

ry Green, she is constantly rediscovered by writers but never quite catches on and so perhaps remains hard to find.

**Mark Amory** is literary editor of the *Spectator* in London.

## Harold Bloom

SHAKESPEARE ALWAYS FIRST. I recommend the Arden editions. The other glories of our language are the King James Bible and Chaucer. A personal favorite among neglected books is the wonderful fantasy by John Crowley called *Little, Big*. As far as royalties are concerned let me add my esoteric study called *The American Religion*. As a lifelong Liberal Democrat I have mixed feelings about your magazine, but let that be.

**Harold Bloom** is a Sterling Professor of Humanities at Yale University and a former Charles Eliot Norton Professor at Harvard. He is the author of more than 30 books, including, most recently, *The Shadow of a Great Rock: A Literary Appreciation of the King James Bible* and *The Anatomy of Influence: Literature as a Way of Life*, both of which are available in paperback from Yale University Press.

## Tim Carney

*OBAMANOMICS AND THE BIG RIPOFF*, by Timothy P. Carney. Learn about the ungodly collusion of Big Business and Big Government while helping put four young Carney kids through Catholic school.

*The Memoirs of Gen. William T. Sherman*: "War is all destruction." So Gen. Sherman ended a war, the only way he could.

**Timothy P. Carney** is a columnist for the *Washington Examiner* and a visiting fellow at the *American Enterprise Institute*.

## Daniel Dennett

HERE ARE TWO BOOKS about biology that read like novels, and two novels that have haunted my imagination for decades:

The novels are *Moby-Dick*, in the famous Modern Library edition with the Rockwell Kent illustrations, each of them branded on my memory since I first encountered them as a 12-year-old reader; and John Barth's *The Sot-Weed Factor*, a hilarious, bawdy romp through the late 17th century, the tale of

Ebenezer Cooke, poet and virgin (as he styles himself), who makes his way to the colonies to take up a position as a tobacco (sot-weed) expediter. Barth mixes history (and historical gossip) with fiction, the whole written in the English of Henry Fielding and John Locke, a dazzling and subversive retelling of early American history.

The nonfiction titles are *Wetware*, Dennis Bray's elegant little book about the talents of microbes and how the protein networks cycling inside them serve as their nervous systems, and *The Ancestor's Tale*, Richard Dawkins' elegant large book: a journey backwards in time from us human beings through our primate ancestors all the way back through the fish to the bacteria, gathering a wealth of astonishing details about life forms and lucid explanations of the theoretical ideas that discipline the journey.

**Daniel Dennett** is the Austin B. Fletcher Professor of Philosophy at Tufts University and the author of *Intuition Pumps And Other Tools for Thinking* (W.W. Norton).

## Ben Domenech

FOR MUCH OF THE PAST YEAR, I and a handful of other writers have been debating the concept of libertarian populism, a growing political movement that I believe represents a potentially dramatic new fusionism that moves beyond the Cold War and War on Terror formations of the right's coalition. In the course of writing on this topic, I have turned to several books, old and new, for ideas and concepts that inform the understanding we have of where the coalition of the right was in the past, and where it is headed today.

Whether you are interested in the concept of libertarian populism or not, I strongly recommend a return to the following books as you consider the direction the right ought to take in the years ahead. Here are three that you have likely already read: Frédéric Bastiat's *The Law*; Charles Murray's *In Pursuit: Of Happiness and Good Government*; and Thomas Sowell's *Intellectuals and Society*, of which there is now an updated edition. And here are three you may have missed: Jonathan Last's *What to Expect When No One's Expecting*, the most entertaining book about demography and destiny you will ever read, and one that speaks to America's ongoing redefinition of the life well lived; Don Devine's *America's Way Back*, an alternate proposal for the nature

of fusionism in the post-Tea Party era; and Tim Carney's *Obamanomics*, which outlines an America where the biggest collection of welfare queens isn't located in impoverished inner cities, but headquartered on Wall Street and K Street, getting billion-dollar welfare checks from the government while the rest of us get stuck with the bill.

Here are an additional three books I enjoyed immensely this year:

First, David Pietrusza's *1920: The Year of the Six Presidents*, which is full of fascinating and colorful anecdotes about an election at the turning point of American history. Pietrusza is a brilliant historian with a great instinct for the odd characters underappreciated by others, and his affection for Calvin Coolidge is endearing.

Second, Thomas McCraw's *The Founders and Finance*, which recounts the unique history of Alexander Hamilton and Albert Gallatin, the two immigrants who transformed the fledgling United States from a potential banana republic into the most successful free market the world had ever seen. If you are like me, you will come away shocked at Thomas Jefferson's anti-market tendencies.

And third, A.E. Stallings' *Olives*, one of the most lovely collections of poetry in the new formalist style. Stallings' voice is incredible for its depth and range, but my favorite entry in her most recent collection is "Fairy Tale Logic," a poem about the "impossible tasks" which block the path of every hero and heroine in myth and legend—fanciful at first, but grim and clear-eyed in its denouement: "The will to do whatever must be done: / Marry a monster. Hand over your firstborn son."

**Ben Domenech** is publisher of the *Federalist* and a senior fellow at the *Heartland Institute*.

## Rod Dreher

MY SIX-YEAR-OLD Nora said to me recently that she feels so good going to Barnes & Noble "because there are books everywhere." That's my girl! Books are my favorite present to give and to get. Here are a few that I have in mind this year:

Dante's *Divine Comedy*, by, ahem, Dante. Somehow, I made it to middle age without having read this masterpiece. This year, staggering around the dark wood midway through the journey of my own life, I picked up the *Divine Comedy* and began reading. It has been transformative and redemptive. Beauty, sex, passion, love, tragedy,