

Jay Langdale
Andrew College
The Philadelphia Society
Dallas, Texas, April 2, 2011

The Idea of Progress in America Before and After Progressivism

Two decades ago, Christopher Lasch opened his work The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics with what he notably described as a “deceptively simple” query. “How does it happen,” Lasch wondered, “that serious people continue to believe in progress, in the face of massive evidence that might have been expected to refute the idea of progress once and for all?”¹ Over the course of the twentieth century, Lasch was among a host of scholars, including the British historian J.B. Bury, the American historian Arthur Ekirch and the American Sociologist Robert Nisbet, who examined the intellectual history of the “idea of progress.”² Lasch’s The True and Only Heaven, though, was distinguishable from the others in both its attempt to assess the late twentieth century consequences of the idea as well as in its insistence that there were profound differences between the prophetic Christian view of history and the modern notion of progress. The difference, Lasch maintained, was that modern views of progress did not so much offer “the promise of a secular utopia that would bring history to a happy ending,” as much as they held out “the promise of steady improvement with no foreseeable ending at all.”³ Generally speaking, Lasch’s observation continues to provide a useful starting point for a consideration of the idea of progress in modern America and, as this paper will argue, the entirety of the American experience.

At the outset, it is useful to recall that Lasch’s 1965 book The New Radicalism in America 1889-1963 was premised upon what he viewed as a sea change in American intellectual life commencing with the Progressive Era in American history. In the preface, Lasch disclosed that the book originated from his then emergent skepticism of “pragmatic liberalism” and what he described as its devotion to the “national purpose.”⁴ Indeed, Lasch’s burgeoning mistrust of pragmatism, it might be said, consistently informed his life’s work and, in many respects, reached its completion in The True and Only Heaven. In short, Lasch contended that that the ascendance of pragmatic liberalism during the late nineteenth century represented a monumental shift in the American faith in progress. While, as he notes, the pragmatic promise of “perpetual progress” rather than of a utopian end transformed the fashion in which the idea was propagated, what is, perhaps, less apparent is the manner in which American critics of the idea of progress were likewise compelled to adjust their arguments before and after the Progressive/Pragmatic turn of the late nineteenth century.

From its founding in the middle of the modern age, America’s blessing and its burden has been, the historian John Lukacs notes, the relative “absence of intellectual traditions older than those of the Enlightenment.”⁵ In many respects, this circumstance is the foundation of the notion of American exceptionalism which rests considerably upon an unfettered faith in progress. In terms of the origins of American singularity and its relation to notions of progress, it might be said that the Puritan idea centered upon mastering time via a New England “city on a hill” whereas the Virginia Cavalier’s notion of progress centered upon mastering space via a Tidewater plantation. While the Constitution of 1789 represented an attempt to devise an

experiment in republican government, it was, perhaps, more importantly an uneasy effort to synchronously reconcile these progressive visions.

During the decade and a half before their deaths on the same day in 1826, the incrementally conciliatory correspondence between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson nonetheless found the New Englander considerably more skeptical than the Virginian of the idea of progress. “I am bold to say,” Adams wrote to Jefferson in 1814, “that neither you nor I will live to see the course which the “wonders of the times” will take.” From this, Adams proceeded to describe himself as “a believer in the probable improvability and improvement [of] human affairs” who, nonetheless, refused to countenance what he described as the “doctrine of the perfectibility of the human mind.”⁶ The often-celebrated reconciliation of the old foes from Washington’s cabinet did not, it seems, extend to a shared perspective on the idea of progress. Indeed, even late in their lives, Jefferson’s overwhelming optimism stood in stark contrast even to what had become Adams’ reluctant skepticism. In 1824, Jefferson wrote that “we have under our eyes tolerable proofs of [progress].”

And where this progress will stop no one can say. Barbarism has, in the meantime, been receding before the steady step of amelioration; and will in time, I trust, disappear from the earth.⁷

While Jefferson’s faith in progress was of an entirely different order and magnitude than Adams’, it was also visibly focused upon space and, especially, upon projecting civilization and progress westward. Jefferson, as complicated and contradictory as he was, was remarkably consistent in his equation of progress with the American westering impulse. In 1780, in the midst of the revolutionary war, Jefferson wrote of establishing what he described as an “Empire of liberty” extending progressively westward and two decades later, as president, he, in no small part, fulfilled this vision by acquiring the Louisiana territory.⁸

By 1815, “Americans,” Henry Adams, the great-grandson of John Adams, later wrote, “for the first time...ceased to doubt the path they were to follow.” “Not only,” he noted, “was the unity of their nation established, but its probable divergence from older societies was,” he observed, “also well defined.” In much the same vein as his great-grandfather, Henry Adams went on to question whether the frequently cited increase in American intelligence following the War of 1812 had actually, in any sense, belonged to a “high order.”⁹ In many regards, Henry Adams was, like Christopher Lasch, both profoundly skeptical of the idea of progress and intensely preoccupied with discerning whether the American version of the idea was merely an extension of the Enlightenment or whether it was, somehow, distinctively American.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, it was a pair of Frenchmen who, during the first half century of the American nation, most famously sought an answer to this question. In 1782, Hector St. John de Crevecoeur, after rhetorically questioning just what type of creature was “the American, this new man,” described the prototypical American as a “western pilgrim” who was progressing towards “finish[ing] the great circle” and would inevitably “cause great changes in the world.”¹⁰ Nearly fifty years later, these same concerns motivated the Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville to cross that Atlantic for an extended study of the American character. “The Anglo-Americans,” Tocqueville later observed in *Democracy in America*, “have a lively faith in human perfectibility; they judge that the diffusion of enlightenment will necessarily produce useful results, that ignorance will bring fatal effects; all [Americans] consider society as a body of

progress.”¹¹ In a subsequent chapter, Tocqueville noted that “Aristocratic nations are naturally brought to contract the limits of human perfectibility too much [while] democratic nations sometimes extended them beyond measure.”¹² This assumed limitlessness among Americans, Tocqueville understood, stemmed also from their being told, he wrote, “that fortune is to be found somewhere toward the west, and they go off in haste to meet it.”¹³

During the decades preceding the Civil War, Americans, North and South, demonstrated an intense preoccupation with the idea of progress. Human perfectibility, progress and the West were the subject of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s 1844 short-story “Earth’s Holocaust.” In the tale, American settlers on the western prairies consign to a vast bonfire everything venerated by ages past including pedigrees, titles, millions of books, weapons of war, alcohol, tobacco and money. Their quest to restore innocence is, however, interrupted by a “dark-complexioned personage” who reminds the settlers that there is one thing that they, in their infinite wisdom, forgot to throw into the fire: the “human heart.”¹⁴ Hawthorne’s resurrection of the specter of human depravity stood in stark contrast to his neighbor Ralph Emerson’s celebratory faith in human progress through self-reliance and to Orestes Brownson’s 1842 proclamation that Americans were nothing less than the “people of the future.”¹⁵ Walt Whitman, in an 1846 newspaper editorial, pronounced that, within three decades, “America” would be the “first nation on earth” and that Americans could expect to be at the center of “the great future of this Western world.”¹⁶ That same year, no less than John C. Calhoun of South Carolina extolled the inevitability of progress on the floor of the Senate. “Civilization,” Calhoun observed, “has been spreading its influence far and wide, and the general progress of human society has outstripped all that had been previously witnessed.”¹⁷ During the early 1850s, the militantly proslavery Georgia governor Joseph Lumpkin, echoing Calhoun, insisted that “the standstill doctrine must be forsaken, and forward, forward, be henceforth the watchword.”¹⁸

Clearly, Hawthorne’s was, at best, a minority voice on notions of progress during the era preceding the Civil War. The war itself, though it certainly revolved around the issues of slavery and state’s rights, was equally a struggle over competing visions of the idea of progress in America. Abraham Lincoln, in 1855, saw only what he notably described as “progress in degeneracy,” but nonetheless, in his 1858 “House Divided” speech, evinced faith that the union would inevitably progress, presumably in either depravity or nobility, towards becoming “all one thing or all the other.” In this regard, John Gast’s 1872 painting titled “American Progress,”

signified the fulfillment of Lincoln's prophecy.



The painting, which features the "Angel Columbia" hovering over the western frontier, was accompanied by an engraving which explained that:

In the foreground, the central and principal figure, a beautiful and charming Female, is floating westward through the air bearing on her forehead the "Star of Empire...." On the right of the picture is a city, steamships, manufactories, schools and churches over which beams of light are streaming and filling the air--indicative of civilization. The general tone of the picture on the left declares darkness, waste and confusion. From the city proceed the three great continental lines of railway.... Next to these are the transportation wagons, overland stage, hunters, gold seekers, pony express, pioneer emigrant and the warrior dance of the "noble red man." Fleeing from "Progress"...are Indians, buffaloes, wild horses, bears, and other game, moving Westward, ever Westward, the Indians with their squaws, papooses, and "pony lodges," turn their despairing faces towards, as they flee the wondrous vision. The "Star" is too much for them.¹⁹

Completed less than a decade after half a million Americans perished in the Civil War, Gast's painting remains, perhaps, the best visual evidence of the triumph of the Northern ideal of providential progress in late nineteenth century America. More importantly, insofar as Gast's depiction of the Angel Columbia conspicuously lacks a representation of the putative end to which she is hovering, the observer is left with the decided impression that her ascension is limitless.

Much as Gast's painting, the philosophy of pragmatism, as it developed during this era, also stands in testimony to the resiliency of the idea of progress. What began as a philosophical quest by Union veteran and future Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes to forestall the "certitude" which he believed led to the "violence" of Civil War culminated in William James' insistence that "ideals ought to aim at the transformation of reality" so as to, among other things, make it impossible for people to be driven to violence by their beliefs. Pragmatism, as Lasch notes, sought to achieve this by postulating a novel version of limitless progress with no foreseeable end.²⁰ Equally significant, there was, around this same time, an analogous progressive transformation of American conservatism which, as part of what Clinton Rossiter subsequently described as the "Great Train Robbery of American Intellectual History," closely aligned conservatism with material progress and unfettered acquisitiveness.²¹

Indeed, the overwhelmingly progressive temper of late nineteenth century America reduced the cultural conservative Henry Adams to criticizing the secular and mechanistic spirit of the age via an autobiography written in the third person. In The Education, Adams famously lamented that:

He had stood up for his eighteenth century, his constitution of 1789, his George Washington, his Harvard College, his Quincy and his Plymouth Pilgrims as long as anyone would stand up with him. He had said it was hopeless twenty years before, but he kept on, in the same old attitude, by habit and taste, until he found himself altogether alone. He had hugged his antiquated dislike of bankers and capitalistic society until he had become little better than a crank.²²

Adams, Russell Kirk notes, was, above all else, "unmistakably and almost belligerently American."²³ As idiosyncratic as Adams' Education was, the book's insurmountable obstacle lay principally in its feckless attempt to criticize, through the lens of American history, not just the idea of progress, but to assail the ascendance, during Adams' own lifetime, of the modern vision of ceaseless improvement.

In apparent acknowledgment of Adams' dilemma, the New Humanists, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, focused their traditionalist conservative critique of progress upon historical circumstances which predated the American founding. Native Midwesterner and Harvard Professor Irving Babbitt condemned the corrupting influences of the romanticism of Jean Jacques Rousseau and the naturalism of Francis Bacon. Of course, insofar as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson were avid Baconians, Babbitt, it might be said, was mounting a rear-guard action against American exceptionalism's zeal for conquering nature "for the relief of man's estate." More than anything, Babbitt's cultural conservatism was emblematic of the assumption by men of letters, during the early twentieth century, of the burden which statesmen had resigned.²⁴ This was nowhere more apparent than in Babbitt's criticism of the First World War. Babbitt mused that "an age that thought it was progressing to a 'far off divine event,' and turned out instead to be progressing towards Armageddon, [had] suffered... from some fundamental confusion in its notion of progress."²⁵

Ironically, it was, in large part, the First World War which inspired Babbitt's former student T.S. Eliot to expose what he viewed as the New Humanism's theological and intellectual shortcomings. In his final analysis, Eliot judged humanism to be only slightly better than "very liberal Protestant theology." Indeed, it might be said that Eliot, a remarkably stern critic of

progress himself, converted to Anglicanism and left America for England in 1927 because he, in part, found the dilemma of American exceptionalism to be philosophically and theologically insurmountable. This, however, did not keep him from reaching back across the Atlantic to enlist a band of Southern Fugitive Poets in his anti-modern crusade. Like Eliot's, the Fugitives' realist inclinations had been deepened by the horrors of the Great War and by the threat that progress and industrialization posed to traditionalism. The latter motivated them to band together, in 1930, to produce the manifesto I'll Take My Stand.

As heirs to a defeated polity whose notion of progress had, by this time, been dead for over a half century, the Agrarians were not constrained in their critique of progress by the specter of American exceptionalism. Indeed, the advantage that the Agrarians believed was conferred by this circumstance was implicit in their declaration that they "all tend[ed] to support a Southern way of life against what might be called the American or prevailing way." The manifesto was framed as an indictment of industrialism, but it might be more aptly described as an indictment of the idea of progress and especially of what the authors notably described as "industrial progress." In the end, the Agrarian manifesto betrayed a collective sense that, though the immediate target was the specter of "industrial progress," the real enemy of civilization was what Lasch later described as "the promise of steady improvement with no foreseeable ending at all." Indeed, in what appears to be his only mention of the Agrarians in his vast body of work, Lasch, in the The New Radicalism, lauded I'll Take My Stand for its assault on the "gospel of progress" and for its recognition that any restoration would be cultural rather than political.

In numerous regards, the saga of the Agrarians is testimony to the near insurmountable nature of the vision of modern perpetual progress. As described in the manifesto's "Statement of Principles," the Agrarian restoration rested principally on three things: Southern exceptionalism, religion and the arts. In terms of Southern distinctiveness, it was increasingly waning as the region's economic fortunes improved over the course of the twentieth century. The need to somehow continue to honor this exceptionalism, in numerous respects, fatally complicated the attempt, led by Allen Tate, to locate what Richard Weaver later called "an older religiousness" in the Southern past. Tate, who eventually in resignation, converted to Catholicism in 1950, had long maintained that the South should have been Catholic, and, by extension, ultimately judged that the Agrarians had been "idolaters" who were worshipping a "perishable God."²⁶ Insofar as John Lukacs located America's dilemma in the absence of intellectual traditions older than the Enlightenment, Tate, it might be said, essentially found that the South's defect lay in the absence of religious traditions older than the Reformation.

Despite the final regional and religious shortcomings of Agrarianism, Ransom, Davidson and Tate were, it is fair to say, considerably more effective in their deployment of the literary arts as an antidote to the idea of progress. Obviously, the corpus of poems, novels and essays produced by the Agrarians and their intellectual descendents stands in testimony to this. However, these were all arguably less important to their critique of the idea of progress than was their elaboration of the New Literary Criticism during the 1940s and 1950s. In short, the New Criticism endeavored to re-assert literature as both an alternative and equally important form of knowledge to that rendered by empirical science and mathematical logic. Towards this end, the New Critics elevated ambiguity, irony and paradox as essential to great literature and as requisite to arriving at a proper understanding of human complexity. In this regard, the New Criticism,

especially its furtherance of irony, endeavored to reassert the fallenness of man and the reality of human limits over and against the modern vision of perpetual progress with no discernable end.

In his 1952 work *The Irony of American History*, Reinhold Niebuhr, in the spirit of the New Criticism, maintained that the “paths of progress” in the American past have proven to be more devious and less predictable than the putative managers of history could understand.” Niebuhr, further observed that the “ironic elements in American history” could be overcome only if “American idealism comes to terms with,” what he described as, “the limits of all human striving.”²⁷ While important in its own right, Niebuhr’s work is commonly held to have, in part, inspired President Carter’s 1979 “Crisis of Confidence.” Carter, who personally consulted Christopher Lasch for assistance with the address, called upon the nation to recover a sense of limits, humility and civil obligation. Though long derided as an act of incompetence, Carter’s speech stands as, perhaps, the only time that a sitting American president has spoken disparagingly of the idea of progress. In the aftermath of Carter’s largely politically ineffectual term in office, Ronald Reagan’s routine evocations of a “shining city on a hill” were, if anything, reminders that presidents are bound not to deviate from the narrative of progress and American exceptionalism. Indeed, David Brooks, on the occasion of Reagan’s death, insisted that in order “to understand the intellectual content of Reagan’s optimism, [one must] start with conservatism before Reagan.” It had been, Brooks continued, “largely a movement of disenfranchised thinkers who placed great emphasis on human frailty and sin, the limitations of what we know, and the tragic nature of history.”²⁸ In light of Brooks’ description of the final importance of the Reagan Revolution, it is little wonder that Mel Bradford, a latter day Agrarian with New Critical sympathies, stood little chance of becoming chairman of the NEH under “The Gipper.”

Over the now three decades since Reagan’s election, there have been a handful of American men of letters who have spoken to the limits of the idea of progress. Over his literary career, the novelist Cormac McCarthy has been as stern a critic as any of the idea. In a 1992 *New York Times* interview, the ordinarily reclusive McCarthy remarked: “There’s no such thing as life without bloodshed. I think the notion that the species can be improved in some way, that everyone could live in harmony, is a really dangerous idea. Those who are afflicted with this notion are the first ones to give up their souls, their freedom. Your desire that it be that way will enslave you and make your life vacuous.”²⁹ In his 2005 novel *No Country For Old Men*, McCarthy translated this sentiment into a monologue by Sheriff Bell which unsurprisingly did not make it into the award winning film adaptation. Bell, in what is supposed to be the year 1980, recalls meeting a self-styled progressive woman from Corpus Christi who, he notes,

was the wife of somebody or other. And she kept talking about right wing this and right wing that. I aint even sure what she meant by it...She kept on, kept on. Finally told me, said: I don’t like the way this country is headed. I want my granddaughter to be able to have an abortion. And I said well mam I don’t think you got any worries...They way I see it goin I don’t have much doubt what she’ll be able to have an abortion. I’m goin to say that not only will she be able to have an abortion, she’ll be able to put you to sleep. Which pretty much ended the conversation.³⁰

Insofar as the Pragmatist Richard Rorty insisted that the focus of philosophy should no longer be a search for incontrovertible truth, but rather furtherance of a perpetual “conversation of

mankind,” McCarthy, through Sheriff Bell, halts this dialogue. Indeed, McCarthy’s body of work can be read as a seamless interrogation of American exceptionalism and the myth of progress which, among other things, dispels Jefferson’s belief that “barbarism” would somehow inevitably “disappear from the earth.”

In gentler, but no less effective terms, Wendell Berry has, over the last three decades, also endlessly challenged the idea of progress in his poetry, fiction and essays. In a 2008 *Harper’s* piece, Berry questioned whether “what we call the American Way of Life will [finally] prove somehow indestructible.” After tracing a genealogy of American notions of limitless progress, Berry turns to Christopher Marlowe’s Tragical History of Dr. Faustus and relates his astonishment upon rediscovering Mephistophilis’ description of hell. Berry, in a passage that succinctly deepens understanding of Lasch’s description of the consequences of belief in perpetual progress, observes that:

When Faustus asks, “How comes it then that thou art out of hell?” Mephistophilis replies, “Why this is hell, nor am I out of it.” And a few pages later he explains: Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed; In one self place, but where we [the damned] are is hell, And where hell is must we ever be.³¹

McCarthy’s and Berry’s critiques of the idea of progress notably rely on provocations of a profound sense of irony. Much the same might be said, in conclusion, regarding the late Richard John Neuhaus’ 2005 essay “My American Babylon.” Noting that there was, at present, a “striking scarcity of thinking about America theologically,” Neuhaus proceeded to trace a genealogy of the “idea of America” from the Puritans to George W. Bush.³² Somewhat redolent of the unmistakable and belligerent Americanness of Henry Adams, Neuhaus noted that he firmly expected to meet God as an American. However, Neuhaus, proceeding to recast American exceptionalism away both from the prophetic Christian and the modern perpetual vision of progress, cautioned that: “God is not indifferent to the American experiment, and therefore we who are called to think about God and his ways through time dare not be indifferent to the American experiment.” Neuhaus, in something of a transposition of Christopher Lasch’s evocation of the “true and only heaven” as an antidote to the modern idea of progress, wrote in conclusion that “American is not uniquely Babylon, but it is our place in Babylon.”³³ In the end, late twentieth and early twenty-first century American critics of the idea of progress like Neuhaus, Berry and McCarthy assail the modern faith in perpetual improvement by reminding us that progress is a not merely an American dilemma, but one which, in the words of J.B. Bury, finally “bears on the mystery of life.”³⁴

¹ Christopher Lasch, The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics (New York: Norton, 1991), 13.

² J.B. Bury, The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into its Origins and Growth (New York: Dover, 1932); Arthur Ekirch, The Idea of Progress in America, 1815-1860 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944); Roger Nisbet, History of the Idea of Progress (New York: Basic, 1980).

³ Christopher Lasch, The True and Only Heaven, 47.

⁴ Lasch, The New Radicalism in America 1889-1963: The Intellectual as Social Type (New York: Knopf, 1965), xvi.

⁵ John Lukacs, A New Republic: A History of the United States in the Twentieth Century (New Haven: Yale, 2004), 435.

-
- ⁶ John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, 16 July 1814, The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States, Volume 10 (Boston: Little Brown, 1850-56), 100-101.
- ⁷ Thomas Jefferson to William Ludlow, 6 September 1824, The Writings of Thomas Jefferson, Volume 16 (Washington: Taylor and Maury, 1853-57), 74-75.
- ⁸ Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 27 April 1809, Looney, J. Jefferson, ed. The Papers of Thomas Jefferson: Retirement Series, Volume 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 169.
- ⁹ Henry Adams, History of the United States, Volume IX (New York: A&C Boni, 1930), 220.
- ¹⁰ Crevecoeur, Letters From an American Farmer (Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1793), 46.
- ¹¹ Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 359.
- ¹² Tocqueville, Democracy in America, 428.
- ¹³ Tocqueville, Democracy in America, 269.
- ¹⁴ Nathaniel Hawthorne, "Earth's Holocaust" in Mosses From an Old Manse (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1863), 188-89.
- ¹⁵ Brownson, "Young America," New York Mirror, XX (22 October 1842), 338.
- ¹⁶ Walt Whitman, "American Futurity" quoted in Ekirch, The Idea of Progress in America, 52.
- ¹⁷ John C. Calhoun, The Papers of John C. Calhoun (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1978), 700.
- ¹⁸ Joseph H. Lumpkin, "Industrial Regeneration of the South," DeBow's Review 5(1852), 43.
- ¹⁹ Quoted in Peter Conn, Literature in America: An Illustrated History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 236.
- ²⁰ Lewis Menand, The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America (New York: Farrar Strauss and Giroux, 2001), 61,440. William James, The Letters of William James, Volume II (Boston: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1920), 269-70.
- ²¹ Clinton Rossiter, Conservatism in America: The Thankless Persuasion (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1966), 128-62.
- ²² Henry Adams, The Education of Henry Adams (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1918), 343-44.
- ²³ Russell Kirk, The Conservative Mind (Washington: Regnery Publishing, 1953), 357.
- ²⁴ Russell Kirk, The Conservative Mind, 417.
- ²⁵ Quoted in Richard Gamble, The War for Righteousness: Progressive Christianity, the Great War and the Rise of the Messianic Nation (Wilmington: Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2003), 233.
- ²⁶ Allen Tate to Andrew Lytle, 23 December 1954 in Young and Sarcone, eds., The Lytle-Tate Letters: The Correspondence of Andrew Lytle and Allen Tate (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1987), 243-44.
- ²⁷ Reinhold Niebuhr, The Irony of American History (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1952), 78, 133.
- ²⁸ David Brooks, "Reagan's Promised Land," New York Times, 8 June 2004.
- ²⁹ Richard Woodward, "Cormac McCarthy's Venemous Fiction," New York Times, 19 April 1992.
- ³⁰ Cormac McCarthy, No Country for Old Men (New York: Vintage, 2005), 196-197.
- ³¹ Wendell Berry, "Faustian Economics" Harper's (May 2008), 38-39.
- ³² Richard Neuhaus, "Our American Babylon," First Things (December 2005), 67.
- ³³ Richard Neuhaus, "Our American Babylon," 81.
- ³⁴ Bury, The Idea of Progress, 3.