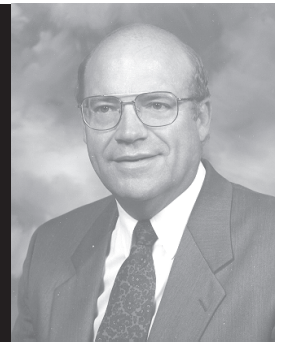




Dr. Fred Schwarz

The Schwarz Report



Dr. David Noebel

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Darwin Seduces Conservatives

by John G. West

The debate over Darwinian evolution is typically framed by the news media as a clash between “right” and “left.” Conservatives are presumed to be critical of Darwin’s theory, while liberals are presumed to be supportive of it.

As in most cases, reality is more complicated.

There always have been liberal critics of Darwin. In the early 20th Century, progressive reformer William Jennings Bryan fought for women’s suffrage, world peace—and against Darwinism. More recently, left-wing novelist Kurt Vonnegut, a self-described “secular humanist,” has called our human bodies “miracles of design” and faulted scientists for “pretending they have the answer as how we got this way when natural selection couldn’t possibly have produced such machines.”

Just as there have been critics of Darwin on the left, there continue to be champions of Darwinism on the right. In the last few years, pundits such as George Will, Charles Krauthammer and John Derbyshire, along with social scientist James Q. Wilson and political theorist Larry Arnhart, have stoutly defended Darwin’s theory and denounced Darwin’s critics.

Some of Darwin’s conservatives are even promoting Darwinian biology as a way to save conservatism. In his book, *The Moral Sense*, James Q. Wilson draws on Darwinian biology to support traditional morality. Law professor John O. McGinnis opines that the future success of conservatism depends on evolutionary biology: “Any political movement that hopes to be successful must come to terms with the second rise of Darwinism.”

No one has been more articulate in championing evolution on the right than political theorist Larry Arnhart at Northern Illinois University, who in his recent book, *Darwinian Conservatism*, argues that “[c]onservatives need Charles Darwin ... because a Darwinian science of human nature supports conservatives in their realist view of human imperfectibility and their commitment to ordered liberty. . . .”

The allure of Darwinian conservatism is not hard to understand. While 19th-Century giants such as Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud have been debunked, Darwin retains his prestige among the elites as a secular saint. Moreover, Darwinists have clothed themselves in the mantle of modern science, successfully stigmatizing those who criticize them as bigoted Bible-thumpers who are “anti-science.”

No wonder a number of conservative intellectuals either refrain from becoming involved in the debate over Darwinism or take the side of Darwin as a matter of course. In some quarters, it is regarded as unfashionable or even embarrassing to be on the side of Darwin’s critics. And who wants to be unfashionable or embarrassed?

One suspects that this concern for being fashionable has something to do with the dismissive attitude taken by conservative columnists such as George Will and Charles Krauthammer, neither of whom, however, shows evidence of having read or considered

And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead expose them. Ephesians 5:11

“Dwell on the past and you’ll lose an eye; forget the past and you’ll lose both eyes.” Old Russian Proverb

the arguments made by intelligent-design proponents. If they had, they would not assert tritely that intelligent design is merely “warmed-over creationism” (Krauthammer) or an attempt “to compel public education to infuse theism into scientific education” (Will). Nor would Krauthammer have denounced the Kansas Board of Education for “forcing intelligent design into the statewide biology curriculum” when the board made clear it had done the exact opposite: “We also emphasize that the Science Curriculum Standards do not include Intelligent Design. . . .” Which part of the phrase “do not include Intelligent Design” did Krauthammer fail to understand? Sadly, he probably never bothered to look at the Kansas science standards he so excoriates.

It is ironic that such conservatives, who would not trust left-wing reporting about, say, the war in Iraq, apparently will accept wholesale anything the mainstream media report about evolution.

Other more careful conservatives remain troubled by what they regard as the excesses of Darwinian ideologues, but they seem to think they can tame or neutralize Darwinian evolution by redefining it. For example, physicist Stephen Barr has argued in *First Things* that neo-Darwinism, properly understood, need not require a process that is “unguided” or “unplanned.” “The word ‘random’ as used in science does not mean uncaused, unplanned, or inexplicable; it means uncorrelated,” he writes.

The problem is not that Barr is wrong about the appropriate meaning of “random” but that mainstream Darwinists do not accept his point and never have. Darwinism from the start has been defined as an undirected process. That is its core, and that is why Darwin himself emphasized that “no shadow of reason can be assigned for the belief that variations ... were intentionally and specially guided.”

In the Darwinian view, biological structures such as the vertebrate eye, or the wings of butterflies, or the bacterial flagellum, “must have” developed through the interplay of chance (random mutations, according to modern Darwinists) and necessity (natural selection or “survival of the fittest”). The same holds true for the higher animals, including human beings. In the words of Harvard paleontologist George Gaylord Simpson, “Man is the result of a purposeless and natural process that did not have him in mind.”

Barr may be correct that a more modest Darwinism that does not insist on evolution’s being undirected would be harmless, but then it also no longer would be Darwinism. Conservatives cannot resolve the problems with Darwinian evolution merely by offering their own idiosyncratic definition of the term.

Still other conservatives such as Arnhart and Wilson believe that, properly understood, Darwin’s theory can be used to support moral universals and temper utopian schemes. But

their argument flies in the face of both Darwinism’s internal logic and an historical record that demonstrates the opposite.

For the past hundred years, mainstream Darwinists have drawn on Darwin’s theory to promote relativism and utopian social reforms such as eugenics. Of course, these Darwinists could have been wrong, but a strong case can be made that their efforts were logically connected to Darwin’s theory.

If one believes that all human behaviors are equally the products of natural selection and that ultimately they all exist because they promote biological survival, it is hard to see an objective ground for condemning any particular behavior. The maternal instinct is natural, according to Darwinism, but so is infanticide. Monogamy is natural, but so are polygamy and adultery. If a certain man prefers five wives to one, who are we to judge? Obviously, natural selection has preserved the desire for multiple wives in that male, so polygamy must be “right” for him.

I am not quarreling here with the attempt by Darwinian conservatives to enlist biology to support traditional morality. I actually agree with them that showing a biological basis for certain moral desires could conceivably reinforce traditional morality—but only if we have reason to assume that those biological desires are somehow normative.

If one believes that natural desires have been implanted in human beings by intelligent design, or even that they represent irreducible and unchanging truths inherent in the universe, it is rational to accept those desires as grounding for a universal code of morality. But Darwinism explicitly denies that natural desires are either the result of intelligent design or an unchanging nature.

According to the Darwinian view, nature may—on occasion—sanction certain traditional virtues because, at the moment, they happen to promote biological survival. But even Darwin would acknowledge, if pressed, that given a different set of circumstances, a radically different conception of morality would be required.

At one point, he said as much: “If, for instance ... men were reared under precisely the same conditions as hive-bees, there can hardly be a doubt that our unmarried females would, like the worker-bees, think it a sacred duty to kill their brothers, and mothers would strive to kill their fertile daughters; and no one would think of interfering.”

Although this startling passage refers to the behavior of hive bees, it is making a point about *human* morality and how it is ultimately a function of the conditions of survival. Whenever those conditions change, Darwin seems to say, so, too, will the maxims of human morality. Hence, relativism is perfectly rational within the Darwinian universe.

Similarly, if one believes that human progress is dependent on a vigorous struggle for existence, then any diminish-

ment of natural selection in human society will raise legitimate concerns, and efforts to reinstate selection through eugenics may well appear rational. In addition, once one understands the evolving nature of “human nature,” it is difficult to see any “in principle” objection to efforts to transform human nature through bioengineering.

Natural selection is a messy, hit-or-miss process of dead ends and false starts. Why shouldn't human beings use their reason to direct their evolution in order to produce a new kind of human being? What is so sacrosanct about existing human dispositions and capacities, since they were produced by such an imperfect and purposeless process?

Conservatives who would rather sit out the evolution controversy need to understand that the current debate is not primarily about religious fundamentalism, nor is it simply an irrelevant rehashing of certain esoteric points of biology and philosophy. Darwinian reductionism has become culturally pervasive and inextricably intertwined with contemporary conflicts over traditional morality, personal responsibility, sex and family, and bioethics.

Darwinism is also central to an important debate about the role of scientific expertise in American society that dates back to the Progressive era. Darwin's defenders have been at the forefront of promoting technocracy—the claim that scientific experts ultimately have the right to rule free from the normal restraints of democratic accountability. Disparaging the wisdom of ordinary citizens and their elected representatives, dogmatic Darwinists essentially argue that public policy should be dictated by the majority of scientific experts without input from anyone else. Today, this bold assertion is made not just with regard to evolution, but concerning a host of other controversial issues such as sex education, euthanasia, embryonic stem-cell research, cloning, and global warming. Those on the left declare that any dissent from liberal orthodoxy on these issues represents a “war on science.”

The effort to demonize normal democratic dissent in the area of science and public policy has been fomented by Fenton communications, the far-left public relations firm for such groups as MoveOn.org, Planned Parenthood, the American Trial Lawyers Association, Greenpeace and the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL). With funding from the Tides Center, Fenton has set up a group bearing the Orwellian name of the “Campaign to Defend the Constitution” (“DefCon”). According to DefCon, good science just happens to equal the political agenda of the left, and anyone who says otherwise is a “theocrat” who opposes “scientific progress.”

Of course, there is much that can be said in favor of the authority of scientific expertise in modern life. In an increasingly complex and technologically-driven world, the need for

scientific input on public policy would seem obvious.

While this line of reasoning exhibits a surface persuasiveness, it ignores the natural limits of scientific expertise. As C.S. Lewis pointed out in the 1950s, “government involves questions about the good for man, and justice, and what things are worth having at what price, and on these a scientific training gives a man's opinion no added value.”

Technocracy poses a further difficulty: Experts can be wrong, sometimes egregiously. If the history of “Social Darwinism” in politics shows anything, it is that scientific experts can be as fallible as anyone else. What is true of individual scientists is often true of the scientific community as a whole. For example, eugenics was embraced for decades by America's leading evolutionary biologists and scientific organizations such as the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Critics of eugenics, meanwhile, were roundly stigmatized as anti-science and religious zealots. Yet the critics were the ones who turned out to be right, while the “consensus” was wrong.

As equal citizens before the law, scientists have every right to inform policymakers of the scientific implications of their actions. But they have no special right to demand that policymakers listen to them alone or to ignore dissidents in their own ranks.

Even conservatives who accept Darwinian theory, therefore, should think twice before embracing the dogmatic claims to authority made by Darwinists. Such claims have resulted in a concerted effort to shut down honest debate through caricatures and intimidation. While evolutionists continue to portray themselves as the victims of fundamentalist intolerance, in most places today it is the evolutionists who have turned inquisitors.

At George Mason University in Virginia, biology professor Caroline Crocker made the mistake of favorably discussing intelligent design in her cell biology class. She was suspended from teaching the class, and then her contract was not renewed.

At the Smithsonian Institution, evolutionary biologist Richard Sternberg, the editor of a respected biology journal, faced retaliation by Smithsonian executives in 2005 after accepting for publication a peer-reviewed article favoring intelligent design. Investigators for the U.S. Office of Special Counsel later concluded that “it is ... clear that a hostile work environment was created with the ultimate goal of forcing [Dr. Sternberg] ... out of the [Smithsonian].”

These efforts to purge the scientific community of any critics of Darwin are fueled by increasingly vehement rhetoric on the part of some evolutionists. In many states, it has become routine to apply the label of “Taliban” to anyone who supports teaching students about scientific criticisms of Dar-

winian theory.

Biology professor P. Z. Myers at the University of Minnesota, Morris, has demanded “the public firing and humiliation of some teachers” who express their doubts about Darwin. He further says, “It’s time for scientists to break out the steel-toed boots and brass knuckles, and get out there and hammer on the lunatics and idiots.”

Whatever one’s personal view of Darwinism, the current atmosphere of intolerance is unhealthy for science, and it’s unhealthy for a free society.

Conservatives who are discomfited by the continuing debate over Darwin’s theory need to understand that it is not

about to go away. It is not going away, because the accumulating discoveries of science undercut rather than confirm the claims of neo-Darwinism. It is not going away, because Darwinism fundamentally challenges the traditional Western understanding of human nature and the universe. Finally, it is not going away, because free people do not like to be told that there are some questions they are not allowed to ask and some answers they are not allowed to question.

If conservatives want to address root causes rather than just symptoms, they need to join the debate over Darwinism, not scorn it or ignore it.

—*Human Events*, November 13, 2006, p. 15-16

For Further Study

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The War Against Christianity

by Rabbi Daniel Lapin

I am certainly not a Churchill. I am not even a Revel. I am having enough trouble just trying to be a Lapin. But I am issuing a very serious warning about deep consequences, just as they did. It is a warning about the earliest stages of what could become a cataract of disasters if not resisted now.

During the 1930s, Winston Churchill desperately tried to persuade the English people and their government to see that Hitler meant to end their way of life. The British ignored Churchill, which gave Hitler nearly 10 years to build up his military forces. It wasn’t until Hitler actually drew blood that the British realized they had a war on their hands. It turned out to be a far longer and more destructive war than it needed to be had Churchill’s early warning been heeded.

In 1983, a brave French writer, Jean-Francois Revel, wrote a book called *How Democracies Perish*. In this remarkable volume, he described how communism’s aim is world conquest. For decades he had been trying to warn of communism’s very real threat. Yet in January 1982, a high State Department official said: “We Americans are not solving problems, we *are* the problem.” (Some things never change.) A good portion of the planet fell to communism, which brought misery and death to millions because we failed to recognize in time that others meant to harm us.

Heaven knows there was enough warning during the 1980s of the intention of part of the Islamic world to take yet another crack at world domination. Yet instead of seeing each

deadly assault on our interests around the world as a test of our resolve, we ignored it. We failed the test and lost 3,000 Americans in two unforgettable hours.

I am not going to argue that what is happening now is on the same scale as the examples I cite above, but a serious war is being waged against a group of Americans. I am certain that if we lose this war, the consequences for American civilization will be dire.

Phase one of this war I describe is a propaganda blitzkrieg that is eerily reminiscent of how effectively the Goebbels propaganda machine softened up the German people for what was to come.

There is no better term than propaganda blitzkrieg to describe what has been unleashed against Christian conservatives recently.

Consider the long list of anti-Christian books that have been published in recent months. Here are just a few samples of more than 30 similar titles, all from mainstream publishers:

American Fascists: The Christian Right and the War on America

The Baptizing of America: The Religious Right's Plans for the Rest of Us

The End of Faith: Religion, Terror, and the Future of Reason

Piety & Politics: The Right-wing Assault on Religious Freedom

Atheist Universe: The Thinking Person's Answer to Christian Fundamentalism

Thy Kingdom Come: How the Religious Right Distorts the Faith and Threatens America

Religion Gone Bad: The Hidden Dangers of the Christian Right

What is truly alarming is that there are more of these books for sale at your local large book store warning against the perils of fervent Christianity than those warning against the perils of fervent Islam. Does anyone seriously think America is more seriously jeopardized by Christian conservatives than by Islamic zealots? I fear that many Americans believe just that in the same way that many pre-World War II Westerners considered Churchill a bigger threat than Hitler.

Some may say that today's proliferation of anti-Christian

print propaganda is nothing to become worried about. To them I ask two questions:

First, would you be so sanguine if the target of this loathsome library were Jewish? Just try changing the titles in some of the books I mention above to reflect anti-Semitism instead of rampant anti-Christianism and you'll see what I mean.

Second, major movements that changed the way Americans felt and acted came about through books, often only one book. Think of Rachel Carson's 1962 error-filled *Silent Spring* that resulted in the pointless banning of the insecticide DDT and many unnecessary deaths. Other books that caused upheavals in our nation were Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, many of Ayn Rand's books and of course *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

No, I would advise you not to underestimate the power of books to alter the behavior of the American public, and I fear for an America influenced to detest Christianity by this hate-filled catalog.

It is not just books but popular entertainment also that beams the most lurid anti-Christian propaganda into the hearts and minds of viewers. One need only think of who the real targets of the recent hit movie "Borat" are. The brilliant Jewish moviemaker Sacha Baron Cohen, as his title character, using borderline dishonest wiles, lures some innocent but unsophisticated country folk, obviously Christians, to join him in his outrageously anti-Semitic antics. Cohen then triumphantly claims to have exposed anti-Semitism. In fact, he has revealed nothing other than the latent anti-Christianism of America's social, economic, and academic secular elites.

Even the recent PBS documentary, "Anti-Semitism in the 21st Century: The Resurgence," managed to do more attacking Christianity than defending Judaism.

Richard Dawkins, an Oxford University professor, is one of the generals in the anti-Christian army of the secular left. American academia treats him with reverence and hangs on his every word when he insists that "religious myths ought not to be tolerated."

For those with a slightly more tolerant outlook, he asks, "It's one thing to say people should be free to believe whatever they like, but should they be free to impose their beliefs on their children?" He suggests that the state should intervene to protect children from their parents' religious beliefs. Needless to say, he means Christian beliefs, of course. Muslim beliefs add to England's charmingly diverse cultural landscape.

The war is against those who regard the Bible to be God's

Founded in 1953, the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, under the leadership of Dr. Fred C. Schwarz, has been publishing a monthly newsletter since 1960. *The Schwarz Report* is edited by Dr. David A. Noebel and Dr. Michael Bauman. The Crusade's address is PO Box 129, Manitou Springs, CO 80829. Our telephone number is (719) 685-9043. All correspondence and tax-deductible gifts (the Crusade is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization) may be sent to this address. Permission to reproduce materials from this *Report* is granted provided our name and address are given.

revelation to humanity and the Ten Commandments to be His set of rules for all time. Phase one in this war is to make Christianity, well, sort of socially unacceptable. Something only foolish, poor, and ugly people could turn to.

We have seen how a carefully constructed campaign pretty much made it socially unacceptable to drink and drive. For years, there had been stringent laws against drunk driving. They achieved little. In the end, the practice was all but eliminated by groups allied with Mothers Against Drunk Driving and their effective ways of changing the way Americans thought about it.

We have seen how a carefully constructed campaign has pretty much made it socially unacceptable to smoke. In the face of a relentless campaign (dare one call it propaganda?), Americans became docile and forfeited the right to make their own decisions. Nobody was willing to stand up to the no-smoking tyrants. Nobody even asked whether health was sufficient grounds for freedom to be reduced. Now, entire cities and even states have banned smoking, not only in public places but even in privately owned restaurants.

Tyranny comes when citizens are seduced into trading freedom for the promise of safety and security.

Considerably more intellectual energy is being pumped into the propaganda campaign against Christianity than was ever delivered to the anti-smoking or anti-drunk-driving campaigns. Fervent zealots of secularism are flinging themselves into this anti-Christian war with enormous fanaticism.

If they succeed, Christianity will be driven underground, and its benign influence on the character of America will be lost. In its place we shall see a sinister secularism that menaces Bible believers of all faiths. Once the voice of the Bible has been silenced, the war on Western Civilization can begin and we shall see a long night of barbarism descend on the West.

Without a vibrant and vital Christianity, America is doomed, and without America, the West is doomed.

Which is why I, an Orthodox Jewish rabbi, devoted to Jewish survival, the Torah and Israel am so terrified of American Christianity caving in.

Many of us Jews are ready to stand with you. But you must lead. You must replace your timidity with nerve and your diffidence with daring and determination. You are under attack. Now is the time to resist it.

—*Worldnetdaily.com*, January 13, 2007

Academic Elites

by Walter E. Williams

Grove City College publishes an excellent newsletter titled “Visions and Values.” Its July 2006 edition features an interview with Dr. Richard Pipes, acclaimed Russian historian and Harvard University professor of Sovietology. The interview was conducted by Grove City College professor of political science Dr. Paul Kengor.

Dr. Pipes, who served on the National Security Council during the Reagan administration, explained that there are actually only a few communists among academics. At first glance, that’s a puzzling observation, given the leftist bias at most college campuses. Drs. Pipes and Kengor explain the puzzle in a way that makes perfect sense.

While academic leftists, and I’d include their media allies, are not communists, they are anti-anti-communists. In other words, they have contempt for right-wingers, conservatives or libertarians who are anti-communists. Why? Academic leftists, and their media allies, are in agreement with many of the stated goals of communism, such as equal distribution of wealth, income equality, and other goals spelled out in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels’ *Manifesto of the Communist Party*. Leftist elites love the ideas of communism so much that they are either blind to, or tolerant of, its many shortcomings.

In practice, communism is nothing less than sheer barbarism that makes even the horrors of Nazism pale in comparison. Professor Rudolph J. Rummel, of the University of Hawaii, outlines that barbarism in his book *Death by Government*, a comprehensive detailing of the roughly 170 million people murdered by their own governments during the 20th century. From 1917 to its collapse in 1991, the Soviet Union murdered about 62 million of its own people. During Mao Zedong’s reign, 35,236,000, possibly more, Chinese citizens were murdered. By comparison, Hitler’s Nazis managed to murder 21 million of its citizens and citizens in nations they conquered. Adding these numbers to the 60 million lives lost in war makes the 20th century mankind’s most brutal era.

At home and abroad, leftists have done a thorough and commendable job documenting and condemning the horrors and crimes of Hitler and his fascist Nazi regime, but when have you heard them direct similar condemnation of Joseph Stalin, his successors, and Mao Zedong? By and large, they’ve chosen to overlook the horrors of communism.

The reason for their reluctance to condemn the barbarism of communism is simple. Dr. Pipes says, “Intellectuals, by the very nature of their professions, grant enormous attention to words and ideas. And they are attracted by socialist ideas.

They find that the ideas of communism are praiseworthy and attractive; that, to them, is more important than the practice of communism. Now Nazi ideals, on the other hand, were pure barbarism; nothing could be said in favor of them.”

Often, when people evaluate capitalism, they evaluate a system that exists on Earth. When they evaluate communism, they are talking about a non-existent Utopia. What exists on Earth, with all of its problems and shortcomings, is always going to fail miserably when compared to a Utopia. The very attempt to achieve the utopian goals of communism requires the ruthless suppression of the individual and an attack on any institution that might compromise the loyalty of the individual

to the state. That’s why one of the first orders of business for communism, and those who support its ideas, is the attack on religion and the family.

Rank nations according to whether they are closer to the capitalism end or the communism end of the economic spectrum. Then rank nations according to human rights protections. Finally, rank nations according to per capita income. Without question, citizens of those nations closer to capitalism enjoy a higher standard of living and a far greater measure of liberty than those in nations closer to communism.

—*Anchorage Daily News*, August 21, 2006, p. B7

Publishing the Crimes of the USSR

by Stephen Singer

Documenting the crimes of the Soviet Union has been a project that Jonathan Brent has been preparing for all his life.

Since 1995, Mr. Brent, associate director and editorial director of the Yale University Press, has led the production of 20 books documenting mass murder, espionage, imprisonment of dissidents, and other Cold War atrocities by the Kremlin.

Anti-communists trying to rally the West against Moscow long accused the Soviets of such outrages. But with the Soviet Union largely closed to outsiders, foreign-policy conservatives and military hawks had to rely on testimony from dissidents and defectors.

Mr. Brent’s 20-book project, *The Annals of Communism*, provides new and vivid details from documents that have been mined by hundreds of his researchers over the years, combing Soviet archives since the collapse of the U.S.S.R. in 1991.

It documents Soviet espionage in the United States, Russian efforts to manipulate the Spanish Civil War, and a history of the gulag slave-labor camps.

The research shows “the dissolution of what anybody would think of as civilization,” Mr. Brent said. “This is why I’m studying it, and why I think it’s so important.”

Among the piles of books and papers in Mr. Brent’s New Haven office is an enlarged copy of a memo to Soviet leader Josef Stalin recommending the execution of 16,000 Polish military officers in 1940. The mass killings were carried out by gunshots to the back of the head, Mr. Brent said.

“The guns got so hot, young officers brought fresh guns,” he added.

Another book in the series details self-portraits by Bolsheviks in the 1920s that began as cartoonish caricatures of each other and evolved into grotesquely vicious and pornographic images that foreshadow the show trials of the 1930s, Communist Party purges, and executions of Stalin’s rivals.

“If you want to talk about the banality of evil, this is it,” said Mr. Brent, who is also a professor of history and literature at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. “[Vladimir] Lenin and Stalin gave [Adolf] Hitler the blueprint.”

World War II, which ended shortly before Mr. Brent was born, had a profound impact on him. Mr. Brent, 56, recalls as a youth seeing images of totalitarianism such as the liberation of the Auschwitz death camp and Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev histrionically challenging the United Nations by banging his shoe on a table.

“The war was like a smell in the backroom of my house,” Mr. Brent said. “It affected every part of my life.”

Mr. Brent, the son of a bookseller, quickly learned to appreciate books and spent a year reading Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina* when he was in eighth grade. He took an early interest in Russia from his grandfather, who was born there and is fluent in the language.

In the mid-1980s, Mr. Brent and his wife, Frances Padorr Brent, published *Formations*, a journal that showcased Eastern European writers, many of whom were dissidents.

At a forum in Prague at about the same time, Mr. Brent said he and Hungarian-born financier George Soros listened to a Hungarian scholar discuss his research in the Eastern European nation’s archives.

“I turned to Soros and said, ‘This is the publishing enter-

prise of the century,” Mr. Brent recalled. In January 1992, he traveled to Moscow for his first foray into Soviet archives.

Mark von Hagen, who teaches Russian, Ukrainian, and Eurasian history at Columbia University and is on an advisory committee of the *Annals of Communism*, said the book series will provide primary-source material critical to historians and students for years to come.

The Soviets’ extraordinary detail of their crimes did not surprise Mr. von Hagen. “A lot of them really believed in what they were doing,” he said.

Mr. Brent’s venture is not the only enterprise rooting through Soviet archives. Private companies are microfilming documents, and the Hoover Institution at Stanford University has microfilmed portions of the Soviet Communist Party archives and documents related to the Soviet gulags, said Carol Leadnam, assistant archivist for reference at the Hoover Institution.

Richard Pipes, a Harvard University historian of Russia and communism, and an adviser to President Reagan, said the public wrongly thinks the archives contain secrets “that subvert the accepted views of events.”

Mr. Pipes, who contributed to the *Annals of Commu-*

nism with a book on Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin, said in an e-mail that on the contrary, the Soviet archives “add details and confirm generally accepted views.”

For example, he said his discovery of documents showing Lenin’s “utter disregard for his fellow men. . . did so explicitly. . . .”

“This evidence reinforces our judgments and gives them a credibility that is otherwise wanting,” he said.

The *Annals of Communism* project is privately funded. Conservative author William F. Buckley Jr. helped with initial fundraising that has netted \$1.3 million since 1992.

Some of the books sell well and are used as texts in university classrooms. *The Secret World of American Communism*, a look at the Soviet Union’s reach into the United States, has sold the most, with 16,000 in hardcover and 3,000 in paperback, Mr. Brent said. Others sell only a few hundred copies, primarily to libraries.”

The Annals of Communism project has not been completed. Next is digitizing and publishing Stalin’s personal archives, Mr. Brent said.

“I can guarantee it will be absolutely sensational,” he said.

—*The Washington Times*, January 22, 20007, p. A 14

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