

THE EPOCH TIMES

ARTS & CULTURE

PUBLIC DOMAIN



A good father can be a protector and a nurturer. "The Warrior and His Child," 1832, by Theodor Hildebrandt. Oil on canvas. Old National Gallery, Berlin.

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

What It Means to Be a Father

5 fathers from literature worth emulating

WALKER LARSON

Good fathers are surprisingly absent in great works of literature. It would be easier to compile a list of weak, tyrannical, or simply absent fathers vanishing from the pages of the classics than to compile a list of outstanding examples of paternity.

Yet this should not surprise us. The fundamental engine driving all stories is conflict. Tension, opposition, problems, and disorders that characters must overcome form the basis of all that we read. You have no story if you have no conflict. Imagine a tale, for example, wherein the protagonist decides to become president, runs a few ads, gets elected by a landslide, and holds an unevent-

ful eight years in office—not very interesting, is it? Characters must endure the sufferings and tragedies of life and struggle against enemies and obstacles; such a story makes us care, and it is more truthful.

Problems in society are greatly reduced when good fathers are in place.

Conflict often has its origin in family relationships and dynamics. Social science, psychology, and literature all teach us the same thing: Problems within families and society are greatly reduced when good fathers are in place. On the

other hand, when good fathers are scarce, societal and family issues abound—which happens to make for great drama—"King Lear," anyone? Hence the number of bad or missing dads in the great books.

But, of course, not all fathers in literature are failures. There are many moving examples of fathers who sacrifice themselves for the good of their families and provide us with models of the potential for heroism in paternity.

In the words of French poet Charles Péguy, "There is only one adventurer in the world, as can be seen very clearly in the modern world, the father of a family." Here are five of those adventurers from great works of literature.

Continued on Page 4



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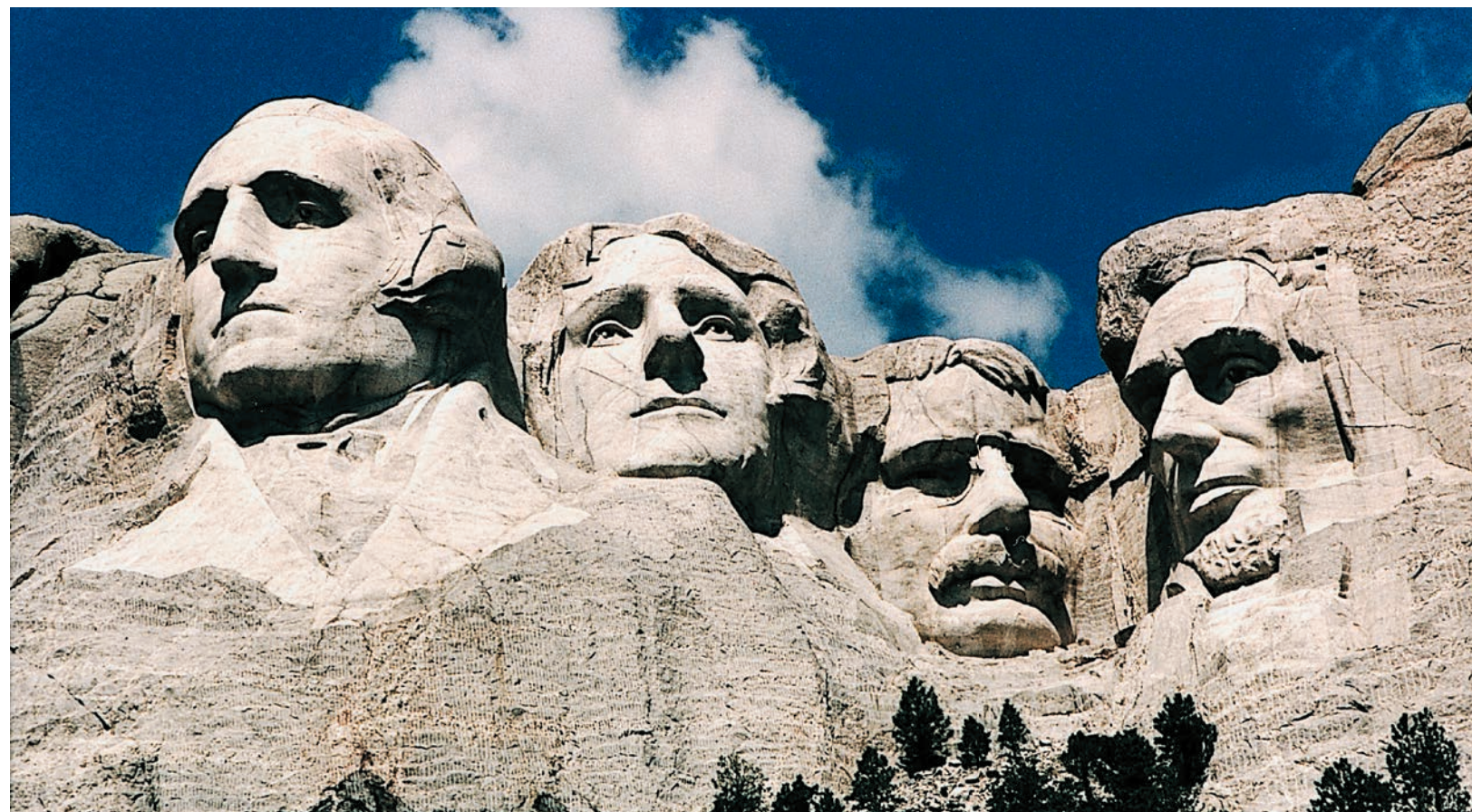


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Roosevelt won the Nobel Peace Prize for helping to end the Russo-Japanese War.

The bust of U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt (3rd L) among other presidential greats at Mount Rushmore National Monument near Keystone, S.D.

BOOK REVIEW

The Man in the Arena

Here's why Teddy Roosevelt's face is carved on Mt. Rushmore

JEFF MINICK

In the mid-1990s, Mrs. Irene Harrison (1890–1999) several times stayed in the bed-and-breakfast my wife and I operated in Waynesville, North Carolina. Daughter of famed tire entrepreneur Frank Seiberling, this centenarian was a gracious lady with a distinctly conservative take on politics. Once when she and her son were discussing politics in the living room, I paused on some errand to ask, “Mrs. Harrison, who was the greatest president of your lifetime?”

“Roosevelt!” she exclaimed. Given her viewpoints, her answer took me aback. Franklin Roosevelt? “Theodore Roosevelt!” she chirped merrily. “He was the greatest president since Lincoln.”

Mrs. Harrison would have been 18 years old when Theodore Roosevelt left office. Had I been on my toes, I would have asked her whether she'd ever met the man. Her father's fortune and status certainly made that a possibility.

But I did ask her why she favored Roosevelt. Though her exact answer escapes me, I do recollect that she talked about the man rather than his presidential accomplishments. She spoke of his energy and zest for living, his ability to connect with people, and his deep and abiding faith in America.

Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919) is the subject of many biographies, including the popular and momentous study by Edmund Morris. His autobiography also remains available as well as his books about his exploits in the West, in war, and on safari.

For those unfamiliar with Roosevelt's wildly adventurous life, his political battles and victories, and the reasons why he inspired loyalty and adulation in people as diverse as Dakota cattlemen, generals, political rivals, and ordinary Americans, bestselling author Jeff Shaara has given us a wonderful introduction to this whirlwind of a man in “The Old Lion: A Novel of Theodore Roosevelt.”

“The Old Lion”: A Bird's-Eye View

“The Old Lion” should appeal to all sorts of readers, from high school students looking for an introduction to the youngest man ever to become president to adults wishing to learn more details about the life of this phenomenal human being. Even those already familiar with Roosevelt's history may enjoy Shaara's ventures into Roosevelt's emotional and personal life.

Throughout this historical fiction, Shaara breaks away from recounting Roosevelt's activities to return to 1919 and Sagamore Hill, New York, the home built and occupied by Roosevelt and his second wife, Edith. At age 60, Roosevelt is dying, a former shadow of the man who had led diplomats and politicians on grueling hikes through Rock Creek Park while president. His cowboy life in the Badlands,

his campaign with the Rough Riders and their famous charge at the Battle of San Juan Hill, an assassination attempt as president that left him with a bullet permanently lodged in his chest, and his near-disastrous exploration of the Amazon just four years earlier have all taken their toll on his heart and general health.

As he lies on his deathbed, tended by his wife Edith and his sister Corinne, Roosevelt conducts several interviews with journalist Hermann Hagedorn, who in real life penned biographies of the 26th president, including the popular “The Boys' Life of Theodore Roosevelt.” The dialogues between the two men serve as the framework for Shaara's retelling of his life.

Focus Points

Though the author covers all of Roosevelt's many achievements, many readers will be particularly fascinated by his in-depth looks at Roosevelt's boyhood, his time as a rancher in the Dakota Badlands, and his military service in the Spanish-American War.

As a boy, Roosevelt suffered from terrible bouts of asthma. Shaara paints a tender picture of the care his parents gave the sickly boy, particularly his father, whom Roosevelt regarded as the chief heroic figure in his life. It is his father, a New York philanthropist, who soothes his son in the middle of the night and who later encourages him to “apply yourself to strengthening your body.” His father's death while Roosevelt was a student at Harvard was one of the major blows of his lifetime.

Another hammer blow of death came on Feb. 14, 1884, when both his mother and his beloved wife Alice died and in the same house—the former from typhoid fever, the latter from Bright's disease incurred during her pregnancy. Devastated by this dual loss, Roosevelt left politics for a time and headed West to his ranch in the Dakotas.

Here, he lived the life of a cowboy, gaining respect from the rough men of that place for his ability to defend himself—he had boxed as part of his war on asthma—and for his dogged optimism. He once pursued three men for stealing one of his boats, caught them, and brought them to justice. Of this incident, Shaara writes: “Word spread quickly of what Roo-



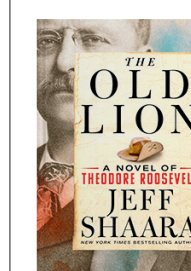
Theodore Roosevelt photographed in 1885 after arriving in the Dakota Badlands in 1884, after the death of his first wife, Alice. Photo by T.W. Ingersoll.

sevelt had done, one more legend piling on the man who seemed simply to love all of life, who poured himself into every enterprise.”

This reputation stood him in good stead when, at age 39, Roosevelt left his post as assistant secretary of the Navy, formed a volunteer regiment under the command of Leonard Wood with himself as second-in-command, and led the “Rough Riders” in the fighting in Cuba. Throughout this campaign against Spanish forces, Roosevelt took care of his men and displayed gallantry and courage on the field of battle. Acclaimed as a hero, he became governor of New York, left that office to serve as William McKinley's vice president, and with McKinley's assassination in 1901, took up residence in the White House.

Shaara's Bully Pulpit

Roosevelt coined the term “bully pulpit” to describe the position of the president, by which he meant that the office provided a grand stage from which to address the American people. In this same sense, “The Old Lion” serves as Shaara's bully pulpit to explain the greatness of Teddy Roosevelt.



“THE OLD LION: A NOVEL OF THEODORE”
By Jeff Shaara
St. Martin's Press
May 16, 2023
Hardback
480 pages

Like all good writers of historical fiction, Shaara adroitly blends a number of historical figures into his story, thereby creating a sort of “you are there” immediacy to his narrative. Joseph “Fighting Joe” Wheeler serves as just one example of this tactic. A former Confederate general in the Civil War, the 61-year-old volunteered for service in Cuba and was in command of cavalry, including the Rough Riders. At one point in “The Old Lion,” Wheeler gives some pointed and humorous advice to the much younger Roosevelt on his boundless political future.

One particularly fascinating character is Anna, known to friends and family as “Bamie,” who was Roosevelt's older sister. Though I've read the Edmund Morris trilogy, I somehow missed the enormous influence of this woman on her family, particularly on Roosevelt himself. After the death of their father, Bamie became both the heart and backbone of the clan, and a respected and wise counselor to her brother. She also helped raise Roosevelt's difficult daughter, Alice Lee, the child of his deceased wife.

When Roosevelt learned of his father's passing, Shaara creates a conversation between him and a Harvard classmate and friend that reveals Bamie's virtue and leadership:

“Your family needs you, for certain. Your mother will need you. You're the head of the family now.”

“He fought back tears, to still the fierce beating of his heart, his hands shaking. “No. That's Bamie. I need her. We'll all need her, especially Mother. She'll know what to do.”

Bibliophiles familiar with Roosevelt's life may have one complaint about “The Old Lion.” When we meet Roosevelt as a boy, he is a reader. Throughout the rest of this novel, however, Shaara pays no attention to Roosevelt's astounding reading habits. Though remembered best as a man of action, he could plow through a book or two a day when he was on a tear and remember much of what he'd read. Many of our presidents have evinced a passion for literature, but none can match Roosevelt's voracious appetite for the written word.

The Face on Mount Rushmore

Shaara ends his novel with “The Legacy of Teddy Roosevelt.” He reminds us that Roo-

sevelt preserved nearly 230 acres of natural land in our national parks system, that he gained a reputation as a trust-buster by breaking up the corporate monopolies that dominated the world of finance and labor, and that he won the Nobel Peace Prize for helping negotiate an end to the Russo-Japanese War.

Though unmentioned in this coda, Shaara earlier wrote of Roosevelt's key role in one of the world's greatest and most enduring engineering feats, the Panama Canal. He also described in detail his meeting in the White House with Booker T. Washington, president of Tuskegee Institute, and the positive influence of their relationship on race relations.

As Shaara also notes, in 1941 sculptor Gutzon Borglum finished his massive sculpture at Mount Rushmore, with its portraits in stone of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt. Some visitors may wonder why Roosevelt deserved membership in this distinguished company. “The Old Lion” is Shaara's answer to that question.

Undoubtedly, Roosevelt's early biographer Hermann Hagedorn would agree with him. Let's allow him the last word on Roosevelt here with an edited version of an introductory paragraph to “The Boys' Life of Theodore Roosevelt,” which was published just before Roosevelt's death.

“The story of Theodore Roosevelt is the story of a small boy who read about great men and decided he wanted to be like them. He had vision, he had will, he had persistence, and he succeeded. ... He is not a second Washington. He is not a second Lincoln. He is not a second Andrew Jackson. He is not a second anybody. He is Theodore Roosevelt himself, unique. There has never been anybody like him in the past, and though the world wait a long while, there will never be any one like him in the future.”

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 nonfiction, “Learning As I Go” and “Movies Make The Man.” Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va.

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

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THE EPOCH TIMES

TRADITIONAL CULTURE

What It Means to Be a Father

Continued from Page 1

Hector From 'The Iliad'

Hector is, in the words of Homer himself, "the lone defense of Troy" against the attacking Greeks. He leads the Trojans into battle, hardens and tempers their resolve, preserves morale, and kills droves of the enemy in combat. He is also a devoted family man. In fact, his motivation to be a terror on the battlefield is precisely his love for his family. J.R.R. Tolkien's words from "The Two Towers" could well be placed on the lips of Hector: "I do not love the bright sword for its sharpness, nor the arrow for its swiftness, nor the warrior for his glory. I love only that which they defend."

Here is the famous scene where Hector takes a reprieve from battle to visit his wife and son, for whom he will lay down his life by the end of the poem:

She [his wife] joined him now, and following in her steps

A servant holding the boy against her breast,

In the first flush of life, only a baby, Hector's son, the darling of his eyes and radiant as a star ...

The great man of war breaking into a broad smile, his gaze fixed on his son, in silence ...

Shining Hector reached down for his son. ... And ... laughed, [Andromache] laughed as well, and glorious Hector, quickly lifting the helmet from his head,

set it down on the ground, fiery in the sunlight,

and raising his son he kissed him, tossed him in his arms, lifting a prayer to Zeus and the other deathless gods. ...

So Hector prayed and placed his son in the arms of his loving wife.

The Knight From 'The Canterbury Tales'

Among Chaucer's group of pilgrims processing through "The Canterbury Tales," there is a knight. Chaucer tells us that he is a noble man, loving "chivalrie, Trouthe, honour, freedom, curteisie." His manner is gentle and courteous, though he, like Hector, knows how to fight ferociously for the things he



In the "Iliad," Hector gives his life to protect those he loves. "Hector Taking Leave of Andromache," 1727, by Jean II Restout. Oil on canvas.

loves, and he has seen service in the wars.

Joining him on his journey is his son, the Squire. He's 20 years old, and like youth throughout history, he's infatuated with the latest fashions. His hair has been curled to fit the style of the time, and "he was embroidered like a meadow bright. ... Short was his gown, the sleeves were long and wide." Moreover, he's girl-obsessed. "A lover and lusty bachelor, ... he loved so hotly that till dawn grew pale he slept as little as a nightingale." Courty love, too, was

in fashion at the time, and the Squire has embraced this idealized form of love completely.

The setup for "The Canterbury Tales" is that each pilgrim will regale his fellow travelers with stories in order to pass the time on the way to the shrine of St. Thomas Becket. "The Knight's Tale" is one of those stories, but as former English professor at the U.S. Naval Academy David Allen White has pointed out, the real audience for the Knight's story is the Knight's own son. It is, in fact, a bit of gentle, fatherly correction. The Knight tells a story about the frivolities and dangers of young, irrational love (or lust) in the tale of Palamon, Arcite, and Emily. It is a stern warning about the wrong form of courtly love and youthful impetuosity—but delivered in a gentle, charming way, to his son.

Prospero From 'The Tempest'

The central figure of Shakespeare's play "The Tempest" is the magician Prospero, who has been wrongly deprived of his dukedom in Milan and exiled with his baby daughter to a mysterious island. Prospero orchestrates the events of the play as, using his magic and his faithful servant, Ariel, he draws his shipwrecked enemies to the island and to repentance.

He also plays matchmaker when he brings the prince, Ferdinand, to his now-grown daughter, Miranda, and tests the young man's quality, chastity, and resolve—as a good father should—before giving him Miranda to be his wife.

Recounting the tale of his exile in a little boat with few possessions, from Milan, Prospero expresses what all good fathers know: The sight of one's child can provide intense motivation to perform almost superhuman tasks for that child's welfare. Speaking to Miranda, he says: "O, a cherubim/ Thou wast that did preserve me. Thou didst smile./ Infused with a fortitude from heaven,/ When I have deck'd the sea with drops full salt,/ Under my burden groan'd; which raised in me/ An undergoing stomach, to bear up/ Against what should ensue." Prospero takes heart and regains his strength in this darkest moment of his life due

to the presence and love of his little baby girl.

And he continues to direct events for her benefit throughout the play: "No harm./ I have done nothing but in care of thee,/ Of thee, my dear one, thee, my daughter."

Bob Cratchit From 'A Christmas Carol'

In Dickens's cherished Christmas story, Bob Cratchit endures long hours as a clerk under a despotic employer (Scrooge) for little pay—all for the sake of his family. Cratchit represents all those countless fathers throughout history who may never have distinguished themselves by a singular moment of extraordinary heroism or bravery, but rather attained a no less significant, though less noticeable, degree of nobility and sacrifice by persevering through the daily slog.

Summer and winter, year after year, these men set their shoulders against the boulder of often inglorious duty simply to support those who depend on them. We might call this "ordinary heroism," which every family man can aspire to.

In connection with Cratchit, one thinks of Robert Hayden's poem "Those Winter Sundays":

Sundays too my father got up early
and put his clothes on in the
blueblack cold,
then with cracked hands that ached
from labor in the weekday weather
made
banked fires blaze. No one ever
thanked him.
[...]
[I'd speak] indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.
What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?

On top of poverty, Cratchit—like so many ordinary fathers—has the added burden of family medical difficulties. His son Tiny Tim is ill, but the family doesn't have enough money

to properly treat him. In spite of this, Cratchit carries his invalid child on his shoulder and cheers him as best he can. Cratchit possesses a patience and dogged cheerfulness in the face of hardship. And in the end, his patience is rewarded.

The Father From 'The Road'

Cormac McCarthy set his novel "The Road" against an incredibly bleak, post-apocalyptic background. After a catastrophic event has wiped out civilization as we know it, a father and son make a trek across a wasted, ashen America because the father doesn't think they can survive another winter in the north. They seek some place "better."

Part of the poignancy of the story, however, is that the father knows on some level that there is nowhere to go, nowhere "better." But he struggles to keep hope alive in his boy, his son, the only thing he has left in this bitter world.

The few survivors the man and boy encounter along the way are mostly killers who have lost their humanity in their desperation and despair. But the father works hard to instill a moral sense in his son in an age that has abandoned all standards of right and wrong: He tells the boy that they are "the good guys" who are "carrying the fire."

The starkness of the backdrop only places the heart of the story in greater relief. The darker the background, the greater the contrast with the light at the story's core, and that light is a father and son's love and sacrifice for one another. The father has only one object that he will pursue even to the point of death: to care for the son.

His words to his boy are words that would resonate with any father speaking to his child: "You have my whole heart. You always did. You're the best guy. You always were."

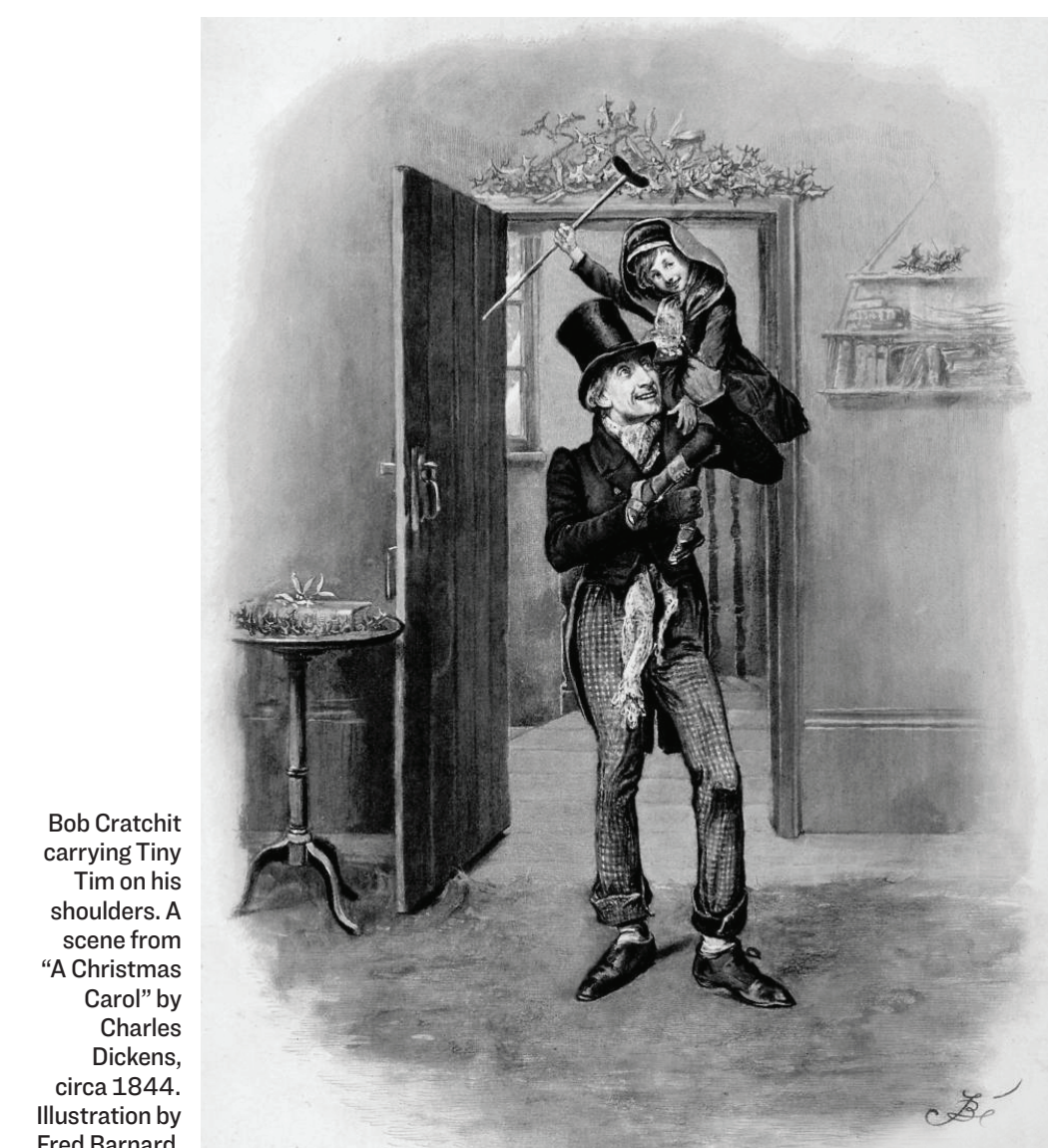
Walker Larson teaches literature and history at a private academy in Wisconsin, where he resides with his wife. He holds a Master's in English literature and language, and his writing has appeared in *The Hemingway Review*, *Intellectual Takeout*, and *his Substack*, "The Hazelnut."



Portrait of a warrior with his squire, who is his son, circa 1501-1502, by Giorgione. Oil on canvas. Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Italy.



Banished from Milan, Prospero and Miranda sail to the remote island where "The Tempest" takes place. "Prospero and Miranda," 1803, by Henry Thomson. Oil on canvas. Royal Academy of Arts, London.



Bob Cratchit carrying Tiny Tim on his shoulders. A scene from "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens, circa 1844. Illustration by Fred Barnard.

There are many moving examples of fathers who sacrifice themselves for the good of their families.

The Wager opens its sails on a perilous mission that leads to a shipwreck, harrowing survival, and cruel savagery. "The wreck of the HMS Wager," 1809, by unknown artist.



PUBLIC DOMAIN



John Byron was a 16-year-old midshipman on the Wager and wrote of what happened. Portrait of John Byron, 1759, by Joshua Reynolds.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

BOOK REVIEW

A Different Take on High Seas Adventure

Mayhem rules. Who survives to tell the tale?

ANITA L. SHERMAN

Author David Grann is no stranger to writing engrossing and compelling historical narratives. His 2010 title, "The Lost City of Z," was made into a 2016 film telling the tale of British explorer Percy Fawcett and his quest for an Amazonian civilization.

Now, in Grann's latest novel, "The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder," he takes readers on a terrifying voyage on the high seas in 1740. At this time, England was at war with Spain. Control of the seas was paramount for both countries.

The Wager is one of seven ships commissioned to seek and find a Spanish galleon, reportedly carrying tremendous treasure in her hull. The officers and crew may have dreams of shared loot, buoyed naval careers, and glorious tales of high sea adven-

ture to share, but theirs is a different story.

Wedged in the Rocks

After months at sea, with no sign of the Spanish galleon, and losing sight of other ships in the squadron, the Wager is shipwrecked off the coast of Patagonia, barely escaping death when perilously passing around Cape Horn at the southernmost tip of South America. Already ravished by scurvy and disheartened spirits, what's left of the crew seek shelter on a desolate and windswept island.

Their story of survival quickly takes a sinister and dark turn. Think William Golding's "Lord of the Flies" on steroids. What little food is left on the ship is parceled out in meager portions by their captain, David Cheap, who believes that ruling with an iron fist is the best course. But his authority is rapidly questioned as the men break up into warring factions. They are no longer at sea.

Surviving on the island was a laboratory of sorts.

They are now on land, so do the rules of who governs change?

Emaciated is an understatement when describing the condition of what's left of the Wager's crew. Battered by starvation and exhaustion, not to mention the tumultuous weather, the scantily clad seamen descend into a Hobbesian world, fearing the loss of self and soul at the hands of their colleagues. Their minds conjure up beasts and malicious motivations, some true and others imagined.

The island offers little in the way of sustenance other than seaweed and a type of sea celery. Grann does an apt job describing their miserable conditions as their bodies, minds, and souls deteriorate even as they try to claim mastery over the bleak wilderness that surrounds them.

Still, at their core, a sense of tradition, honor, and fortitude keeps them hopeful and courageous even if those loyalties fall away from the established line of command.

Mad and Mutinous?

It is a feisty but very capable gunner, John Bulkeley, who eventually persuades the majority of the seaman to join him in building a craft that will carry them back to England.

Leaving their captain with a few of his most stalwart supporters, Bulkeley commandeers their newly crafted boat, which is named the Speedwell, and heads back through the Strait of Magellan with a course set for England and certain validation by the Admiralty for their decision to abandon their captain,

whom they are convinced is a lunatic, and be hailed as heroes.

It took the Speedwell months to traverse the nearly 3,000 miles of treacherous seas to reach their homeland. Initially welcomed as surviving spirits from a ship thought lost at sea, their fates soon change when six months after their arrival, a small and even more decrepit cast of characters turns up—one being Capt. David Cheap.

The sets of stories don't match, and each is subject to manipulation as these returnees attempt to shape their stories to suit their own purposes.

Surviving on the island was a laboratory of sorts—testing human nature and the human condition. Once liberated, their trials would haunt them. Now, back in civilization, what will their fates be when faced with a court martial and perhaps execution for their supposed crimes?

A Spellbinder

Perhaps it's a parable for our turbulent times: The future of the survivors will be determined by who wins the war over the truth as the layers of disinformation are peeled back.

Grann introduces readers to a variety of characters but one of the most endearing is the 16-year-old midshipman, a young and enthusiastic gentleman named John Byron. I don't think it is a spoiler to say that he survives the entirety of this beyond-belief ordeal. Bryon, with perhaps literary genes in his makeup, is the main chronicler and observer of all that is happening around him. (He is the grandfather of the poet Lord Byron, one of the leading figures of the Romantic movement.)

Grann's narrative is spellbinding. It's a page-turner. Readers will want to know what happens to these men, plucked from history and brought to life in a riveting tale of extreme survival and ultimate judgment.

Anita L. Sherman is an award-winning journalist who has more than 20 years of experience as a writer and editor for local papers and regional publications in Virginia. She now works as a freelance writer and is working on her first novel. She is the mother of three grown children and grandmother to four, and she resides in Warrenton, Va. She can be reached at anitajustwrite@gmail.com

BOOK REVIEW

The Lives Behind the Rockwell Paintings

Author celebrates the relationship between Rockwell and his models

DUSTIN BASS

During the middle of the 20th century, Norman Rockwell became America's artist. He captured the best of what America represented: freedom, friendship, and family, these typically encapsulated with a sense of patriotism. Yes, it was Rockwell who captured all that with his artistic realism, but the depth to which he captured that reality depended heavily on the people he used as models. S.T. Haggerty, in his book "Norman Rockwell's Models: In and Out of the Studio," focuses on the models Rockwell used in order to make his art connect with average Americans.

Instead of professional models, Rockwell preferred regular people. His art reflected the everyday activities of everyday citizens. Who better to stand in for those moments than his neighbors, friends, and family members? Haggerty takes readers much deeper into the masterpieces of Rockwell, and tells the stories of those who modeled for specific pieces.

The Rockwell Models

One of those models was the young girl, Ruth McLenithan, who was the girl in the humorous "Marbles Champion" painting. Haggerty tells the story of why Rockwell believed Ruth would make a great primary subject because

of her red hair and freckles. When he asked her to pretend like she knew how to play marbles, she couldn't wait to tell him that she was already a marbles champion of sorts. Haggerty's retelling is merely the first of many heartwarming and fun stories.

In these stories, Haggerty clearly expresses not only the artistic gift Rockwell possessed on the canvas, but also his gift for choosing models who could express a specific look he required.

In a way, the author creates a memoir for

many of Rockwell's best-known paintings, as well as for his models. The range of these stories is spectacular, from the near impossibility of convincing the religiously devout mother of Sophie Rochiski to allow her daughter to model for him in "Tired Salesgirl on Christmas Eve" to the miraculous story of Claire Squires, who modeled for "Freedom of Religion" and "Long Shadow of Lincoln," to encouraging Tom Paquin to look his most disappointed at having to come home and practice the trumpet in "Trumpet Practice."

GABRIEL BOUVIS/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Covers of The Saturday Evening Post by Norman Rockwell are shown at the exhibition "American Chronicles: The Art of Norman Rockwell" at the Rome Museum Foundation in 2014 in Rome.

A Wealth of Art

An addendum to Haggerty's work discusses the worth of Rockwell's paintings. He begins in his preface with the intrigue of the auction at Sotheby's in New York City where daughter to model for him in "Tired Salesgirl on Christmas Eve" was predicted to sell for \$20 million. It sold for twice as much. Haggerty ends his book on the tantalizing tale of the auction of "Breaking Home Ties"—a story that indeed deserves its own book.

The author makes the obvious point that Rockwells are priceless, and to have owned one was to, over time, own a fortune. But Haggerty indicates in his book that Rockwell never saw it that way. He didn't think people would be willing to spend a fortune for his artwork.

Perhaps he was right. While he was alive, millions may have been out of the question. Nonetheless, their value was held much higher in the eyes of those not named Norman Rockwell. His work had gone to publications for illustrations, most notably "The Saturday Evening Post." The thought of selling them to the highest bidders seemed ridiculous. His price at random would often be about \$500, a price buyers jumped at. One anecdote is when Gene Pelham, a fellow artist and longtime assistant to Rockwell, decided to create a deterrent to buyers

by raising the price to \$1,000. The painting, "April Fools," went in no time.

The People of the Art

The creation of the art pieces and their value are significant topics in "Norman Rockwell's Models," but ultimately it is about the relationship the models had with Rockwell and the paintings. Rockwell often used the same people in his works, their faces and demeanors meeting specific needs.

But as much as those models filled a need for Rockwell, Rockwell filled a need for the models. A majority of them were from the small town of West Arlington, Vermont. Having their likeness placed on the cover of one of America's most read magazines provided a great sense of value and belonging, an irreplaceable sense of importance. But it was more than a sense; it was a fact. They were recreated in art form to represent the best in the country, and often at times when the country needed reminding, such as the eras of the Great Depression and World War II. The author succeeds in capturing all of that.

Haggerty's work is, in itself, a work of art. He has, much like Rockwell, paid great attention to detail. For fans of Rockwell's illustrations and even for those who simply wish to understand an important aspect of 20th-century America, "Norman Rockwell's Models: In and Out of the Studio" is an important work. Furthermore, it is a very fine piece of writing.

Dustin Bass is an author and co-host of *The Sons of History* podcast.

POPCORN AND INSPIRATION

Dads Who Make That Personal Connection

MICHAEL CLARK

Released a decade ago on Father's Day, the 23-minute documentary short "Father Son Run" ("Run") isn't exactly what one might expect when looking for feel-good holiday-themed fare. Although it is low on production value and hits a number of bumps along the way, it turns out that "Run" is indeed, if not more, inspirational and uplifting than most big-budget, feature-length, assembly-line Hollywood productions.

Directed by Erik Beck and Justin Johnson, "Run" chronicles the 1,890-mile motorcycle ride that Erik and his father, Wally, made three years earlier. This feat in and of itself isn't such a big deal, as there are certainly other father-son pairs who have done the same thing, or something like it.

What makes Erik and Wally's trip unique is that the two men spent very little time together during Erik's formative years, they live in different states not close to each other, and Erik had never ridden a motorcycle prior to this journey. After spending less than five minutes in their company, it's also clear that these guys have next to nothing in common. This makes for a great setup promising dramatic friction—and, boy, does it ever deliver on that front.

For every heartwarming and endearing passage shared between the two, there's another where they clash and butt heads often over the most trivial and benign reasons. This is pretty much the same kind of relationship I had with my own father, and so did, I would venture to guess, many other dads and their sons (and daughters, for that matter).

It is this dynamic and others, of

course, that makes "Run" feel so authentic and lived in. Not to take anything away from other very good Father's Day movies, but many lack in anything resembling character or storytelling arcs. Nothing changes from start to finish, which is not what takes place in most of our lives.

Other Dads and Sons

If the prospect of watching other similarly themed movies appeals to you, you're in luck. Here are a few that avoid taking the path of least resistance. It is the conquering of adversity, getting beyond personal differences, and taking on unexpected parental duties that makes coming out on the other side all the more rewarding and memorable.

In his first leading role, Michael Keaton stars in "Mr. Mom" (1983) as Jack, a recently fired Detroit automotive engineer. Out of necessity, Jack switches places with his wife, Caroline (Teri Garr), who returns to advertising—the career she gave up to become a stay-at-home mother. The dual fish-out-of-water plots are telling inasmuch as they point out the near impossibility of truly "having it all" while pointing out (without sledgehammer-style metaphorical bludgeoning) that earning the daily bread and taking care of children each come with equal amounts of setback

and reward. In "Field of Dreams" (1989), Kevin Costner stars as Ray, an Iowa farmer whose relationship with his long-gone father continues to gnaw at him. The only thing the two had in common was baseball. While tilling the corn, Ray hears a voice telling him "If you build it, he will come" and surmises that if he builds a baseball field, it will summon the ghost of disgraced



It's all about dads on this upcoming holiday. CHOKNI-STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

FILM REVIEW

How COVID Was Planned Decades Ago

The New World Order and the loathsome marketing of COVID-19

MICHAEL CLARK

The third and perhaps not the last in the "Plandemic" series, "The Great Awakening" from director Mikki Willis goes over a great deal of information found in the previous two films, "Plandemic" and "Indoctormation." The film also includes reams of backstory, suggesting the seeds of the 2020 COVID-19 scare were planted decades ago, and it was only a part of the diabolical and sinister effort on the part of a very few to create a uniparty called the New World Order (NWO).

A former member of the Bernie Sanders "Bernie Bros" brigade, Willis, like so many of those on the far Left, began to realize he was being led astray and made a huge ideological about-face.

Teaming with Informed Consent Action Network founder and CEO Del Bigtree (who wrote and produced the 2016 "Vaxxed: From Cover-Up to Catastrophe"), Willis spends nearly half of the 116-minute running time connecting what has been transpiring for the last three years to events dating back as far as 1949 with the founding of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

It Started with Mao

Two of the first things that CCP leader Mao Zedong implemented were framing "obedience" as "virtue" and asexualizing the populace. This "nongendering" called for males and females to have identical hair styles and wear the same unflattering uniforms.

What may you ask does this have to do with COVID-19? Plenty. March of 2020 saw an immediate global shutdown, which included "non-essential" workers to isolate at home and to get vaccinated. If you were "obedient" you were behaving with "virtue;" if not, you were shamed and ridiculed, or worse.

The Left's recent push towards trans-

genderism, body mutilation, pushing hormone blockers on children, and supporting gender dysphoria is right out of the Mao playbook.

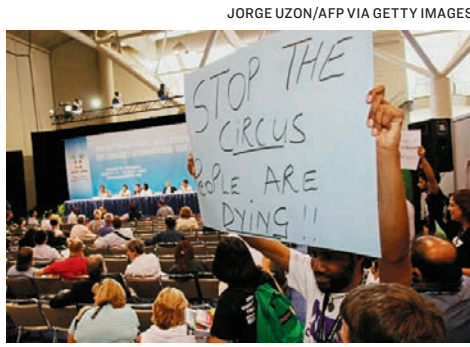
Showing up early in the film and doled out at regular intervals along the way are snippets of a 1969 video featuring writer and filmmaker G. Edward Griffin. In it, the anti-communist Griffin eerily predicts what is taking place right now: first, divide and conquer people by race, class, and ideology; and second, weaponize the federal government to squelch the voices and freedoms of those who even dare to question the motives and methods of those in power. Today, these are the NWO and the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

Fauci Then and Now

Speaking of the CDC, in addition to the Griffin video, Willis includes another one from the '80s featuring none other than Anthony Fauci, whose foot-dragging regarding researching a cure for AIDS was widely criticized, particularly by those most at risk of contracting the disease. With COVID-19, Fauci did the exact opposite. Instead of doing the necessary research, he rubber-stamped what was essentially a prototype and sold this bogus bill of goods to the world.

The number of deaths of vaccinated people from COVID-19 has now eclipsed those who refused it. For more on that, check out the film "Died Suddenly" on Rumble.

One thing Willis wisely avoids for the entirety of the movie is framing or positioning it with politics. Although politicians (the current occupant of the White House and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, for example) were instrumental in promoting this "cure," it was Fauci and, in particular, the World Economic Forum (WEF) founder Klaus Schwab, who double- and triple-downed on the vaccine's efficacy.



Protesters interrupt a press conference in Toronto on Aug. 16, 2006, given by Anthony Fauci during the XVI International AIDS Conference.

player Joe Jackson (Ray Liotta). The second message, "ease his pain," leads Ray to seek out a legendary retired writer (James Earl Jones), and yet another ("go the distance") points toward a deceased physician (Burt Lancaster in his final performance). The final scene will melt the hearts of even the most cynical viewers.

The third installment of the still active franchise "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (1989) stars Harrison Ford as the title character and Sean Connery as his father, Henry, who recently went missing while searching for the Holy Grail. Chronologically the first in the series, "Crusade" is another example of pitch-perfect "oil and water" character development and displays two industry legends in peak form. As with "Raiders of the Lost Ark," there is a subplot involving the Third Reich, which isn't quite as foreboding—which is just as well. The prickly interplay between Connery and Ford is the main attraction, and it never disappoints.

"The Pursuit of Happiness" (2006) is based on the true story of Chris Gardner (Will Smith), a struggling medical device salesman living in San Francisco with barely enough resources to support himself. Things go from bad to worse when Gardner's soon-to-be ex-wife Linda (Thandine Newton) leaves him in the lurch to care for his toddler son, Chris Jr. (Smith's son Jaden). For over a year, Gardner and his child remain homeless until he gets the oh-so-small break that will eventually lift them up from demoralizing squalor.

"Father Son Run" is now available for free (with ads) on YouTube.com

'Father Son Run'

Directors
Erik Beck,
Justin Johnson
Running Time
23 minutes
MPAA Rating
Not Rated
Release Date
June 16, 2013
★★★★★

Enter Darth Vader

Showing up in one clip dressed as if he's been cast as a "Star Wars" villain, Schwab is presented as the chief strategist of the NWO. This makes complete sense as his father Eugen was appointed by the Nazi regime to be the director of the now defunct Zurich engineering company "Escher Wyss AG," which provided turbine engines and flamethrowers for the Third Reich. The film makes clear Schwab's "scorched Earth" mindset and insatiable lust for power are metaphorical flame-throwing.

As far as content is concerned, "Awakening" gets a solid 5/5 rating. The amount of data and information stuffed into the not-quite-two-hour movie is staggering—which is also something of a problem. The movie is presented so relentlessly fast, it borders on the overwhelming. I had to pause the movie three times just to give my gray matter some rest. I would have had no problem had Willis slowed it down a bit and taken longer to unspool everything. For style and execution, I gave the film 2/5.

When phrases like "mass formation," "social credit system," and "great reset" enter the lexicon, it can't end well. The label Willis uses to describe all of what is happening now, "synchronized tyranny," couldn't be more accurate, or horrifying.

The film is now available on [rumble.com](https://www.rumble.com)

Originally from Washington, D.C., Michael Clark has provided film content to over 30 print and online media outlets. He co-founded the Atlanta Film Critics Circle in 2017 and is a weekly contributor to the Shannon Burke Show on FloridaManRadio.com. Since 1995, Mr. Clark has written over 4,000 movie reviews and film-related articles. He favors dark comedy, thrillers, and documentaries.

'The Great Awakening'

Director
Mikki Willis
Starring
Documentary
Running Time
1 hour, 56 minutes
MPAA Rating
Not Rated
Release Date
June 3, 2023
★★★★★

POPCORN AND INSPIRATION

A Musical for Any Mood

Golden age films

TIFFANY BRANNAN

Is there a movie that you always enjoy watching, no matter what your mood is? "Rhythm on the River" from 1940 is such a movie, a little-known gem that belongs in every classic movie lover's collection.

This movie stars Bing Crosby, Mary Martin, Basil Rathbone, and Oscar Levant. This is only the second movie that Broadway star Mary Martin made. British actor Basil Rathbone is best known for playing swash-buckling villains and portraying Sherlock Holmes in 14 movies, but he plays a different kind of clever scoundrel in this story. Acid-witted pianist Oscar Levant practically plays himself in his hilarious role as the wisecracking sidekick. Crosby, of course, shows off his famous baritone singing, but he also shows off a hidden musical talent of his, playing the drums.

A Songwriter's Story

Oliver Courtney (Basil Rathbone) is one of the top songwriters on Tin Pan Alley. He's had countless hits, and he is now writing the score for a big Broadway show. However, he has a secret known only by his sarcastic righthand man, Billy Starbuck (Oscar Levant). For years, he's been writing neither his music nor his lyrics. He has relied on ghostwriters since his sweetheart left him and took his inspiration with her, but he's been getting all the accolades and the wealth.

During the past year, Courtney's melodies have been supplied by Bob Sommers (Bing Crosby), a carefree young songwriter who just wants to earn enough money to build a little boat for sailing and fishing on the river. Just when everything is going well, Courtney's lyricist dies, so he seeks a new source for his words in Cherry Lane (Mary Martin), a fan of his who keeps sending him her poems.

Bob thinks Courtney writes his songs'

words, and Cherry thinks he writes the music; both are sworn to secrecy as well-paid ghostwriters. However, the musical crook's profitable arrangement is in danger of being disrupted when Cherry escapes the noise of the jazz band that has moved in next door to her by going to Nobody's Inn, a quaint hideaway run by Bob's curmudgeonly uncle (Charley Grapewin). Bob is also staying there, so it's only a matter of time before they discover the secret that they've been collaborating on.

Music in Your Heart

Any movie with rhythm in its title is bound to be full of catchy tunes. Since the story is about songwriters, "Rhythm on the River" is a great musical showcase for its stars. It features seven original songs, six of which feature music by James V. Monaco and lyrics by Johnny Burke. The catchiest song is "That's for Me," the first of Courtney's songs for which Cherry writes the lyrics. I warn you that you'll be humming it long after the movie ends. The score's tender love song is "Only Forever," a sentimental ballad that Bob and Cherry write and sing together.

Also featured in the score are "What Would Shakespeare Have Said," "When the Moon

'Rhythm on the River'

Director
Victor Schertzinger

Starring
Bing Crosby, Mary Martin,
Basil Rathbone

Running Time
1 hour, 32 minutes

MPAA Rating
Not Rated

Release Date
Sept. 6, 1940

★★★★★

(L-R) Bob Sommers (Bing Crosby), Cherry Lane (Mary Martin), and Billy Starbuck (Oscar Levant), in "Rhythm on the River."



PARAMOUNT PICTURES

Comes Over Madison Square," "Ain't It a Shame About Mame," and "I Don't Want to Cry Anymore." The last of these was written by the film's director and producer, Victor Schertzinger. In some later scenes, Martin and Crosby are accompanied by John Scott Trotter, a real bandleader, and his orchestra.

The title song is performed in a pawn shop by Crosby and a jazz band led by Harry Barris, who formed Paul Whiteman's Rhythm Boys with Crosby and Al Rinker before the former became a solo radio star. Wingy Manone, another famous jazz musician, plays the comical co-owner of the band. In addition to singing, Bing shows off his percussive skills in this number, as he grabs some sticks and drums on anything he can find in the store.

A Laugh a Minute

One of the reasons that I love this movie is how funny it is. The humor isn't slapstick or goofy physical comedy. It's very clever, intelligent humor conveyed through witty dialogue, which isn't surprising when you realize that Billy Wilder was one of the writers.

The comical dialogue is even funnier because of its effective delivery by the very diverse actors. Crosby, Martin, and even Rathbone display impressive comedic timing. Without a doubt, however, the funniest cast member is Levant. Every one of his lines is a hilarious wisecrack, which he delivers dryly as if he were just adlibbing. He also demonstrates how to make amazing classical piano technique very funny!

This is a delightful movie, which gives a laugh a minute, but it is also a charming and heartwarming story about two young songwriters who inspire each other.

Watch "Rhythm on the River" for free on YouTube with foreign subtitles or on ok.ru.

Tiffany Brannan is a 21-year-old opera singer, Hollywood historian, interviewer, copywriter, fashion historian, travel writer, and vintage lifestyle enthusiast. 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.

TRUTH and TRADITION

In Our Own Words

From the Desk of Our Puzzle Master



“I've benefited greatly from the many relationships and friendships formed making the puzzle pages better and better with each passing year.

Tom Houston
Puzzle Master



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Dear Epoch VIP (and Puzzler!),

Thank you for subscribing to The Epoch Times and for supporting our journey of providing the world with truthful, uncensored journalism as well as analysis of world events, especially in China.

My journey with The Epoch Times actually began in 2009 when I discovered the publication's outstanding coverage of events in China, something of which I had studied for over 30 years principally as a linguist and China analyst. The Epoch Times' coverage was unique and included many aspects and facets of Chinese life under the Chinese Communist Party that were either not covered or were entirely avoided by the mainstream press. After reading this coverage, I felt compelled to "climb aboard" and support The Epoch Times on its journey toward truthful reporting that would not be beholden to any kind of censorship, whether it's from a government or commercial entity.

After discussions with the editor-in-chief on what the newspaper actually most needed and what I personally could do to support the paper, I published my first puzzle page on Jan. 4, 2010—over 12 years ago. Since then, my Epoch Times journey has been eventful, to say the least. I have learned and grown a great deal, and so has our puzzle page! It's grown from a single page of puzzles in a 16-page edition to two pages of puzzles (and a half page on the Wednesday "For Kids Only" page) in what is now a 52-page paper!

Along the way, hundreds of puzzlers have reached out through our feedback@epochtimes.com email to comment on the puzzles, send me pictures of their unique solutions, ask questions, point out my mistakes (I've made many!), pass along a compliment or constructive criticism and offer to help. I've benefited greatly from the many relationships and friendships formed making the puzzle pages better

and better with each passing year.

Thank you, readers! We wouldn't be where we are today without you! **Each and every one of you who has subscribed, advertised, or who has sent in encouraging words, constructive comments, or ideas has helped to make The Epoch Times what it is today.**

A number of Epoch Times readers (and puzzle fans) actually contribute to our puzzle pages! "Coder Chang" developed a "4 Numbers" puzzle tool (4Nums.com) that we have been using since January 2018. Our skydiving chess master, Michael Gibbs, began donating "Chess Challenges" to The Epoch Times over two years ago. Liz Ball, an accomplished puzzle developer whose work has appeared in more than 300 publications (HiddenPicturePuzzles.com) began donating her popular "Hidden Picture" puzzles to The Epoch Times' kids page over a year ago.

We sincerely appreciate these puzzles, and for me, they are a kind reminder of the community that has built up around this newspaper.

In short, seeing people genuinely moved by The Epoch Times' commitment to journalism and truthful reporting of events, often glossed over or "slanted" by other media outlets, has been a heartwarming experience for me.

I hope that your journey with The Epoch Times will be as educational, satisfying, and fulfilling as mine has been. And, please, always feel free to drop us a line at feedback@epochtimes.com. We appreciate your insight, and who knows—I could always use a few more hands in the puzzle workshop.

In truth and tradition,

Tom Houston
The Epoch Times

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