the university was intellectual authority. One of the first changes I noticed from my own undergraduate education when I began teaching at Northwestern—and this is certainly not true of Northwestern alone—was all the junky subject matter being taught. Courses in science fiction, in the movies, in contemporary or near contemporary writers already consigned to the third class, along with many courses that sounded more like magazine articles in quite boring magazines."

[Review of James Miller's *Examined lives: From Socrates to Nietzsche*](#)

by Sarah Bakewell

Miller has the "superb idea" of taking Diogenes Laertius as a model, "which sees philosophy not as a set of precepts but as something one learns by following a wise man — sometimes literally following him wherever he goes, listening, and observing how he handles situations. ... to test whether such an approach can still offer us anything of value."

[Review of Hubert Dreyfus and Sean Dorrance Kelly, *All things shining: Reading the Western classics to find meaning in a secular age*](#)

by Susan Neiman

Hubert Dreyfus and Sean Dorrance Kelly "offer a meditation on the meaning of life, in a sharp, engaging style that will appeal to readers both within the academy and beyond it. They provide a compressed narrative of changes in Western understanding of human existence over the course of nearly three millennia, and argue that reading great works of literature allows us to rediscover the reverence, gratitude and amazement that were available in Homeric times."

["Among the Evangelicals: Inside a fractured movement"](#)

by Timothy Beal

"[R]ecent studies by more-or-less outsiders show there is no such thing as evangelicalism. The term represents a broad range of significantly different theologies, practices, and religious movements within Christianity, and there are often tensions among and within them. Which is no revelation at all to most more-or-less insiders, who call themselves evangelicals, however qualified, and who argue as much with others who do the same as with those of us who don't."

["Navigating past nihilism"](#)

by Sean D. Kelly

"There is a downside to the freedom of nihilism ... Without any clear and agreed upon sense for what to be aiming at in a life, people may experience the paralyzing type of indecision depicted by T.S. Eliot in his famously vacillating character Prufrock; or they may feel, like the characters in a Samuel Beckett play, as though they are continuously waiting for something to become clear in their lives before they can get on with living them; or they may feel the kind of "stomach level

sadness” that David Foster Wallace described, a sadness that drives them to distract themselves by any number of entertainments, addictions, competitions, or arbitrary goals, each of which leaves them feeling emptier than the last. ... Herman Melville seems to have articulated and hoped for ... the meaning that one finds in a life dedicated to “the wife, the heart, the bed, the table, the saddle, the fire-side, the country,” these are genuine meanings."

"Hating God"

by Bernard Schweizer

"When I started investigating misotheism, I wondered what might cause a rational, decent, responsible person to go on the warpath against God. My research reveals a variety of reasons, including personal tragedy, psychological trauma, social or political upheaval, and natural catastrophe. All of these specific causes of God-hatred, however, lead back to the problem of evil."

"Making Muslim Democracies"

by Jan-Werner Mueller

Through reflection on the thought and action of Jacques Maritain, Mueller concludes that "...the formation of some liberalized Islam by self-consciously moderate and democratic Muslim intellectuals should not be seen as a sideshow to the hard-nosed politics of interests.... the history—including the intellectual history—of Christian Democracy provides both reasons for optimism and lessons for the future"

"A room full of yearning and regret"

by Wendy Plump

"I look at my parents and at how much simpler their lives are at the ages of 75, mostly because they haven't marred the landscape with grand-scale deceit. They have this marriage of 50-some years behind them, and it is a monument to success. A few weeks or months of illicit passion could not hold a candle to it. If you imagine yourself in such a situation, where would you fit an affair in neatly? If you were 75, which would you rather have: years of steady if occasionally strained devotion, or something that looks a little bit like the Iraqi city of Fallujah, cratered with spent artillery?"

"The Neuroscience of Trust"

by Paul J. Zak

"Ultimately, you cultivate trust by setting a clear direction, giving people what they need to see it through, and getting out of their way."

"Not leadership material"

by Susan Cain

"What if we said to college applicants that the qualities we're looking for are not leadership skills, but excellence, passion and a desire to contribute beyond the self?"

"The secret of good humanities teaching"

by Julius Taranto and Kevin J.H. Dettmar

"The best humanities professors leave students with the ability and the desire to first make a complicated text simple and understandable, and then to reread and find the complexity again."

They teach how much is there if you know how to look."

["Catholicism Unriddled"](#)

by Russell E. Saltzman

"“[D]ensity” characterized by an intensity of common teaching, worship vibrancy, the confidence of a tradition extending to the very beginnings of the Church, and the welcomed contention of many voices around and within all of it as each yet seeks better to understand the core, foundational truths that God is triune and Christ is fully God and fully human."

["He's Jesus Christ"](#)

by Nicholas Kristof

If you subscribe to the caricature of devout religious believers as mostly sanctimonious hypocrites, the kind who rake in cash and care about human life only when it is unborn, come visit the doctor here. Dr. Tom Catena..., a Catholic missionary ... is the only doctor at the 435-bed Mother of Mercy Hospital nestled in the Nuba Mountains in the far south of Sudan. For that matter, he's the only doctor permanently based in the Nuba Mountains for a population of more than half a million people.

[Gay conservatism and straight liberation](#)

by Ross Douthat

The drive for same-sex marriage was a tactical decision on the part of the gay community to enshrine the normalcy of same-sex relations within one of the most conservative America institutions, marriage. But, having won that battle, the gay community is now seeing that the culture itself has moved on to freedom from marriage., something that gays opposed to gay marriage originally wanted. It seems you can have it both ways!

[A little respect for Dr. Foster](#)

by Nicholas Kristof

The next time you hear someone at a cocktail party mock evangelicals, think of Dr. Foster and those like him. These are folks who don't so much proclaim the gospel as live it. They deserve better.

[The cathedral of computation](#)

by Ian Bogost

The scientific revolution was meant to challenge tradition and faith. But science and technology, now so pervasive and distorted, have turned into a new type of theology.

[Take heart: Nature is on our side, and she does not change](#)

by Anthony Esolen

"I am persuaded that we could clear our heads of most of the unnatural evils we have come to accept if we would simply leave the Teaching Machine and the Entertainment Machine, and go out of doors, and stay there for a while, walking, listening, perhaps whistling, playing, working, thinking, or simply being.

[Abundance without attachment](#)

by Arthur C. Brooks

First "collect experiences, not things". Second, "steer clear of excessive usefulness". Finally, "get to the center of the wheel".

Sanctuary for the humanities

by Christopher Noble

The humanities are considered arcane, of dubious practical value, and possibly a lost cause—in other words, a perfect fit for religious colleges.

[Take heart: Nature is on our side and she does not change](#)

by Anthony Esolen

"I am persuaded that we could clear our heads of most of the unnatural evils we have come to accept if we would simply leave the Teaching Machine and the Entertainment Machine, and go out of doors, and stay there for a while, walking, listening, perhaps whistling, playing, working, thinking, or simply being.

["It's urgent to put the liberal arts back at the center of education"](#)

by Pascal-Emmanuel Gobry

"Nobody stops to ask what education is for, because the answer is implicitly accepted by all: an education is for getting a job. It is, in other words, for being a cog in the giant machine of post-industrial capitalism. It is, in other words, for the opposite thing that our forefathers wanted for us. I do not use these words lightly, but it is against—in the sense that a headwind is against a ship—the very foundations of our liberty and our civilization."

OTHER READINGS:

[David Brooks, Mental Courage](#)

[Theodore Dalrymple, Modernity's uninvited guest](#)

[Ross Douthat, The Pope and the crowds](#)

[_____, Condoms, Catholicism, and Casuistry](#)

[Stanley Fish, The crisis of the humanities finally arrives](#)

[Thomas Hibbs, On Stanley Cavell and the uncaniness of the ordinary](#)

[Metropolitan Hilarion, The dialogue with liberal Anglicans is over](#)

[Carlin Romano, Cosmology, Cambridge Style](#)

[Robert Sibley, Engineers without souls](#)

[_____, Intellectual infantilism](#)