

# Wall Street Dreads a Biden-Trump Rematch

BY CARA LOMBARDO

On a farm in upstate New York recently, Wall Street types groused about the coming presidential election in between bites of roast pig.

Billionaire money manager Mario Gabelli and banker Ralph Schlosstein were among the guests at former Honeywell Chief Executive David Cote's Carnivore Ball—a celebration of all things meat—that featured lively discussions of potential business-friendly candidates who could shake up the 2024 race. A few meat-lovers spent the evening urging Ray McGuire, the La-Zard president and former

New York City mayoral candidate, to run.

With less than a year until the primaries, politicians' wealthiest benefactors are sizing up the presidential hopefuls soliciting their donations. But many on Wall Street find the prospect of a Biden-Trump rematch unappetizing.

Wall Street likes President Biden's steady hand and cabinet picks like Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo, but his aggressive stance on antitrust enforcement has turned off potential backers whose profits depend on a healthy supply of corporate deals. And while another Trump term could deliver the traditional Republican

goodies of lower taxes and less regulation, financiers are worried that the former president's unpredictability could wreak havoc on global markets.

"Everybody is hoping for a miracle," said one senior deal maker, one of more than 20 people The Wall Street Journal spoke with to gauge Wall Street's mood around the election. "Nobody wants Biden, and nobody wants Trump."

A Trump campaign spokesman said the former president is supported by Americans from all backgrounds. A Biden spokesman declined to comment.

Reliable blue financers such as Centervue's Blair Efron,

Blackstone's Jonathan Gray and deal maker Antonio Weiss are expected to support Biden, even as others quietly float long-shot names to replace him on the Democratic ticket. Jamie Dimon, whose name has swirled as a potential candidate for years, recently got an earful from a fellow billionaire who wishes the JPMorgan Chase CEO would run, according to people familiar with the matter.

Meanwhile, Wall Street Republicans are reluctant to support former President Donald Trump and are mulling other options, including Ron DeSantis. The Florida governor made his candidacy official Wednesday.

DeSantis has yet to win over many in the business community, in part due to his escalating legal battle with Walt Disney.

Another GOP candidate, Vivek Ramaswamy, is one of Wall Street's own, with stints at Goldman Sachs and a hedge fund. But his financial pedigree hasn't been enough to overcome his far-right stances on some social issues. Billionaire investor Bill Ackman backed away from an earlier prediction that the "Woke, Inc." author would win the 2024 election, but said Ramaswamy is still better than the current alternatives.

South Carolina Republicans

Nikki Haley and Sen. Tim Scott have been making pilgrimages to New York and Palm Beach for one-on-ones with the biggest donors.

"I am hoping it is not Trump," said Ken Langone, the billionaire financier who co-founded Home Depot. The one-time Trump supporter said he is closely watching DeSantis and others in the field, similar to Citadel founder Ken Griffin.

No Labels, a group focused on supporting centrist lawmakers, has been steadily adding Wall Street supporters. No Labels is considering running a moderate like West Virginia Democratic Sen. Joe Manchin as an independent candidate.

## U.S. WATCH

DETROIT

### Supply Deal Reached With Asian Nations

The U.S. and 13 other Asia-Pacific nations agreed to expand supply-chain cooperation, delivering an early win in a new U.S.-led initiative to strengthen economic ties with the region's friendly nations amid rising tensions with China.

But some trade officials questioned the Biden administration's growing focus on protecting domestic jobs and bolstering U.S. manufacturing, saying these policies hurt smaller or less-healthy nations that rely heavily on exports to expand their economies.

The supply-chain agreement is part of the Biden administration's effort to work more closely with allies and friendly nations in the Asia-Pacific under a group called the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, which covers issues such as digital trade, clean energy and tax policies, as a way to counter China.

Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo said the U.S. hopes to conclude the overall IPEF negotiations by the summit meeting of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation nations in San Francisco in November, which President Biden will host.

Under the new pact, the countries will begin working together to strengthen supply chains in critical sectors and set up a mechanism to prevent and respond to emergencies similar to the semiconductor shortages seen during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We learned the hard way during the pandemic...how intertwined these global supply chains are," Raimondo said, noting that shutdowns in Malaysian factories caused chip shortages that forced Michigan auto facilities to close and furlough workers. The new cooperation "absolutely would have helped us secure American jobs and keep supply chains moving."

Amid continued skepticism of free-trade policy among U.S. lawmakers, many worry that worried about trade's impact on American jobs, the IPEF doesn't include tariff reduction and other enforceable market-opening measures that were the trademark of traditional free-trade agreements.

At the Detroit meetings this week, U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai emphasized the administration's workercentric trade policy that maximizes benefits for the U.S. middle class.

"For too long, our trade policies have been focused on liberalization, efficiencies and lowering costs," she said at a panel featuring U.S. labor union leaders.

—Yuka Hayashi

NEW JERSEY

### Teen Dies at Unguarded Beach

A 15-year-old boy died and several other victims were taken to hospitals after six people were pulled from the ocean at an unguarded New Jersey beach over the weekend, authorities said.

Officials said it happened at about 4:30 p.m. Sunday at Sandy Hook in the Gateway National Recreation Area. Daphne Yun, a spokesperson for the National Park Service, said the six were swimming at Beach B, which has no lifeguards.

Sandy Hook lifeguards responded from other nearby beaches. First responders from nearby Sea Bright and Highlands joined them in pulling the victims from the water. The boy and two other victims were taken to Monmouth Medical Center in Long Branch, where he was pronounced dead.

—Associated Press

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# OPINION

## McCarthy Earns the Speakership



POTOMAC WATCH  
By Kimberly A. Strassel

A week can feel like an eon in Washington, while six months passes in a flash.

Kevin McCarthy triumphantly caps this long week of a debt-ceiling showdown, his painful January feels like a distant memory.

The House speaker notched a real win this week, when the House passed 314-117 a spending-reform bill negotiated almost entirely on Republican terms. The legislation is no panacea to federal ill health, though it marks a sharp reversal from 18 months of Biden White House dominance. Equally important, it sent a loud message: Republicans can govern.

What a turnaround. Amid a "humiliating" 15 ballots to be elected speaker in January, the press insisted Mr. McCarthy was crippled, the token head of a "ragged GOP" stumbling "through the wilderness," assuming a speakership that would be a "nightmare" as it failed to manage "MAGA" radicals, "rebels" and "anarchy." As recently as mid-April, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer snuck on the sidelines, chiding Mr. McCarthy for "bothering with partisan wish lists" given that he lacked the GOP votes to pass them.

The dynamic changed entirely one week later, when the Californian got his four-

vote majority to deliver the only debt-ceiling bill in town, forcing the White House to the table. That was the master stroke, and it's worth dissecting how Mr. McCarthy did it. Because it wasn't Lady Fortune or a sudden outbreak of GOP kumbaya. It was a deliberate, well-considered strategy that required hard work.

Nancy Pelosi's success with her narrow majority flowed from the iron fist she brought down on recalcitrants. That doesn't work in the more unruly GOP, as past Republican speakers will attest. And John Boehner's approach of stiff-arming the party's more conservative wing also excluded some spectacular blowouts, including Mr. Boehner's own.

Mr. McCarthy's strategy was to embrace his right—and his center, and his defense hawks, and his culture warriors, and everybody else—and to give the whole crew ownership. Mrs. Pelosi delivered marching orders; Mr. McCarthy decentralized. He gave the leaders of all five of his caucuses a seat at the leadership table and set the well-respected Louisiana Rep. Garret Graves to days and months of discussions. This wasn't an elite few dictating a bill; it was an entire conference hammering out the delicate trade-offs that became the April product. It was built to last.

The McCarthy team also wisely used those months to build trust by sticking to promises made during the speaker battle—in particular vows to return the House to regular order. In a Congress that had increasingly looked like a dictatorship, this produced a sea change. Members for the first time in years are conducting business in committees—holding markups, offering amendments, having debates. The devotion reassured the party that the McCarthy team had no intention of pulling a high-handed debt-ceiling fast one, even as it deepened personal relationships and added to civility.

**The debt-ceiling vote was the product of a deliberate, well-considered strategy.**

This approach has yielded far more than the April bill. The House GOP passed an ambitious energy reform in March and sweeping border legislation in May—again, despite a minuscule margin and competing agendas. While these are messaging bills—dead in the Senate—House Republicans are also unified on votes that put the White House on the back foot. Mr. Biden has been forced to veto House-Senate Congressional Review Act resolutions against his key regulations—including rules on waterways, ESG investing, and so-called offsets. House Republicans collected enough votes on their vote to overturn a lenient District of Columbia crime bill to compel Mr. Biden to sign it.

Mr. McCarthy couldn't have negotiated a deal with this president that would satisfy the Freedom Caucus. But it's a testament to his approach that two-thirds of his members this week voted for his final product—in a party congenitally averse to debt-ceiling hikes, and despite press predictions he'd fail to get even half. (In past fights this century, only 24% of House Republicans voted to raise the debt ceiling under a Democratic president.) Yes, House Democrats provided more votes—though only because they chose not to undercut further their unpopular candidate for re-election. House progressives revolted—a bitter measure of the bill's reform contents.

The McCarthy outreach helps explain why threats to oust him this week came from a few loudmouthed limelights and are unlikely to go anywhere. Even many of the most vocal Republican opponents of the bill praised the efforts of the negotiators, as well as Mr. McCarthy's insistence that the bill receive 72 hours of public review.

Does the speaker still face rough seas ahead? You bet. He'll have to do this all over again for other must-pass bills, and it may not turn out as well. But at least he has a formula. His success this week came in part from it is possible that Republican members are becoming impatient and demanding the power that comes with that unity. Mr. McCarthy won the speakership in January. This week, he earned it.

*Write to kim@wsj.com.*

BOOKSHELF | By Hamilton Cain

## The Thing With Feathers

### George: A Magpie Memoir

By Frieda Hughes  
(*Avid Reader*, 264 pages, \$28)

Frieda Hughes, the British writer, painter and former poetry columnist for the London Times, is equally famous, to those who follow her on social media, for the menagerie she keeps at her home in Wales. She shares photos of Huskies slouched on carpets; a ferret nibbling from a bowl; and owls lined up for meals of frozen chicks, which Ms. Hughes pops into their beaks.

Yes, that Frieda Hughes—or as she describes herself in her spirited, winsome "George: A Magpie Memoir," "DAUGHTER-OF-TEDHUGHES-AND-SYLVIA-PLATH." She's the sole survivor of a literary dynasty that includes them among postwar poets, one American golden girl, and the other a Heathcliff-like brooder.

"George" is a rejoinder to that myth, a diary of her adventure with the mischievous corvid who stole her heart amid a period of personal adversity. The McCarthy outreach incandescent yet doomed. Like Prince Harry, who recently confessed in an interview with Michael Strahan that no version of him exists outside the Royal family, Ms. Hughes tacitly acknowledges she will never escape the demise of Sylvia Plath and Ted Hughes's marriage and her mother's suicide in 1963, when Ms. Hughes was a toddler.

"George" is a rejoinder to that myth, a diary of her adventure with the mischievous corvid who stole her heart amid a period of personal adversity.

After a life of peripatetic moves—her father "found it difficult to settle," and Ms. Hughes resided in western Australia in the 1990s—she was ready to put down roots in 2007 she and her husband, a fellow writer, moved to Pembrokeshire and just began renovating a house in the Welsh countryside.

Throughout the book she refers to him as "The Ex," foretelling the outcome of their troubled marriage. His presence in the narrative is minimal: He watches Arnold Schwarzenegger videos, resentful, as she throws herself into various projects, particularly the lavish garden that wraps around the house. She adopts a magpie chick after he falls from a nest. She's aware that her neighbors consider this species pests, but she's not one to follow the conventional wisdom: "Where crows possessed gravitas, jackdaws possessed curiosity, and magpies possessed a tangible sense of humor."

George quickly adapts to the household, cawing with Ms. Hughes's dogs and traumatizing the cleaning lady with his aggressive behavior. The baby bird stirs a maternal instinct in his mistress while alienating her friends and taxing her spouse's patience. True to his nature, George forages and tucks away canine kibble, dead rodents, light bulbs and balls of string. He drinks milk from a glass.

Ms. Hughes admires to anthropomorphize him, in thrall to a tiny feathered Rastafarian. She even builds a spacious cage for him, a home he could fly out of, but it's impossible not to love him," she writes. "It's interesting to me how his antics humanized him... he had a clearly defined character, recognizable idiosyncrasies and a very definite thought process." After four months he wings into the wild, gone for good. (*The Ex* soon flies the coop as well, declining back to Australia.) Desolate, she vows to care for injured or unwanted predators. Poems, paintings, motorcycles, an ever-growing cadre of birds and beasts—these now constitute her purpose.

But Ms. Hughes is a canny stylist: There's another memoir lurking behind this one, caught in asides. The book is both a love letter to the magpie who changed her trajectory and a nod to the voyeurism of her readers, "the peanut-crunching crowd," to quote a Plath poem. Ms. Hughes does well in her biography in tidbits, feeding us in much the same manner as she feeds George. She's in command, and the familiar setting and characters—Court Green, Richard Murphy, Aunt Olwyn Hughes, the villainous "my father"—shock when they unexpectedly slip into the narrative.

**Smaller relatives of the crow, magpies are famed for mischievous intelligence. One orphaned chick could take over a household.**

Once she turns to her family romance, Ms. Hughes toys with us, not unlike George playing with her dogs. Her mother's a ghost at the margins. She mentions in passing her brother, Nicholas, who hanged himself in 2009. She pays homage to Ted Hughes, whom she adored, but drops this bombshell: "My father once told me that a woman should never be more successful than her man... He insisted that evolution had decreed that the man must be the provider. Of dead bison many years ago, and now, of a living wage and a roof over the family heads." Crows, a totemic inspiration for her father's poetry, circle in and out of "George." In one harrowing scene she steps gingerly, in Hitchcockian fashion, among an ominous gathering.

After George's departure, she takes in an ailing old crow, christening him Oscar; his death, weeks later, rips open emotional scars. "When I got back in the car I burst into tears again," Ms. Hughes writes. "Oscar's death links me to all the other deaths: my mother's death, my father's death... my collapsing marriage." Grief takes on a Plath-like dimension: "It seeped through my veins like a sticky ink."

A crow in Ms. Hughes's writing, then, is never merely a crow. And in "George" a magpie is no longer just a magpie. She embraces her identification with her pet: "I had certainly developed George-like avoidance strategies thereafter; they were part of my survival kit as a child." The book itself is a kind of magpie: Ms. Hughes hoards myths and secrets within her birding lore, and dispenses them at her leisure: "I have been trying to file my life since I was a child: letters, diaries, pay slips, tax demands, marriage and divorce artefacts." She tells her story in poised yet anecdotal language; her charm relents us. Memoir as a form of self-revelation comes beautifully to her. I suspect her audience will clamor for another soon.

*M. Cain is the author of "This Boy's Faith: Notes From a Southern Baptist Upbringing."*

## Coming in BOOKS this weekend

Empire, Inc.: The corporations that built British India • How our minds predict reality • Nashville Confidential: The memoirs of a country songwriter • The road trips of Henry Ford • Sam Sacks on new fiction & much more

## California Catholics Under Attack

### HOUSES OF WORSHIP By Salvatore Cordileone

"History never repeats itself," Mark Twain is supposed to have said. "But it rhymes." Consider the American Catholic Church over the past two centuries.

In 1834, a group of Ursuline nuns outside Boston. The act was the culmination of years of anti-Catholic preaching and aggression toward the church's property. None of the firemen present intervened, and some reportedly joined the riot. Later that century, the Know Nothing Party emerged to suppress the rights of German and Irish Catholic immigrants, fearful of a Catholic conspiracy to take over the country.

Not long after, that the Ku Klux Klan began to terrorize black Americans, Catholics and Jews. In 1921 an enraged Klansman fatally shot Father James Coyle after the priest celebrated the birthday of his godmother, a Catholic convert daughter to a Puerto Rican man. The killer was acquitted at trial by a Klansman judge and Klan-filled jury.

Our nation is now struggling to come to terms with its history of racism. Yet universally ignored is its long, deep and sordid history of anti-Catholicism. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops reports that "at least 260 incidents"—attacks on church property—"have occurred

across 43 states and the District of Columbia since May 2020." The behavior runs the gamut, from arson to spray-painting, beheading and toppling statues, to defacing gravestones with swastikas and anti-Catholic messages. Arrests in these cases, and especially prosecutions, have been extremely rare.

Catholics believe in contradiction: that when we don't treat religiously or racially motivated crime seriously, we will see more and worse aggression. This week a committed a felon, which was witnessed, and publicly condemned.

One who was arrested is John David Corey, who in July 2020 set a devastating fire at Mission San Gabriel Arcangel, the historic Los Angeles-area church founded by St. Junipero Serra in 1771. Law enforcement told local news at the time that Mr. Corey had a history of conflict with the Catholic Church.

In December 2022 he was ordered to stand trial on several counts of arson and burglary, to which he has pleaded not guilty.

Our brothers and sisters in Los Angeles aren't alone. Catholics in the San Francisco area have weathered their share of attacks too. In October 2022, protesters responded to the vandalism of Mission San Rafael carrying paint, tools and rope with the intention of de-erecting and destroying a beloved statue of St. Junipero Serra. Five perpetrators were later charged with felony vandalism.

Yet on May 25, the Marin County district attorney's office decided to resolve the case through an "innovative restorative justice solution"—reducing the charges to a felony charge that can be made to Catholics in the Bay Area if they are deeply disturbed by this attack. The district attorney

and appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In *Meyer v. Nebraska*, the justices reversed the conviction of the teacher, holding that the state had violated the Fourteenth Amendment by depriving him of his due process rights. The court held that the state had violated the teacher's right to teach his students. The teacher's right to teach his students was protected by the First Amendment.

*Meyer v. Nebraska* is a powerful recognition of the right of parents, rather than the state, to direct the education of their children. It is a powerful recognition of the right of parents to control the education of their children.

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## The School-Choice Century

By Michael Bindas

This has been a banner year for the educational choice movement. State legislatures have greatly expanded educational opportunity through programs that give families alternatives to public schools. The foundation for this success, however, was laid a century ago—by a teacher in a one-room schoolhouse in rural Nebraska.

That teacher was Robert T. Meyer. On June 4, 1923, the U.S. Supreme Court set aside Meyer's conviction for the "crime" of teaching German through the reading of Bible school.

In a wave of anti-immigrant hysteria following World War I, the National Education Association charged that the passage of "language laws" that restricted or even prohibited the teaching of foreign languages. Nebraska's law provided that "no person,

individually or as a teacher, shall, in any private, denominational, parochial or public school, teach any subject to any person in any language other than the English language."

Like the NEA's support several decades earlier of the anti-Catholic Blaine Amendment, which prohibited public funds from going to parochial schools, its championing of language laws was rooted in nativism.

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# OPINION

## IRS Needs a Cage, Not More Cash



POTOMAC WATCH  
By Kimberly A. Strassel

As House Republicans and the White House wrangle over a debt-ceiling deal, one GOP deerman ought to be nonnegotiable. A politicized Internal Revenue Service has no business keeping its untrustworthy fingers on last year's \$80 billion cash infusion.

This week brought two more examples of IRS roguery that build on its already unsavory record of leaks, incompetence and partisan behavior. The first is the almost true story of Jordan Taibbi, Matt Taibbi, who may have been recruited by the IRS in its bid for documenting the joint censorship efforts of Big Tech and the federal government.

Mr. Taibbi in March told the House Judiciary Committee a disturbing tale: an IRS agent had made a surprise visit to his New Jersey residence on March 9—the same day Mr. Taibbi testified before another House committee about censorship at Twitter. The journalist was subsequently told there were "identity theft" concerns with his 2021 and 2018 tax returns. The 2018 claim particularly troubled Mr. Taibbi, since his accountants possessed documentation showing the return had been filed and accepted, and neither they nor he had ever received notification of a problem. Judiciary Chairman Jim Jordan demanded the IRS explain.

Whether Mr. Taibbi is a

The IRS earlier this month provided Mr. Jordan documents that only add to the appearance of targeting. It seems the IRS officially opened its examination of Mr. Taibbi's return on Dec. 24—not only Christmas Eve but a Saturday. What could be urgent enough to inspire a government employee to work overtime? That was the day Mr. Taibbi capped three weeks of reporting with his ninth installment of the Twitter files, an exposé of a wide sweep of federal agencies working with social-media companies to censor online speech.

Documents also show that in addition to the unannounced house call, an IRS agent dived deep into Mr. Taibbi's personal life, compiling a file of his voter-registration records, whether he had a concealed-weapon permit and even whether he possessed hunting or fishing licenses, among other data. The file contained his Wikipedia page detailing his Twitter files work. The IRS launched this excavation even though Mr. Taibbi didn't owe the IRS any money.

More notable is what the IRS didn't provide the House; any proof of letters it claimed to have sent to Mr. Taibbi alerting him to the purported 2018 problem. It also failed to cough up internal communications related to the case, despite Mr. Jordan's demand and Mr. Taibbi's signed waiver to allow Congress to see information related to his return.

Mr. Shapley's attorneys informed Congress that their

target of harassment or not, these IRS tactics ought to alarm lawmakers. How many other Americans—those who don't even own the fees money—have an IRS file detailing their gun-permit status? How does that relate to tax liability? Federal tax forms require preparers to list their names and phone numbers. Is it IRS practice to jump on an investigation before picking up the phone? Is it now standard for an agent to show up unannounced at your door—in absence of any proof of lawbreaking?

Matt Taibbi's ordeal shows why the GOP should claw back that \$80 billion infusion.

Then there's IRS Supervisory Special Agent Gary Sharpe, the congressional whistle blower who this week went public with his claims of Justice Department political interference in the Hunter Biden probe. A 14-year IRS veteran, Mr. Sharpe oversees a team that specializes in international tax and financial crimes. He says he was assigned control of the Biden investigation in 2020, but again and again watched prosecutors engage in "deviations" from the norm procedure in pursuit of the subject, "not the subject itself." He explained he "couldn't silence my conscience anymore."

Mr. Sharpe's attorneys informed Congress that their

client and his team had recently been yanked off the probe "at the request of" the Justice Department—which looks like clear (and forbidding) retaliation for his speaking out. IRS Commissioner Danny Werfel will undoubtedly try to slough this off on Justice, but a request is only a request, and nothing excuses Mr. Werfel from his own obligation to see tax justice done or protect whistleblowers. The IRS can hardly claim to need more money to pursue tax cheats when it is sidelining top investigators pursuing tax cheats.

No agency with this track record deserves last year's \$80 billion reward, especially as the IRS is already presiding over a rash of hints of thousands of new agents for draconian enforcement activity. If Democrats are so concerned about discretionary spending cuts, they ought to be forced to choose between a cash infusion aimed at taxpayer harassment and the domestic handouts they claim aim vital.

Meanwhile, look to see which enterprising GOP presidential candidate strikes on the obvious answer to the forever IRS mess: a flat tax. A vastly simplified system wouldn't only strengthen the economy but carry the side benefit of completely eliminating the positions of legions of IRS employees, who would test the gray area of a tangled tax code. Starve the beast—for now. Ultimately, put it in a tiny cage.

*Write to kim@wsj.com.*

## The Many Paradoxes of Timothy J. Keller

HOUSES OF WORSHIP  
By Kate Bachelder Odell

Ask anyone to name a story from the Bible, and you'll likely get the answer David and Goliath. Most Americans know it as a tale about facing your fears, steeling yourself and prevailing against long odds. "I'm here to tell you that's not all the artistry, musicians and nonprofit executives.

He would, as he told me for a 2014 Weekend Interview, aspire to "show secular people that they're not quite as unreligious as they think. They're putting their hopes in something, and they're living for it." In New York, it's often a career. "I try to tell people: The only reason you're laying yourself out like this is because you're not really just working. This is very much your religion."

A second paradox: Keller was a popular pastor who was allergic to the celebrity he attracted. His books, such as *The Prodigal God* and *The Meaning of Marriage*, may often have sold millions of copies. But he was enigmatic and avoided the spotlight. An editor of the Christian magazine *World* once quipped that he could organize an interview with Keller "as easily as I can set one up with Vladimir Putin."

Keller "was not that great showman preacher," says Colleen Hansen, editor of the Gospel Coalition, a network of Presbyterian and Reformed churches. He was introverted and cerebral in a way that Billy Graham, for all his strengths, never was. But Keller's "sense of irony," his "professorial approach," appealed to New Yorkers.

Keller insisted that Christian evangelism be winsome, which made him polarizing—perhaps the third paradox. "I fear that anxious evangelicals hope that if they can just be grace-centered enough" and "make converts, but also the arts, musicians and nonprofit

executives, then unbelievers will turn to Christ." Kevin DeYoung, a fellow Reformed pastor, recently wrote of Keller's bent:

plant Redeemer for the Presbyterian Church in America in 1989.

"We did not come expecting a great deal of success," Keller said on the church's 25th anniversary. He spoke plainly of sin and grace to New York's skeptical and high-achieving clientele: the corporate managers and Ivy League-educated culture. "The converts are there, but also the artists, musicians and nonprofit executives.

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It's a fair point. Keller warned that Christians shouldn't be politically monolithic. He worried about American evangelicism's association with the far right.

But there is also the paradox of Keller, the shadow. "In the small and passing thing; there was light and high beauty for ever beyond its reach."

Keller said he realized that "if the Bible is true, the whole universe is a universe of joy, of glory, of life." On earth we're "stuck in this little tiny speck of darkness." But because of Christ's death and resurrection, "even that darkness someday is going to be taken away."

At the end of his 2015 sermon, Keller referred to J.R.R. Tolkien, whose myth-drenched narratives had long captured his imagination. Keller said he leaned on a line from "The Lord of the Rings" while fading under anesthesia for thyroid cancer surgery, years before the pancreatic variety took him. "A thought plucked the character Sam... in the shadow was only a small and passing thing; there was light and high beauty for ever beyond its reach."

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*Mrs. Odell is a member of the Journal's editorial board.*

friend and seeing unspeakable carnage at the Battle of Ypres in World War I, John McCrae, a Canadian army officer and physician, began his work: "In Flanders Fields, the poppies blow / Between the crosses, row on row."

The flower caught on in Britain after being introduced stateside.

Michael came across the poem in 1918 in New York while training YMCA war workers and was so moved in what she later called "a real epiphany" that she wrote her own poem, "We Shall Keep the Faith." In it, she promises to wear a poppy in memory of those who served in the war. "I didn't know at the time that selling poppies to give financial and occupational support to disabled servicemen began in the U.S., thanks to the efforts of professor and philanthropist Moina Michael after World War I."

A poem, "In Flanders Fields," inspired the use of poppies to remember veterans. After losing a close

friend and seeing unspeakable carnage at the Battle of Ypres in World War I, John McCrae, a Canadian army officer and physician, began his work: "In Flanders Fields, the poppies blow / Between the crosses, row on row."

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Michael came across the poem in 1918 in New York while training YMCA war workers and was so moved in what she later called "a real epiphany" that she wrote her own poem, "We Shall Keep the Faith." In it, she promises to wear a poppy in memory of those who served in the war. "It seems

to signal to the skies / That blood of heroes never dies."

After the war, Michael was teaching a class in education to disabled veterans at the University of Georgia. Realizing the financial need of many returning soldiers, she initiated a drive to raise money for disabled service men coming home by selling silk poppies. By 1921 the American Legion Auxiliary and by what would become the Royal British Legion had adopted the poppy as a symbol of remembrance for war veterans. Shortly after her death in 1943, the U.S. Navy commissioned the SS Moina Michael, a Liberty-class cargo ship, in tribute to her humanitarian efforts. In 1948 the post office issued a 3-cent stamp in her honor.

My business partners and I started the Poppy Project in

2012 and began sending poppies to our clients, believing it should carry the same symbolism in the U.S. that it does in the Commonwealth. Donations from recipients go to their programs that support veterans, the military community and their families. Congressional efforts to designate the Friday before Memorial Day as National Poppy Day regrettably have stalled in committee.

Bringing back the poppy would allow Americans to honor our own brave veterans and those of our allies. It's time to revive this proud and noble symbol in the country of its origin.

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BOOKSHELF | By Brenda Cronin

## The Wearing Of the White

Pazazz

By Nina Edwards  
(*Reaktion*, 223 pages, \$27.50)

White clothes can make you see red. Consider "Top Hat," the 1935 movie where Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers dazzle in "Cheek to Cheek." Their show-stopping number was briefly in peril because Astaire objected to his partner's dress—a costly concoction of satin and ostrich feathers that was in fact pale blue but shone on-screen as pure white. The director dangled an alternate costume but Rogers held firm: "It's either that dress or home I go." Did Astaire fear being upstaged by a shimmering ensemble? He said it was all about the feathers flying during their routine. It was as if "a chicken had been attacked by a coyote," he recalled in his memoir. "It was like a snowball. I liked feathers in my eyes, my ears, my mouth." The dance's energetic movements did have flecks swirling around the floor and clinging to Astaire's tailcoat.

The strong feelings on both sides are no surprise, according to Nina Edwards, who recounts the drama in "Pazazz: The Impact and Resonance of White Clothing." One-time Vogue editor Diana Vreeland said *pazazz* evoked "the spirit and glamour of fashion." Ms. Edwards borrows the term—and its unorthodox spelling—for her study of the "peculiar allure" of white garments. White clothes span life from a newborn's onesie to a mummy's linen wrappings. Ms. Edwards offers a *tour d'horizon* of white raiment through the ages, in a maid's apron or doctor's coat, white telegraphs or authority. White clothing signifies purity, innocence, and nobility, although most sports embrace colorful clothes. Wimbledon's "almost entirely white" dress code prevails at tennis championships. White can bewitch the seemingly sensible into fashion contortions. Ms. Edwards notes the medieval rage for light-colored, point-toe shoes that were so impractical the tips had to be "cut away" when knights wearing them dismounted for hand-to-hand combat. In 18th-century Paris, towering white powdered wigs inspired the notion "to heighten standard doorways to create easy passage for . . . vast, teased updos." For sheer danger, no unwieldy headdress could match the flammable 19th-century crinoline, which an errant spark could explode into a "burning whirlwind of fire." The crinoline's massive skirts atop layers of snowy petticoats also "could get trapped under carriage wheels or caught up in machineries." The risky garment was handy for shoplifters and smugglers, such as a woman aboard a steamer headed to England from the Netherlands. She told officials she was pregnant; instead, they discovered that her crinoline was concealing "no less than five pounds of cigars, nine pounds of tobacco, a quantity of tea and a bottle of gin."

White spans the military and the divine, from the Virgin Mary to the Queen of Heaven. Such a shift would be welcome only between Memorial Day and Labor Day. That likely arose because those who could afford vacations (and frequent laundries) favored clothes of light color and material during summer holidays. When fall returned, so did heavy, dark garments—a convention that caught on among those taking cues from the elite.

In previous books Ms. Edwards has ruminated on the significance of buttons, offal, weeds and darkness. Her M.O. allows for a stream-of-consciousness meandering, like the caretaker of a sleepy museum who suddenly finds herself escorting visitors through its jumble of treasures. Ms. Edwards's apertus will beguile some readers but frustrate others eager for more context. In "Pazazz," a discussion of cleaning white clothes has a cameo by Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle, the hedgehog washerwoman of Beatrix Potter's children's books. The same chapter notes that "white glove" describes a fancy residential building or hotel—the doormen wear them—before gliding on to the long white gloves seen on debutantes.

When it comes to clothes, white can come laden with meaning, from the authority of a doctor's coat to the innocence of a debutante's glove.

Plucking from history, religion, royalty and the arts, the author cites memorable figures in white, real and imaginary. There are portraits of women by Constable, Whistler and Sargent. In Dickens's "Great Expectations," Miss Havisham still wears her wedding dress decades after being jilted. Men get their due for wearing white and keeping it spotless. Regency dandy George (Beau) Brummell (1778-1840) stood out "going so far as to bathe and to brush his teeth every day." By contrast, biographer James Boswell (1740-1795), apparently "seldom washed himself, so that when he was well dressed his clean ruffles showed up the griminess of his skin."

The silver screen is a trove of images: Think of Marilyn Monroe in white dress and high heels in "The Seven Year Itch." Peter O'Toole wore white robes and headress as "Lawrence of Arabia"—and reveled in white as a celebrity. "I woke up one morning to find I was famous," he said. "I bought a white Rolls-Royce and drove down Sunset Boulevard, wearing dark specs and a white suit, walking like the Queen Mum."

White is intertwined with marriage and mourning. Ms. Edwards credits Queen Victoria's all-white dress for her 1840 wedding with popularizing white for brides. Victoria later spent decades in widow's weeds but for her funeral insisted that her body be dressed in white and her face covered with her wedding veil.

Elizabeth I never married but was a vigorous advocate for the absence of color, portrayed around 1592 by Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger "in the height of sumptuous white silk excess." The painting captures the monarch in an immaculate ruff, with lariats of pearls and a ghostly complexion conjured up by "daily applications of white lead paste and vinegar." In couture, a model dressed as a bride has traditionally closed fashion shows, even if what she wears is a far less reliable moneymaker than its colorful predecessors down the catwalk. Bright clothes sell while white clothes stun.

So, the only rule for wearing white? When accessorized with elan, it befits any occasion.

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