

RELEASE IN PART  
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**From:** sbwhoeop [redacted]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 17, 2009 6:35 PM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** Peter Galbraith called, wants to talk to you...

Hillary: Peter Galbraith just called me and I had a long talk with him. As you know, as chief of US mission to UN in Afghanistan he has protested the election fraud and come into conflict with the head of UN there, who wanted to cover it up. Peter has just come out of Afghanistan after four solid months there. He is pessimistic, says the analogy to Vietnam is not wrong-headed, that comparisons of increasing troop levels there as though the surge in Iraq could be replicated are misguided, but thinks there is an approach that should be attempted that involves the vote recount and trying to replace Karzai. He wishes to speak with you directly. He says that he has difficulty communicating with Holbrooke, not because he can't reach him, but because he finds Dick disjointed these days. Peter is on a plane right now to Norway, then London, then to NY on Wed, then could go to DC. He says you can reach him through the US mission to the UN office. FYI, from Wash Post today:

"The issue of how seriously to take the fraud charges, and whether to force a runoff, has also caused a rare public rift within the international community here. The senior American official at the U.N. mission, Peter W. Galbraith, left the country abruptly Sunday in a dispute with the mission director, Norwegian Kai Eide.

"Galbraith had pushed for an exhaustive probe. Sources who are familiar with the dispute but are not authorized to speak on the record said Eide argued that the international community should not press too hard because it could undermine national stability.

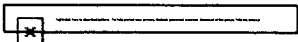
Galbraith had been convinced that Karzai could not win without fraud and had tried to reduce the number of polling stations in some areas in the south, the incumbent's ethnic stronghold, said one diplomatic source. Eide and others, the source said, were convinced that Karzai would win in any case and that any irregularities could be smoothed over, as they were in the 2004 presidential election that Karzai won by a safe margin."

And, I've included below Jane Smiley's rave review of Max's book.

Sid

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jane-smiley/republican-gomorrah\\_b\\_290293.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jane-smiley/republican-gomorrah_b_290293.html)

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## **Jane Smiley**

Pulitzer Prize-Winning Novelist and Essayist

Posted: September 17, 2009 02:56 PM

## HuffPost Book Review: *Republican Gomorrah*

About twenty years ago, I read an article about a death row inmate who had shot a clerk in a convenience store. The way the murder was presented by the man on death row was mysterious--his hand just rose up and the gun went off. Shooting the clerk in the face in the midst of a robbery wasn't in fact his fault. He never said, "I shot a man." It just happened.

I thought of that man while reading Max Blumenthal's terrific, but also, of course, appalling new book, *Republican Gomorrah*. Apparently there isn't a single person in the present incarnation of the Republican party who does anything. Things happen--God does it. Satan does it. No Republican is an agent of his or her own success or failure, sin or redemption. It just happens.

The consequences of this lack of responsibility are there for all to see--screaming threats, guns at rallies, unhinged behavior every time a Republican doesn't feel the way he or she wants to feel, absolute sense of powerlessness leading directly to an absolute will to power. Because that was the thing that struck me about the murderer in the 7-11--he had the power and in his own last moments, the clerk knew it. But the killer, no matter how well armed, never *felt* it.

*Republican Gomorrah* is a frightening book because it is clear to all of us on the outside that the various Republican operatives who surround James Dobson and his ilk have no consciences and will stop at nothing. They invoke the name of God for purposes that shame God absolutely--hurting, destroying, maiming, and damning others who either don't accept their beliefs or don't acknowledge their power and righteousness. Of course that is frightening.

But Blumenthal's cast of characters, beginning with Dobson and his prodigal son, Ryan, and including John Hagee, Sarah Palin, Ralph Reed, Charles Colson, Judith Reisman, Christina Regnery, Donald Wildmon, et al. strike the reader as above all else very small--egocentric, narrow minded, uneducated, selfish, and resentful. Each of these qualities is destructive in and of itself. The combination is turning out to be coercive. Even those of us who are immune to the emotions these people play upon are getting more and more nervous about the power that they wish to exert.

Blumenthal does two things that no one else I have read manages to do--the first of these is that he organizes the network. He shows how Ted Bundy is connected to James Dobson is connected to Gary Bauer is connected to Erik Prince is connected to Ralph Reed is connected to Jack Abramoff is connected to Tom Delay is connected to Tony Perkins is connected to David Duke is connected to Mel Gibson, and so forth, and in the course of tracing these connections, he informs us, or reminds us, of the crimes and misdemeanors these people have committed.

Two of my favorites are James Dobson's son Ryan's messy divorce (Dad seems to have paid the settlement--did he not dare to discipline? Or did he discipline too much?) and David Vitter's habitual recourse to a brothel in New Orleans where Republicans "wanted to be spanked and tortured and wear stockings--Republicans have impeccable taste in silk stockings" (the madam is talking about men). *Republican Gomorrah* is full of crimes--both those we've already heard of, such as Abramoff's and Ted Haggard's, and those we haven't (there is good evidence that Texas billionaire T. Cullen Davis, funder of the right wing Council For National Policy, ordered hits on his estranged wife, and succeeded in murdering his step-daughter and the wife's boyfriend).

This aspect of the book reminds me of a Scottish novel called *The Private Memoirs And Confessions Of A Justified Sinner* by James Hogg, in which, once a man believes he is among the saved, he can commit any sin he wants to and be sure he will go to heaven. Once Davis was "saved," for example, he said, "My goal is to get to heaven. I'll do anything it takes to get there, and I'm not going to let anything stand in my way." He must have thought getting to heaven was just another power play.

And power plays are the key to right wing psychology. Right wing psychology is the other thing that Blumenthal has to offer. At the periphery of this world is your run-of-the-mill bully, a man like Jack Abramoff, whose brutality is well remembered by his high school classmates, but who sang like a bird once he was caught. At the center of is James Dobson, a much more destructive figure than Abramoff, who advocates, in the strongest terms, child beating, and not only child-beating, but dog-beating. At one point he brags about going after the family canine (who weighed twelve pounds) and engaging in "the most vicious fight ever staged

between man and beast." As for children, the goal is to keep beating the child until "he wants(s) to crumple on the breast of his parent." In other words, Dobson is a proud sadist who thinks sadism is kind of funny, and who, over the years, has successfully advocated sadism as the only workable form of child-rearing.

In order to understand the deeply disturbing effect Dobson and his theories have had on our culture, Blumenthal cites Erich Fromm's *Escape from Freedom*, about the psychology of Nazism and authoritarianism, and Eric Hoffer's *The True Believer*. Insofar as he finds the documentation, Blumenthal points out how many of these powerful Evangelical Christians were beaten and abused as children (including Dobson). It's a high number. The beatings, often arbitrary, cruel, and frequent, were then, in many cases, backed up with constant lessons about God--that he is arbitrary, that he is cruel, that he demands obedience above all things, and that he surpasseth understanding. The point of these exercises is to establish the powerlessness of the child, his shame and guilt as a worthless sinner, and his absolute fear of thinking for himself. He will then take his place in the hierarchy and thereby reinforce the existence of the hierarchy.

Blumenthal goes pretty far with this psychology, but, in my view, not far enough. I'm sure he was reared by liberal parents, who gave him a sense of responsibility, curiosity, and autonomy, and since he is only in his thirties, I don't think that he really empathizes with the tortured and damaged souls that he has been interviewing and watching for the last few years. I don't think he understands their fear--how deep it is, how constant it is, and how arousing it is. I don't think, in fact, that Max Blumenthal looks within and sees evil. I think he looks within, and says, "I'm okay; you're okay." That's the goal of liberal parenting, and as we can tell by statistics he cites concerning unwed pregnancy, divorce, and occurrence of STDs, liberal parenting works--atheists and agnostics, for example, have a much lower rate of divorce than Evangelicals, and states that have sex education in the schools, rather than abstinence-only education, have lower rates of teen pregnancy. But a child who is beaten enough eventually comes to understand two things above all--that the world makes no sense (and so why try to make sense of it?) and that the world is so dangerous that to be oneself, or even to try to figure out what oneself might be, is a death-defying exercise. There is safety only in two things--conforming to a group and, as a part of that group, dominating and even destroying other groups. The rules of the group can be anything at all, as long as the members of the group abide by them. And other groups have to abide by them, too, or the painful and arbitrary rules that group abides by are meaningless. The beaten child's sense of terror can only be assuaged by evanescent feelings of power, because in relation to his parents and to God, he is defined as powerless. When he "crumples" on the "loving" breast of his parent (and in my view a person who administers a beating to a living being who is 1/16th his size doesn't know what love is) he accepts his powerlessness and he also accepts that power is what defines this life.

That's where your freedom and mine come in.

Many of the Evangelicals Blumenthal discusses are Christian Dominionists--that is, they differ from the Taliban only in their choice of doctrine. Their uses of that doctrine (to dehumanize women and other groups, to never share power, to control every aspect of every life within their power, and to create society as a steeply hierarchical structure with them at the top) are those of the Taliban.

It's an eye-opener to read about R.J. Rushdoony, son of Armenian immigrants who fled the Armenian genocide of 1915. You would think that a man whose family escaped mass murder would go on to espouse peace, love, and understanding, but Rushdoony went the other way, taking literally the 613 laws in the Book of Leviticus. In his book, *The Institutes of Biblical Law*, he advocates capital punishment for "disobedient children, unchaste women, apostates, blasphemers, practitioners of witchcraft, adulterers," and homosexuals. Gary North, the Presbyterian Christian Reconstructionist, is his son-in-law, and, while not backing down on the mass death penalty, advocates stoning rather than burning at the stake, because stoning is cheaper (and of course that is a factor, because there would be a lot of people to exterminate). As for who would be doing the killing (of you and me, if they could catch us), well, Christians would, but not because they wanted to. Ever unable to accept responsibility, they assign agency to God, who wants us killed, who will beat us until we "crumple" on his "loving" breast, a God who has given us all sorts of talents, skills, and interests, but is, like these Christian Dominionists, interested only in power. I believe his motto is "Adore me or I will hurt you."

Can you believe in a God so small? When I was a parent of young children, I, too, got frustrated, and I, too, thought a spanking might be a good thing. I soon realized that my motives for administering physical punishment were highly suspect--more anger and frustration than care for the child or knowledge about effective methods. I then saw a show about child-rearing, in which a woman who firmly believed in child-

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beating aroused far more resistance in her beaten daughter, and had much more family disruption, than the parents who ignored the tantrum and then used the technique of redirection to train their toddlers. Works with horses, dogs, and other animals, too. It was then I decided that if I, in my human weakness, could put two and two together concerning free will and proper behavior, surely God could, also. I didn't want to believe in a God who was a smaller being than myself. And I don't.

The ray of hope in Blumenthal's book is that the right-wingers he talks about tend to be so psychologically unstable that they don't have much staying power--think Ted Haggard. But they have numbers. The bad thing about that is that they could take control. The defeat of Sarah Palin, Conrad Burns (R-MT), George Allen (R-VA), Rick Santorum (R-PA), James Talent (R-MO), and Mike DeWine (R-OH) brought us "back from the brink" according to the website Theocracy Watch. But only back from the brink. The good thing is that they would not be able to maintain what we call a government for very long (see George W. Bush). The bad thing is that they would destroy the country as we know it while they were trying. If I take the long view, well, I think, Stalinism lasted about 25 years, Nazism 12. The Iranian Mullahs have been at it for 30 years. Russia and Germany survived, Iran might, as well. But generations were lost in all these places. And Stalin and Hitler didn't have nuclear weapons.

I think about the 22-year-old clerk in that convenience store, looking down the barrel of that pistol. He probably had no idea that his killer had no sense of agency, hardly even knew what he was doing, was seeing his hand as separate from himself. But I have to feel sorry for the killer, too, subject to feelings that he could not label that were terrifying and overpowering. I bet he was beaten, shamed, and neglected as a child. I bet, afterward, he wished someone, somehow, had stopped him.

*Don't forget to buy one: Max Blumenthal, Republican Gomorrah, Nationbooks, available at your local bookstore and anywhere else that books are sold.*

Read more at: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jane-smiley/republican-gomorrah\\_b\\_290293.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jane-smiley/republican-gomorrah_b_290293.html)