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THE EPOCH TIMES ARTS& CULTURE



The two-faced statue of Janus in Reggio Emilia, Italy.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

Reviewing 2021 in the Month of Janus, Part 1 Abandoning Purpose in Life for Our Feelings

JAMES SALE

e have just left the month of January. January was named after the Roman god Janus, who had two heads: one looking forward, which meant that he was the god of new beginnings, and one looking backward, which meant he was a god of wisdom. Because, of course, we need to learn from what has gone before, and failure to do so means we end up in a futile cycle of defeat and despair. If, therefore, I were to invite you to identify what If Janus-like we look back at 2021 in order to increase our stock of wisdom, we can consider more pointedly how to go forward. one thing would you consider the most significant, important, or noticeab¹e of the year 2021, what would you say?

I guess most of us want to talk about the big stuff: certainly, COVID is alive and well, and all its ramifications. Are vaccine passports the big issue? Or maybe you think the first year of Joe Biden's presidency is worth much more commentary? Or even, is it international issues such as what China or Russia are doing and the tensions that are building up? Or climate change—does that need addressing? These are all big and important things, but for me, I sometimes think we need a more Sherlock Holmesian approach to reviewing the data.

You will recall that Holmes frequently spurned the big clues that Dr. Watson and others always thought solved the case; for Holmes, it was often the small details that were most revealing. And so, if Janus-like we look back at 2021 in order to increase our stock of wisdom, so that we can consider more pointedly how to go forward, then I would like to identify one small detail that I have noticed with increasing frequency.

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What Our Readers Say (#31, part 1)



I subscribed to The Epoch Times from an ad I had seen on YouTube. In the ad I saw the slogan "Truth and Tradition." That really caught my eye as those two elements are often missing from the mainstream news media.

Truth - A journalist's opinion is often considered the truth nowadays and that should never be the case. There are those journalists who believe that they do not need to mention the source from where they get their information. While reading The Epoch Times I notice that their journalists extensively list references throughout their articles. This is helpful as I can go to their direct source to verify the information and receive even more insight on the article.

Tradition - I am proud to be an American and, on a daily basis, I am grateful for the opportunities this country provides to me. I am very traditional. I am NOT progressive. Our founding fathers fought for independence through the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The American Revolution established that every American then, now and in the future have

three unalienable rights: the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Progressives believe that they need to radically change our Constitution. I don't. The words written in our Constitution are just as strong today as they were when originally written. I enjoy reading The Epoch Times because this paper understands American tradition and the value of every American. I especially enjoy reading the Life & Tradition section as it provides great biographical and many other informative articles that are helpful to me.

I am very pleased with The Epoch Times' no holds barred coverage on the CCP. I am now better informed on the CCP's communist influence here in America and around the world. I enjoy reading all the very well done infographics. Some of my favorites include: The CCP's Virus Propaganda War, The CCP's Influence Over International Groups and China's Secret War Against America. **The Epoch Times has** made me a much better informed American. I am very pleased with my subscription.

JAMIE MANUELS





Feeling the evil in our culture, feminist Naomi Wolf believes it's time to talk about "spiritual combat" again. "Michael and Satan," circa 1630–1635, by Guido Reni. Our Lady of the Conception of the Capuchins, in Rome.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

Antidotes to Ideology: Art and Faith

JEFF MINICK

"More than half a century ago, while I was still a child, I recall hearing a number of older people offer the following explanation for the great disasters that had befallen Russia: 'Men have forgotten God; that's why all this has happened," said Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in 1983 presence of 'principalities and powers'when he accepted the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion.

since Solzhenitsyn's childhood, and here in America many have not only forgotten God but also, over the years, some have worked to abolish altogether any hint of Divine Providence from speech and laughter; at killing school; the public square.

of the United States—"In God We Trust" along with the word "Liberty"—but most of our officials and politicians leave their bully pulpit, demands for people to colreligious beliefs at home. In our society, lude in excluding, rejecting, dismissing, faith all too often resembles the water of shunning, hating their neighbors and the pond near my house this January; loved ones and friends." passersby know the water exists, but it is

concealed by a thick sheet of ice. Yet cracks can and do appear in that ice.

A Stunning Cry From the Heart

In a recent essay "Is It Time for Intellectuals to Talk About God?" feminist author and cultural commentator Naomi Wolf discusses COVID-19 and the efforts by government and big tech to suppress any

particularly outraged by the readiness of her fellow liberals to squash opinions and data opposing that narrative. And then her argument takes a shocking turn:

"I felt around us, in the majestic nature of the awfulness of the evil around us, the almost awe-inspiring levels of darkness and of inhuman, anti-human forces. In Nearly a century has now passed the policies unfolding around us I saw again and again anti-human outcomes being generated: policies aimed at killing children's joy; at literally suffocating children, restricting their breath, at killing ties between families and ex-Our coins still bear the official motto tended families; at killing churches and synagogues and mosques; and, from the highest levels, from the President's own

> Wolf then addresses the restrictions imposed by our politically correct culture on discussions of God:

"It was not always the case that Western intellectuals were supposed to keep quiet in public about spiritual wrestling, fears and questions. Indeed in the West, poets and musicians, dramatists and essayists and philosophers, talked about information that contradicts the prevail- God, and even about evil, for millennia, ing narrative of the pandemic. Wolf is as being at the core of their understand-



Russia.

ing of the world and as forming the basis this great and noble undertaking." of their art forms and of their intellectual missions."

evil growing in our culture, Wolf offers this conclusion:

"It is time to start talking about spiritual combat again, I personally believe. Because I believe that is what we are in, and the forces of darkness are so big that we need help. Our goal? Perhaps just to keep the light somehow alive—a light of true classical humane values, of reason, of democracy, inclusion, kindness—in this dark time.

"What is the object of this spiritual battle? "It seems to be for nothing short of the

human soul."

Forgotten Premises

Many people today, particularly our leaders, have forgotten that America was founded on Judeo-Christian principles. The men and women who helped give birth to the United States of America varied in their religious beliefs and their fervor, but even deists like Thomas Jefferson understood that without morality and a force.... Ideology involves a fundamental belief in Divine Providence the republic alienation from being." could not survive.

influences of writers ranging from Ci-plain many of the wars and the murdercero to John Locke gave Americans their ous policies of certain governments over laws and means of governance, which the last hundred years. Nazi Germany, applied to all citizens whatever their Soviet Russia, Communist China: What religious faith. Some of the Founders are these and dozens of smaller powers were explicit in recognizing the gifts of if not regimes imposing abstractions Christianity to the new nation. As Patrick by force? Henry wrote: "It cannot be emphasized too strongly or too often that this great nation was founded, not by religionists, but by Christians; not on religions, but on the gospel of Jesus Christ. For this very reason peoples of other faiths have been afforded asylum, prosperity, and freedom of worship here."

tury, faith played a role in our politics and culture. Americans as different as Abraham Lincoln and Harriet Tubman invoked the Almighty without shame or only in disaster for the bulk of humanity. apology. Prayer was common in schools. In his address to the troops setting out **Renewal** to invade France on D-Day, General Dwight Eisenhower stated, "Let us be- those who are so keen to direct our seech the blessing of Almighty God upon thoughts and control our speech, who

How far we have traveled from those ready recognitions of a deity is apparent to anyone who even casually examines Having surveyed what she considers the our culture today. "The past is a foreign country," L.P. Hartley wrote in his 1953 novel, "The Go-Between." "They do things differently there." So it seems.

Our Manmade Mess

When we put aside the divine, when we instead worship Mammon and celebrity, we diminish our culture and ourselves. We elevate the body above the soul, the material above the metaphysical. In doing so, we give up a piece of our humanity and may even become prey to dangerous enemies, the grim fanatics of extreme ideologies.

In his book "Beauty Will Save the World: Recovering the Human in an Ideological Age," Gregory Wolfe sums up the damages done by ideology to the human soul:

"The political expression of modernity, of course, is the ideological regime, founded on a rigid system of abstractions which are imposed on society by

Biblical principles coupled with the If we study those words, we find they ex-

And now we in the United States find ourselves increasingly sucked down into the quicksands of ideology. Certain politicians and cultural gurus have introduced measures that we might once have regarded as the marks of tyranny: imposing mandates and masks, demanding changes in language that in turn will And until the middle of the 20th cen- alter reality, and ostracizing and denigrating those who oppose them. "In God we trust" is becoming "In Big Brother we trust," and that transformation can end

So what can we do? How can we resist

Until the middle of the **20th century**, faith played a role in our politics and culture.



PUBLIC DOMAII

the Almighty without shame or apology. An 1895 portrait in the National Portrait Gallery.



"In God We Trust" first appeared on the obverse side of the two-cent piece in 1864.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

seem to view human beings as parts in a machine rather than as individual souls, who believe they possess the solutions to all our problems, and that we need only obey them to build our own brave new world?

Gregory Wolfe answers these questions by arguing for a renewal of Christian humanism, "to draw nourishment from the deepest sources of culture: art and religious faith." He cites artists from all genres, both past and present-musicians, painters, writers— whose work enriches our souls and so enables us to become more fully human.

"After centuries of secularization," he writes, "the West has exhausted the moral and spiritual capital of the Judeo-Christian tradition," and yet he refuses to give way to despair. Instead, he believes that we can best replenish that worn-out store of Western culture by returning to the traditional union of faith and art.

In her essay, Naomi Wolf makes similar connections. She, too, looks to the past to provide a compass into the future: "I do think we need to call, as Milton did, as Shakespeare did, as Emily Dickinson did, on help from elsewhere; on what could be called angels and archangels, if you will; on higher powers, whatever they may be; on better principalities, on whatever intercessors may hear us, on Divine Providence—whatever you want to call whomever it is you can hope for and imagine."

By infusing ourselves with the restorative powers of culture, the arts, and tradition, we can guard against the virus of raging and deranged ideologies infecting our time. Not only will we then resist the evils bred by those who are the enemies of all that is sacred, beautiful, good, and true, but we will also preserve the human dignity and the liberty that is our birthright.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. He is the author of two novels, "Amanda Bell" and "Dust on Their Wings," and two works of non-fiction, "Learning as I Go" and "Movies Make the Man." Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

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fresco at the Vatican's Camera dei Papiri. Father Time with his long grey beard and scythe sits in the foreground, behind whom History is busy keeping records. She looks up to the fresh new face of Janus, as the old one looks away to the right.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

Reviewing 2021 in the Month of Janus, Part 1 Abandoning Purpose in Life for Our Feelings

Continued from Page 1

A Recent Trend

And it is this: As a business person, I am a regular user of LinkedIn. I have been a user for well over 10 years, indeed close to when it was first launched. For those who don't know, LinkedIn is a kind of platform, like Facebook; only unlike Facebook, which is for personal connections, family, friends, relationships, it is for business networking. The whole rationale of LinkedIn (and there are some 770-plus million people on it) is

to promote business: recruitment, selling, networking, and so on. One posts business stuff on it, not personal stuff (except in relatively rare cases). That's the point of it. But in 2021, we had a glut of posts—an avalanche of posts—that were firstly all connecting to the "positivity" trend of advocating wellness, resilience, and kind-

ness as a sort of universal panacea. Secondly, as these unoriginal memes proliferate, there has grown up with them a darker side. Namely, LinkedIn now abounds with posts about people's

personal mental problems, depressions, impostor syndromes, suicides (of their loved ones or friends), and such other and like stuff that is clearly NOT business related—except, of course, as by being now accepted as normal on LinkedIn.

All this emotional, personal stuff is becoming itself a business! This is surprising and quite different from what we once considered business to be: a transaction between two parties in which honesty, courtesy, respect, decency, and goodwill were manifested for mutual benefit. Busi-

ness was not at any point thought to be a replacement for the deeper human contact that came from family and friends and one's wider social circle. It is perhaps indicative that such deeper relationships are now at the point of collapse, which is why business people are now seeking such depths in LinkedIn posts.

There is, too, in all this emotional welter a sense that many of these people are seeking-craving even-some sort of validation for their experiences. The validation occurs in two ways. First, they get their THE EPOCH TIMES Week 6, 2022

"Four Seasons: Winter:

(Paris, France). Wool, silk,

inches. Gift of Francis Ginn,

Marian Ginn Jones, Barbara

Alexander Ginn in memory

of Frank Hadley Ginn and

Ginn Griesinger, and



Philo of Alexandria from André Theyet's 1584 book, "The True Portraits and Lives of Illustrious Greek, Latin and Pagan





Cornelia Root Ginn, The Cleveland Museum of Art "Four Seasons: Spring: Fishing Scene," late 1600s–early 1700s, Gobelins Manufactory (Paris, France). Wool, silk, and gold filé: apestry weave; 101 1/2 inches by 1041/2inches. Gift of Francis

Ginn, Marian Ginn Jones, Barbara Ginn Griesinger, and Alexander Ginn in memory of Frank Hadley Ginn and Cornelia Root Ginn. The Cleveland Museum of Art.

"Four Seasons: Summer: Harvest Scene," late 1600s–early 1700s, Gobelins Manufactory (Paris, France). Wool, silk, and gold filé: tapestry weave; 99 1/2 inches by 100 1/2inches. Gift of Francis Ginn, Marian Ginn Jones, Barbara Ginn Griesinger and Alexander Ginn in memory of Frank Hadley Ginn and Cornelia Root Ginn. The Cleveland Museum of Art.



'Four Seasons: Autumn: Vintage Scene," late 1600s-early 1700s, **Gobelins Manufactory** (Paris, France). Wool, silk, and gold filé: tapestry weave; 103 inches by 1431/2 inches. Gift of Francis Ginn, Marian inn Jones. Barbara Gi Griesinger, and Alexander Ginn in memory of Frank Hadley Ginn and Cornelia Root Ginn. The Cleveland

Museum of Art.

FINE ARTS

Rarely Shown: Four Seasons Tapestries by Gobelins Manufactory, Paris

LORRAINE FERRIER

Time and tide wait for no man. As sure as day turns to night, the everchanging seasons constantly take us through life.

Visitors to the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) need wait no more to see its rare set of late 17th- to early 18th-century tapestries back on display—for the first time since 1953 in the exhibition "Cycles of Life: The

Four Seasons Tapestries." The chance to see the tapestry set is an extraordinary one for many reasons. Weavers at the esteemed Gobelins Manufactory in Paris made the tapestries. (The manufactory, made famous in Louis XIV's reign, is still in production today.) And the tapestry set will be on display starting Feb. 13 for the first time since its extensive restoration.

Why the Four Seasons?

For centuries, artists have celebrated the supreme harmony of nature by depicting the four seasons in frescoes, paintings, sculptures, and tapestries, on furniture, and even on snuff boxes.

The ancients used the zodiac signs, and then gods and goddesses, to personify the attributes of spring,

summer, fall, and winter. But me dieval artists depicted everyday seasonal scenes, such as summer fields full of farmers bringing in their hard-won harvest.

The CMA's set of four season tapestries is full of such everyday activities: men, women, and children fishing and gardening in spring, harvesting in summer, winemaking in autumn, and ice skating in winter. Exhibition visitors can learn about

the history of the tapestries, how they were designed and created, and how the museum acquired them. Visitors will also be able to understand the unique challenges that the CMA's textile conservator and tapestry conservation specialists at the Belgium royal tapestry manufacturer De Wit faced when preserving the delicate textiles.

Not only will visitors be able to marvel at the workmanship involved in making the tapestries, and in restoring them for future generations, but they'll also see how nature waits for no man.

The "Cycles of Life: The Four Seasons Tapestries" exhibition opens on Feb. 13, 2022, and runs until Feb. 19, 2023. To find out more, visit ClevelandArt.org

followers to comment with statements like, "how brave," "authentic," "real"; and then, the longer-term objective seems to be the normalization of the pathological condition. I say "pathological" not as a judgment call but as a reminder that being depressed or suicidal is not normal or desirable. The healthy human being seeks to avoid these conditions. What we want is joy and life.

Put another way, rather than getting confirmation that having mental health problems is normal because so many other people have them and can relate to them, it might be better to think about this question: What can I do to redress mental problems? True, support from other people can be vital in these situations, but the trouble with the way this escalates on LinkedIn (and elsewhere) is that we form ghettos celebrating our problems rather than finding a way through or past them.

We are forming ghettos celebrating our problems rather than finding a way through or past them.

And this leads to another pattern I have noticed with many of these posts. Frequently, as they wrestle with expressing their mental states and suicidal thoughts, they somewhere along the line reveal that they cannot see the purpose of life, or see a point in anything. Then, leaving the issue unresolved, they conclude with the best they can do: a final meme, and the most popular here must surely be "So everyone, be kind." They leave us with rationality's (and the Enlightenment's) final aspirational ethic on the topic of meaning. Sadly, however, an ethic in itself does not produce meaning, for how does "being kind" contribute to one's seeing the purpose of life?

Directionless

Perhaps the original formulation of the meme "being kind" was from Philo of Alexandria (circa 20 B.C.-A.D. 50) who is reported to have said: "Be kind. Everyone you meet is carrying a big problem." Being kind is, of course, a good thing and accords with all the major religious traditions, but eviscerated from these other religious contexts, what does it amount to? Really, "be kind" is just a throwaway and virtue-signaling semaphore that, at bottom, says "I'm a good person,

really, aren't I? Validate me." This, then, is the small detail I have noticed. Like COVID, this need for validation has become an epidemic even on LinkedIn, so goodness knows what it is like on other social media sites, which I do not follow so closely. But the important thing is that it is telling us something critically important about people and society: People are increasingly feeling, and in larger and larger numbers, wholly lost. They don't know who they are, where they are going, and why. They are in an emotional turmoil and stew, and it seems to me that

the rational faculty is largely turning itself off as people abandon themselves to how they feel.

Of course, how we feel changes; it is unstable. So as a barometer of who we are, it is extremely unreliable—like the weather in England

There is, of course, no easy solution to this. But if I were to start outlining a beginning (for Janus), I would start with an important model that I outline in my book "Mapping Motivation for Coaching" (cowritten with Bevis Moynan) and which is featured in Stephen Covey's famous book "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People." Basically, the one and whole human being is made up of four essential strands or levels: body (physical-doing), emotions (emotional-feeling), mind (mental-thinking) and spirit (spiritual-knowing/being, which also might be described by some as "existential"). These levels are not discrete; they impact each other.

A primary mistake the Western world has made is that it has predicated the physical level as being the most important. We see this every day when joggers run past us, cyclists pedal with all their flash kit on, gym membership escalates, when challenges for marathons bring in tens of thousands, health watches proliferate, and so on. And then we have the nutritional crazes to lose weight, get healthy, live forever, and government or local author ity initiatives seek to reduce fat or sugar content in school meals, and so on. Never has there been such a focus on achieving physical health while at the same time experiencing rocketing obesity, and drugand drink-related health problems.

But what if instead of trying to fix our problems at the physical level—diet and exercise—we attempted to review our life at the spiritual (or existential) level? What would that look like? I think there are three primary questions that we would need to ask ourselves if we were to have any chance of really grappling with some of the issues. In part 2 of this article, I will outline what I think these three questions are. Perhaps, Janus-like, you might want to look ahead and figure out what they might be.

James Sale has had over 50 books published, most recently, "Mapping Motivation for Top Performing Teams" (Routledge, 2021). He has been nominated for the 2022 poetry Pushcart Prize, won first prize in The Society of Classical Poets 2017 annual competition, performing in New York in 2019. His most recent poetry collection is "HellWard." For more information about the author, and about his Dante project, visit

EnglishCantos.home.blog

We are a nation obsessed with our physicality.



MOVIESTILLSDI

A Family Double Feature: 'Every Girl Should Be Married' and 'Room for One More'

TIFFANY BRANNAN

n the 21st century, girls are advised to study STEM courses, go to college, acquire advanced degrees, and pursue high-power careers. Being "just" L a housewife and mother is painted as settling for less than reaching her full potential. However, in overlooking the previously revered jobs of wife and mother, women are cheating themselves out of the greatest joys of womanhood.

Many old movies remind us that no career is a replacement for being a wife and mother. Two great proponents of this theme are "Every Girl Should Be Married" from 1948 and "Room for One More" from 1952. Both these films star Cary Grant and his wife, Betsy Drake. They made the first film before they tied the knot and the second while they were married.

Although their real-life marriage didn't last until death, this unlikely yet charming couple helped bring these heartwarming stories about matrimony and parenthood to life. Pair these two movies as a double feature for a three-hour family movie night!

'Every Girl Should Be Married'

In "Every Girl Should Be Married," Drake is Anabel Sims, a saleswoman in a New York department store with one goal: to get married. She dreams about making a nice home, caring for her husband, and having adorable babies.

"Every Girl Should Be Married" is perfectly described by its title. This is Anabel's mantra for life. She could have married a young man back home called "Old Joe," but she decided to go to the big city instead—with no ambitions for a career.

She is very ambitious in terms of matrimonial prospects, since she believes that a girl can end up married to "just anybody" if she doesn't strategize. That is, she believes in planning her life, deciding what she wants, and going after it.

Her slightly cynical roommate, Julie (Diana Lynn), thinks her friend's scheming will get them both into trouble, but Anabel is immovable in her resolve, comparing herself to General Eisenhower. The war that she proceeds to wage while pursuing her dream man's hand in marriage is one worthy of Eisenhower, but her comedic maneuvers are innocently motivated by love.

When by chance Anabel meets pediatrician Madison Brown (Grant) in a drugstore, she instantly falls in love with him and decides that he's the man she wants to marry. At first, he thinks she is obnoxious and perhaps even a bit crazy, but that doesn't stop her. She concocts elaborate schemes to "trap" him, which she carries out with hilarious results. Even though he insists that he isn't interested in getting married, the bachelor doctor soon finds himself being charmed by Anabel's open, uncomplicated sincerity and infectious likability.

Anabel researches Madison Brown's habits, likes, dislikes, schedule, and background to form a complete file on his life. She uses this information to "coincidentally" meet him at his favorite spots, pretend to share all his tastes, and fabricate a romance with one of his old schoolmates, Roger Sanford (Franchot Tone). In choosing the ideal prospect, Anabel doesn't consider wealth, since she is dismayed when millionaire Sanford actually develops interest in her. She wants Brown because she loves him, and she won't settle for anyone else, no matter how wealthy he is.

From the above description, Anabel may sound like a conniving young woman. But despite her schemes, she never seems conniving or manipulative. If anything, she's admirably clever. How many women would go to so much trouble to learn everything about a prospective beau? Many films show women using their feminine wiles to trap men, in marriage or otherwise, to obtain the money or position they can offer. The character known as the "vamp" or "golddigger" goes back to the earliest days of silent films. Anabel is neither of these, since she is motivated by genuine love, admiration, and concern for Dr. Brown's well-being. She also believes that every man should be married, having a loving wife to cook and care He feels increasingly neglected, as more and for him. All she has to do is convince him of it. She might use unconventional means er than a wife. However, that doesn't stop to do so, but we can't help but love her for it.

'Room for One More'

Drake as a married couple, George and touching scenes in the film is when George Anna Rose, with three children (two boys answers Jimmy John's questions about the and a girl). This time, he is a city engineer, facts of life in a very frank, wise, and appro-



A publicity still from "Every Girl Should Be Married," featuring Cary Grant and Betsy Drake.



A lobby card for "Room for One More," starring (L-R) Clifford Tatum Jr., Betsy Drake, and Cary Grant.

and she is a housewife with an open heart for every stray pet that comes to her door. When her women's club visits a local orphanage, Anna is moved to foster a child.

The orphanage director (Lurene Tuttle) persuades her to take in troubled adolescent Jane Miller (Iris Mann) for a few weeks. At first, George doubts they can provide for the extra child, but Anna soon convinces her husband and children that all the orphan needs is love. After the trial has ended, everyone agrees that there is room for the reformed girl in the Rose family.

Four children, however, are not enough for Anna when she learns of a crippled orphan, Jimmy John Wilson (Clifford Tatum Jr.), who has spent most of his life in hospitals. The Rose family takes him on their beach vacation, but he proves to be a disruptive troublemaker. It will take all of the parents' ingenuity and love to heal Jimmy John's sickly body and bitter heart.

"Room for One More" is a frank look at the foster care system, which disproves the misconception that classic films always substituted romanticism for reality. Instead of an idyllic view of orphans who are immediately contented in the new homes, this movie shows the struggles that foster parents, their biological children, and the new arrivals face in trying to become a family. The foster children are realistically damaged by their early life experiences. It takes Anna a lot of time, patience, and love to soften their

hardened hearts and make them trust her. George is less enthusiastic about the idea. more of Anna's time is spent being a moth-George from taking a strong paternal interest in both the troubled children who enter their home. It's he who makes them both "Room for One More" depicts Grant and feel welcome in the family. One of the most

Many old movies remind us that no career is a replacement for being a wife and mother.



Cary Grant and Betsy Drake photographed in 1959 by Modern Screen were married in real life.

priate way. Even amid his concerns for the family's finances and his ability to provide for and love all the children, George Rose tries to be a considerate, caring father.

A Charming Pair

Both films feature poignant lecture scenes. In "Every Girl Should Be Married," Dr. Brown lectures to a group of mothers on the parents' responsibility to the child. He receives a very favorable reception from the hall of mothers after he's finished his lecture, until he asks for questions. Anabel stands up to ask a question, pretending like she doesn't know him, but she really just wants to give her own lecture. Starting out to teach Brown about his own reluctance to give up bachelorhood, she ends up making him angry with the whole roomful of women. As he storms out, she

fears that she has gone too far. However, the dozens of cancellations he receives from female patients the next day drive him to make a date with her, so maybe she didn't do so badly after all. Deep down, Dr. Brown realizes that Anna is right in affirming that women may have to "trap" their husbands into proposing.

In "Room for One More," George similarly decides to use Q and A after a speech

Anna gives to the local PTA on the topic "Raising Foster Children Can Be Fun." When he asks whether Anna's husband (himself) isn't neglected while she accepts the "interesting challenge" of raising troubled foster children, she tenderly responds with a declaration of her husband's dedication to fatherhood. George can't resist the temptation to publicly remind his wife of how long his "temporary" neglect is lasting. However, she turns it into a wonderful moment and praises him as she describes his patience, discipline, support, and love for all their children. He is reminded of how much she cares, as she concludes: "He has the undying love and affection of every member of his family, including his wife. And you ask if he's neglected."

Times change, but the things that bring us happiness don't. It's wonderful when we can be reminded of the importance of family values by fun comedies like these. The next generation of girls needs to see movies like these to help them realize that no career in the world will replace the joys of planning for traditional marriage and motherhood.

Tiffany Brannan is a 20-year-old opera singer, Hollywood history/vintage beauty copywriter, film reviewer, fashion historian, travel writer, and ballet writer. In 2016, she and her sister founded the Pure Entertainment Preservation Society, an organization dedicated to reforming the arts by reinstating the Motion Picture Production Code.



Artwork for the 1952 film "Room for One More."



A movie poster for "Ghostbusters: Afterlife."



This One's for the Kids, and the Kids Are Alright

MARK JACKSON

"Ghostbusters: Next Generation" would have been a better title, since "Ghostbusters: Afterlife" features the grandkids of the original Ghostbusters inheriting the legacy. The kids master the decrepit but still functional ghost-gear and save the world that is, yet again, beset by demons and ghosts. Call it a love letter to the original movie, directed by the kid of the original director (Jason Reitman, son of Ivan). Ivan Reitman directed and produced the two 1980s "Ghostbusters" movies.

Nostalgia

Completely ignoring the 2016 all-female "Ghostbusters" reboot, the latest installment hammers on the nostalgia key corny jokes while in deadpan science and, having much in common with "The Goonies" (1985) and "Stand by Me" (1986), does a decent job of that.

How do you automatically ramp up nostalgia in an American pop-culture movie? Start with Smalltown, USA, add a cornfield, a '70s muscle car (or otherwise cool barn-find vehicle under a dusty tarp), a drive-in restaurant with neon signs glowing in the dusk, a greasy-spoon diner, a gas station, and a high school romance featuring a skinny, doesn't-have-a-snowball's-chance boy yearning for the local alpha-cutie girl who all the boys dream about. Oh, and a Ferris wheel. All that's missing here is the Ferris wheel.

The requisite small town is Summerville, Oklahoma, where the technology is far from current. For instance, job-shirking science teacher Gary Grooberson (Paul Rudd) likes to use VHS movies to babysit his classes. Podcast (Logan Kim), the science-nerd version of chubby, motormouthed Vern in "Stand By Me"), uses a Kodak instant camera for photo-documentation. You get the idea.

Oklahoma!

But first things first: Why are we in Summerville? There's a financially down-ontheir-luck, evicted family looking for a fresh start. Callie Spengler (Carrie Coon) and her two kids, Trevor (Finn Wolfhard) and Phoebe (Mckenna Grace)—naturally, being teens-don't want to be there. As luck would have it, they've inherited a big old wreck of a farm, following the death of Callie's estranged dad (locally known as "the Dirt Farmer"). It ain't pretty, but beggars can't be choosers and so they settle in. Mckenna Grace as Phoebe does a great job as a young science devotee so emotionally detached that her science-devotion, for all intents and purposes, functions as a form of faith. When she sees things that would normally scare the dickens out of any other teen, she feels only sciencelab curiosity. She also continually cracks mode, trying to improve her understand ing of humor, which is of course endearing but only because Grace has the precocious comedic chops to pull it off.

Her many curiosity-killed-the-cat discoveries set up much of the narrative; for example, discovering a giant, dusty science lab in the basement with electrical cables leading everywhere, and a yellow-andblack hazard-demarcated trap-looking thingie with a heavy cable attached to it. She doesn't know what it's for. But you do.

Meanwhile, brother Trevor finds a dusty white Cadillac hearse in the barn with a curious logo on it, featuring what looks to be one of Casper the Friendly Ghost's companions! Trevor also plays the role of the yearning skinny kid who falls hard and embarrassingly for the local cutie-pie (Celeste O'Connor).

Eventually, Trevor and Phoebe figure out via Google that their granddaddy was one of the original Ghostbusters when the spirit world tried to take over Manhattan in the '80s. They also figure out how to use all the rusty ghost-busting gear (including the laterally ejecting door-gunner seat on the old "Ecto-1" Caddy-hearse) and then do their predecessors proud when the ghosts show up. Remember ghosts? This



The decrepit barn-find Caddy-hearse.

Podcast (Logan Kim) and Phoebe (Mckenna Grace) hose some

ghosts with an old-school, DIY lightning bolt.

(L-R) Dan Aykroyd, Bill Murray, and Ernie Hudson from the original movie show up in "Ghostbusters: Afterlife."

is a movie about ghosts. And it turns out that Summerville, Okla-

homa, is ground zero for a new ghost outbreak. It's got a transworld portal that needs monitoring. Which is why-say it with me now-granddaddy moved there in the first place.

Any Good?

It's got a kid-

time around

more toward

dramedy than

spookiness.

'Ghostbusters:

Carrie Coon, Paul Rudd,

Grace, Logan Kim, Bill

Finn Wolfhard, Mckenna

Murray, Dan Aykroyd, Ernie

Hudson, Sigourney Weaver

Afterlife'

Director:

Starring:

Jason Reitman

Running Time:

MPAA Rating:

Release Date:

Nov. 19, 2021

 \star \star \star \star

PG-13

2 hours, 4 minutes

friendly

focus this

and leans

It's obviously got a kid-friendly focus this time around and leans more toward dramedy than spookiness. Released in the United States in November, it did \$120 million at the box office, which is not bad considering the impact of COVID-19. This was, and still is, a beloved franchise; its roots in the American pop-culture universe are strong-on par with the "Back to the Future" franchise—and Reitman the Younger brings back the original Ray Parker Jr. "Ghostbusters" theme song. "Afterlife" is partially a throwback designed for existing fans but also a chance for younger generations to make the "Ghostbusters" world their own.

Like the "Harry Potter" clubs and Quidditch teams that span the globe, there are still "Ghostbusters" fan clubs and diehards who will likely enjoy this new episode and the Easter egg hunt of finding old stuff in new places. There are many fun one-liners, and while the film is sometimes clichéd and relies too much on fan memory, it's also heartfelt, sincere, and entertaining. In addition to Mckenna Grace, young Logan Kim as Podcast is exceptional with rapidfire comedic line deliveries.

Although Reitman directs with an obvious reverence for dad's franchise, "Afterlife" is unfortunately a tad clumsy, and yet it's difficult not to find it rather sweet and endearing; it's got a bunch of fun cameos and equally fun performances from the young cast. That said, sequels suffer from sequelitis because the world-building newness of the original can only happen once, and the rest is by definition rehash. "Ghostbusters: Afterlife" is a perfectly acceptable rehash.



Lazy middle-school teacher Gary Grooberson (Paul Rudd) tries to figure out a strange contraption.



Phoebe (Mckenna Grace) utilizes the door-gunner seat to better hose down an apparition that's eating Summerville's fire hydrants.



"The Departure of Hiawatha," 1868, by Albert Bierstadt. It depicts the final scene of "Song of Hiawatha."

POETRY

America's Epic Poem: 'The Song of Hiawatha'

YVONNE MARCOTTE

DUMda DUMda DUMda DUMda Like the constant beat of drums at a tribal athering, the rhythm of the poem reverberates in our hearts:

BY the SHORE of GITche GUMee, BY the SHINing BIG-Sea-WAter

We hear its rhythm as it carries us through the epic travels of the first legendary American hero, Hiawatha.

This was not the first long poem that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote, but "The Song of Hiawatha," published in 1855, embodies the spirit needed by a nation on the verge of civil war. Longfellow got the story of an Onondaga tribal leader from historian and ethnologist Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, who had collected the oral history of the Ojibway of northern Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Longfellow also heard stories from his friend, an Pearl Feather, the evil magician who brings Ojibway chief, who told him of the legendary tribal leader Hiawatha.

The historical Hiawatha lived in northern New York state circa 1580 and is known to have united five tribes into the Iroquois Confederacy. He charged the tribes never to disagree among themselves. He called anger disgraceful. He required great patience and goodwill among the tribes when deliberating. His way was to have peace among the tribes and cultivate friendship and honor.

Legendary Leader

Like Homer's Odysseus, Longfellow's Hiawatha sets out on epic journeys that cover great expanses of the new land. Our hero grows up near the shores of Gitche Gumee— Lake Superior. Then as now, Longfellow describes the lake as plentiful with sturgeon:

Level spread the lake before him; from its bosom leaped the sturgeon.

Our hero sets out for the Rockies to confront Mudjekeewis, his father and Ruler of the West Wind, because he abandoned Hiawatha's mother. He struggles with his father, who then becomes the Spirit of the cussed with Schoolcraft since Finns had West Wind.

Just as Odysseus did, Hiawatha cultivated special friendships. There is a Hercules-type companion, Kwasind, who once hurled a huge rock into the river that was so big it

could be seen at all times. Hiawatha's musician friend, Chibiabos, sings our hero's praises as they travel together.

The great love of his life is Minnehaha,

"Laughing Water," whom he meets among

the Dacotahs on his return from sending his

father to the hereafter. This is truly a love for the ages. No one is more beautiful than this Dacotah maiden: Minnehaha, Laughing Water, Handsomest of all the women

In the land of the Dacotahs, In the land of Handsome women.

Hiawatha fearlessly accepts any challenge to help his people. Like the courageous heroes of the past, he engages gods, demons, and other-worldly beings. Just as Jacob wrestled an angel, Hiawatha successfully battles the corn spirit Mondamin whose body magically gives the people maize, which feeds them during famine. Hiawatha takes on disease and death.

Spirits watch over him and his loved ones, even if it is to bring sad news. He listens with sadness as small gray spirits foretell Minnehaha's death. Whatever he does is for his people. Hiawatha never fights for personal gain but stands strong for peace to build prosperity and power. And the gods reward him. What could be

a cliché in a Western becomes very moving when Hiawatha rides into the sunset's portal to the realm of the hereafter.

Epic American Literature

"Hiawatha" is a bona fide epic poem by any standard. Longfellow gives us a legendary hero who serves his people through courage and vision. Our hero engages supernatural beings with strength and skill. As the epic hero, Hiawatha travels to many lands in his quest to serve his people.

The poem is built on 22 poems in eight sections, called cantos. The poetic rhythm is written in trochaic tetrameter—four pairs of stressed-unstressed syllables in each line. This is similar to the Finnish epic, the "Kalevala," which Longfellow may have dissettled in the upper Midwest where the story is set.

Prominent American artists of the day contributed their talents to making "Hiawatha" memorable. For a deluxe edition

In the tradition of all great literary works, Longfellow has given us a leader who thinks of others first, fosters peace over war, and battles invisible forces without hesitation.





1874, by Augustus Saint-Gaudens of Hiawatha in thoughtful reflection.

of the poem in 1891, Frederic Remington painted a series of 22 black-and-white paintings using the grisaille technique (monochromatic tones). He created one for each canto, including a painting of Hiawatha's friends Chibiabos and Kwasind for Canto 6.

In 1874, Thomas Eakins presented our hero poised in silhouette between the earth and the spirit realm in the sky. Augustus Saint-Gaudens completed a marble sculpture in 1891 of Hiawatha sitting in quiet reflection. Renowned landscape artist of the American West, Albert Bierstadt chose to depict Hiawatha leaving his earthly realm as a reward for his heroic deeds in the final scene of the poem:

Westward, westward Hiawatha Sailed into the fiery sunset, Sailed into the purple vapors, Sailed into the dusk of evening

Legacy of Peace and Power

In planning his work, Longfellow said: "I have at length hit upon a plan for a poem on the American Indians. It is to weave together their beautiful traditions into a whole." In the tradition of all great literary works, Longfellow has given us a leader who thinks of others first, fosters peace over war, and battles invisible forces without hesitation.

The poem made its mark on America's landscape. Character names from the poem appear in geographical locations throughout North America. Parks, trails, and waterways are named for our hero. A waterfall in Minnesota is named for Minnehaha.

Each generation that inhabits this land can benefit from an understanding of this epic poem. It not only weaves together the traditions of Native Americans but of all Americans, of every group and every age, as it nurtures the epic power of peace.



A painting by Frederic Remington for Canto 6 for the 1891 publication of "The Song of Hiawatha."

Epic of Man's Inhumanity

AMERICAN TREASURES

D.W. Griffith's Silent Film 'Intolerance: Love's Struggle Through the Ages'

STEPHEN OLES

Everything about cinema's first blockbust er, "The Birth of a Nation" (1915), seemed new: its three-hour running time, complex narrative, large cast of characters, and its powerful emotional effect on audiences.

Its director, David Wark Griffith, was born in 1875, the son of a Kentucky farmer. A mediocre actor, he toured the country for years with ragtag theater troupes. He never hit it big, but he did gain a thorough knowledge of stagecraft, plays, and above all—audiences. In 1908, he fell into film directing almost by accident. In the over 450 short movies he cranked out for the Biograph company, he expanded the narrative and pictorial possibilities of film, pioneered new techniques like crosscutting and flashbacks, and set the stage for his Civil War epic.

"The Birth of a Nation" grossed an incredible \$11 million—\$300 million in today's money—but its triumph was tainted by controversy over its treatment of the Reconstruction era.

Griffith was stung by the backlash. His social conscience had been evident since "A Corner in Wheat" (1909). He wanted his next film to remind his critics that he had always sided with the poor against the rich, the weak against the strong. While editing "The Birth of a Nation," Griffith had begun "The Mother and the Law," a drama about a young couple struggling against poverty and injustice. It came out well, but Griffith and his team worried that an hour-long populist potboiler would be a weak followup to "Birth," so he looked for a way to make it bigger and more important.

The result was "Intolerance," a sprawling epic that took on nothing less than 2,500 years of man's inhumanity to man. Griffith's wildly ambitious plan added three new stories to "The Mother and the Law": the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C., the massacre of the Huguenots in 16th-century France, and—as if that weren't enough—the Passion of Christ. The great currents of history were pictured through the eyes of ordinary people victimized by the machinations of the powerful, their stories intercut to draw analogies and comment on one another. That a filmmaker conceived such a project in 1915 is amazing. That he realized it so brilliantly is astounding, and he did it without a script. He had it all in his head. to Judea, Griffith contrasts Jesus's mercy to

New Methods

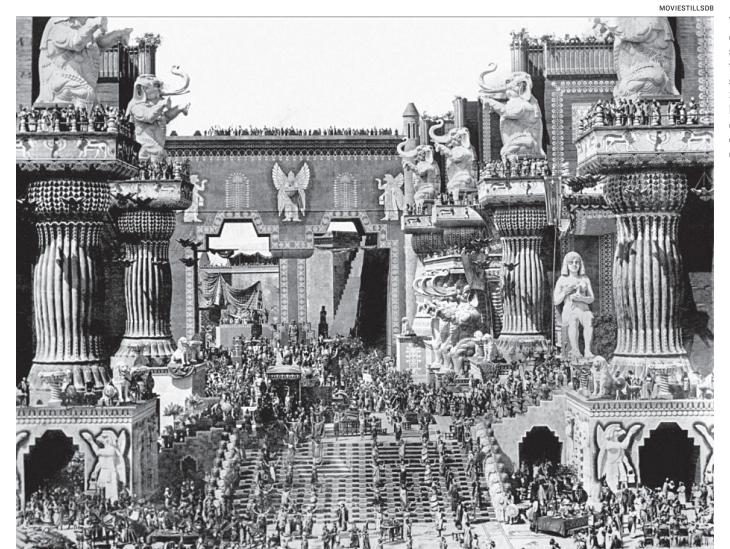
Everything Griffith learned, invented, and developed in his Biograph movies paid off in "The Birth of a Nation" and "Intolerance." Discarding the static, stage-bound conventions of early film, he discovered exciting new ways of staging scenes in motion, for and with the camera. It's as if a single artist had bridged the gap between Neolithic cave paintings and the early Renaissance masterworks of Giotto.

Griffith didn't invent the close-up or the moving camera, but he and cameraman Billy Bitzer deployed them as never before to drive the story, reveal characters' thoughts, and stir powerful emotions in the viewer. Historian David Cook wrote: "In the brief span of six years, between directing his first one-reeler in 1908 and 'The Birth of a Nation' in 1914, Griffith established the narrative language of cinema as we know it today." One year later, he took that language to another level with "Intolerance."

Scenes Commenting on One Another The movie begins with a symbolic image that will tie the stories together: a woman (Lillian Gish) rocking a mystic cradle.



Silent film star Lillian Gish appears as the Eternal Mother. U.S. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division.



elaborate scenes for the Babylon story include 3.000 lavishly costumed extras and dancers.

Griffith gives his leads coy names: the Boy, the Dear One, Brown Eyes, the Mountain Girl, and so on. In the modern "Mother and the Law" story, the Uplifters—prudish busybodies who believe, like today's social justice warriors, that it's their sacred duty to condemn and reform everybody elseraid cafés and nightclubs until dancing and drinking are banned. "We must have laws," they announce, "to make people good."

When the husband of the Dear One (Mae Marsh) is arrested on a false charge, the Uplifters barge into her apartment. Declaring her an unfit mother, they brutally beat her, ripping the terrified baby out of her arms in a scene as shocking and heartrending today as it was 107 years ago.

Meanwhile in France, Catherine de' Medici urges her weak-willed son, the king, to crush the growing power of the Huguenots, a religious minority. Cutting an adulteress and creation of wine at Cana with the Uplifters' harsh prohibitions.

In Babylon, a scheming high priest betrays the city to its Persian enemies. The connection to intolerance is vague, but the spectacle is mind-blowing. These days, movies fake large sets and crowds with computer graphics, but not this Babylon. Its walls, wide and strong enough to run chariots along the top, rose 150 feet and ran for a mile along a still-unpaved section of Sunset Boulevard.

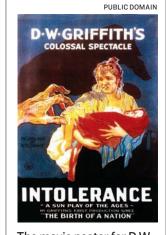
Even grander, reports Gary Krist in his book "The Mirage Factory," was the 200-foot-tall colonnaded palace where King Belshazzer and 3,000 lavishly costumed extras and dancers celebrate his temporary victory over the Persians. Bitzer had to invent a new technique to capture the dazzling panorama: the cinema's first "crane shot."

When the Persians launch another attack, Griffith pulls out all the stops. The battle scenes surpass even the epic ones in "Birth." Thousands of soldiers clash in a gargantuan, terrifying melee. Men are speared, slashed, thrown to their deaths, even graphically beheaded. A flamethrowing war engine mows down attack-



David Wark Griffith. George Grantham Bain collection at the Library of Congress.

Discarding the static, stage-bound conventions of early film, Griffith discovered exciting new ways of staging scenes in motion, for and with the camera.



The movie poster for D.W. Griffith's "Intolerance" (1916).



Constance Talmadge, who played the Mountain Girl, in 1919. J. Willis Sayre Collection of Theatrical Photographs.

ers, while real elephants propel gigantic siege towers against the walls from which arrows, stones, and boiling oil rain down on the Persians. (The extras really got into it. On one shooting day, an ambulance was called 60 times, according to an unpublished manuscript cited in "Griffith and the Rise of Hollywood.")

Griffith loved spunky, self-reliant heroines like the Babylon story's Mountain Girl (Constance Talmadge). When lecherous men approach, she mocks and rejects them, defiantly munching raw onions. When the city is attacked, she grabs her bow and fearlessly picks off Persian soldiers like ducks in a shooting gallery.

As the film proceeds, it cuts between the stories faster and faster until, at the climax, the Dear One races with a reprieve to stop her husband's execution as Persians breach the walls of Babylon, soldiers slaughter the Huguenots, and Jesus shoulders his cross in Jerusalem. There had never been a film like this before. There's never been one quite like it since. In the words of critic Iris Barry, "History itself seems to pour like a cataract across the screen."

Clear Storytelling

"Intolerance" has its flaws. It can get preachy, the French and Judean stories are skimpy, and the acting is variable, but these defects are minor.

In recent historical and superhero movies, you can lose track of who's fighting whom and why—the filmmakers can't even keep one storyline straight. "Intolerance" intercuts four stories and, incredibly, we are never confused. The clarity of Griffith's storytelling and his way of humanizing history and social issues through characters we care about, and intimate moments that touch the heart, may be his greatest achievement and his greatest gift to later filmmakers, many of whom he trained, including Victor Fleming ("Gone With the Wind") and Tod Browning ("Dracula").

"Intolerance" opened to good reviews, but its innovative structure confused some viewers, and its pacifist message wasn't welcome as President Wilson pushed the country into World War I, as Gish said in her book "The Movies, Mr. Griffith, and Me." It wasn't a flop but it lost money, most of it Griffith's. By the mid-1920s, the director's sentimental sensibility was out of fashion. His career fizzled and he died in 1948, cast aside by the industry he had practically invented.

You can watch Griffith's movies on disk or stream them on Prime or YouTube. Other standouts include the poetic "Broken Blossoms" (1919) and "Way Down East" (1920). Gish plays an abused girl in both films, prompting one wag at the time to call for a "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Lillian Gish."

Stephen Oles has worked as an inner city school teacher, a writer, actor, singer, and a playwright. His plays have been performed in London, Seattle, Los Angeles, and Long Beach, Calif. He lives in Seattle and is currently working on his second novel.

FILM REVIEW

From Sundance '22 a Film of **Unfinished Business**

JOE BENDEL

"The Exiles" is all about unfinished business. In 1989, documentarian Christine Choy started filming the exiled Chinese student leaders who were trying to continue their movement in America, shortly after the Tiananmen Square massacre.

Since she had not been there in the square, she did not feel a close connection to her subjects, so when she ran out of money, she simply dropped the project. She also assumed that the world would force the communist government to come to some sort of understanding with the student protesters.

Obviously, the campaign for democratic reform in China remains just as unfinished as her film, if not more so, since now some of her footage will finally be seen by audiences. Decades later, Choy reconnects with three of the most prominent activists she nearly documented, in Violet Columbus and Ben Klein's "The Exiles," which premiered during the 2022 Sundance Film Festival.

Choy is best known for the Oscar-nominated "Who Killed Vincent Chin," but for former students like Columbus and Klein, she is the blunt-spoken, chain-smoking,

vodka-swilling "Ab-Fab"-ish film professor who constantly inspired them. She was born in Shanghai but raised in South Korea, before moving to America to study and work. The first 15 minutes of "The Exiles" establishes her leftist credentials in glorious detail. That might alienate some viewers, but no Chinese Communist Party trolls can credibly accuse her of being a CIA plant or the like.

Choy was originally approached to document the student leaders-in-exile, because she spoke Mandarin and had the necessary micro-budget skills. For years, Choy kept the resulting film cans in storage, with no clear plan for them. Then, with financial assistance from a famous colleague, she started the process of restoring the footage. In the light of current events, her previously unseen film takes on fresh new significance, especially in light of the ongoing Uyghur genocide in Xinjiang.

Of the three focal student-activists, Wu'er Kaixi was the most widely known during the demonstrations. In the film, he is probably the most emotionally honest and revealing interview subject, and he is Uyghur (describing himself as "Uyghur by blood, Chinese by birth, Taiwanese by



Promotional photo of Christine Choy for "The Exiles."

When Beijing's puppet government in Hong Kong is tearing down Tiananmen Square memorials, the rest of the world should redouble our efforts to remember the

'The Exiles'

massacre.

Directors: Violet Columbus and Ben

Klein Starring: **Christine Choy**

Rated: PG

Running Time: 1 hour, 35 minutes **Release Date:**

2022

American Essence

choice"), which is significant.

Ostensibly, he is still wanted in the PRC, and he has tried to turn himself in, in the hope that he might finally see his family again by doing so. But Chinese embassies have perversely rebuffed his attempts to surrender himself.

Yan Jiaqi should have been one of China's greatest scholars, but he remains haunted by the People's Liberation Army's assault on the square. Like most of his colleagues, he never believed the government would open fire on the students—a nightmare that still haunts him.

In contrast, Wan Runnan was not even a student at the time. The entrepreneur was well on his way to becoming a tech tycoon, but he believed that his country needed the modernizing reforms the students advocated, so he financially supported their demonstrations. Yan Jiaqi and Wan Runnan also have plenty to say about the price they paid and the dismal state of human rights in mainland China.

Their testimony is gripping stuff, but "The Exiles" is most powerful when Choy shows the three men in the previously unseen footage she shot of the exiled activists in their idealistic youth. It is a bittersweet viewing experience for them and us. With brutal honesty, they admit that they are not sure whether they would do it all again if they had the choice. Yet, they also admonish the West for emboldening the CCP regime with its weak response to the massacre.

This is a profoundly sad film in many ways. It intimately documents the acute pain and survivor's guilt of the three aging activists, while supplying solid context to understand the full enormity of the Tiananmen crackdown. At a time when Beijing's puppet government in Hong Kong is tearing down Tiananmen Square memorials, the rest of the world should redouble our efforts to remember the massacre. A film like this definitely helps toward that end.

Frankly, the caustic Choy is sometimes a bit of a distraction, but she still deserves credit for shooting the footage and keeping it secure over the subsequent years. It needed and needs to be seen. Highly recommended for the exiles themselves and the warning they issue regarding the danger represented by the CCP regime, "The Exiles" premiered at this year's Sundance.

Joe Bendel writes about independent film and lives in New York. To read his most recent articles, visit JBSpins.blogspot.com

Week 6, 2022 THE EPOCH TIMES

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>___

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