

## The Last Hurrah Edwin Oconnor

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*Amusing Ourselves to Death* Palgrave Macmillan

What happens when media and politics become forms of entertainment? As our world begins to look more and more like Orwell's 1984, Neil's Postman's essential guide to the modern media is more relevant than ever. "It's unlikely that Trump has ever read *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, but his ascent would not have surprised Postman." -CNN Originally published in 1985, Neil Postman's groundbreaking polemic about the corrosive effects of television on our politics and public discourse has been hailed as a twenty-first-century book published in the twentieth century. Now, with television joined by more sophisticated electronic media—from the Internet to cell phones to DVDs—it has taken on even greater significance. *Amusing Ourselves to Death* is a prophetic look at what happens when politics, journalism, education, and even religion become subject to the demands of entertainment. It is also a blueprint for regaining control of our media, so that they can serve our highest goals. "A brilliant, powerful, and important book. This is an indictment that Postman has laid down and, so far as I can see, an irrefutable one." —Jonathan Yardley, *The Washington Post Book World*

*The Rascal King* Penguin

Has the Americanization of American Catholics--their cultural assimilation, that is--been a blessing or a curse for the Church in the United States? Or has it been a bit of both? In *The Gibbons Legacy* Russell Shaw takes a searching look at that question and reaches a disturbing conclusion. Cultural assimilation, which was ardently championed by churchmen like the great Cardinal James Gibbons of Baltimore around the turn of the last century, has undoubtedly conferred many benefits on Catholics. Their absorption into the secular culture of America, however, now threatens the Catholic identity of millions of faithful and of their institutions, such as schools, universities, and hospitals. Shaw does not offer this conclusion as an unsupported generalization. *The Gibbons Legacy* is a richly documented analysis of a process extending over two centuries. Colorful characters and dramatic incidents abound, including the nineteenth-century intellectual feud between Father Orestes Brownson and the Transcendentalist convert to Catholicism Isaac Hecker, Pope Leo

XIII's condemnation of Americanism, the anti-Catholicism that greeted the presidential campaigns of Al Smith and John F. Kennedy, and the numerous intra-Church conflicts that have divided American Catholics since the Second Vatican Council. In concluding his study, Shaw offers a number of thoughtprovoking suggestions about what the Church in America needs to do now in the face of an ongoing decline that is sapping its strength and may threaten its very survival.

*Land's End House of Stratus*

from "Mount Fuji" A draughtsman's draughtsman, Hokusai at 70 thought he'd begun to grasp the structures of birds and beasts, insects and fish, of the way plants grow, hoped that by 90 he'd have penetrated to their essential nature. And more, by 100, I will have reached the stage where every dot, every mark I make will be alive. You always loved that resolve, you'd repeat joyfully—Hokusai's utterance of faith in work's possibilities, its reward, that, at 130, he'd perhaps have learned to draw. Gail Mazur's poems in *Forbidden City* build an engaging meditative structure upon the elements of mortality and art, eloquently contemplating the relationship of art and life—and the dynamic possibilities of each in combination. At the collection's heart is the poet's long marriage to the artist Michael Mazur (1935 – 2009). A fascinating range of tone infuses the book—grieving, but clear-eyed rather than lugubrious, sometimes whimsical, even comical, and often exuberant. The note of pleasure, as in an old tradition enriched by transience, runs through the work, even in the final poem, "Grief," where "our ravenous hold on the world" is a powerful central element.

*Henry and Clara* Ignatius Press

"Until 2004 and the publication of "*A Short History of Boston*," there was no good short history of the city of Boston, not in print anyway. With economy and style, Dr. Robert Allison brings Boston history alive, from the Puritan theocracy of the seventeenth century to the Big Dig of the twenty-first. His book includes a wealth of illustrations, a lengthy chronology of the key events in four centuries of Boston history, and twenty short profiles of exceptional Bostonians, from founder John Winthrop to heavyweight champion John L. Sullivan, from "heretic" Anne Hutchinson to Russian-American author Mary Antin. Says the *Provincetown Arts*, "*A first-rate short history of the city, lavishly illustrated, lovingly written, and instantly the best book of its kind.*" "

*The Last Hurrah* Little Brown & Company

*The Last Hurrah* Boston ; Toronto : Little, Brown

*Late George Apley a Novel in the Form of a Memoir* Picador

A spirited and revealing memoir by the most celebrated editor of his time After editing *The Columbia Review*, staging plays at Cambridge, and a stint in the greeting-card department of Macy's, Robert

Gottlieb stumbled into a job at Simon and Schuster. By the time he left to run Alfred A. Knopf a dozen years later, he was the editor in chief, having discovered and edited *Catch-22* and *The American Way of Death*, among other bestsellers. At Knopf, Gottlieb edited an astonishing list of authors, including Toni Morrison, John Cheever, Doris Lessing, John le Carré, Michael Crichton, Lauren Bacall, Katharine Graham, Robert Caro, Nora Ephron, and Bill Clinton--not to mention Bruno Bettelheim and Miss Piggy. In *Avid Reader*, Gottlieb writes with wit and candor about succeeding William Shawn as the editor of *The New Yorker*, and the challenges and satisfactions of running America's preeminent magazine. Sixty years after joining Simon and Schuster, Gottlieb is still at it--editing, anthologizing, and, to his surprise, writing. But this account of a life founded upon reading is about more than the arc of a singular career--one that also includes a lifelong involvement with the world of dance. It's about transcendent friendships and collaborations, "elective affinities" and family, psychoanalysis and Bakelite purses, the alchemical relationship between writer and editor, the glory days of publishing, and--always--the sheer exhilaration of work. Photograph of Bob Gottlieb © by Jill Krementz

*All in the Family* University of Chicago Press

"A dark, suburban fantasy . . . richly funny, even whimsical, and bizarrely familiar." —*The New Yorker* In the seaside community of Donald Antrim's *Elect Mr. Robinson for a Better World*, the citizens are restless. The mayor has fired stinger missiles into the Botanical Garden reflecting pool, and his public execution was a messy affair. As these hawkish suburbanites fortify their houses with deadly moats and land mines, a former third-grade teacher named Pete Robinson steps forward with a tenuous bid to replace the mayor. But can anyone satisfy the terrible will of the people? By turns funny and phantasmagorical, fiercely intelligent and imaginative, Donald Antrim's story of suburban civics turned macabre is a new American classic.

*Wasps* University of Illinois Press

An engaged couple's lives are forever changed when they are invited to share the presidential box at Ford's Theater and witness Lincoln's assassination, an event that tragically heightens their awareness of nineteenth-century Victorian America. Reprint.

*The Last Hurrah* Loyola Press

The story of Father Hugh, a middle-aged priest who grew up with the Carmody children in Boston but fell prey to alcoholism. Eventually, he does come back to Old St. Paul's, but he cuts himself off from any awareness of life going on. However, when the Carmodys come back into his life, things begin to happen.

*The Last Hurrah* Macmillan

With her latest poetry collection, Gail Mazur once again shows her mastery of the descriptive-meditative narrative, powerfully evoking the past while writing from the firm ground of the present. In *Land's End*, we see Mazur writing with the kind of lyric authority, ever-deepening emotional range, and intellectual and social scope that her readers have come to expect in her poetry. Beautifully crafted elegies meet with reflections on her own life, her family, and artists who have come and gone. In the title poem, she leads readers through a garden, where new and old growth twists together in an "almanac of inheritances" that conjures the rich memory of poets who have passed on. In this space of remembrance, Mazur also charges us with the responsibility of nurturing art and artists of the future, especially in the face of the disheartening absurdities of contemporary politics. Contemplating the growth and decay so entwined in life, these poems invite us to consider both inevitable brokenness and necessary hope, writing "My work now: to continue learning to absorb the loss, / and live." Through tidal creeks and the weightless scenes of ukiyo-e woodcuts, in artists' studios and along the frozen Charles River, Mazur connects passionately with the world around her. Carrying with her the undeniable presence of loss and of time past, she engages deeply with the present, her historic memory informing a deep concern for contemporary life. Reading *Land's End*, we find ourselves with the poet: as if here at land's end, here on the coast, urgent,

together we'd have energies to do battle forever. As if we could rescue the guttering world....

*Walking in Her Shoes* Crown

*Irish American Fiction from World War II to JFK* addresses the concerns of Irish America in the post-war era by studying its fiction and the authors who brought the communities of their youth to life on the page. With few exceptions, the novels studied here are lesser-known works, with little written about them to date. Mining these tremendous resources for the details of Irish American life, this book looks back to the beginning of the twentieth century, when the authors' immigrant grandparents were central to their communities. It also points forward to the twenty-first century, as the concerns these authors had for the future of Irish America have become a legacy we must grapple with in the present.

*The last Hurrah* The Last Hurrah

This classic tale of shipwreck and survival is reprinted with essays that provide a historical perspective and trace the sources from which Kenneth Roberts (1885-1957) drew his tale. A native Mainer, Roberts, whose historical novels include *Northwest Passage* and *Arundel*, was intrigued by the story of the December 1710 wreck of the *Nottingham*. After running aground a dozen miles offshore, the ship broke up, stranding her crew with minimal tools, scant shelter, and a few pieces of cheese. The men survived nearly a month of screeching gales, sub-freezing temperatures, and driving snowstorms. During their ordeal they resorted to cannibalism and were finally rescued after one of them made it ashore on a crude raft. Included here are contemporary accounts from crew members, offering dramatically different versions of the true-life traumatic event and a fascinating counterpoint to Roberts' fictionalized version. A bestseller when published in 1956, *Boon Island* is a story of the ways that crisis can inspire the best—and worst—in human nature.

**Benjy** Aspen Publishers

When ""*The Last Hurrah*"" was published in 1956, the obscure Edwin O'Connor gained sudden wealth and fame. This biography covers his comfortable upbringing in Rhode Island, his formation at Notre Dame, his toil in journalism and television reviewing and more.

**While the Music Lasts** University of Chicago Press

Benjy is a very good little boy who never behaves badly, until a fairy grants him one wish.

*The Last Hurrah* Simon and Schuster

Leola Williams was a strong-willed, independent woman who only wanted to provide for her children. Growing up in Boston with her parents and eight siblings, she had a good life and never wanted for anything. At least that's what she told her six children. But Leola kept a secret; and a code of silence that reigned supreme throughout the family held that secret close. Following Leola's death, her youngest daughter embarks on a journey through her mother's pasta journey that takes her back more than sixty years to the discovery that Leola's life took a dramatic turn when she married handsome WWII soldier, James Williams. Determined to break the code of silence, she uncovers the truth of her mother's compelling and shocking past.

**Avid Reader** Da Capo

"A realistic Christian novel of hope in a non-Christian age."-*New England Quarterly* "A deeply felt and eloquently expressed work . . . A quiet, gentle novel of considerable insight and charm . . ."-*Library Journal* "O'Connor succeeds in delineating poignantly the overwhelming spiritual storms of the soul which assail the conscientious clergyman."-*The Christian Century* Winner of the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction In this moving novel, Father Hugh Kennedy, a recovering alcoholic, returns to Boston to repair his damaged priesthood. There he is drawn into the unruly world of the Carmodys, a sprawling, prosperous Irish family teeming with passion and riddled with secrets. The story of this entanglement is a beautifully rendered tale of grace and renewal, of friendship and longing, of loneliness and spiritual aridity giving way to hope.

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**Boon Island** Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Hollywood & God is a virtuosic performance, filled with crossings back and forth from cinematic chiaroscuro to a kind of unsettling desperation and disturbing—even lurid—hallucination. From the Baltimore Catechism to the great noir films of the last century to today's Elvis impersonators and Paris Hilton (an impersonator of a different sort), Robert Polito tracks the snares, abrasions, and hijinks of personal identities in our society of the spectacle, a place where who we say we are, and who (we think) we think we are fade in and out of consciousness, like flickers of light dancing tantalizingly on the silver screen. Mixing lyric and essay, collage and narrative, memoir and invention, *Hollywood & God* is an audacious book, as contemporary as it is historical, as sly and witty as it is devastatingly serious.

**The Boston Irish** Knopf

Organized thematically, this anthology provides a collective self-portrait of the New England mind. With an introductory essay on the origins of New England, a detailed chronology, and explanatory headnotes for each selection, the book is a welcoming introduction to a great American literary tradition and a treasury of vivid writing that defines what it has meant, over nearly four centuries, to be a New Englander.

**The Edge of Sadness** Vintage

Kennedy's *O Albany!* is in part the non-fictional stories he covered in his novels, *Legs* and *Billy Phelan's Greatest Game*. Kennedy retells the exploits of the bootlegger Jack 'Legs' Diamond, the bungled 1933 kidnapping of John O'Connell, Jr., heir to the Albany Democratic machine and explores the Albany of his past, including its demographics and vanished neighborhoods.

**The Last Hurrah and the Edge of Sadness** Penguin

*Going After Cacciato* (winner of the National Book Award in 1979) was widely acclaimed as one of the most powerful and emotionally vivid novels about Vietnam. Now, writing with the same sharp, richly expressive language, the same edgy dark humor and complete honesty, and the same rawness of nerve and energy, Tim O'Brien gives us an equally powerful novel about growing up as a child of anxiety—the big anxiety, the one that's been with us since the fifties, when we finally realized that Einstein's theories translated into Russian. It's 1995 and William Cowling is digging a hole in his backyard. He is forty-nine, and after years and years of pent-up terror he has finally found the courage of a fighting man. And so a hole. A hole that he hopes will one day be large enough to swallow up his almost fifty years' worth of fear. A hole that causes his twelve-year-old daughter to call him a "nutto," and his wife to stop speaking to him. A hole that William will not stop digging and out of which rise scenes of his past to play themselves out in his memory. The scenes take him back to his quietly peculiar adolescence (No. 2 pencils had a surprising significance), to his college days, down into the underground, and up through several stabs at "normal" adulthood . . . they take him from Montana to Florida, from Cuba to California, from Kansas to New York to Germany and back to Montana as he makes his way through an often mystifying—but just as often hilarious—labyrinth of fears and desires, obsessions and obligations, blessed madness and less-than-blessed sobriety . . . they take him into the lives of a shrink who's a whiz a role reversal and of a dizzying eccentric cheerleader; of radical misfits and misfit radicals; of an ethereal stewardess (the traveling man's dream); and two guerilla commandos who mix shtick and nightmare in their tactical brew. And each scene is a reminder of the unbargained-for-terror that has guided him to the bottom of his hole. For this digging is his final act of "prudence and sanity"—he's taking control, getting there first, robbing his fears of their power to destroy . . . or so he believes. But is this act really sane? Is his daughter's estimation of his emotional well-being ("pretty buggo, too") the only truly sane statement being made? Is sanity even the issue? In the dazzling final scenes, William turns from the hole—from his past and from his future 0 to himself, digging deeper and deeper to find his answers. *The Nuclear Age* is pyrotechnically funny and moving, courageous and irreverent. It takes on our supreme unacknowledged terror (whose reality we both refuse to accept and all too easily accommodate ourselves to), finds its lunatic core, and shapes it into a story that speaks of, and to, an entire age: our own, our nuclear age. It is an extraordinary novel.