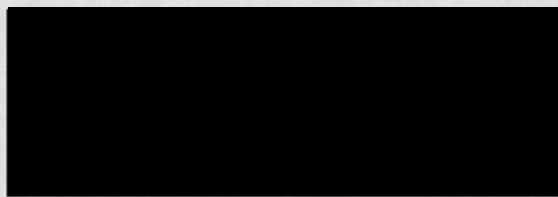


Oct 16, 1996

Mr Lamb:

The following letter and attachments
were precipitated by your program
Booknotes, featuring Louise Barnett,
author of Touched by Fire.

I thought you might be
interested in the highlighted
parts.



G. BIC

October 16, 1996

Professor Louise Barnett
American Studies
Rutgers University
PO Box 2101
New Brunswick NJ 08903

I was privileged to view Booknotes this past Sunday evening, October 13, in which your new book *Touched by Fire* was discussed. (I consider Booknotes the single outstanding program on TV. Brian Lamb must be the perfect interviewer -- he doesn't intrude, but lets the author have her or his say, which is always considerable.)

I did not expect to see Custer and his wife portrayed in such an honest, forthright, and objective manner. This portrayal was reinforced by a very attractive lady who was articulate without affectation, a welcome change from the usual fare of actors acting as authorities.

I confess I don't have much interest in Custer, but have secured your book and am going to give it a whirl. Somewhere, in past times, I obtained a copy of *The Custer Myth*, and also Custer's *My Life on the Plains*. (The latter I bought in Billings MT back in 1962 when myself and family spent the summer there as fugitives from Tulsa and the University of Tulsa, working in a local refinery as a visiting chemical engineering professor. We of course stopped by the battlefield on the way up from Sheridan WY, early one cloudy and spectacular morning.) The sole thing I remember about Custer's book is how he viewed the Plains. Over every rise there was still another rise, like the waves of the ocean. Also have Libby Custer's *Boots and Saddles* and *Following the Guidon*, which I found more appealing. Your assessment of Mrs. Custer agrees with my own.

(Tulsa, by the way, is home to the famous Gilcrease Museum, a gift of oilman and collector Thomas Gilcrease, with an outstanding collection of western art and Americana. To the north, and southwest of nearby Bartlesville, is the Woolaroc Museum, a gift from oilman Frank Phillips, founder of the Phillips Petroleum Company. The latter museum displays the famous painting -- by Leigh, I believe -- of an old Indian behind a plow, looking up at the clouds, where he sees visions of yesteryear, of Indians on horseback in the chase after buffalo. This sort of remembrance colors my own attitude, in spite of the usual platitude that there is enough blame to go around and then some. Cowboy artist Charles M. Russell perceived that the Indians once had it made, but he and his cowboy friends ruined it all for \$25 a month, or whatever. A point of view.)

I've read extensively about the Plains, merely as a hobby after a day's work, and have accumulated many of the significant Plains-related books through the years, e.g., from the University of Oklahoma Press, etc. This has in turn caused me to attempt a sourcebook on the subject, which I have a go at every once in awhile. (A draft is at the Texas Christian University Press, but I haven't heard back since I sent it in as they requested, so they may have tossed the thing, but I've

been too busy on other projects to worry about it).

Anyway, this particular project gives me the occasion to get out and explore the countryside. In fact I was down in Oklahoma the weekend before last visiting with longtime friend Stan Hoig (he is the author of *The Battle of the Washita*, cited in your book, and a retired prof from Central State Univ at Edmond OK). We headed out west from Oklahoma City to locate Rock Mary, which was named by Captain Marcy's command in 1849 on his outward journey to Santa Fe (after Mary Conway, the fiancée of a Lieut. Harrison of the expedition, who was later killed by a party of Kiowas on the return trip through western Texas, near Big Spring.) We finally found the rock formation, and some others too, amid the peanut fields west of Hinton, just south of Interstate-40.

All of this brings to mind that Army officers such as Capt. Randolph B. Marcy, Col. Richard Irving Dodge, and Lt. James W. Abert seemed able to get along with the Indians to some extent, in contrast to Custer's warring role. Even the renowned old Indian fighter Gen. George Crook was respected by the Indians for his fairness, and vice versa. He in fact tried to obtain a more equitable treatment for the Indians, but ran afoul of Washington and public sentiment. Gen. Phil Sheridan was similarly inclined, for instance, ordering the return of displaced Navajos from eastern New Mexico to their ancestral lands.

Therefore -- this all gets around to the matter of ethics, or comparative ethics, or one system against another. Accordingly I attach a clipping from the local newspaper, the *Laramie Boomerang*, in which I tried to stir up the natives, but only received a few hoots from the morning McDonald's coffee crowd. (The *Boomerang* was named after founder/publisher/editor/columnist Bill Nye's mule. Nye was a humorist in the class of Mark Twain, and whose writings have been preserved in book form.)

I note in this connection that you are planning a book project on courts-martial. It seems to me that systems of ethics are central to the problem.

And these sorts of things bother me, as do matters of logic -- or illogic. In fact I seem to be continually trying to stir up trouble, to challenge the status quo, as per the attached news release about my latest (technical) book on *Power Cycles and Energy Efficiency*. In furtherance of this contrary stance, I have recently submitted a paper on "Evolutionism as Religion" to one of the popular scientific magazines -- based on another book manuscript in preparation. The editor will probably jump out the window. (After an exploratory phone call, I formally queried the trade division of Princeton University Press about the book manuscript, but have yet to hear back.)

[I comment that Oswald Spengler wrote that "There is no more conclusive refutation of Darwinism than that furnished by paleontology" (*The Decline of the West*, II, p. 32). It is a remark which still stands, in spite of all the prestidigitations about "missing links" or "punctuated equilibria." Spengler observes that species exist essentially unchanged over long periods of time, then disappear, and different species emerge. As to science as religion, Princeton psychologist Julian Jaynes says this better than anyone else, speaking of "clusters of scientific ideas which come

together and almost surprise themselves into creeds of belief, scientific mythologies which fill the very void left by the divorce of science and religion in our time (*The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1976, p. 441). In turn, science becomes the new religion. And if evolutionism -- or "creation by evolution" -- is not religion, then why do its proponents refuse to allow it to be critiqued? I observe, furthermore, that "creation by evolution" is a fundamental contradiction in terms, or oxymoron, in that creation is genesis from nothing or nothingness, from the void, whereas evolution requires a starting point or point of departure. I originally brought up the subject in the epilogue of my book *Analytic Thermodynamics: Origins, Methods, Limits, and Validity* (Taylor & Francis, New York, 1991), in which I also point out that the concept of energy is tautological, arising as merely another way to (mathematically) represent the results of experiment or observation, and that the processes of reason must deal either in tautologies or error.]

Still another controversial subject is cancer. My wife of 42 years died on [REDACTED] 1995 from the effects of both cancer and chemotherapy, and no one, and I mean no one, knew from straight up about curing cancer -- either by orthodox means or by unorthodox means. So I've done a literature search amounting to, so far, over 1,100 pages on WordPerfect, about this mostly incurable disease, with the working title of *Cancer Dilemmas: A Sourcebook About Alternative Therapies*. I've written to most of the major TV-talk programs, trying to stir things up, with little to show for it. Except that a prestigious doctors' (MD's) newsletter invited me to submit a paper about my "provocative" findings, which I've done, titled "Enzyme Inhibitors for Cancer Cell Metabolism." (That is, there are known agents which act selectively against cancer cell metabolism, which converts blood sugar or glucose to lactic acid or lactate, instead of to carbon dioxide and water, the products of normal cell metabolism. Whereas conventional chemotherapy consists of enzyme inhibitors which act against *both* normal cells and cancerous cells -- an action called cytotoxicity or cell-toxicity. I even found a literature reference in a medical journal which found that vitamin C does indeed destroy cancer cells, just like Linus Pauling said.) Along the way I call the War on Cancer a medical researcher's relief fund, and quote from the National Cancer Institute that conventional cytotoxic chemotherapy is ineffective against solid tumors. (Chemotherapy for metastasized cancers is only a palliative, and the comment has been made -- by an MD cancer specialist no less -- that chemotherapy is most effective for those who need it least, and least effective for those who need it most.) If there was as much publicity about cancer treatment failures as about the O.J. Simpson case, then maybe medical research would be compelled to come up with some solutions.

This brings to mind how much we are influenced by the media, by what they say and don't say -- a form of censorship. For instance, I've reached the conclusion that polls don't follow opinion, but rather that opinion follows polls. For example, if Dole was arbitrarily spotted 20 points over Clinton, true or not, and repeated endlessly, then I wonder who would win the election? The reminder is of Stanley Milgram's *Obedience to Authority: An Experimental View* (Harper & Row, New York, 1974.) The media and the polls serve as authority figures.

Back to the West, and more controversy, I note that a fellow faculty member at Rutgers ([REDACTED])

[REDACTED] I believe) are suggesting that the Great Plains farmers and ranchers trade cattle raising for buffalo herding. (Reading about the strange viruses -- possibly cancer-causing -- that reside in chickens and feedlot beef has turned me into a vegetarian, except for ocean-caught fish.)

The Nature Conservancy is also advocating a return to buffalo, ideally suited to the shortgrass country of the Great Plains. I mention that the Nature Conservancy purchased the old Chapman-Barnard ranch north of Pawhuska OK, the town where I was raised. I visited the ranch back in 1993, before the buffalo were shipped in, and I understand that now things are going full blast. We even have some buffalo herds on some ranches around Laramie, and in northeastern Wyoming, south of Gillette, for about 10 miles along the highway, the immense herds look like the Old West.

(As to Pawhuska, I grew up there when the Osages still had lots of oil money -- they would get drunk, wreck a Cadillac, and buy another. The Osages were atypical, however, since most of the Plains Indians had no money, only a reservation for each tribe -- though in northern Montana a few struck it rich in oil. Probably the outstanding book about the Osages is John Joseph Mathews' WAHKON-TAH, published back in the early thirties, and a Book-of-the Month Club selection. Mathews lived on the first tier of hills overlooking downtown Pawhuska, and had a cabin north of town, where he wrote *Talking to the Moon*, which I also consider to be what we call literature. In other words, it is worth reading more than once. I remember meeting JJM when I was a kid, and I have plenty to say about growing up in Pawhuska in my book manuscript about the Great Plains -- though Pawhuska is more on the edge, in post oak and blackjack and tallgrass prairie, or bluestem prairie.)

And speaking of Gen. Crook and the books by and about him, somewhere I read about two soldiers who were each bitten by the same rabid animal, and though one died, the other survived. If we knew why, then we might also know why most people succumb to cancer but some don't. (If you should run across this incident in your searches of the literature, I would appreciate your letting me know. Though I remember it, I can't seem to find it again -- but figure it is someplace or the other.)

After wandering all over the territory, I conclude by wishing you well on your next book project, and hope that a dissertation on courts-martial will prove as colorful and informative as your book about Custer. Not only this, but maybe you can weave in something about ethics, and about why some officers were martinets like Custer, yet others were more like ordinary human beings. This reminds me, that when I was in the service, some of the officers and noncom's were just plain nuts (or psychopathic), while others could command a body of men without hardly raising their voices. If I understand right, Napoleon, even, was looked up to by his troops. Some few people just naturally have it, and some don't.

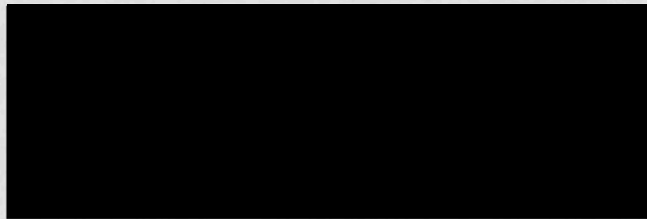
Evidently Custer believed in flogging, or the next thing to it. Which reminds me, that this was a common practice used in the Revolutionary War, as set forth by W.E. Woodward in his book *George Washington: The Image and the Man* (Livewright, New York, 1926, 1942, 1946).

Woodward also wrote about the Civil War in *Years of Madness* (Putnam, New York, 1951; Frontier Press, Santa Rosa CA, 1967). One doesn't ordinarily hear about this kind of punishment for American troops in times past. Nor the fact that the principals of the Boston Tea Party, who are now esteemed as patriots, were in fact objecting to Britain *lowering* the tax on tea, which would interfere with their black market operations.

Admittedly, American colonials and frontiersman were tough individualists, and it took a lot to hold them together. A sometimes quoted example is of Doniphan's Army, which more or less did as it pleased, but yet was an effective fighting force, perhaps more like Indians than regular Army.

So in speaking history, and of courts-martials, and making the punishment fit the crime, there is always at least two sides to the story.

I trust that no one else will send such a long-winded and rambling communication, precipitated by your book; otherwise, you won't have time to do any further work. Enough is enough.



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People Speak

Who decides ethics?

Dear Editor:

I note in the Branding Iron for Sept. 18, 1996, that the University of Wyoming is now offering a minor in ethics through the Center for the Advancement of Ethics, whose director is David B. Resnik of the department of philosophy. I am looking forward to being enlightened on this subject, and hope that the findings will be shared from time to time.

For instance, I'm wondering just what constitutes ethics, and who or who all decides? Are systems of ethics to be from a Biblical or divine source — that is, from a religious source — or are they to be man-made (or woman-made), that is to say, made up? If they are made-up, I would like to know what sort of reasoning takes place, and what set of logic is used to formulate these ethics. Moreover, what authority figure or figures will vouch for the system of logic in the first place. And are these authority figures merely human, or are they divine? That is, can they pass the test of immortality?

Take the act of homicide for instance. By what criterion is this considered unhuman and not to be sanctioned? Not by reason, for the processes of reason can come to any arbitrary conclusion whatsoever — and have done so and continue to do so. Thus many societies or civilizations have been, and are, based on homicidal instincts, in thought and in practice. Ritual human sacrifice is part and parcel. Is it considered entirely proper in their code of ethics.

(As to the processes of reason, when we attempt to reason or rationalize we must deal either in tautologies or error. A tautology merely repeats the same exact thing in a different way, whereas if we are not repeating ourselves, then we must be in error. So our reasoning ends up wandering off in any and all directions.)

These things said, if we can't reason ethics, then is not ethics a religious matter, and in fact are not ethics and religion one and the same? But just what particular religion, if I may so ask, is a system of ethics to follow? Is it to be congruent with Judeo-Christianity, that is, with Biblical statement, or is it to be based on something else, something man-made or man-inspired, often called secularism, humanism, or secular humanism? And who is to decide?

Interestingly, what we call secular humanism is intended to be apart from religion. However, it has been ordained as religion by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Torcase v. Watkins*, decided in 1961. By this curious stroke, all that is not religion becomes religion — everything in effect is religion.

In turn, consider what we think of as science. The explanations of science, however, are subject to the limitations of reason and same as anything else, and by default science becomes a religion in itself — which may then be called scientism, or evolutionism, or whatever.

So just where does this all leave ethics? Out on a limb, I suppose — unless we are speaking of Biblical ethics. But then how does this play amid all the talk about a wall of separation between church and state? I would say the UW ethics program has its work cut out for it.



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ADVANCES IN POWER GENERATION MAY HELP TO STRETCH WANING ENERGY RESOURCES

A new book being published by Academic Press promises to stir up excitement among experts in traditional energy generation using classic power cycles. Written by E.J. Hoffman and titled **Power Cycles and Energy Efficiency**, the book challenges the hypothetical limitations imposed upon electrical power generation and offers a modified cycle to help conserve the Earth's energy resources and save costs in power generation. This topic has been all but dismissed by many who believe that technology for conventional power generation has reached its apex and that we are using our resources in the most efficient manner allowed by modern science.

Any form of energy generation can be broken down to the simple conversion of heat to work. In the past, this conversion has been regarded as restricted by the theoretical limitations of the hypothetical Carnot cycle. Named after the French scientist Sadi Carnot (1837-1894), the cycle supposedly indicates the theoretical upper limit on the proportion of heat that can be converted to work. This cycle, as well as several other power cycles, is analyzed by Hoffman for its limitations. As an alternative, Hoffman develops a modified Joule cycle which operates nonadiabatically. That is, heat is removed from a gaseous working fluid during compression and added during expansion. A circulating heat transfer medium removes heat from the compression section, heat from a combustion or other thermal source is then added to the medium to reach a higher temperature level, and the medium in turn transfers heat to the expansion section. In very brief terms, Hoffman shows that the efficiency of the overall cycle is determined primarily by the difference in temperature between the circulating medium leaving the expansion section of the cycle and entering the compression section. The smaller the temperature difference, the greater the efficiency.

In this manner, the hypothetical limitations of the Carnot cycle can be circumvented. Not only can Hoffman's modifications increase the efficiency for converting primary energy sources to power -- notably fossil fuels, but even nuclear fuels -- but it also furnishes a means for converting low-grade or low-temperature waste-heat to power. This includes in particular the waste-heat from conventional steam-power plants. In other words, a system has been found to use heat energy which is ordinarily lost to the surroundings or the environment. The net effect of this cycle modification is to increase the efficiency of power generation. Increased efficiency in turn translates to cost benefits, and aids in the conservation of energy resources.

This unique book provides a fresh perspective on the thermodynamics of the classic energy cycles. The methodology discussed can be applied directly to geothermal and solar energy recovery, and is particularly adapted to skid-mounted units, as used for gas-fired turbine/generators. The evidence presented in this ground-breaking book shows that significant increases in efficiency are still possible in spite of the conventional wisdom about the classic power cycles.

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