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Special Issue: The Republicans

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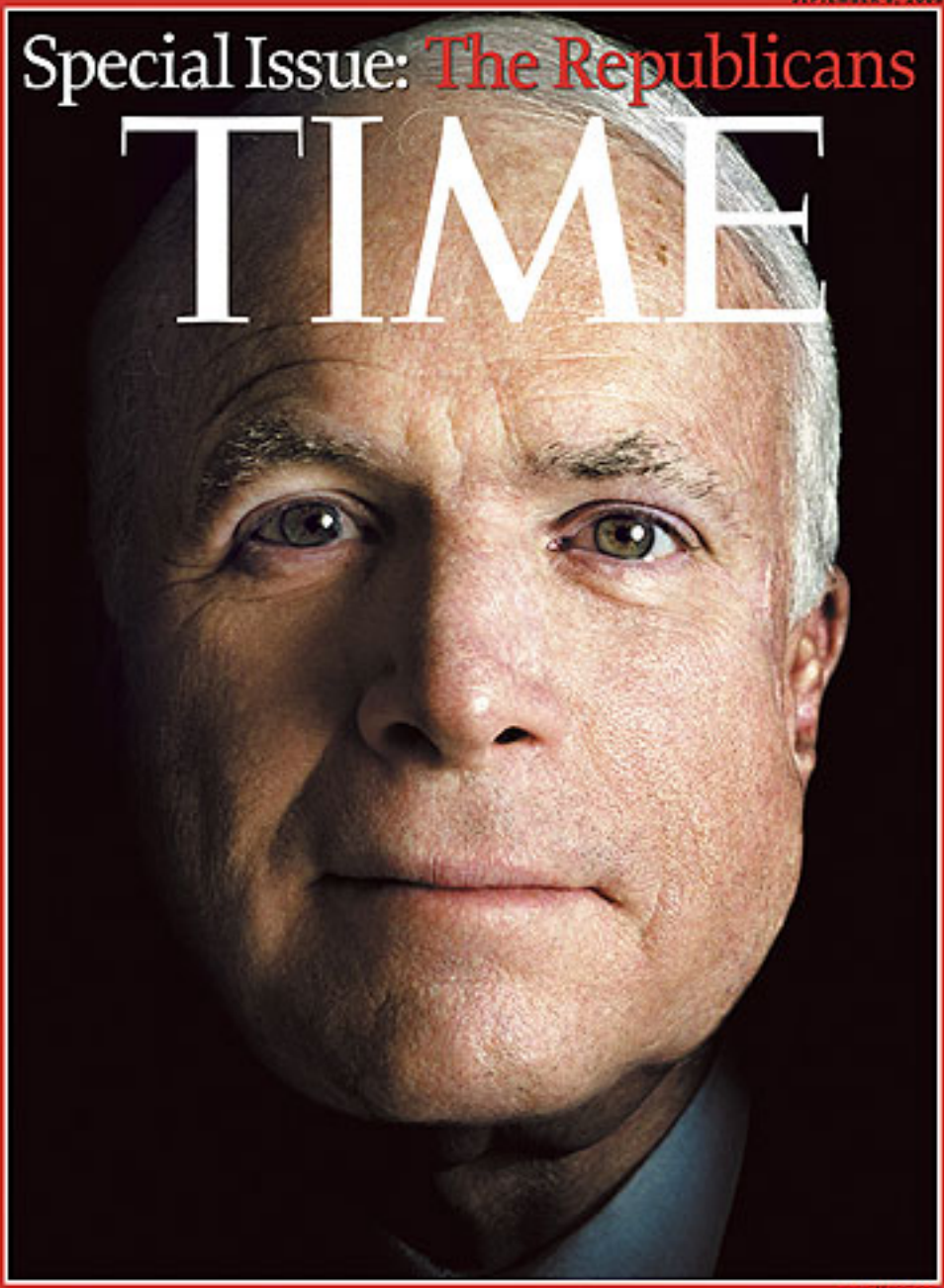

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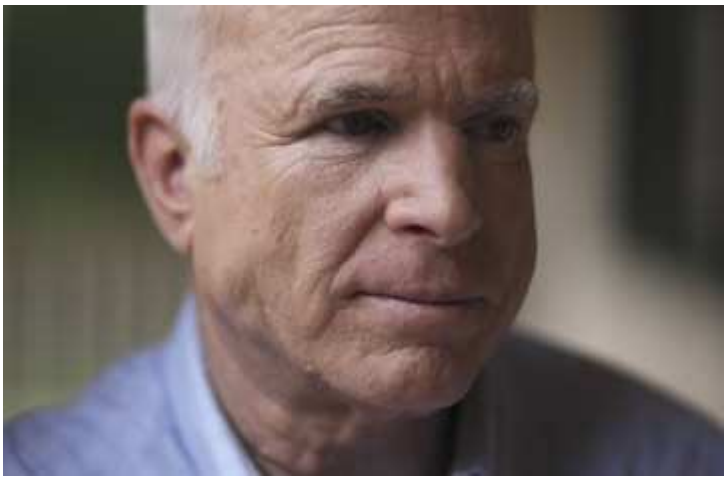
The Republicans

PHOTOGRAPH BY PLATON

COVER

Understanding John McCain

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By JAMES CARNEY AND MICHAEL GRUNWALD



Photograph for TIME by Christopher Morris / VII

John McCain, according to one of his most perceptive and persistent critics, has struggled throughout his career to balance his principles and his ambitions, to reconcile the code of honor instilled in him as a boy with the insistent demands of political expedience. His worst moments in public office, this critic has charged, have come when he has failed to put his country first — opposing a holiday for Martin Luther King Jr. to bolster his conservative credibility in Arizona, concealing his abhorrence of the Confederate flag to troll for votes in South Carolina. And before you judge, you should know that the critic in question is John McCain, who has explored and deplored his own flaws in remarkable detail in his books and speeches and has apologized for them with candor that is rare in a politician. In 2000, after sidestepping the flag issue during his first presidential campaign, he returned to South Carolina to flay himself for pandering. "I don't seek absolution," he said. "I can only try to resist future temptations to abandon principle for expediency."

If it be a sin, as Shakespeare wrote, to covet honor, then McCain might be the most sinful politician alive. His 50 years of nearly continuous service to his country — in the Navy, as a POW and in Congress — have been a tumultuous and often inspiring

saga of a man and his code. McCain languished in prison in Hanoi for years rather than accept a release he considered dishonorable, and he has made his mark in Washington as a kind of honor politician, a crusader who has chosen his battles on the basis of morality rather than ideology. Fighting to limit the influence of money in politics or performance-enhancing drugs in sports, attacking Democrats who opposed the surge in Iraq or Republican lobbyists who exploited Indian tribes, McCain tends to approach his pet issues not as arid policy disputes about which reasonable people can disagree but as emotionally pitched battles between good and evil, affairs of honor vs. the ignominy of disgrace. If it hasn't won him a lot of popularity contests with his colleagues, it has burnished his national reputation for being his own man.

To John McCain, honor means telling the truth, doing the right thing rather than the easy thing and putting America's needs ahead of your needs. But as he has reminded us so many times, McCain is not a saint. And he is now the Republican nominee for President, the anointed leader of the party establishment he has antagonized so often. He has a real chance to extend his public service to the Oval Office and an abiding conviction that these perilous times require his leadership. But getting there in a year when so much is stacked against the GOP may require him to play by rules that don't always conform to the code of honor to which he subscribes.

Honor Bound

These days, there is a new McCain on the campaign trail. He has forsworn his freewheeling sessions of straight talk with the press, sticking religiously to GOP talking points, bottled up by a campaign that is highly disciplined, curiously hostile to reporters and quick to launch negative and often misleading attacks. During a brief, weird and remarkably uninformative interview, TIME asked him about the abrupt shift in strategy. The candidate who used to spend hours kibitzing with reporters refused to acknowledge that anything has changed. "I don't know what you're talking about," McCain said, staring blankly at a press aide, without even a wink.

Acknowledged or not, the change in strategy has worked: as McCain heads to his convention, he is virtually tied in the polls. The theme of McCain's coronation in St. Paul, Minn., will be putting "country first," but his aides are not about to apologize

for putting victory a close second. They say they would have loved to run a classic McCain campaign, with a series of high-minded town-hall debates and the usual open access, but Barack Obama refused the debates, and the Obama-smitten media decided that the campaign is all about their new darling. "The race is as we found it," says Mark Salter, a close adviser and the co-author of McCain's five books. "We're not going to do anything dishonorable. But we are going to try to win."

The candidate is, more than anything else, a born fighter. John Sidney McCain III grew up in the considerable shadow of the first two John Sidney McCains, both four-star admirals who were small of stature but large of presence, both true believers in the military code of Duty, Honor, Country. "They were my first heroes, and their respect for me has been the most lasting ambition of my life," the Senator said at a 1994 ceremony to commission the destroyer U.S.S. *John S. McCain* in their honor. His grandfather, known as Slew, was a Navy legend, an innovative strategist and a relentless warrior who dropped dead four days after attending the 1945 Japanese surrender on the U.S.S. *Missouri*. McCain's father Jack was a highly decorated World War II submarine skipper who rose to command U.S. naval forces in the Pacific and ordered the bombing of Hanoi despite the danger to his prisoner-of-war son. Jack was a workaholic and an alcoholic, and he wasn't home much, but he tried to instill in John his greatest-generation values and strict sense of honor.

At first, the lessons seemed wasted. The young John McCain was a constant breaker of rules, a brawler and a slob, an undersize punk with an oversize chip on his shoulder. He reluctantly followed his forebears to the Naval Academy, but he continued to flout authority there, leading a band of late-night miscreants known as the Bad Bunch, accumulating so many demerits that he finished 894th out of 899 in his class. And in flight school, a culture more accepting of go-it-alone bad boys, his womanizing and partying were considered impressive even by the standards of naval aviators. But he had his limits; McCain always sensed how far he could bend a system without breaking it — or being broken.

On Oct. 26, 1967, McCain's opportunities for high jinks were severely limited when he was shot out of the sky, beaten by a Vietnamese mob, then transported to a

prison camp for 5 1/2 years of hell. The fact of his captivity is common knowledge, but the pain he endured and the defiance with which he endured it are not so well understood. "The first time I saw him, I thought he'd be dead by morning," recalls his cellmate, retired Air Force Colonel George (Bud) Day. "He'd been beaten, bayoneted and starved. He weighed maybe 95 lb. He just willed himself to live."

In the Hanoi Hilton, McCain's family tradition of honor and his own instinct for rebellion meshed into an inspiring example for his fellow prisoners. He was the camp troublemaker, cursing out guards despite the constant threat of torture, defying rules barring communication to tell his comrades vulgar jokes. He refused several offers of freedom because the military code of conduct requires all prisoners to be freed in order of capture and he knew that an admiral's son accepting early release would be a propaganda victory for North Vietnam as well as a devastating blow to camp morale. The one time his captors brutalized McCain into a sham confession, he considered suicide. "He could not avoid the conclusion that he had dishonored his country, his family and himself," wrote his biographer Robert Timberg.

In books with names like *Faith of My Fathers*, *Character Is Destiny* and *Why Courage Matters*, McCain has said his captivity was a personal turning point that opened his eyes to causes larger than himself, transforming a vain jet jockey into a servant of his country. It was also a political turning point that forged his views on foreign affairs. McCain saw Vietnam as an honorable and winnable war botched by spineless politicians who tied the hands of American soldiers and betrayed their South Vietnamese allies, dishonoring the U.S. and emboldening its enemies. And those were not just knee-jerk reactions to his own traumas; McCain spent a year after his release studying Vietnam and its history at the National War College. McCain's Vietnam lessons dovetailed with the World War II lessons he had learned at home. He even believed his father should have resigned to protest President Lyndon Johnson's insufficient aggression. "John gets that appeasement doesn't work with our enemies," says Orson Swindle, a fellow POW who later served in the Reagan Administration. "They have to know that if they slap us, we're going to knock the hell out of them."

The Crusader

A few years after his return, McCain was posted to Washington as a Navy liaison on Capitol Hill, a political job his Beltway-connected father had performed with flair. Still a rebel by nature, McCain used his connections to lead a rearguard effort to save a $2 billion aircraft carrier from President Jimmy Carter's budget ax, even though McCain was supposed to be representing Carter on the Hill. By 1980, he wanted to stop advising members of Congress and start becoming one.

From his beginnings as a politician, he was inspired by the sunny conservatism of Ronald Reagan, especially Reagan's efforts to rehabilitate Vietnam as a noble cause and the military as an honorable profession. McCain's first marriage had crumbled — he has admitted he was unfaithful — but he was remarried, to an Arizona beer heiress named Cindy Hensley, and the day in 1982 a Phoenix Congressman announced his retirement, she bought a house in his district. McCain was elected to the House as a Reagan Republican that year, but he already had his eye on the Senate. He easily moved up in 1986 after Barry Goldwater's retirement.

In his early years as a politician, McCain was mostly a party-line Reaganite; his cleanest and most difficult break with the President was his 1983 call to withdraw the Marines from Lebanon because he didn't see a clear mission for them. He turned out to have been tragically right. He was otherwise notable mostly for his bursts of temper, especially when he perceived an affront to his honor. In his first House race, he threatened to beat up an opponent who had called his ex-wife to look for dirt. In his initial Senate run, he exploded after his opponent accused him of selling out for special-interest contributions.

As incomprehensible as it sounds, McCain has told friends his involvement in the Keating Five scandal of the late 1980s caused him more pain than his imprisonment in Hanoi. Again his honor was on the line, and the scandal seemed to drain his mojo; he went through the motions of his job, but he was visibly depressed. Salter, his speechwriter, ghostwriter and alter ego, remembers walking back to the Capitol with his boss in uncharacteristic silence after a press conference. McCain's mind was clearly elsewhere, perhaps wondering how he ever got so close to the savings and

loan crook Charles Keating Jr. during the go-go 1980s. "It won't always be like this," McCain finally told Salter. Recalls his friend Bill Cohen, then a Senator from Maine: "John had never felt so wounded, even in Vietnam, because his sense of honor had been challenged. And he was seething."

The common myth is that McCain was caught pressuring federal regulators to ease up on a political benefactor, then sought penance for his sins by leading a crusade to limit the influence of money in politics. But the real story is more complex. Despite all that Keating gave to McCain — $112,000 in campaign contributions, several junkets to his Bahamas estate — McCain never did anything official for Keating. He did attend two meetings with regulators along with the rest of the Keating Five, but he told the regulators that Keating's banks should receive no special treatment. After a long and agonizing investigation, the Senate Ethics Committee found McCain guilty of nothing more than "poor judgment."

McCain has acknowledged misjudging Keating, but the dishonor and especially the casual allegations of corruption left him more outraged than ashamed. The episode soured him on partisanship — and in some ways on the Senate. "He got screwed, and he took it personally," says Slade Gorton, a former Republican Senator from Washington State. "That's what led to the whole McCain-Feingold thing." Says New Hampshire's Bob Smith, a former Republican Senator who tangled with McCain: "He did get shafted, and he never really got over it. I think he said, I'm on my own now." The Keating ordeal led McCain to team up with Democrat Russ Feingold on soft-money restrictions — not only to attack political corruption but also to remove what he saw as a cloud hanging over honorable politicians.

It also began his transformation from party man to party maverick. He forged alliances with Senators John Kerry, to normalize relations with Vietnam, and Ted Kennedy, to promote immigration reform. He crusaded against tobacco, steroids, corporate criminals, ultimate fighting, a sweetheart deal for Boeing and all kinds of pork. He crusaded for a patients' bill of rights and even a boxers' bill of rights. He got great press, and colleagues have often rolled their eyes at his ubiquitous television presence, but the Sunday shows wouldn't have invited him so often if he hadn't

become so interesting — and so candid. "He's fascinating: basically a doctrinaire Reagan conservative, but when something offends him, he breaks from the orthodoxy," says Ivan Schlager, the top Democratic counsel to McCain's Commerce Committee during the 1990s. "It's not ideological. It's good guys and bad guys."

Doping might not seem like an issue of vital national import, but it offended McCain's sense of fair play, and the possibility of a U.S. scandal at the Athens Olympics horrified him. So he started issuing subpoenas and ended up with enough evidence to get a dozen athletes disqualified before the Games. "He didn't want American athletes dishonoring their country," recalls his former aide Ken Nahigian. He has free-market instincts, but like his political hero Teddy Roosevelt, he has taken great pleasure in regulating and otherwise harassing those he considers malefactors of great wealth.

McCain's GOP colleagues have not always appreciated his moral crusading or his suggestions that any disagreement with "St. John" about soft-money rules was somehow tantamount to corruption. "He was so condescending. If you weren't with him, you were obviously wrong," Smith says. And McCain sometimes approached debate the way he approached boxing as a midshipman, throwing wild haymakers until someone went down. He has offended the clubby Senate with his sailor's mouth, cursing at Pete Domenici of New Mexico over pork, John Cornyn of Texas over immigration and even the Mormon Orrin Hatch of Utah over judges. During McCain's campaign to normalize relations with Vietnam, he nearly came to blows with Charles Grassley of Iowa. Smith served on a tanker in the Gulf of Tonkin, but he says that when he was the Senate's only Vietnam vet to oppose normalizing relations, McCain belittled his service to other Senators as noncombat busywork. "That's way over the line," Smith says. "McCain was nasty, vindictive and mean-spirited. Those are tough words, but that's how he was."

Talking Straight

As with many military men, McCain's Vietnam experiences seemed at times to make him wary of U.S. involvement abroad. He opposed Reagan's deployment in Lebanon and peppered the Clinton White House with questions about military interventions in

Haiti, Somalia and the Balkans. But as he began his presidential quest in the late 1990s, McCain began to argue that America's honor required much stronger responses to tyrants, and he attacked the Clintonites for refusing to send combat troops to the Balkans and for appeasing a retrograde regime in North Korea. "I understand the instinct to protect national honor, but [North Korea] has got 800,000 men 40 miles from downtown Seoul," says Cohen, who was best man at McCain's second wedding but has not endorsed his friend. "Wars can get started over honor."

McCain's enemies say he lacks the temperament to be President; his friends say he is just a spirited fighter who isn't afraid of taking on sacred cows. Some of McCain's worst enemies have been GOP appropriators like Domenici, Ted Stevens of Alaska and Thad Cochran of Mississippi, who has said the thought of a President McCain sends a cold chill down his spine. McCain has been a relentless critic of congressional pork and has made a point of publicizing the pet-project earmarks that appropriators slip into budget bills. "He ruffles a lot of feathers because he doesn't worry about playing the game with the boys in the club," says Tom Coburn, an Oklahoma Republican who has replaced McCain as the Senate's top porkbuster — and top headache. "I call him a crusty old fart. People say he's bullheaded, but he's never afraid to irritate people if it will get something done for his country."

While Coburn has been willing to bog down the Senate to try to stop pork, McCain stops short of drawing the line. He tends to bend institutions without breaking them; he never alienated his caucus enough to lose his chairmanship, and even Cochran has endorsed McCain's candidacy now that he's the Republican nominee. "McCain used to make great speeches about all the garbage in military spending bills, especially after 9/11, but he'd do nothing to stop it," says the Center for Defense Information's Winslow Wheeler, a former GOP staffer who supports Obama for President. McCain "got the porkbuster reputation, but he never strayed too far off the reservation."

In 2000, McCain ran for President as a reformer, vowing to clean up Washington and restore honor to the presidency after eight years of Bill Clinton. But the wheels came off the Straight Talk Express right after New Hampshire, when he impulsively decided

to pull all his negative ads off the air even though George W. Bush supporters were spreading vicious lies about him. Bush soon co-opted McCain's message — he too vowed to be "a reformer with results" — all the way to the White House. And McCain spent the next several years picking fights with Bush and the GOP establishment over campaign finance, health care, gun control and the President's massive tax cuts, which McCain characterized as fiscally irresponsible. The battles burnished his maverick image, but critics within the party attributed them mostly to vanity and sour grapes. "He was just grumpy about losing to Bush," says Grover Norquist, the antitax activist who has clashed with McCain but supports him now. "Anybody could see that."

But as he prepared to run for President again, McCain made peace with Bush and their party. The iconoclast who attacked Jerry Falwell as an "agent of intolerance" during the 2000 campaign made a pilgrimage to Falwell's university to make amends. The scold who attacked the Swift Boat Veterans campaign as dishonorable in 2004 signed up its funders for his campaign. McCain now wants to make the Bush tax cuts permanent, and he has not only reversed his opposition to offshore drilling but has also made offshore drilling the centerpiece of his economic message. Several veterans of the McCain 2000 campaign told TIME that they barely recognize the McCain of 2008, but most of them also noted that the McCain of 2000 lost. "He's learned over the past eight years that the world of politics he'd like to inhabit is not the world he inhabits," says Dan Schnur, the communications director from the 2000 campaign. The world he inhabits paid almost no attention to McCain's heartfelt and self-critical speech about Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis, Tenn., but has buzzed about McCain's tawdry ads comparing Obama to Britney Spears and Moses.

Honor and Its Limits

The unanswerable question is whether McCain's rough campaign will eventually violate his own code of honor; he adores boxing, but he considers ultimate fighting a sickening national disgrace. Most Americans see McCain's focus on honor as a commendable commitment to principle; the danger comes when that insistence turns into dogma or a belief in one's monopoly on virtue. Asked whether he would look back at his tactics with Confederate-flag-style regrets, McCain at first refused to

answer. When pressed, he gave the kind of canned, these-are-my-talking-points response he used to ridicule on the Straight Talk Express: "I'm very happy with the way our campaign has been conducted, and I am pleased and humbled to have the nomination of the Republican Party."

Behind the new front, McCain and his aides believe a straight-talk hiatus, a few necessary policy reversals and some standard-issue political attacks are small concessions to expedience, considering the stakes of the election. The race may turn on economic matters — and McCain seems to be learning how to talk about gas and housing prices with passion — but his driving issue is America's honor in a dangerous world. He has framed his support for the surge in Iraq — and Obama's unrepentant opposition — as proof of his superior qualifications to be Commander in Chief and of Obama's willingness to put politics before country.

Though McCain is quick to say he considers his opponent a "patriot," McCain and his aides now view Obama with the same level of contempt they once reserved for tobacco-company executives, corrupt lawmakers and George W. Bush. They have convinced themselves that Obama is not honorable, that he does not love his country as much as himself. That makes it easier to justify doing whatever is necessary to defeat him — especially if it's done in the pursuit of honor.

McCain genuinely believes that America's honor is at stake in this election. His friends say he's learned through hard experience as well as family values that tough talk backed by force is the only language our enemies understand, that vacillation in the face of evil will dishonor America and endanger our safety. And this obsession with national honor has driven his belligerent approach to dishonorable regimes — not only North Korea and Iraq but also Iran, Cuba and, most recently, Russia. His hard-edged approach has a visceral appeal and an undeniable consistency; it is also popular with some conservatives who are otherwise skeptical of McCain. But it's a radical and potentially dangerous approach to foreign affairs. In a messy world full of unsavory despots, belligerence can have its costs, even when it's belligerence in the pursuit of honor.

John McCain had dedicated his adult life to that pursuit; in November, Americans will have to decide whether to make his obsession with honor their own.

McCain's Prickly TIME Interview

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008

Christopher Morris / VII for TIME

For years, John McCain's marathon bull sessions with reporters were more than a means of delivering a message; they *were* the message. McCain proudly, flagrantly refused direction from handlers, rarely dodged tough questions and considered those who did wimps and frauds. The style told voters that he was unafraid, that he had nothing to hide and that what you see is what you get. "Anything you want to talk about," he promised reporters aboard the Straight Talk Express in Iowa back in March 2007. "One of the fundamental principles of the bus is that there is no such thing as a dumb question." When asked if he would keep the straight talk coming, McCain replied, "You think I could survive if I didn't? We'd never be forgiven ... I'd have to hire a food taster, somebody to start my car in the morning." Even after he won the GOP nomination, he demanded that his new campaign plane be configured

to include a sofa up front so he could re-create the Straight Talk Express at 30,000 ft.

Sticking to the old formula seemed like a good idea. But with the press focused on Obama, McCain got attention only when he slipped up during one of his patented freewheeling encounters with reporters. And so in July, the campaign decided to clamp down on the candidate. Open-ended question time was reduced to almost nothing, and the famously unscripted McCain began heeding his talking points, even as his aides maintained he missed the old informality.

And so when TIME's James Carney and Michael Scherer were invited to the front of McCain's plane recently for an interview, they were ushered forward, past the curtain that now separates reporters from the candidate, past the sofa that was designed for his gabfests with the press and taken straight to the candidate's seat. McCain at first seemed happy enough to do the interview. But his mood quickly soured. The McCain on display in the 24-minute interview was prickly, at times abrasive, and determined not to stray off message. An excerpt:

What do you want voters to know coming out of the Republican Convention — about you, about your candidacy?
I'm prepared to be President of the United States, and I'll put my country first.

There's a theme that recurs in your books and your speeches, both about putting country first but also about honor. I wonder if you could define *honor* for us?
Read it in my books.

I've read your books.
No, I'm not going to define it.

But honor in politics?
I defined it in five books. Read my books.

[Your] campaign today is more disciplined, more traditional, more aggressive. From your point of view, why the change?

I will do as much as we possibly can do to provide as much access to the press as possible.

But beyond the press, sir, just in terms of ...

I think we're running a fine campaign, and this is where we are.

Do you miss the old way of doing it?

I don't know what you're talking about.

Really? Come on, Senator.

I'll provide as much access as possible ...

In 2000, after the primaries, you went back to South Carolina to talk about what you felt was a mistake you had made on the Confederate flag. Is there anything so far about this campaign that you wish you could take back or you might revisit when it's over?

[Does not answer.]

Do I know you? *[Says with a laugh.]*

[Long pause.] I'm very happy with the way our campaign has been conducted, and I am very pleased and humbled to have the nomination of the Republican Party.

You do acknowledge there was a change in the campaign, in the way you had run the campaign?

[Shakes his head.]

You don't acknowledge that? O.K., when your aides came to you and you decided, having been attacked by Barack Obama, to run some of those ads, was there a debate?

The campaign responded as planned.

Jumping around a bit: in your books, you've talked about what it was like to go through the Keating Five experience, and you've been quoted as saying it was one of the worst experiences of your life. Someone else quoted you as saying it was even worse than being a POW ...

That's another one of those statements made 17 or 18 years ago which was out of the context of the conversation I was having. Of course the worst, the toughest experience of my life was being imprisoned, so people can pluck phrases from 17 or 18 years ago ...

I wasn't suggesting it as a negative thing. I was just saying that ...
I'm just suggesting it was taken out of context. I understand how comments are taken out of context from time to time. But obviously, the toughest time of my life, physically and [in] every other way, would be the time that I almost died in prison camp. And I think most Americans understand that.

How different are you from President Bush? Are you in step with your party? Are you independent from your party?
My record shows that I have put my country first and I follow the philosophy and traditions of Abraham Lincoln and Theodore Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan. Sometimes that is not in keeping with the present Administration or my colleagues, but I've always put my country first, whether it's saying I didn't support the decision to go to Lebanon or my fighting against the corruption in Washington or out-of-control pork-barrel spending, which has led to members of Congress residing in federal prison. So I've always stood up for a set of principles and a philosophy that I think have been pretty consistent over the years.

Your tougher line on Russia, which predated [the Russian invasion of Georgia], now to many looks prescient. Others say it's indicative of a belligerent approach to foreign policy that would perhaps further exacerbate the tensions being created with our allies and others around the world under the Bush Administration. How do you respond to that critique?
Well, it reminds me of some of the arguments we went through when Ronald Reagan became President of the United States. I think Russian behavior has been very clear, and I've pointed it out for quite a period of time, and the chronicle of their actions has been well known since President [Vladimir] Putin came to power, and I believe that it's very important that Russia behave in a manner befitting a very

strong nation. They're not doing so at this time, so therefore I will criticize and in some cases — in the case of the aggression against Georgia — condemn them.

You were a very enthusiastic supporter of the invasion of Iraq and, in the early stages, of the Bush Administration's handling of the war. Are those judgments you'd like to revisit?

Well, my record is clear. I believe that the world is better off without Saddam Hussein. I believe it's clear that he had every intention to acquire and use weapons of mass destruction. I can only imagine what Saddam Hussein would be doing with the wealth he would acquire with oil at $110 and $120 a barrel. I was one of the first to point out the failure of strategy in Iraq under [former Defense Secretary Donald] Rumsfeld. I was criticized for being disloyal to the Republicans and the President. I was the first to say I would lose a campaign rather than lose a war. I supported the surge. No observer over the last two years would say the surge hasn't succeeded. I believe we did the right thing.

A lot of people know about your service from your books, but most people don't know that you have two sons currently in the military. Can you describe what it means to have Jack and Jimmy in uniform?

We don't discuss our sons.

The Poet and the Pit Bull

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By MICHAEL SCHERER/WASHINGTON

An early Reagan fan, Schmidt, far left, earned McCain's trust after his campaign imploded in the summer of 2007. Co-author of five of McCain's books, Salter, near left, started with McCain as a speechwriter and became one of his closest friends.
Christopher Morris / VII for TIME

At about this point in a presidential campaign, the candidates' top advisers are often reduced to cartoons, their personalities melted into caricatures, their humanity sharpened into daggers aimed at the other guy. Take Steve Schmidt, John McCain's latest political guru--a big, bald, barrel-chested stack of a man nicknamed "the Bullet" for his shiny scalp and steely focus. He's been painted as a bruiser who single-handedly trained McCain in the ruthless ways of general-election politics, in which the press is an adversary and any candor is punished. He's the one who always said Barack Obama was a bundle of hype, easier to beat than Hillary Clinton, less tested than anybody knew. Schmidt is so easy to reduce to a cartoon character that Doonesbury actually gave him a bit part.

And if Schmidt is the candidate's drill sergeant, Mark Salter is his purported soul. A brooding writer who wears a goatee, faded Levis and a cigarette on his lips, Salter is known as the author of the McCain myth, the pen behind five of the Senator's books, the chief deacon in the Church of John. His soaring sentences are said to have been forged from experience, from a youth that had him pounding Iowa railroad ties and dating Miss USA. But neither man has too much patience for his own reputation. Salter, the writer, knows how the game works. "You guys have to write in greater arcs than exist in reality," he says of the press. "Any storyteller does."

The truth about both men is, of course, more complex, unfit to be folded into a few dozen sentences. Salter and Schmidt are among the closest advisers and friends to McCain, but neither is his captain nor his conscience. At times, they serve as his protectors and his soldiers, often spewing negative invective that can border on name-calling. But politics is not their first love or final destination. Unlike Karl Rove, neither man has grand plans to transform Republican politics or the country. They rose to the top of the Washington rock pile by happenstance as much as by design--Salter because of his close friendship with McCain, and Schmidt because most of McCain's other advisers resigned last year. Together, they have edged him toward a new type of campaign, more aggressive in general and less friendly with the press. They are sure to take much of the blame or a considerable amount of the adulation, depending on the election's outcome.

For a politician known to keep the same staff for years, Schmidt, 37, is the newcomer. He grew up in New Jersey, a fan of Ronald Reagan's, though he never fully signed on to the hard right's views on social issues. He attended but left the University of Delaware and gradually worked his way up through small political campaigns, landing in 1998 as a press secretary for the underfunded California Senate campaign of Matt Fong, who lost to Barbara Boxer. At one point, to drum up press coverage about Fong's contention that Boxer did not take terrorism seriously, Schmidt arranged for a man in work clothes to disrupt one of Fong's own press conferences by lighting a Sterno candle to symbolize a chemical attack. "Schmidt always was thinking outside the box," says Fong.

Assignments followed at the Bush campaign in 2004, for Vice President Dick Cheney and then for Arnold Schwarzenegger's 2005 re-election campaign. His current role in the McCain campaign occurred after the candidate realized he needed someone fearless who could ride hard on ... McCain. Salter says Schmidt runs the campaign like the high school football coach he aspires to become. "If you blow it, you are going to run wind sprints," he jokes.

But in general, Schmidt plays against type. While he can deliver a political attack on television like a sledgehammer, he is just as likely to type e-mails that seem written by a 16-year-old: "How r u." Or he will answer the phone like a surfer kid: "Hey, dude." He will talk a lot about his fascination with sharks and his fear of rattlesnakes, the pests that surround his California home and once bit his dog. No single quote has upset him more over the years than the claim that he shouted "Kill! Kill! Kill!" as he worked in the war room of the 2004 Bush-Cheney campaign. An absolute falsehood, he maintains, along with the claim that he sometimes gets nosebleeds when he gets angry, like stigmata of his temper. The nosebleeds, he says, just happen sometimes, as they would for anybody else. When McCain calls him "Sergeant Schmidt," the candidate is making a joke on a couple of different levels.

Salter, 53, goes back with McCain longer, and the ties between the two are deeper. Raised in Davenport, Iowa, and schooled at Georgetown, he fell into a freelance speech-writing job for McCain in 1988. Before long, he had become McCain's chief of staff and one of his closest friends. Salter married a former McCain aide. His house in Maine was purchased with the proceeds from the books he wrote for McCain. Mark McKinnon, a veteran of the Bush campaigns who worked closely with McCain and Salter during the primaries, describes Salter's role as that of three staffers in any other campaign: he is chief speechwriter, an encyclopedia of McCain's personal history and the man who can tell McCain anything. "We became close friends," Salter explains of his mentor. McCain calls him "my guy."

There is a widespread assumption that if Salter didn't create the persona that is the modern McCain, he certainly gave it an airbrushing in the books he wrote with the Senator. Salter disputes this. "McCain was a fully formed human being when I met

him," Salter explains. "It's his story. It's not some story that I gave him." It is, however, a story Salter passionately defends, endlessly firing off e-mails from his BlackBerry and penning letters to the editors of major publications. But the two men aren't always of one mind. Salter objected strongly to McCain's split from longtime adviser John Weaver last year and even told friends that he might leave the campaign. "Obviously, my first loyalty was to him," he says now of McCain.

Vital as they have been to reviving McCain's chances, both Schmidt and Salter claim little aspiration to power. Win or lose, Salter plans to take months off at his Maine cabin next year. Schmidt has vowed not to serve in a McCain White House, saying he wants to return to California, where he hopes one day to finish college so he can teach high school history and coach teenagers. Like nearly everyone else on McCain's virtually all-male senior staff, the two men have fashioned themselves as ragtag outsiders, buddies and true believers in McCain who will play hard and play to win. Then after hours, instead of sipping martinis, they seek out beer to drink like college kids. Like nearly everything else in McCain's life, Salter and Schmidt are a team that can seem haphazard, a tad risky, even a little unlikely. But McCain wouldn't have it any other way.

Mrs. Maverick

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By NANCY GIBBS/SEDONA

Christopher Morris / VII for TIME

Cindy McCain is sitting by the creek that runs through the McCains' ranch, under a sycamore tree that is equipped with a ceiling fan. The spread near Sedona, Ariz., has served as the family retreat for nearly a quarter-century, and right now, there's a lot to retreat from.

"Look," she says with a deep breath. "I understand what's at stake here and what I have to do. I've opened my life up. I'm not saying it's without frustration. I mean, I'm only human. I do the best I can. But there've been times I'd like to not answer." For the past 48 hours, stories have been breaking in great shuddering waves; one profile explores her beloved father's criminal record (he was a bootlegger before he was a fantastically successful beer distributor), which followed multiple accounts of

her half sister's resentment of her and a furor over her husband's inability to account for how many houses they own. All this comes as she prepares to step out center stage in Minneapolis and help her husband woo the female voters who so far aren't on his team. "I'll show them what I'm about and hope for the best," she says with a serene, almost placid smile. "I believe in the good spirit of people, that they want to see the best in you and don't believe everything they read."

To watch her in her tailored suits, her hell on heels, you almost hear the assumptions snap into place. Google her name plus trophy wife, and you'll get something like 18,000 hits. Anyone tracking new lows in misogyny this year, who hated the treatment of Hillary and Michelle, should note that Cindy gets her share too, from sneers about Republican Barbie to the vicious dismissal of her as a product of a taxidermist.

So I understand how careful she is now, why her answers come out with all the edges sanded down. I ask her about her life and her role and what she hopes people take away from getting to know her better. "I'd like them to see the kind of relationship that my husband and I have," she says. "What I hope you'll hear from me is our commitment to continue putting our country first in every way." And it's hard to miss that the campaign's new slogan is embedded in her answer.

It's all the more striking when, practically midsentence, her tone and temperature totally change. We have seen Cindy McCain much more than we've heard her until now, and she has always benefited from the element of surprise. It's when she discusses her travels and work overseas that she sounds 20 years younger, eager and unscripted—a hint that, as First Lady, she would use the spotlight to advance her cause. Until very recently, she could just head off and do her thing, have a life far away from Washington intrigue: no cameras, no questions, with missions to Nicaragua, Kuwait, Vietnam, Afghanistan. This past Easter, she was touring minefields in Kosovo; she was in Rwanda in July and was about to fly to Georgia to meet with soldiers wounded in the Russian invasion and monitor refugee relief efforts. McCain adviser Nicolle Wallace previews the partnership the campaign will roll out in Minneapolis: "She's on the phone with the World Food Program; he's on

the phone with [Georgian President Mikheil] Saakashvili," she says. "It was a great picture of what they'll be like in the White House."

Cindy started messing with people's expectations long before she had so much as glanced in the direction of John McCain or public life. The junior Rodeo Queen with the gold Mercedes graduated from USC (University of Spoiled Children, her husband likes to call it) with a master's in special education and proceeded to teach children with Down syndrome and other disabilities in one of Phoenix's poorer schools. When she met a dashing war hero at a cocktail party in Hawaii, she was 24 but said she was three years older; he said he was four years younger. The McCains learned the truth of their 17-year age difference only when they applied for their marriage license, and they were wed just over a month after his divorce was final.

Her adventures overseas began early in their marriage. They were on vacation with another couple in 1984 in Truk Lagoon, Micronesia, when their friend had a minor accident that required stitches at the local hospital. Cindy and John, meanwhile, got a tour of the facility. "I couldn't believe what I saw," Cindy says. "I was looking at rats in the OR. I was looking at raw sewage everywhere. There were no beds. There was an X-ray machine with no film. There was no power half the time. I was so astounded by it that when I left, I said to the hospital director, 'Let me see what I can dig up at home. I have some friends in the medical industry.' I started sending supplies to this little hospital, and it really kind of grew from there." She founded her own charity, American Voluntary Medical Team, in 1988.

After a string of miscarriages, the couple went on to have three children, and the experience of becoming a mother, Cindy says, propelled her deeper into her relief work. In 1991, when she was touring Mother Teresa's orphanage in Dhaka, Bangladesh, she met an infant with a cleft palate so severe, the nuns weren't able to feed her properly, and they feared she couldn't be saved. Cindy decided to take the baby home with her to get treatment and concluded during the long flight that the child would be joining their family. She informed her husband only when she landed.

This is a bit easier, of course, when you are the multimillionaire daughter of one of the nation's largest Anheuser-Busch distributors. But she had her trials too: there was a series of spinal surgeries for a ruptured disk, which occurred just as her husband was fighting off charges that he had misused his influence on behalf of a contributor in the Keating Five scandal. Eventually, she later admitted, she was taking as many as 15 pain pills a day, including drugs she'd stolen from her charity. She wrestled with addiction for several years; it was her parents, not her husband, who saw that she had a problem, and she quit cold turkey. When a federal probe into her charity's missing drugs meant the whole thing would become public, she finally told her husband.

I wondered whether she had kept her secret from him out of shame or pride or the determination to make sure everything went smoothly when he came home on the weekends. "No," she says. She's had to talk about this over the years, but she looks away, clearly wishing she could skip it this time. "It was about my mistaken understanding of my relationship with my husband. He is my best friend. And I didn't go to him, and I didn't talk to him when I should have. I thought I didn't need to bother him; he was very busy. That was the wrong thing to assume or do."

She disputes the standard separate-lives narrative of the McCain marriage, though there have been signs of tension in the past. They decided to raise their children in Arizona, she says, because her roots there were deep and they could give the kids a normal childhood. He was home every weekend, she says, and now she's urgent, insistent: "I want people to understand, he was not a father who was from afar. He was very involved with his kids and in our relationship. I felt like we saw more of him by living out in Arizona because when he was home, he was dedicated to us."

McCain's political operation has such a smell of a band of brothers in the foxhole that it's hard to imagine Cindy, or anyone else, breaking in. But she says that when it really counts, she's the only one in the room. "I know the one person he trusts the most is me," she says. "And so when it comes right down to it, particularly in the job we're doing now, we have to rely on each other." So as he made a final decision on a

running mate, would it come down to just the two of them in the room? She gives a small smile and nods.

But you get the clear sense that Cindy's chief influence is not with his campaign but with their kids. During an hour-long chat, the cell phone that is her lifeline never leaves her side. She learned to check homework, approve clothing choices and practically administer Band-Aids by cell phone during the 2000 campaign. She has three BlackBerrys and is the family techie, programming the computers and solving problems. Bridget is now 17; Cindy is on the phone with her constantly, as well as with eldest daughter Meghan and sons Jimmy, a Marine who returned from deployment in Iraq in February, and Jack, who will be a senior at the Naval Academy. They too will be stepping out in Minneapolis for the first time, along with McCain's three children from his first marriage.

It's just one of those fateful twists that John McCain now finds himself in the same position his father was in, she notes, when Admiral John S. McCain Jr. was commander in chief of U.S. forces in the Pacific, ordering bombing runs on Hanoi as his son was being held prisoner there. "Now, my husband is not calling the shots in this war, but he's very involved, obviously, in what the strategy is and shaping American policy toward it. With that said, at the same time, his son is in Iraq. So yes, it's very personal for me."

Cindy's father, whom she revered, was a World War II bomber pilot who was shot down three times over the English Channel. Her husband survived being shot down over Hanoi. Listening to her talk, you get the sense that she's every bit the warrior too, with her own discipline, her own mission, her own scars. (Her wrist is in a soft cast—some of the bones are fused—because of injuries made worse by fans who shook her hand too enthusiastically.) "I want my sons led by a Commander in Chief who understands what it means to send young men and women into combat—and more importantly, how to bring them home." That's been enough to keep her in the trenches—even when she's the one coming under fire.

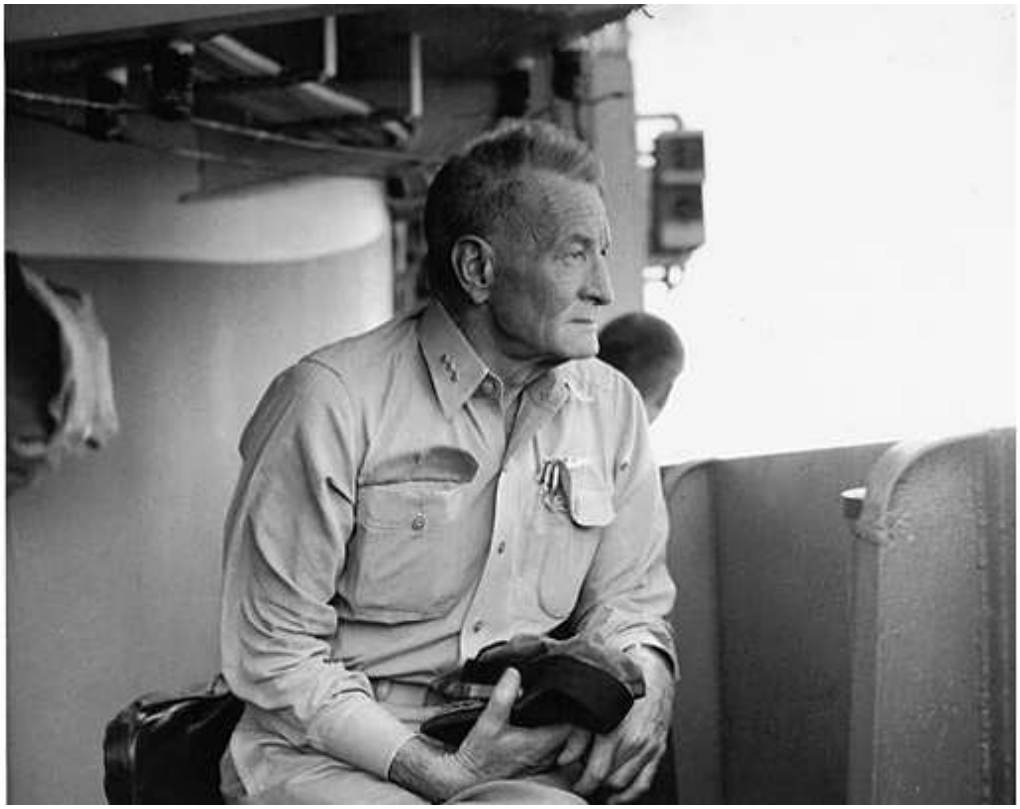
John McCain's Family Tree

Ancient Ancestor?

Genealogists dispute McCain's claim to have descended from the 14th-century Scottish king Robert the Bruce, above, but the candidate does come from a long line of fighters. His great-great-great-great grandfather Captain John Young was a member of General George Washington's staff during the American Revolution and once tracked down the Indians who had killed and scalped his brother, Thomas.

Army Man

McCain's distant uncle Major General Henry Pinckney McCain set up the World War I draft and is known as the father of Selective Service.



Grandfather

A four-star Navy Admiral, John "Slew" McCain Sr. commanded a carrier group in the Pacific in World War II, during which he participated in the Marianas Campaign and the Battle of the Philippine Sea.

Father

Admiral John McCain Jr. commanded US forces in Vietnam, where he authorized air strikes against Hanoi, even while he knew his son was imprisoned there.

Toddler

The future Senator plays with his sister Sandy on a sofa in a photograph taken sometime around 1938.

Family Photo

McCain, left, stands with his mother Roberta, brother Joe and father John Jr. in 1951. Roberta, the daughter of a wealthy oil man, was known for her spunk, and is often referred to as the Auntie Mame of Navy wives.

Like Fathers, Like Son

Following in the footsteps of his grandfather and father, McCain enrolled in the Naval Academy in Annapolis in 1954. Four years later, he graduated with the rank of ensign and began training as a navy aviator at a base in Pensacola, Florida.

First Wife

McCain met Carol Shepp, a divorced swimsuit model, while he was stationed in Pensacola. They married in 1965 and he adopted her two sons. Together they had a daughter, Sidney.

Kids

The couple poses with Doug and Andy, Carol's sons from her previous marriage, and Sidney sometime in the early 1970s. McCain and Carol divorced in 1980. They are still on good terms.

Second Wife

McCain met Cindy Hensley, the daughter of an Arizona beer distributor, in 1979, while he was still married to Carol. They were married five weeks after the divorce.

Christmas Card

Cindy and John have four children, John IV, known as "Jack", James, Meghan and Bridget, whom Cindy found in a Bangladeshi orphanage run by Mother Teresa and later adopted.

The Next Generation

The candidate and his seven children, counterclockwise from bottom left: Meghan, "Jack", Jimmy, Bridget, Andy, Sidney, and Doug.

What Bush Taught McCain

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By JOE KLEIN

Illustration by Stephen Kroninger for TIME McCain: Alex Wong / Getty Bush: J. Scott Applewhite / AP

The woman, a venture capitalist from the Denver area, looked a bit like Cindy McCain, and so it was disconcerting when she announced, in a focus group of undecided voters conducted by the Republican pollster Frank Luntz, that she had decided she just couldn't vote for John McCain this year. "I supported him enthusiastically in 2000, but he's hired the same people who ran him into the ground last time to run his campaign," she said. McCain's tone was more negative now. "It breaks my heart."

Most people don't care about the consultants a candidate hires — very few handlers achieve the celebrity status of a Karl Rove or a James Carville. Most voters who supported McCain in 2000 but not this year have more obvious gripes: they don't like

the way he's shaved his policy positions to approach Republican dogma. They may remember that he opposed the Bush tax cuts before he favored them. They may remember that he was more moderate on social issues like abortion in 2000, decrying the extremists on both sides and saying that "people of good intentions" could come to some understanding. They may be surprised by his free-range bellicosity, rattling sabers from Iran to Georgia. All of which is summed up in a single image: McCain hugging — no, nuzzling up to — George W. Bush. And yet, as the venture capitalist pointed out, the most disheartening aspect of McCain's 2008 campaign is not his embrace of Bush's policies but of the Bush style of campaigning.

We have just now completed the month of August, which is the cruelest month for Democrats, the month when Republicans go for the jugular, trotting out arguments — some valid, most scurrilous — that paint their Democratic rivals as weak, élite or unpatriotic. This is a relatively new phenomenon in American politics, the Bush family's gift to the process. Ronald Reagan never staged an ugly August. He attacked his opponents, but on the high ground of policy. His most famous advertising gambit was a balm: "Morning in America," a series of ads filled with gorgeous American images that didn't even mention Reagan's 1984 opponent, Walter Mondale. But then Reagan was operating at the beginning of a political pendulum swing, utterly confident that his ideas were better than the tired industrial-age liberalism and post-Vietnam pacifism of the Democrats.

George H.W. Bush — or rather, his designated sleazeball Lee Atwater — gave us the first truly ugly August, in 1988. Atwater had conducted a series of focus groups among blue collar Democrats in Paramus, N.J., in May and found all sorts of fodder: Michael Dukakis was "against" the Pledge of Allegiance. More substantively, Dukakis ran a weekend prison-release program in Massachusetts that allowed an African-American felon named Willie Horton to go on a killing spree. But what was most distinctive was a new tone: a derisive, sarcastic negativity that predicted, and enabled, Rush Limbaugh's brilliant, destructive trade.

A repentant Atwater died of brain cancer before he could slice and dice Bill Clinton in 1992, and Bob Dole was too honorable to try in 1996. But the arrival of George W.

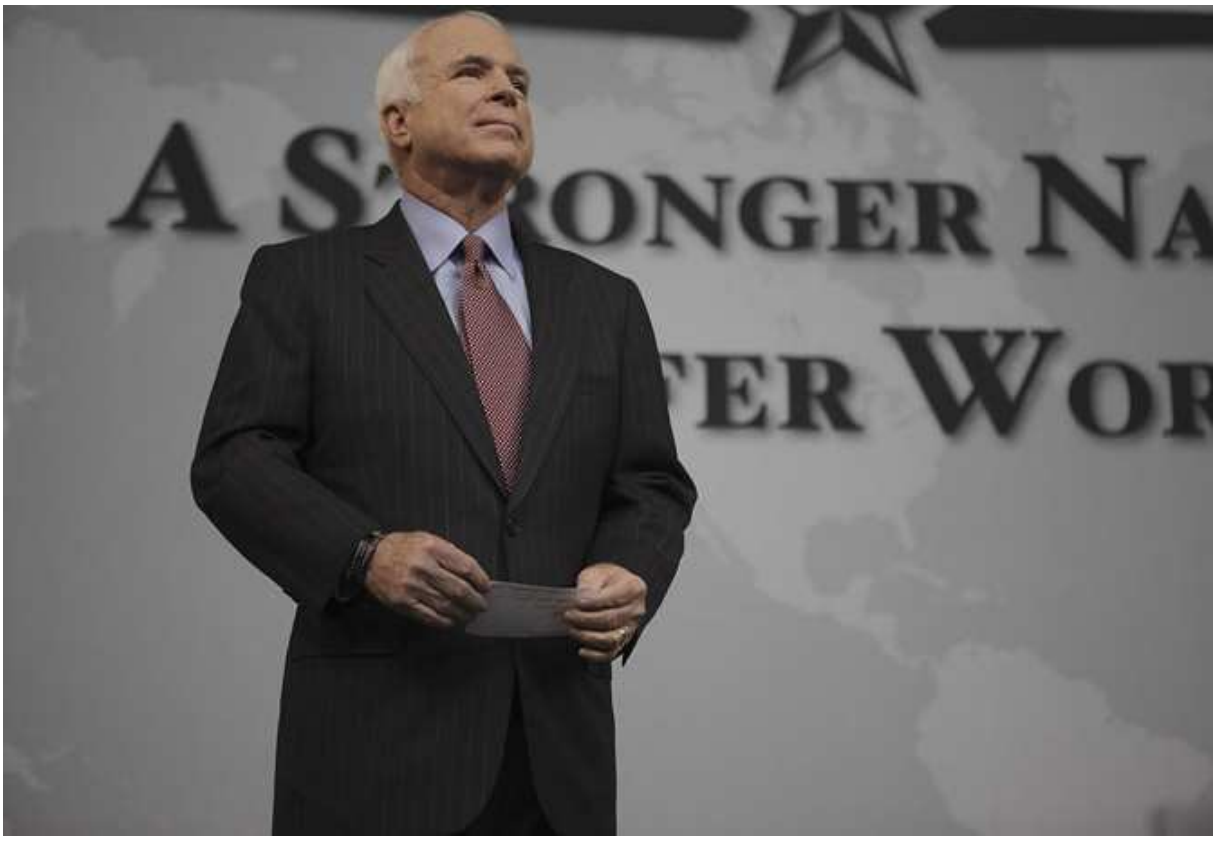
Bush and Rove — an Atwater protégé — brought August back with a vengeance in 2000 and, spectacularly, with the "independent" Swift Boat campaign against John Kerry in 2004.

This summer McCain has waged a nonstop assault — from the derision of his "celebrity" ads comparing Barack Obama to Paris Hilton, to McCain's own filthy attack on Obama as someone who would "rather lose a war than lose an election." (Obama has tried to strike back, but creative personal attacks just seem foreign to the Democrats' DNA.) The Republican Convention will doubtless be another assault on Obama, featuring McCain groupies like Joe Lieberman and Rudy Giuliani as attack dogs. Some of these attacks — those criticizing Obama's inexperience — are well within the bounds of traditional politics, but the uninterrupted gush of negativity has successfully diverted the media's attention from the fact that 80% of Americans think the country is moving in the wrong direction.

Michael Crowley of the New Republic recently observed that the McCain campaign was the most sarcastic in memory. He's right: sarcasm comes naturally to the fighter jock. He disdains all those — his colleagues in the Senate, his political opponents — who aren't as courageous as he thinks he is. But McCain has proved a selective maverick, surrounded by special-interest lobbyists who shape his foreign and fiscal policies. In fact, I suspect that this year's McCain is closer to the real thing than the noble 2000 version. This one is congenitally dark, the opposite of Reagan — not confident enough in the substance of his ideas, especially on domestic policy, to run a campaign that features them. Instead, his natural sarcasm has enabled him to perfect the Bush way of politics. He is, sadly, Mr. August.

Falling Upward

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By PETER BEINART



Would a McCain victory in November be bad for the GOP?
Christopher Morris / VII for TIME

As their convention in Minnesota gets under way, Republicans are feeling a little better. Barack Obama hasn't blown the presidential race wide open, as many expected. The McCain campaign's charge that he's a celebrity, not a tested leader--widely mocked at first--seems to have caught on. In some key states, McCain may even be gaining ground.

Good news for the GOP, right? Actually, the exact opposite. Of all the disasters that have befallen the Republican Party in recent years, the most cataclysmic may be about to unfold: John McCain might win.

To understand why McCain's election would be so awful for the GOP, start with the obvious: the party is flat on its back. According to the Pew Research Center, through

August 2008, the percentage of Americans who identify themselves as Republican is lower than in any of the previous 15 years. The party is probably headed for another round of deep losses in the House and Senate. Asked recently by the Pew Center to choose between a generic Democrat and a generic Republican for Congress, registered voters under 30 gave the Democrats a 22-point lead.

How can Republicans come back from the dead? In one of two ways. First, they could elect a Republican President who passes popular conservative legislation, as Ronald Reagan did in 1981, thus energizing the GOP faithful and swelling their ranks. Alternatively, they could savage a Democratic President who tries to pass controversial liberal legislation, as Newt Gingrich did to Bill Clinton in 1993 and '94.

If Obama wins, scenario No. 2 becomes a live option. Democrats have a history of overreaching when they win huge majorities. Franklin Roosevelt did so after his re-election landslide in 1936; so did Lyndon Johnson after 1964. Obama could as well. With big majorities in the House and Senate, he'd probably take another run at universal health care, which is what helped prompt the Gingrich revolution in 1994. He could hike taxes and impose tough new environmental regulations on business. He might preside over a messy withdrawal from Iraq and perhaps see Iran complete development of a nuclear weapon. Any one of these things could pump some life into the near catatonic GOP.

If McCain wins, of course, scenario No. 2 is impossible. The problem is that so is scenario No. 1. There's simply no way a McCain Administration could pass the kind of large-scale conservative initiative--think of Reagan's big tax cut in 1981 or George W. Bush's in 2001--that fires up the GOP base. Facing large and aggressive Democratic majorities in Congress, McCain will have to drink deeply from the well of bipartisan compromise if he wants to get anything done. The alternative will be veto upon veto as he tries to remain ideologically pure.

But that doesn't sound like McCain. After all, he hasn't always been a conservative stalwart. He opposed Bush's tax cuts in 2001; he has teamed up with Democrats on immigration; he's greener than many of his fellow Republicans when it comes to

global warming; and he has often been perceived as halfhearted on the cultural issues beloved by the Christian right. The thing he cares about most is foreign policy, and he might well give Democrats much of what they want on domestic issues if they let him and David Petraeus run the show in Iraq.

This kind of coalition government might be good for the country, but it would be disastrous for the GOP. If you think Republicans are demoralized now, wait until McCain stamps the GOP label on higher taxes, tougher regulation and looser rules on immigration. The best precedent is what happened when George H.W. Bush cut a deal with Democrats to raise taxes in 1990. The result was Pat Buchanan's challenge in the 1992 primaries, followed by Ross Perot's in the general election, which together cut the Republican Party's heart out. Already Rush Limbaugh and James Dobson are unhappy with today's GOP. If McCain wins and governs significantly to the left of George W. Bush, the party's meltdown in the early 1990s will seem like child's play.

The bald reality is this: the public is more eager for activist government than it has been in years. American politics is moving left no matter who wins in 2008. The real question is whether Obama becomes the face of that leftward shift--which will remind Republicans why they loathe Democrats--or McCain does, in which case Republicans will increasingly loathe themselves. If McCain loses in 2008, the GOP will eventually come back and win. If he wins, on the other hand, they will lose and lose and lose.

Beinart is a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations

Cue the Ticket Splitters

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By MIKE MURPHY

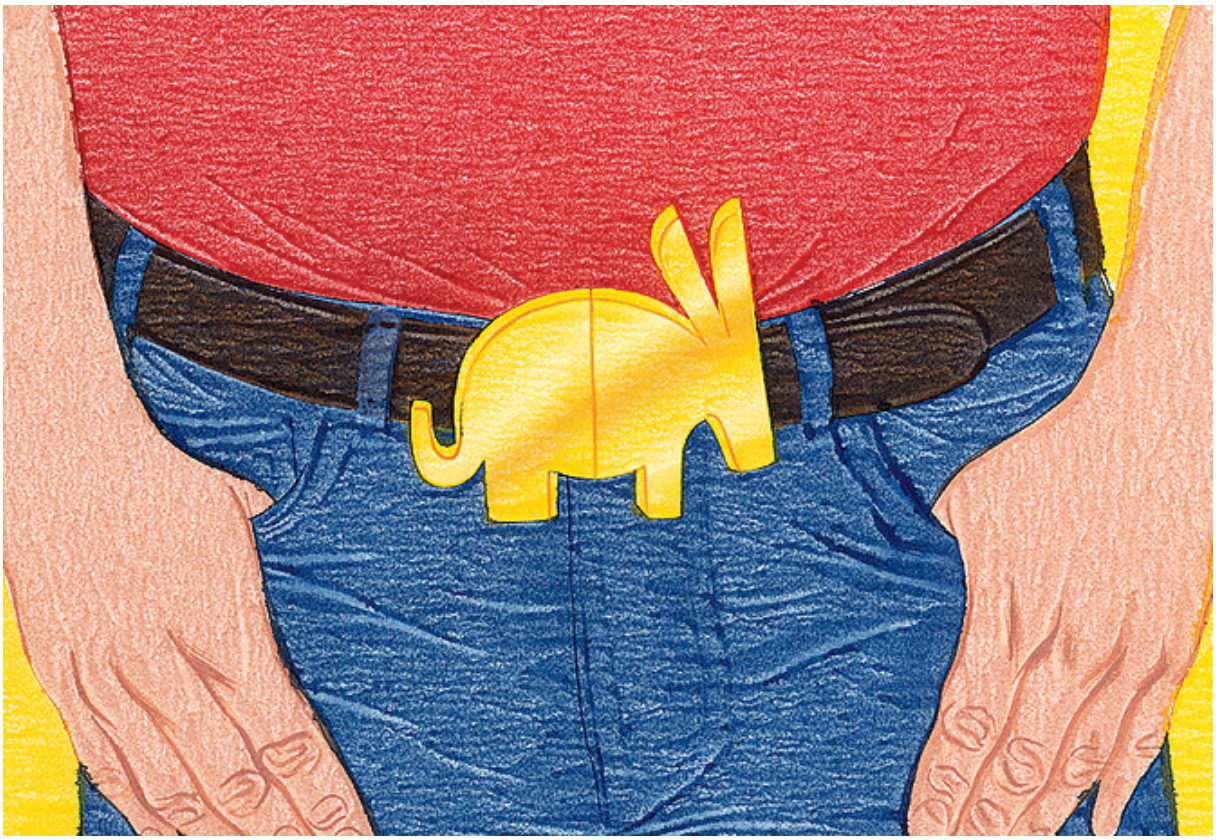


Illustration by Alex Nabaum for TIME

Every flavor of Democrat--and then some--turned up for the big show in Denver. Hip young Obamacrats, Newport-smoking grudge carriers from Team Hillary stomping around in sensible shoes and, of course, a walking forest of gung-ho environmentalists. The proceedings in Denver were so relentlessly green that even the magnetic hotel card keys were made out of some sort of sustainable wood fiber. (I know because I had plenty of time to study my planet-friendly card key during several trips to the front desk to get it to finally work.) Obama's heavy chore in Denver was to unite all these folks to seize the opportunity of a big Democratic year.

Obama's convention was largely an internal affair. In Minneapolis, John McCain faces a different dilemma. He must reach outside the Republican base and win over ornery independents as a different kind of Republican. Can the GOP put on a different kind of convention?

GOP conclaves work like the docile old horse at the petting zoo. The old mare plods along a path it knows well, the kid is happy riding and the show ends right on schedule with no surprises. Sure, the wealthy pro-choice donors who fund the GOP occasionally break into an uneasy sweat when caught in an elevator crush with a few of the party's pro-life, pro-gun fuglemen, but in the end everybody has a good time, and we usually win the election.

This year everything is different. Pollsters have never recorded a higher "wrong track" feeling about the country in the history of polling. Voters are angry enough to march on Castle Washington carrying pitchforks and Frankenstein torches. While early--and therefore shaky--polls may show a close race for President, the Republican vs. Democrat numbers look bleak for McCain. To win, he will need as many as 1 out of 5 of his voters to be a ticket splitter: someone who will vote Democratic for the House and Senate but pull the lever for McCain before leaving the booth. McCain will get some of those votes for free in the South, but the rest he will have to earn.

Minneapolis is McCain's great chance to define himself to these folks. Ticket splitters eschew partisanship. They don't trust any one party to have all the power. They are happy with divided government, so long as that government can deliver results. The convention's hammering on Obama should be targeted at these voters and portray Obama as an unapologetic liberal who will team up with congressional Democrats to put Washington on a runaway train of pent-up left-wing legislative appetites. That will surely cause moderate ticket splitters to think twice about a President Obama. But the vital issue is how McCain sells himself. He must show these fickle voters that a McCain Administration will be something they can live with: independent, effective and not stridently ideological.

Some argue that McCain needs to use this convention to shore up the Republican base, and that all this namby-pamby stuff will turn off the rank and file. It is true that after years of maverick behavior, McCain will be in the ironic position of having many of his longtime political enemies staring back at him from the convention floor. The creative-destructive caucus in the GOP is small, however, and few crave victory at the cost of self-immolation. And the prospect of an Obama-Pelosi diktat in Washington is enough to make even the most McCain-hating Republican sprint breathlessly to the polls. Ultimately it is a question of simple arithmetic. In 2008, the

GOP base alone is not large enough to deliver victory. The free-market party must either move with the market or die.

To attract votes beyond the base, McCain's convention must trumpet his peerless credentials as a reformer. He must engage passionately on middle-class economic issues. McCain's comfort zone may be world affairs, but if he cannot hold his own in a kitchen-table debate with Obama on jobs, schools and health care, he'll visit ticket-splitting kitchens once more on Election Day, but this time as toast. Finally, he must give the convention speech of a lifetime.

It is a myth that McCain cannot give a great speech. True, he doesn't do it very often. But he has given compelling speeches that wrapped powerful arguments in lyrical language about honor, battle and victory. His convention speech has a different purpose: it must welcome and then reassure. It must show in plain language not one party's road to victory but what a McCain presidency would mean to all Americans. This is not the sort of convention the GOP does naturally. But in this difficult year, the Republicans must gallop, not walk, along a different path.

Murphy is a GOP political consultant and was senior strategist for Senator John McCain's 2000 presidential race

ESSAY

Everybody Knows the Trouble I've Seen

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By MICHAEL KINSLEY

Joe Biden, with his two sons, and wife, Neilia, who was killed in an automobile accident one month before he took office.
AP

Joe Biden has been a Senator for 36 years. He has vast understanding of constitutional law and foreign affairs, among other topics. But his most important qualification for Vice President is that his wife and daughter were killed and two sons badly injured in a tragic auto accident in 1972. At least that is the impression you get from listening to Barack Obama and other Democrats as they tout Obama's choice for Vice President. By the same standard, Biden's second most important qualification appears to be that in 1988 he suffered two life-threatening brain aneurysms.

And just in case you think he hasn't suffered enough, Biden stuttered as a child.

John McCain is also one of the best members of the Senate and a sterling character in many ways. But if that were all he was, he wouldn't be running for President. Most voters couldn't tell you a thing about McCain's Senate record. But everyone knows he endured five years in a North Vietnamese prison. That fact is the cornerstone of his political appeal.

Back during the Democratic primary campaign, there was John Edwards. He had an ambitious plan for health-care reform, I believe, but I couldn't tell you a thing about it. We all knew two things about him: he (like Biden) lost a child in an automobile accident, and his wife had inoperable cancer. (Now we know a third thing about Edwards, which illustrates the peril of drawing too many conclusions from a candidate's life story as framed by the candidate and his or her campaign.) And, of course, there was Hillary Clinton. She never made an explicit issue of her personal troubles. She didn't have to, since we lived through them with her. Her role as the nation's officially wronged wife (who started out dissing Tammy Wynette and ended up standing by her man) was the basis of her political career.

It is perfectly legitimate for the voters to want to know more about a politician than just a list of his or her positions on the issues. We don't know what issues are going to be really important over the next four years. In November 2000, for example, no one could have predicted what happened in September 2001. We need to make a judgment about who this person who wants to be our next President is at a deeper level. And biography is a good way to do it.

As the political consultants say, a candidate needs a story. And the media seem capable of handling only one story: overcoming adversity. (In fact, they use the same story in profiling Olympic athletes.) This particular story has two morals. First, it says the candidate has the inner strength or the wisdom or whatever it takes to address the unpredictable challenges he or she will face if elected. Second, it suggests that the candidate will be able to empathize with voters and the adversities they face.

But there are different kinds of adversity. One kind goes back to the oldest of all political life stories: the one about being born in a log cabin. Rising from poverty to within grasp of being President clearly does say something admirable both about you

and about the country where this can happen. Obama's story is a near perfect 21st century updating of the log-cabin myth.

Putting yourself back together and going on after a tragedy like the death of a child also takes admirable qualities. But, except at the most abstract level, these qualities don't say much about what it takes to be a good President. The truth is that when adversity takes the form of a child's death or a spouse's cancer or a spouse's cheating or even, to some extent, of being tortured in an enemy prison, it is the adversity that moves us more than the rising above it. Making it central to your campaign is more a matter of seeking empathy than offering it. You're asking for a pity vote. Or maybe it's more ghoulish than that. Maybe politicians are now held in such utter contempt that personal suffering is the only way they can prove their humanity.

When the media or a candidate's political allies--or sometimes even the candidate--suggest that a child's death or half a decade as a prisoner of war will make the candidate better able to feel the pain of American voters, this is really an insult to the candidate and to whatever inner strength got him or her through the challenges he or she faced.

Most American voters have never suffered this kind of pain, which is really outside the realm of politics in any event. Or it should be.

TO OUR READERS

Behind the Scenes

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By RICHARD STENGEL, MANAGING EDITOR

The best politicians tend to be complex people. But most of them camouflage their complexity because voters--especially presidential voters--are not usually enamored of nuance. John McCain is a complex man--ironic and earnest, driven and fun-loving, self-assured and self-deprecating--but his concern with honor is like a golden thread woven through his remarkable life of service. In the cover story of our special Republican Convention issue, McCain's abiding concern with honor is the prism through which James Carney and Michael Grunwald look at the Republican presidential nominee. Carney, our Washington bureau chief, has covered both of McCain's presidential campaigns. He first encountered McCain during the Arizona Senator's antitobacco crusade of 1997. "He basically allowed me into every meeting and strategy session he had on tobacco," he recalls. "His rule: I could stay in any meeting until someone else--another Senator, the Surgeon General, an Administration official--kicked me out. It was warts and all. There was no one remotely like him in Congress." Senior correspondent Grunwald has also spent years charting politics and policy, including a stint covering Congress for the Washington Post.

Our package of stories includes an intimate portrait of Cindy McCain by Nancy Gibbs, who visited her at the family's ranch in Sedona, Ariz. Nancy's piece is a revealing look at a woman who has all too often been portrayed in a one-dimensional way. Mike Murphy is back again this week with his take on how the Republicans must reach out beyond the conservative base if they are to capture the White House. Peter Beinart's commentary suggests that the best thing for the Republican Party may actually be losing in November. Michael Scherer, who has been on the McCain bus and plane for 17 months now, gets inside McCain's tight-knit campaign team, led by two unique personalities: the strategist Steve Schmidt and McCain's alter ego and chief speechwriter, Mark Salter. And Mark Halperin tracked McCain's path to nomination for The Page.

Christopher Morris has been photographing McCain since 2000. Chris, who has documented more than 18 foreign conflicts, recently spent time in a more restful place: the McCain ranch. His behind-the-scenes pictures--including the one this week of McCain barbecuing tenderloin--add a dimension of intimacy to the McCain family story. This week's striking cover portrait--like the one last week of Barack Obama--is by the great English photographer Platon, who usually chats with his subjects about pop music. Platon says McCain was "funny and cheeky" and said he was an Abba fan. As always, our coverage was orchestrated by assistant managing editor Michael Duffy, whose vast experience--as White House correspondent, Washington bureau chief and presidential historian--enables us to give you unmatched reporting and insight on this extraordinary campaign.

Richard Stengel, MANAGING EDITOR

WORLD

Postcard From Jordan Valley

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By ANDREW LEE BUTTERS

Revered in the Bible, the Jordan today is more brown and shallow than "deep and wide." Gali Tibbon / AFP / Getty

For centuries, the children of Abraham--Jews, Christians and Muslims alike--have venerated the Jordan River. So much so that "crossing over Jordan" has become a mystical metaphor for liberation and resurrection. These days, it's the river itself that could use some resurrecting. Instead of a mighty torrent "deep and wide," as the gospel songs proclaim, much of the river is a thin rivulet of brown slime largely obscured by reeds. Most of what now flows in between the Jordan's banks is human sewage, almost all of it untreated. The river where John the Baptist proclaimed Jesus to be the Messiah, a river so sacred it doesn't need a priest's blessing to be considered holy water, is today, for all intents and purposes, full of crap.

Almost all the water that used to flow into the river is now diverted for human use, and in past decades, both the Israeli and Jordanian governments have blocked off the Jordan's sources. The relative trickle is so shocking that American pilgrims are often heard exclaiming "That's it?" when crossing the river at Allenby Bridge, the checkpoint separating the Kingdom of Jordan on the river's east bank from Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories on the west.

The decline of the river has had profound social and environmental consequences for the Jordan Valley. It has reduced habitats for the 500 million birds migrating each year from Europe to Africa. It is killing the Dead Sea, which, without replenishment from the Jordan, is being reduced in depth about a meter a year. And it is helping decimate Palestinian towns in the occupied West Bank--home to some of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities--which are slowly dying of thirst without access to the river or the authority to dig their own wells.

But the plight of the Jordan Valley is also galvanizing a new generation of environmental activists in the region. For Palestinians, reviving the river is a necessary part of establishing a national water system, vital for a future Palestinian state. For Israelis--with environmentalism replacing Zionism as a motivating ideology among idealistic secular Jews--learning to live with their dry country's fragile ecosystem is giving new meaning to the old imperative to "make the deserts bloom." And for all the communities that live along the Jordan, sharing its blessings is an opportunity to nurture the region's fragile peace.

The trick is to convince the national governments that use the Jordan's water that they would be better off returning the river to its natural course. For Gidon Bromberg, founder of Friends of the Earth Middle East (FOEME), a joint Israeli, Palestinian and Jordanian environmental organization that is leading the effort to revive the Jordan, the future of water conservation in the Middle East lies in transforming rural economies. Right now the Israeli and Jordanian governments provide precious water at subsidized prices to their agricultural industries. Farming consumes the majority of the water supply but contributes little to national economies. Because they don't pay full price for their resources, farmers grow water-

hungry crops such as garden vegetables, fruits and flowers, most of which are shipped to Europe. "We are exporting our water," says Bromberg. "Bananas are a tropical fruit. Why are we growing them in the desert?"

Rural communities in the valley would be better off if they developed themselves as destination spots. In particular, a healthy and accessible Jordan River (much of its banks on the Israeli side are in a restricted military zone) could be a much bigger draw for pilgrims visiting holy sites. FOEME and Yale University architects have developed a showcase ecotourism project: a Peace Park on an island in the middle of the river, where Jordanians and Israelis may one day meet without passports or visas. The Peace Park would also be a concrete way of fighting the mistrust that pushes countries to grab and hoard as much water as they can. "War will not generate water," says Nader Al-Khateeb, the Palestinian director of FOEME. "But peace can."

HEALTH & MEDICINE

Safety in Numbers

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By JEFFREY D. SACHS

In Sauri, Kenya, Mary Wasonga is improving the health of some 200 households by encouraging that births occur in a hospital.
Evelyn Hockstein / Polaris for TIME

AIDS can kill by stigma even when lifesaving medical treatment is available. Until recently, an HIV-infected woman in Sauri, Kenya, was discouraged by her husband, also HIV-infected, from seeking medical care because of his fear of stigma. All too often, death quickly ensues in such cases. But not in this one. Husband and wife were saved by Mary Wasonga, a fellow villager recently trained to be a community health worker by the Millennium Village Project, which is helping more than 400,000 people in dozens of African communities fight extreme poverty, hunger and disease. Wasonga visited the couple and encouraged them to get home-based HIV testing and counseling, and then helped them enroll in a treatment program. Indeed, she

and the 82 other community health workers in Sauri have helped thousands of villagers do the same.

These workers also attend to women in labor who need urgent transport to a delivery room, individuals too weakened by cholera to get to a clinic, children with malaria and many others. They do this with one year of on-the-job training that builds on at least some secondary education. That basic training is enough to save lives in vast numbers.

Across Africa, Asia and Latin America, programs are under way that are reminiscent of China's successful use of village-based health workers--the so-called barefoot doctors--a few decades ago, but today's workers have even better health-care tools. The mother of all community health efforts is India's National Rural Health Mission. Initiated by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and spearheaded by the young, dynamic Minister of Health, Dr. Anbumani Ramadoss, the program has, in just over three years, mobilized more than half a million new community health workers, each known as an ASHA--short for "accredited social health activist," and the Hindi word for hope.

Technology companies and foundations are also joining the effort to support community health workers. Mobile-phone giant Ericsson is empowering these workers with phones and support systems for training, reporting vital statistics and calling ambulances, among other services. In India, Satyam Computer Services and other organizations have partnered with the state government of Andhra Pradesh to provide emergency-response coverage for 80 million people. The Gates Foundation is similarly stepping up its programs of mobile-phone-based health delivery.

In the coming years, community health workers can support a breakthrough in the decisive control of many devastating diseases. The rich world can help through expanded financial support for community health workers and training programs by its universities. And the U.S. can learn something from these programs: we too need to enlist more community workers to help our own poor and vulnerable gain access to a health-care system that far too often is remote and utterly bewildering.

SOCIETY

Fifty States of Wine

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By JOEL STEIN

David Gubernick / Corbis

I'm not sure why my instinct, upon learning that all 50 states make wine, was to try one from each. If I found out that every state has a water park, I wouldn't try to go to each one. That's because water parks can't get you drunk.

But besides some patriotic call of duty, I think I wanted to try a wine from each state to see if, as I increasingly suspected, good wine can be made anywhere. Great wine keeps coming from surprising new places--New Zealand, Lebanon, Slovenia--so why not Nebraska? In 1976, as recounted in the new indie flick Bottle Shock, experts at a blind tasting in Paris were astonished to find they preferred California wines to Bordeaux. Would my experiment rearrange the wine world and create legions of devotees of Montanan merlot? And if so, would John Cusack play me in the movie?

One reason some regions have trouble building up their wine cred is that Europeans, and now Californians, contend that the specific soil their vineyards sit on makes their wine good, that the flinty rock or dusty earth imparts a distinctive flavor. But Fred Franzia, maker of the popular $2-a-bottle Charles Shaw, told me that terroir--a French term embracing all things regional, from soil to climate to topography--is a concept winemakers use to overcharge. "Anything will grow with sun and water. We can grow on asphalt," he said. "Terroir don't mean s___."

But my attempt to debunk terroir was more difficult than I had anticipated. Though all 50 states make wine (ever since North Dakota joined the pack in 2002), it's not so easy to get a bottle from each state. Most wines are sold only locally, and Alaska won't even ship its product, which is made from grapes from other states. So if you try to duplicate this project, know that it's best undertaken slowly while traveling around the country--or during the summer, when you have a lot of interns.

In reviewing somewhat randomly selected bottles priced around $15 to $20, I learned a few general truths. White is easier to make than red. Wines made at golf courses are not good. And the importance of terroir is definitely questionable, since no region of the country seems ill suited for winemaking except the Deep South, all of which I think Sherman salted. Though I didn't touch the dirt on these vineyards, my impression is that it's more a matter of finding the right grape for your climate. (Michigan's riesling was one of my favorites.)

I also learned that you can make and apparently sell some truly disgusting wine: six of the bottles I tried with a dozen friends were unanimously deemed "undrinkable." But 11 of them were quite good, and while all the expected states made this list (California, Oregon, Washington, New York, Michigan and Texas), so did a pinot grigio from Delaware, a white from Kentucky, a muscat from New Hampshire, a cabernet from Colorado and a chardonnay from North Carolina. Of the remaining wines, 21 were pretty decent and 12 were bad. In general, the wines were better than I predicted, given the newness of many operations, but all the people who tasted with me thought the U.S. had let them down. "Overall, there were some stinkers," said Gary Vaynerchuk, author of 101 Wines Guaranteed to Inspire, Delight

and Bring Thunder to Your World, who joined me in trying to guess which bottles were from which states. "That being said, the wines showed the potential of better things to come over the next five to 10 years."

Sure, most of these wines were overly simple, and I could get a much better bottle for the money from Spain or Portugal, but I got to try several grapes I'd never heard of. Chambourcin is being used on the East Coast to make weird, interesting reds. And I loved the Midwest's big, tannic Norton grape. I had a dark red grape called Marechal Foch from Pennsylvania that was really different. After all this, though, I still don't know if terroir matters. It could be that the South's muscadine grape is inherently horrifying or just that people who drink sweet tea should not make wine.

After a lengthy tasting session where we tried 20 wines, my drunken friends encouraged me to drink from the spit bucket. I took a whiff and instantly realized it couldn't taste as bad as the red from Cape Cod, which was the worst beverage of any kind I'd ever tasted--and I had to swallow barium for an upper-GI test. As I took a swig and swirled it around to gross out my friends, I thought it tasted like America. It was sweet, funky, simple, aggressive and not as bad as you'd been led to believe.

TECHNOLOGY

Working on the iPhone

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By JOSH QUITTNER

My dog is messing up my game. A while ago, Apple loaned me an iPhone 3G, and after extensive "testing," I finally convinced my wife I needed to buy one. "What about your BlackBerry?" she asked. "I can use the iPhone for work now, instead of my BlackBerry," I said. Grudgingly (the latest iPhone costs $199 or $299, plus I'd have to pay Verizon a $120 early-termination fee), she gave me the green light. Then tragedy struck: my 10-year-old morbidly obese Labrador retriever Otto tore his ACL.

So much for the fragile Quittner family budget; the canine orthopedic surgeon in town (who has the gall to display a gold statue of a dog in his office) said the repair would cost $4,000. "I remember when I was a boy, all the old dogs limped," I pointed out to my wife as we helped Otto hobble over to his chafing dish of designer kibble. "You'll have to wait a little bit longer for the iPhone," she said. "Be brave."

After I ran up to my room, threw myself on the bed and kicked and thrashed for a while, I consoled myself by enumerating the various pros and cons I had experienced while using the phone, which runs on AT&T's superfast 3G data network. Because the latest iPhone, which went on sale in July, supports Microsoft Exchange--the industry standard for synching corporate e-mail, calendars, contacts and so on--Apple is pitching its phone to business users as well as to consumers. So, aside from cost--AT&T's rates for the iPhone are way steeper--how does it compare with my old workaday BlackBerry?

PEOPLE

10 Questions for Tom Wolfe

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By RADHIKA JONES

Tom Wolfe
Todd Selby / Corbis Outline

Will you ever return to nonfiction? Jeff Lewis, ADA, MICH.

I'm working on a book called Back to Blood. It's a novel set in Miami, and much of it has to do with immigration. But if I could have found one real story, I would have done it. I still believe nonfiction is the most important literature to come out of the second half of the 20th century. Nonfiction is never going to die.

What are your feelings on the current state of fiction? Andrew Herold, JOHANNESBURG

There's so little of it now that it's pathetic, and it's pathetic all over. Writers come from master-of-fine-arts programs now. If you add up the college education of Steinbeck, Hemingway and Faulkner, you get to spring break of freshman year.

After Acid Test was published, did you ever visit Ken Kesey? Mindy Weiser, LAS VEGAS

No. I didn't hear a single thing about his reaction to it until about five years later. He said, "Well, he got most of it right, except when he tried to be nice." He was right. I shouldn't have pulled my punches. You should never do that, not if you're writing nonfiction.

Did you ever use LSD or marijuana? John Foster JEJU-DO, SOUTH KOREA

No, I never did. LSD is too strong to take. I write about it in the book. They take it once, and for years afterward, they have these flashbacks. Just driving over a bump in the road on a motorcycle can do it. I tried marijuana once.

Has the drug culture been stripped of its intellect? Max Stendahl, IPSWICH, MASS.

Ha! That's assuming that it had an intellect. It inevitably leads to total lack of intellect--particularly in the case of LSD, which everyone assumed opened the doors of perception. We've since discovered that it does the opposite.

You always speak glowingly of Hunter S. Thompson. Could you describe how he impacted your writing? Michael R. Trevino PONTIAC, MICH.

He was the great comic writer of the 20th century. I really do consider Hunter as being in the tradition of Mark Twain. Gonzo journalism, as he called it, is exactly what Twain did in things like The Innocents Abroad. You do some reporting of what's actually there, but you also let your imagination free. You're not deceiving anybody because they know that's what you do.

Is New Journalism still alive? If so, is it any better than in the pioneering '60s, or has it just become old journalism? Thabo Jijana

Port Elizabeth, South Africa [Laughs.] Well, the problem is, when you call any kind of movement new, you've already doomed it to an early death. There is some of it now, and it usually comes out in books. Mark Bowden's Black Hawk Down is an example of it and a very good one. I don't see it that much in magazines.

Who today is displaying "the right stuff"? Mark Gagne, LA JOLLA, CALIF.

I've often been asked to speak in business meetings about The Right Stuff. I always ask them, How many people in your organization have died in the last 10 years? The Right Stuff is about people who make it their profession to risk their lives. I don't know of anybody [who does that] other than people in combat in Iraq or Afghanistan or wherever else.

Do you regret saying you intended to vote for President Bush? Derek Traub, WASHINGTON

Whenever I enter a room full of journalists or writers, they give me a look as if I had just raised my hand and said, "I'd like to let you know that I'm a child molester." There's that insular attitude. I wish I had never said a thing. I don't think journalists should talk about whom they're voting for.

Do you ever get tired of being known for your white suits? David Royce WESTPORT, CONN.

It has done me so much good. Not long after I published my first book, I quickly found I was terrible at being interviewed. But then I'd read the piece and it would say, "What an interesting man; he wears white suits." And so it was a good 10 years where the suits were a substitute for a personality.

SPECIAL SECTION

Audi Gets in the Fast Lane

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By THOMAS K. GROSE/LYMINGTON, ENGLAND

The Audi R8

The Audi R8 is the German luxury automaker's first attempt at producing that most rarefied of motoring beasts, a super-sports car--a high-priced combination of verve and vroom. As I drive down the main drag of this English coastal town, the road narrows and I stop to let an oncoming car through. It turns out to be a vintage Mercedes SL sports car. As the R8 idles, its 420-h.p. V8 engine purrs with a low growl, and I can't resist revving it. As the Merc passes, its driver slows to a pause, nods at the sinuous, sleek lines of the pearly dark blue R8, then smiles approvingly and says, "Simply lovely." His is a typical reaction.

By definition, a super-sports car combines a powerful engine with superb performance, agile handling and drop-dead looks to such an ultrabuffed level that it turns heads, inspires envy and justifies a stratospheric price. In this case $112,500. And clearly, the R8 seals the deal. Notes Jay Nagley, managing director of car consultancy Spyder Automotive: "Italian styling with German quality and engineering. What's not to like? It's a great brand builder."

And that's the point. As the R8 races into its second year, Audi's still building just 4,500. In 2009, it hopes to release between 800 and 1,000 of them in the U.S. And they'll go quickly. Audi says those few cars, coupled with a deft marketing campaign,

will raise the company's profile in the competitive U.S. premium-car segment, where it hopes to double sales of all models by 2015 to around 200,000. "I would almost describe every one of those R8s as a mobile billboard for the Audi brand," says Johan de Nysschen, head of Audi's U.S. operations.

And its message: This is a rare automobile that few can afford, but the top-notch engineering and technology needed to design and build such a beautiful machine are evident in every model.

BMW is the world's leading premium carmaker, closely followed by Mercedes, and Audi's overarching goal is to overtake them--which won't happen without the boost in U.S. sales it's striving for. And given the shape of the U.S. economy, that task isn't getting any easier. Worldwide, however, Audi had a strong 2007. It sold 964,151 cars, 6.5% more than in 2006, and its revenue jumped almost 8% to $52.9 billion. This year, Audi has sold 516,211 cars as of June 30--a half-year sales record and a 1.4% increase over midyear 2007 sales.

While the R8 is the designated head turner, Audi's momentum is being led by its lesser beasts, such as the $32,700 A4 and the $42,950 A6. Like its German counterparts, Audi benefits from an accurate perception that its cars are expertly engineered and well made. But in recent years, Audi's been winning the style wars, turning out models, like the TT sports car, with eye-catching designs that are hugely influential and popular with buyers.

In the next year, Audi will introduce several new models aimed at consumers it categorizes as "sporty" and "progressive." Look for the Q5, a junior sibling of the full-sized Q7 SUV, as well as the Q7 TDI, which boasts a 221-h.p. diesel engine.

Still, catching BMW won't be easy. The Bavarian stalwart sold 1.5 million cars last year, nearly 336,000 of them in the States, and it is building cars at a plant in Spartanburg, S.C. That gives BMW a healthy cost advantage with the euro so strong--which is why Audi hasn't ruled out opening its own U.S. plant.

Another potential hurdle: Audi is pushing its superb diesel technology as the best way to cut emissions and lower fuel consumption. But diesels remain a hard sell in the U.S., where memories of dirty, noisy, sluggish diesels of an earlier era linger like smog. Nonetheless, Audi expects that 10% to 15% of its cars sold in the U.S. by 2015 will be diesel.

Puny greenbacks and diesel issues aside, Garel Rhys, an emeritus professor of automotive economics at Cardiff Business School, says, "Audi's closing the gap quickly." Five years ago, Audi wasn't competitive, but now it outsells BMW in several European markets. Nagley's not sure there's much that BMW can do to halt that design-driven momentum. "It's not been able to stop Audi in Germany, the U.K. and the rest of the world, so why should it be able to stop it in America?"

Audi's been a consistent winner of the 24-hour race at Le Mans, and the R8's bloodlines flow directly from those victories. The low-slung, squat R8 grips the road with comforting authority. Likewise, it navigates twisty country roads with commanding agility. Such performance doesn't come cheap. The $112,500 price is more than for most Mercedes and BMW roadsters, but less than what you'd pay for, say, a Ferrari or Lamborghini.

Designing a car to be priced higher than its German rivals was an exercise in brand positioning, says De Nysschen. "We think we found a sweet spot in the market." Bentley--which, like Audi, is part of the Volkswagen Group--successfully exploited a similar luxury-market niche when it positioned itself between supercostly Rolls-Royce and the sedans and coupes of BMW and Mercedes.

Of course, the R8 is also more expensive than most Porsches, and Porsche recently became Volkswagen's biggest shareholder. But, says John Wormald, managing partner of consultants Autopolis, because Porsches and the R8 occupy different niches, "they don't cannibalize each other."

In the near future, expect to see a convertible version of the R8. What you won't see is huge numbers of R8s on the road. Ever. Rhys thinks Audi will keep global production at 4,500 for the time being, though it could eventually push it to 6,000.

Even so, that's still not many cars. Which is the idea. De Nysschen insists Audi will ensure that demand for the R8 always outstrips supply--to keep its aura of exclusiveness intact. "In that market segment," he says, "the difference between too many and too few cars is one."

Is Parting Sweet for Cadbury?

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By JANET MORRISSEY

Illustration for TIME by Red Nose Studio

Cadbury Schweppes' two-pronged portfolio of candy and soft drinks wasn't too far off strategically from the soft-drink and snack-food approach that has served PepsiCo so well. The difference is that Pepsi has Pepsi, not Dr Pepper, as a top brand and an organization that can execute to the last bottle cap. For Cadbury, growing two separate businesses proved an insurmountable task, undone by bad execution, bad luck and the weird actors who dominate candyland--the secretive, privately held Mars Inc. and the stumbling, publicly held Hershey Co., which is controlled, ineptly, by the Hershey Trust Co.

Under relentless pressure from shareholders like agitator Nelson Peltz to sell its beverage business--yet unable to find a buyer given the collapse of the credit markets--Cadbury spun off its soft-drinks unit as the Dr Pepper Snapple Group earlier this year, leaving it once again a stand-alone candy company. And a relatively diminished one. Cadbury was dethroned as the king of candy by the surprise buyout of Wrigley by Mars, giving Mars-Wrigley a 14.4% share of the global confectionery market, compared with Cadbury's 10.1%, according to Wachovia Capital Markets.

But the spin-off also leaves a pure-play candy outfit that might be able to find chocolatey growth again. "We're focused on delivering," says CEO Todd Stitzer, the veteran Cadbury executive who is only the second person outside the Cadbury family

to run the shop. Stitzer is predicting that yet another restructuring--the company plans to close 15% of its factories and ax 15% of its workers in the next four years--will allow Cadbury's chocolate, candy and chewing-gum business to deliver annual sales increases of 4% to 6% and profit margins in the midteens by 2011 from its current level of around 10%.

Wall Street thinks Stitzer can do it. In the first half of 2008, sales (unadjusted for currency) rose 14%, to $5.27 billion. Cadbury's clever drumming-gorilla ads helped too. Morgan Stanley said in a recent report that "unlike with many other consumer stocks, we expect Cadbury's earnings growth to accelerate." Says David Morris, food and beverage research director at Mintel International Group, a market-research company: "The spin-off is a smart move. Investors had felt these businesses weren't getting their appropriate valuations when they were combined." As stand-alones, they can also grow by attracting merger partners, he says.

Over the years (the company dates to 1824, when John Cadbury, a Quaker in Birmingham, England, opened a shop selling tea, coffee and chocolate), Cadbury has snapped up some impressive brands, including such names as Dr Pepper, 7Up, A&W, Canada Dry, Sunkist and Snapple, which came as part of its merger with Schweppes in 1969. On the candy side, it was Stitzer's 2003 acquisition of Adams, which included the Halls, Dentyne and Trident brands, that transformed Cadbury into the world's largest confectionery company.

Despite its scale, Cadbury has been hobbled by decisions made years, even decades ago that have hampered its ability to compete globally. For instance, Cadbury doesn't control its own chocolate brand in the U.S., having sold those rights to Hershey in 1988 under a 25-year agreement that only Hershey can terminate. The idea at the time was that Hershey had the distribution power Cadbury was lacking to compete with Mars and Nestlé. But losing control of your own brand's destiny in a major market doesn't look smart today.

Logically, it made Cadbury and Hershey potential merger partners. Indeed, Cadbury has had on-and-off merger talks with Hershey for more than a decade and even

teamed with Nestlé in a failed $10.5 billion bid for Hershey in 2002. The latest talks occurred in 2007 between Stitzer and then Hershey CEO Richard Lenny. But Lenny was ousted from Hershey in an ugly shake-up later in the year. Hershey continues to stumble--most recently when it raised prices 10% in response to rising costs, a move that hit its stock hard.

Stitzer has also engineered a series of restructurings. Beginning in 2003, he sold off low-margin businesses, closed about a quarter of the company's factories and cut 10% of its workforce. But a series of missteps hindered the company's turnaround. Although Stitzer had projected annual margin growth of 50 to 75 basis points for four consecutive years, it came in at less than half that.

On the beverage side, Cadbury was equally handicapped. The company sold its rights to Dr Pepper outside North America to rival Coke and Lion Blackstone in 1999, which made it difficult to compete head to head with international powerhouses like Pepsi--and Coke. "We really can't go back on the deal," says Larry Young, a 30-year Pepsi veteran who was coaxed out of retirement to head the beverage business. "I don't think you'd ever get Coke to sell it back. If I were them, I wouldn't."

Dr Pepper also has old distribution deals with Coke and Pepsi bottlers, which Goldman Sachs analyst Judy Hong describes as a "potential Achilles' heel." According to Hong, "there is an inherent conflict of interest because Pepper's distribution platforms are also its largest competitors'," and as an example, she cites Pepsi's Sierra Mist displacing 7Up as the No. 2 lemon-lime brand, behind Sprite, in part because Pepsi Bottling stopped distributing 7Up.

That makes the newly spun-off Dr Pepper Snapple Group a bit of a soft-drink Frankenstein, cobbled together from odd parts. Dr Pepper has acquired about $1.2 billion in bottling assets over the past two years, and that will likely continue, which bodes well for its longer-term outlook, says Wachovia analyst Brian Scudieri. Young is predicting that the Dr Pepper Snapple Group will deliver annual revenue growth of 3% to 5% and earnings-per-share increases in the high single digits over the next few years.

Now that the two companies are separated, Wall Street buzz naturally revolves around their merging with or buying other companies or being sold themselves, especially in the wake of the Mars-Wrigley deal. "We believe [the spin-off] makes Cadbury a more attractive potential acquisition target, especially for Kraft," says Andrew Wood, a Sanford C. Bernstein & Co. analyst.

Stitzer says he's under no pressure to do a deal. When Nestlé acquired Rowntree in 1988, there were similar predictions of industry consolidation that never materialized, he says. "I don't think I'd be a proponent of the domino theory of consolidation." He insists he's committed to achieving revenue and margin growth targets to restore investor confidence and sees Cadbury as more of an acquirer than an acquiree. "We're always looking for the right bolt-on acquisition," he says.

Cadbury's operating margins expanded 190 basis points in the first half of 2008, and Stitzer expects this to continue despite the economic downturn. "We don't sell automobiles," he says. "We sell small moments of pleasure--small treats that are affordable in most circumstances." The question is, Can Cadbury sell enough of them?

Reclaiming Lagos

By WILL CONNORS/LAGOS

Status-conscious Lagosians are overbuilding on vulnerable coastal marshland
Thomas Dworzak / Magnum for TIME

The tomatoes, peppers and yams used to fly off the shelves of Grace Emah's small food stand. Then one night this spring, dump trucks came and filled a large stretch of land nearby with sand, blocking the drainage canals that carried rainwater and waste past her shop and into the Atlantic. When the rains came this summer, there was no place else for the water to go, and the stretch of road in front of her shop flooded. "I've been here since 1990, and the water was never like this until this year, when they dumped the sand," says Emah, 60, holding up the hem of her dress as she stands shin-deep in filthy brown water. "Because of the flooding, customers don't even enter the market to buy things."

The sanded plot will be the base of a lucrative new development area, one of hundreds of similar land-reclamation projects that have begun all over the marshlike islands that constitute the wealthy areas of sub-Saharan Africa's largest city.

Lagos is Nigeria's commercial hub, a city that is creating wealth quickly and growing chaotically. Its corruption-corroded infrastructure is losing the race with growth, and its boom areas along the coast could lose their bet with Mother Nature. Once a center for Portuguese slave traders, then a British colony, the city is growing 8% a year. About 6,000 people move to Lagos every day, adding to its already bursting

population of 15 million to 18 million people. The U.N. estimates the city will swell to 25 million by 2015. The poor arrive to escape the poverty of rural Nigeria and nearby countries; the wealthier, to escape the violence and kidnappings in the country's oil-rich delta region.

Lagos generates $85 million in revenue a month, according to government officials, and hopes to keep the cash flowing so it will have one of the 20 largest city economies by 2020. Essential to the city's plans are two small spits of land known as the islands, where banking, oil, consulting and telecom companies have their offices and the wealthy and politically powerful keep their lavish homes. "Lagos is like another country for most Nigerians. Some people move to the U.S. or Britain. Others move to Lagos," says Tosin Anatishe, general secretary of the Association of Real Estate Developers in Lagos. "Every politician and big man has to have a home on the islands. Even if they don't sleep here."

But the city's island hubs, at sea level and with no protection from an increasingly violent oceanfront climate, are on a particularly small and vulnerable stretch of land. Lagos is at risk more than other shoreline cities because almost all its ambitious plans are focused on the islands. "This is simply not the place to build a megacity. It was never meant to be. That's the tragedy of Lagos," says Stefan Cramer, the in-country director of the German Green Party's Heinrich Böll Foundation and a marine geologist. "Usually it's the poor people who will suffer first. Here, it's the other way around. It's the rich on the land areas that are most at risk. That's the big irony of urban planning in Lagos. Billions of dollars are invested in that infrastructure there, and I think they'll be the first to go." Government officials insist they have planned for every contingency. Whether true or not, their ability to stave off nature's forces is not on the minds of most Lagosians. As the sand gets dumped, plots are sold, buildings go up, and the money flows. Most people just want to know how they can get their foot in the door.

Doing so has become increasingly difficult, since the valuable land is in the hands of so few. A Western worker for Julius Berger, the largest Nigerian construction company and a subsidiary of Germany's Bilfinger Berger, sees the corruption every

day. "There is a real Mafia here," he says, requesting anonymity. "It's controlled by real estate agents and property owners. They meet once a year and set the land prices. Then if no one pays the prices, they'll leave the land unoccupied for a year, even two, until someone pays it—and they do pay it."

This has led to skyrocketing land prices on the islands. Rents can exceed $5,000 a month, and tenants must pay at least two or three years' rent in advance. Small homes and plots of land go for millions, and few can be bothered about waterfront vulnerabilities with so much money at stake. "The developers will recover their money before the disaster sets in, and somebody else will sit with the bill—either foolish investors or the public," Cramer says.

Rapid growth has added to a deeply rooted system of corruption that penetrates nearly every aspect of society here and hobbles attempts at improving infrastructure. Nigeria has made some steps toward transparency, but if you want to get things done in Lagos, it is often necessary to have a dash—a bribe—at the ready. A Westerner in Lagos who worked for oil-and-gas-services company Willbros acknowledges that paying bribes is part of the deal. "When I joined, the then divisional manager brought me a statement on noncorruption to sign," he says, requesting anonymity out of fear of alienating business clients. "He told me, 'Just sign it. We both know it's Nigeria.'"

The corruption means billion-dollar electricity projects are left half done, so most of the city runs on expensive diesel-powered generators. It also means new hotel projects are left as empty shells, devoid of activity, so room rates at existing hotels are exorbitant. But business goes on.

At the recent unveiling of one of the city's many new master plans, Francisco Bolaji Abosede, the Physical and Urban Planning Minister, admitted that problems exist. "We are to be the third largest megacity by 2015, but we have hardly any infrastructure to show for it, and this has to change," he said. A few minutes later in his speech, however, it became clear why the change he is advocating might be difficult to realize. "This is the only country, not just the only state, where you can

make 25% interest on your investment in one year. Not many countries will give you that."

This honesty does not bring light or water or help ease the traffic jams that plague the city. Nor does it ease the burden felt by poorer residents who know they will be pushed farther and farther away from the city center. And while it is hard to argue with the cold logic of economics, it is also difficult to see a sustainable future for a city built on the promise of quick returns. "Let's applaud the vision, that there is a vision at all, but there needs to be effective infrastructural development," says Kola Karim, CEO of Shoreline Energy International, which is headquartered in Lagos but not on the islands. "The social stigma that says that the islands are the places to be is killing business. The investors are looking at fantastic returns, not at creating an effective city. It's a difficult position, but the government has to extricate itself from the business of making money so that it creates infrastructure that's durable."

Samuel Aiye Yemi knows the government-controlled land his community lives on would bring those fantastic returns for developers. Yemi is the chairman of the neighborhood group that represents flood-affected shopkeepers like Grace Emah, and as he walks past fetid water and piles of garbage, pointing to where the drains used to be, he shrugs. "We are not against the megacity project. We embrace it. But we don't want the government to flush us out," he says.

As he picks his way around deep puddles, his weathered skin and squinting eyes crunched into a permanent scowl, Yemi passes the concrete wall of a crumbling building nearby. Painted in wide black brushstrokes on the wall is the message THIS LAND IS IN DISPUTE.

Business Books

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By ANDREA SACHS

The New Elite: Inside the Minds of The Truly Wealthy

By Jim Taylor, Doug Harrison and Stephen Kraus Amacom; 245 pages

Countless books tell you how you can get filthy rich and join the wealthiest 1% of the U.S. population. But less energy has been expended on assessing the attitudes of that fortunate demographic. The three market researchers behind this book are seeing The Millionaire Next Door and raising it $4 million. By interviewing 6,000 people with liquid assets of at least $5 million, they have written a comprehensive book that statistically defines this well-heeled group. You might not be one of them, but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy their peculiarities--or learn how to sell them something.

Certainly, there are common traits, say the authors. Central to understanding today's superwealthy (average age: 47) is recognizing their essentially middle-class mind-set. Less than 5% inherited their wealth. In fact, say the authors, "they are undeniable proof that the American Dream of unrestricted social mobility in a single lifetime is alive and well." They are usually practitioners of what this book refers to as "stealth wealth--having money, but keeping it under the radar."

Naturally, there are conspicuous consumers buying Louis Vuitton bags and Cartier watches, but a large number of the wealthy agree with the interviewee who said, "I have a Chevrolet taste on a Mercedes income." The contemporary wealthy shopper, say the authors, is "the logic shopper" (70%) whose middle-class upbringing leads to a focus on value and due diligence before a purchase. That may explain why the retail store most likely to have been shopped in by this demographic is Target (80%). Why pay more for the same roll of toilet paper?

From there, the ultra-rich fan out. The length of time that one has had a fortune will probably shape one's behavior. Apprentices (five years or less of experience with

moola) are cautious and self-conscious; journeymen (six to 14 years) have gotten used to their millions and learned to buy expensive toys; masters (15 years plus) have learned to steer their portfolios and amass greater sums. In addition, there are at least five different wealth personalities, from wrestlers, who are conflicted about their exalted financial status, to directors, who feel they've earned every penny, thank you, to patrons, who are ready to share their bounty. So take heed, luxury providers: if you pay more attention to the élite customer's history and disposition, you are more likely to strike gold.

Click: What Millions Of People Are Doing Online and Why It Matters

By Bill Tancer Hyperion; 221 pages

In an earlier era, the author would have been a pollster. Now, as the general manager of global research at Hitwise, an online intelligence firm, he sifts through a database that reveals what more than 10 million Internet users do every day. With this digital treasure trove, Tancer (who is also a columnist for TIME.com can aid traders by gauging the market's direction on specific issues, as well as answer pressing questions such as which day of the week is most popular for porn websites (Friday). The author assures the reader that the user data he analyzes are "anonymized and aggregated," but here's hoping that Big Brother doesn't have a PC.

The 3 Big Questions For a Frantic Family: A Leadership Fable

By Patrick Lencioni Jossey-Bass; 240 pages

Memo to mom: "if my clients ran their companies the way we run this family, they'd be out of business." So says the management-consultant dad in this slim but thought-provoking volume. BlackBerrys are blurring the line between work and home. Why not apply business principles to "the most important organization in your life"? It's hard to argue with the idea that family goals should be carefully articulated. Likewise, a weekly family meeting can only help team spirit. But please, let's draw the line at pink slips.

LETTERS

Inbox

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008

Pointing Fingers over Georgia

Zbigniew Brzezinski certainly knows his subject when it comes to relationships with the Russians [Aug. 25]. I would expect his practical experience to be more useful than the predominantly theoretical knowledge Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice relies on. It is unfortunate that President George Bush's actions in Iraq play into the Russians' hands. How can we criticize their aggression and belligerence when the U.S. under Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney acted similarly with respect to Iraq? I do hope Barack Obama and John McCain follow Brzezinski's advice, and I hope NATO and the rest of the international community can persuade Russia to leave Georgian territory or make the political and economic consequences as painful as possible. Andy Paquet, UNIONTOWN, OHIO

I fear Russia as much as the next guy, but I have a good memory. What would the U.S. do if Russia suddenly started alliances with Mexico, Bolivia, Cuba and other Latin American states and began setting up missiles there? Fortunately, we have an answer. President Kennedy faced the Soviets during the Cuban missile crisis. Why should the Russians be the ones to blame for the current crisis? We ought to look in the mirror and at the Texas cowboy in the White House. Albert Reingewirtz, HAVERTOWN, PA.

As a student majoring in history and an immigrant from the Caucasus, I was astounded that Brzezinski piled all the blame for the Russia-Georgia conflict on Russia. He should have pointed out that for decades, Ossetians and Abkhazians were discriminated against by the Georgians. When the U.S.S.R. was beginning to collapse, Georgian nationalists began to blockade Ossetian and Abkhazian towns. Mikheil Saakashvili, Georgia's democratic leader (as Brzezinski calls him)--whose police officers were using force on nonviolent protesters just last November--was

goaded by the U.S. and NATO into waking up the Russian bear. It looks as if Georgia will now pay the price. Armen Hovhanesyan, WESTWOOD, CALIF.

Both Russia and Georgia are guilty of atrocities. However, Georgia's heavy shelling of South Ossetia, including civilian areas, must preclude it from being seen as a "victim." I would expect that type of language from Fox News, but I expect a powerful media outlet like TIME to report the truth in an unbiased manner. Chris Pappas, LUBBOCK, TEXAS

The Measure of the Medalist

I am happy for Michael Phelps' success in Beijing [Aug. 25]. But it is not apt to compare Phelps with Mark Spitz and the seven gold medals Spitz earned at the 1972 Munich Olympics. Spitz did not have the technological advantages of superspeedy pools and laser-sleek swimsuits. Nor did Spitz wear a streamlined swimming cap to cover his hair. In fact, he swam those events with a mustache. Spitz won his medals the old-fashioned way. It has taken more than 30 years of innovation and technology for anyone to come close to his Olympic success. Mark D. Reese, SALT LAKE CITY

A Meaty Debate over Goat

I have enjoyed goat dishes for some time now, but I've always wondered why goat wasn't more widely available [Aug. 25]. Yours was a great article about how the food we love makes it to our dinner plates. In such a politically correct climate, I want to salute you for publishing this story. I expect that PETA will be lining up to run you all out of town. Jay Ruane, LANSDALE, PA.

Your article espousing the slaughter of goats was repellent. Vegetarianism is advancing because it's irrefutably beneficial for the planet. Soy, nuts, beans, flax and grains can easily supplant animal protein. Spare the goats and enjoy some oats. Brien Comerford, GLENVIEW, ILL.

NOTEBOOK

The Page

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By MARK HALPERIN

2005

FEB. 20 In one of his 52 lifetime appearances on Meet the Press, McCain exasperates conservatives by saying of his fellow guest "I am sure that Senator Clinton would make a good President"

AUG. 23 TIME says McCain would be his party's "instant front runner" if he enters the race, along with Hillary Clinton for the Democrats

AUG. 29 President Bush offers McCain a 69th-birthday cake--as flooding ravages New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina

2007

FEB. 28 McCain semiofficially announces his plans to run for President on the Late Show with David Letterman

APRIL 1 McCain sees "encouraging signs" while touring a Baghdad market, draws derision from the press and Democrats for his heavy security escort

APRIL 25 He formally announces his run for President in Portsmouth, N.H.: "I'm not the youngest candidate. But I am the most experienced"

MAY 3 At a Republican debate in California, McCain memorably vows to pursue Osama bin Laden to the "gates of hell"

JUNE 28 The Senate defeats a McCain-supported immigration bill, ending months of his attempts to awkwardly balance a run for the Republican nomination with a policy unpopular among conservatives

JULY 2 After a disappointing fund-raising year and a mishandled budget, McCain dismisses campaign employees and cuts the salaries of senior staffers. Speculation mounts that he will be forced to quit the race altogether

JULY 10 McCain's campaign manager and top strategist leave amid reports the campaign has only $2 million left. McCain grimly denies talk he may need to abandon his bid

AUG. 11 In the all-important (but ultimately meaningless) Iowa straw poll, Mitt Romney finishes first, Mike Huckabee comes in second and McCain 10th--second to last--with 101 votes (0.7%)

NOV. 22 On his seventh trip to Iraq since the war began, McCain has Thanksgiving dinner with U.S. troops

2008

JAN. 3 Huckabee wins the Iowa caucuses, Romney comes in second, and McCain ties for third

JAN. 8 McCain wins the New Hampshire primary. Romney comes in second, Huckabee third

JAN. 15 Romney keeps his candidacy alive by beating McCain in the Michigan primary

JAN. 19 McCain wins the South Carolina primary, avenging his 2000 loss there to George W. Bush

JAN. 22 Fred Thompson drops out of the race

JAN. 26 After weeks of intense competition for his support, Florida governor Charlie Crist endorses McCain

JAN. 29 McCain wins the Florida primary

JAN. 30 Rudy Giuliani ends his presidential bid and endorses McCain, leaving Romney and Huckabee as McCain's remaining challengers

JAN. 31 California governor Arnold Schwarzenegger endorses McCain

FEB. 4

FEB. 5 McCain finishes off Romney with sweeping Super Tuesday wins

MARCH 4 After lingering for weeks, Huckabee concedes, allowing McCain to declare victory and "claim with confidence, humility and a great sense of responsibility" that he will be the GOP nominee

SEPT. 1-4 REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

With reporting by Randy James, Katie Rooney

Jerry Ford

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By KATE BETTS

Widely credited with transforming modeling into a big business by creating the first exclusive modeling contracts, Jerry Ford died on Aug. 24 at his home in Morristown, N.J. He was 83.

Along with his wife Eileen, Ford revolutionized the industry when he began negotiating lucrative contracts for models to represent certain brands exclusively; the first such agreement was between Lauren Hutton and Revlon in 1974. In doing so, he demanded higher fees and made many of his clients household names, including Christie Brinkley and Brooke Shields.

Born in New Orleans, Ford studied accounting at Columbia University and fell into the fashion industry when his wife, who was managing the accounts of several model friends, became pregnant. He took over her duties and discovered a knack for management. The couple founded Ford Models in 1946 and went on to manage the early careers of Jane Fonda, Candice Bergen and Ali MacGraw, among many others. It's fair to say Ford's preference for healthy-looking American models such as those women played a defining role in fashion for four decades.

Milestones

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008

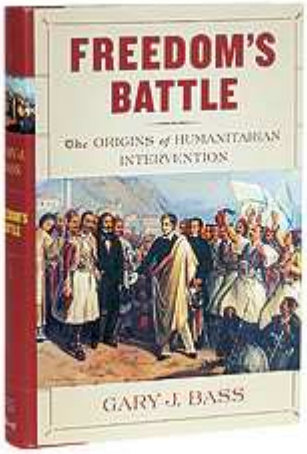
DIED The first African American to serve as executive director of the National Football League Players Association (NFLPA), Gene Upshaw held the post for 25 years. An outstanding offensive lineman for the Oakland Raiders, Upshaw was selected seven times for the Pro Bowl and was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1987. When he was director of the NFLPA, his experience on the field gave him a unique understanding of player dynamics and helped him craft significant union agreements--including the game-changing introduction of free agency. He died of pancreatic cancer at age 63.

From the distinctive cymbal crashes that punctuate Simon and Garfunkel's The Boxer to the chugging beat of Johnny Cash's Ring of Fire, the work of drummer Buddy Harman can be heard on some 18,000 recordings. The Nashville native took to the drums at a very early age, following in the footsteps of his mother, who played percussion in the family band. Over the course of his nearly half-century career, he mastered a wide variety of styles. He became a fixture in Nashville, accompanying everyone from Elvis Presley and Tammy Wynette to Dolly Parton. He was 79.

An East German lawyer with a marked ability for negotiation, Wolfgang Vogel became known during the Cold War as the point person for anyone who wanted to cross the Berlin Wall--in either direction. Over three decades he helped more than 200,000 people leave East Germany, including American pilot Gary Powers, whose release he infamously arranged in exchange for Soviet spy Rudolph Ivanovich Abel. Though Vogel considered himself a humanitarian, his reputation was tarnished after the Cold War ended and he was convicted of blackmail. Upon appeal, he was cleared--and his benevolent reputation restored. He was 82.

The Skimmer

Thursday, Aug. 28, 2008 By LEV GROSSMAN



Freedom's Battle: The Origins of Humanitarian Intervention

By Gary J. Bass Knopf; 509 pages

It shouldn't be necessary to say this, but it probably is: Humanitarian intervention was not invented in the 1970s by Jimmy Carter. In fact, it was all the rage in the 19th century. European powers intervened on behalf of the Greeks against the Ottoman Empire (the poet Lord Byron died while taking part in that particular adventure); they sent troops to Beirut to aid Syrian Christians against the Druze; they helped the Bulgarians against the Ottomans (again)--and on and on. In Freedom's Battle, Bass tells the strange, bloody tales of these now nearly forgotten campaigns with extraordinary verve and wit, especially for a Princeton political-science wonk. But the book's real payoff is what it brings to our understanding of contemporary conflicts that have been justified on humanitarian grounds, from Somalia to Kosovo to Iraq: context. "All of the major themes of today's heated debates about humanitarian intervention ... were voiced loud and clear throughout the nineteenth century," Bass writes. "They knew things then that we have forgotten now."

READ X SKIM TOSS