ACCESS TO ENERGY

A Pro-Science, Pro-Technology, Pro-Free Enterprise Monthly Newsletter

November 2018 (Vol. 46 no. 4) **Box 1250, Cave Junction, Oregon 97523**

Great Books

As a pathological reader, your editor reads all sorts of things. I cannot, however, read things of substance while falling asleep at night. They keep me awake.

Lately, for nighttime literature, I am re-reading Louis L'Amour books that I first read 35 years ago. His heroes, especially his Sackett family, are remarkable.

Yet, I am comparatively illiterate compared to my colleagues. This weekend Matthew and Noah added shelves to one of our rooms. They favor fir lumber 2x12s for shelves. This morning their new shelves are now filled – with about 1,000 books.

Matthew now leads the work distributing our curriculum and advising families who use it. When this began, 25 years ago, Noah led the project, with Zachary, Arynne, Joshua, and Bethany all working to create it.

Zachary, the oldest, literally wore out Bibles and read whole sets of encyclopedias for fun – remembering in detail much of the text. Matthew is now the leader in this. Matthew literally inhales books – vast numbers of the best books in the English language.

On the CDs that transmit their curriculum (and cover all aspects of effective K-12 study), they put image files of the books they wanted to be sure the students read, to be printed on family printers. Later, they began making bound books and selling some of the titles.

Many favorable reviews were written when their curriculum was published, but a few responded by saying, "This is just books."

And, so it was – books and a superb methodology with which to train a K-12 student's mind in using them.

As a boy, my former 2nd grade teacher mother made sure I could read, and the local Carnegie library kept me supplied with books (and the public schools with text books). Reading is a skill that a child must have before he begins to train his mind. The academic knowledge with which it will be trained is in books.

To be sure, a mind is also trained in many other ways. Books contain the thoughts and experiences of many other minds, so they amplify this training many times over.

Louis L'Amour's fictional Sackett central characters of the 1600s through the 1800s are mostly backwoods men, farmers, and western adventurers, yet many of them place great value in their books. L'Amour was careful to make his characters realistic to their time.

AtE has previously quoted Booker T. Washington who taught his students that the purpose of education is to learn to find the truth, in many circumstances. He taught his people the truth using books and personal lectures. Those who listened to him found freedom in our nation after the civil war. Many, however, white and black, have not found truth and are in intellectual bondage.

For there are many who seek to enslave their fellow men. Today, they do so primarily by preventing them from knowing the truth.

But, for K-12 students, why books? And, even if books, why physical paper-and-ink printed books? And, if printed books, why well-made hard backed books?

The value is in information content, isn't it? This is now available digitally by Internet. It provides a river of digital information free, even readable versions of most of the world's great books.

When, however, a child is presented with hard backed beautiful copies of, for example, *A Child's History of England* by Charles Dickens, 1880, or *Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain, 1891, the perceived value of these gifts is higher. He is motivated by this perception, just as he is motivated by his level of respect for the presenter.

Each book becomes a valued possession and its contents read more carefully and perhaps more often. Soft-backed books are less expensive, but, as real books, also retain part of this value.

Words on a printed page have greater perceived value and effect than words on an Internet computer screen. And, they have more permanence. While I had long known of the life and work of Booker T. Washington and had read some of his writings, a couple of years ago Matthew loaned me his set of hard-backed copies of the books Washington authored.

I read them, and I also kept those books on the corner of a table in my office for about two years before returning them. Each time I noticed them, I thought again of the writer and his message. Their physical presence continued to guide my mind, as do the books on my own book shelves.

In the Robinson curriculum, the student starts each day solving problems in mathematics. When he finishes calculus (at average age about 16), he moves on to physics and then to chemistry. And, he keeps permanently on his own book shelf the hard-backed text books with which he studied these subjects.

The problems in these subjects train his mind in general problem solving and also build his self-confidence that he can solve problems. These are the first subjects he studies each day because the answers in these subjects are absolutely true, albeit true with respect to questions far simpler than many that he will face in life.

Starting his day this way causes his mind to approach the more complicated subjects of history, economics, and literature with more self-confidence, too, and his mind seeks the truth in these as well.

And, even if he becomes a scientist or engineer, he will forget many facts about science and engineering, but will always know that he can find them on his book shelf and has the skills to use them.

I am a well-trained and accomplished chemist and I have taught chemistry to university undergraduates and graduate students. Moreover, I taught when the professor was expected to walk into the lecture hall with no notes and have only blank chalk boards and chalk to work with. There were no Power Point crutches available.

Yet, as the years passed, and I only made use of specialized parts of chemical knowledge, my active knowledge of the parts I did not use faded toward passive knowledge – the ability to understand, but less ability to actively use.

Still, I have my text books. I know that, with their help, I can recall almost anything I need.

MORE BOOKS

American frontiersmen typically had only a few books. They read them over and over. And those they valued and carried had mostly to do with history and human nature.

Yet, cannot this be all electronic? We now have most of the people on Earth linked in an electronic net with immediate access to more truth and lies than they can possibly comprehend. Has this strengthened their minds? Just the opposite. The manipulators are profiling them, tailoring their lies to them, digitally creating instant mobs at will, and tearing severely the fabric of our civilization.

None of this is fundamentally new. Human nature, for practical purposes, has not changed in recorded history. And the giants of our

past (and an occasional giant in our present) have thought most of these things out before and written to us about them – in our books.

They have written about them in the reasoned messages of John Locke, the poetic messages of Rudyard Kipling, and the dramatic messages of William Shakespeare.

For a K-12 student, reading books begets writing – not the writing of crude texting shorthand, but instead the erudite writing of stories and other thoughts originated in the student's mind. In our curriculum, we advocate that writing begin at the age of 10 years, with the parent-teacher reading and marking spelling and grammatical errors in the text. This requires a growing active vocabulary.

When Matthew began writing, his imagination and vocabulary outran one another. We had Snaggle Tooth (his fictional outlaw) riding up on his horse and then using erudite vocabulary.

In the Scholastic Aptitude Tests, before they were gradually dumbed down to accommodate diminishing student capabilities and to erase politically incorrect inferences that would trigger identity politics attacks, vocabulary was emphasized.

It was not vocabulary per se that the SAT examiners wanted to know about. They wanted to know the extent of the student's reading, both in amount and erudition. Since reading is the primary method of learning vocabulary, the better the vocabulary, the better read they judged the student to be.

With decades of experience, the older SAT tests contain superb vocabulary selection, so we have made sure that all of this vocabulary is learned in the Robinson curriculum vocabulary methodology.

The best measure that a K-12 student is progressing well with his studies is that he is often seen with a book in his hand, reading in his spare time. And, while methods vary, the best measure that he is being well-educated is that he has his own desk in a quiet room with no distractions in which he studies his books several hours each day.

> "What, then, do we mean by education? I would say that education is meant to give us an idea of truth. I do not care how much you get out of all your text books: – unless you have got truth, you will have failed in your purpose to be educated."
>
> ***Booker T. Washington***

BOOKS VS. TELEVISION

Television, unfortunately, is used by many families as a baby sitter. Children are less prone to mischief while watching TV. And, like candy, parents tell themselves the children like TV, as many do.

Conservative families often avoid TV or institute some provision to permit just "good" programming. They complain that much television content is not appropriate for children, and they are right.

Yet, the worst aspect of television is that it promotes passive mental habits. Everything is done "for" the student's mind while passively watching. He is "entertained" with no mental effort.

By contrast, a book requires active mental involvement. As the student reads, his mind builds in his imagination the images portrayed in the text. Or, if the text requires no images, his mind studies the content. A book trains the student's mind to think. TV trains the student's mind to watch – a much less valuable mental habit.

And, as television gives way to the Internet or to "educational" video this same disadvantage is operational.

TV is, of course, not a serious failure. In a society where alcohol addiction, drug addiction, pornography addiction, and the new addictions wherein lies about public figures have become a spectator sport, watching too much television is barely worth mention.

Nevertheless, an addiction to books is far better.

There is also, in education, an increase in use of video. People are even trying to teach physics by video alone.

Students in science are traditionally taught by attending lectures, writing notes during the lectures, reading science text books, and working problems. Exams are also educational experiences.

Thus, the students see the science, hear the science, write the science, read the science in their books, and actively use the science in solving problems. This combination is very effective.

Video about the science does not hurt, but it has little effect. It is again, a very passive method. And, if used to replace any part of the combination listed above, it is counterproductive

There is, however, a video advance that, I think, is rapidly approaching. A university physics department may have a very good physics lecturer, but only a few have the best lecturers.

Richard Feynman taught freshman physics once (one year) and sophomore physics once, and wrote (with two colleagues) books to go with these two courses. Linus Pauling taught freshman chemistry and wrote a book to go with his course. These men were very great lecturers. On the other hand, Robert Millikan gave no lectures, preferring that his students learn from books and problem solving, as students do in the Robinson curriculum.

These men are gone now, but their equals (or near to them) in teaching physics and chemistry are probably still among us.

Why shouldn't all physics students have the finest lecturers and the best text books? The Internet and video advances, especially the wonderful screens, are gradually making this possible.

I think a great decrease in cost and increase in quality is coming to university science education. (Other subjects, too, but perhaps more slowed by political forces.) When the greatest lecturers can be delivered to everyone electronically, cost should drop rapidly.

High cost and political bias have spread malignantly through most of our universities. This may succumb to electronics. Quality lecturers will be available inexpensively to all.

Yet, whatever the methodology, books – hold-in-your-hand great books – will always be central to quality education.

NUCLEAR POWER IN THE ARCTIC

"Nuclear Power Becomes Critical to Arctic Dominance" by Victor Nian, *oilprice.com*, December 11, 2018, reports that "For many, the Northeast Passage through the Arctic could one day be a 'Northeastern Suez Canal.'"

This canal would markedly shorten sea routes between Europe and Asia. It could cut these shipping costs by an estimated 40%.

The route is now open to traffic only from July to October, even with ships designed to deal with ice, including ice breakers, This has been true for a long time. It does not depend on past claims or future claims about "climate change."

With, however, very large nuclear-powered ice-breaking ships, expected to be available by 2020, the current use of the Northeast passage will be enhanced. Moreover, floating nuclear power plants, the first of which have already been placed in the Arctic by Russia, will power ports and other needed infrastructure.

Both Russia and China are now spending large amounts of capital developing an Arctic passage designed to operate 12 months per year. This development depends on nuclear energy. Under President Trump, regulations that prevented drilling for oil in the Arctic have been relaxed, but U.S. nuclear development is still stalled.

Under bureaucracy left over from the Obama administration, new nuclear power efforts in the United States have died, and many current U.S. nuclear power plants are now targeted for closure.

The Arctic is cold, wet, and icy. Technological development there requires lots of energy – energy not requiring voluminous amounts of hydrocarbon fuel. China and Russia realize that the solution to this is nuclear energy, and are moving forward. Our nation is not.

In fact, our nation is unable to move forward with low cost nuclear energy even where it is warm. Instead it is moving backward. This is not because private entrepreneurs do not want to develop nuclear energy. It is because the administrative state prevents them from doing so. Even after two years in office, the Trump Administration has failed to overcome this. The American people, if this continues, are going to pay a terrible price.

CANADIAN HYDROCARBONS

"Green Politics and Global Instability" by Holman W. Jenkins, Jr., in *The Wall Street Journal*, January 23, 2019, reports on growing political instability in Canada caused by the "climate change" hoax.

The Canadian province of Alberta has 4 million people and the world's third largest hydrocarbon energy reserves, exceeded only by Saudi Arabia and Venezuela.

Yet, Alberta's oil was recently selling for only $10 per barrel, as compared with about $50 from other world producers. The reason is that Alberta oil producers lack a means of transporting their oil to world markets. They need pipelines to get their oil out of Alberta and delivered to users.

Only a small amount can be transported now. The Alberta government has imposed production cuts on Alberta oil producers and is purchasing 7,000 railcars to help get the oil to market. These cars are only a token fix, since they can carry only a small fraction of the oil.

Rationing is usually imposed on consumers when there are shortages. In Alberta, it is now being imposed on producers because unprincipled and ignorant politicos are attacking industrial freedom.

"Green" activists and politicians pandering to them in the Canadian provinces on both sides of Alberta have blocked pipelines. And, the "green" Prime Minister of Canada says that Alberta oil production should be phased out in a generation. His party is pushing legislation to ban new pipelines to combat "climate change."

To add insult to injury, Alberta oil wealth has previously been transferred out of Alberta to finance government subsidies to other Canadian provinces.

When I visited Alberta a few years ago, the province was booming from the oil rush. The working people were prosperous, their efforts succeed, and their personal appearance confident. While seeing this, I found myself wondering if this resembled U.S. industrial cities before the dead hand of government worked its ways.

Jenkins reports that now, "In the provincial capital of Edmonton, house prices have been falling for three years. Car sales are drying up. One third of Calgary's office buildings are empty." He writes that Canadian law allows provinces to declare independence and that talk is rising in favor of this.

Destabilization of one of the world's major oil producers causes ripples in world stability – with widespread ramifications.

We all have experience with lies and liars. This is a negative aspect of human nature. As our children and I grew up together after Laurelee's death, our self-sufficient life in a debt-free little Oregon valley of our own shielded the six children from this sort of thing.

We had many friends, but they were mostly like us. When the children became adults and worked together and simultaneously independently, they learned about liars through experiences. I, of course, already knew about this characteristic.

Even so, it still astonishes me that a colossal lie about the Earth's climate and human activity – a lie easily disproved by experimental facts – could spread so widely over the world and cause so much actual and potential damage.

Yet, why is *Access to Energy* being written? It is because Petr Beckman, 45 years ago, set out to resist another set of comparable lies – lies that have suppressed the incredible gift of nuclear energy.

LESS PRIVACY – LESS FREEDOM

"Electricity Sector Sparks Tech Interest" by Bradley Olson in *The Wall Street Journal*, January 28, 2019, begins:

"Alphabet Inc.'s Google and Amazon.com are taking early steps to expand into the electricity business, **as home-energy automation emerges as a rich source of customer data**."

The stock in trade of these companies, especially Google, is personal information. They have already substantially reduced American privacy, upon which personal freedom depends. That they see the electricity business as a "rich source of consumer data" bodes ill for remaining personal privacy.

Technological advance is facilitating this. As Olson writes, "smart speakers, internet-connected thermostats, and other devices" .... "provide information on consumer's personal energy use."

In fact, smart meters are sufficient. The few types of electrical devices in most homes each have a unique signature composed of electrical current, time and interval of use, and frequency of use. It is the tying of this data to the identity of the user that diminishes privacy and freedom.

Google sells personal information and the profiles calculated from it. It is their stock in trade. And, government "intelligence" agencies increasingly violate citizens' privacy in a similar way.

Spying on the American people is well under way. Unless stopped soon, before long it will be unstoppable. Electronic countermeasures can be employed to prevent this, but few Americans will buy them.

Home electrical self-sufficiency can also evade this snooping, providing it is not connected to the power grid. In order to save electricity storage costs and conform to requirements for government subsidies, however, most home systems are attached to the grid.

Freedom in our nation is in increasingly short supply.

VALUE

J. Robert Oppenheimer, writing in *Frontiers in Science*, a collection of essays by the faculty of Caltech, published in 1958 by Basic Books, New York, and addressing undergraduate science students, wrote:

"I think that today, if I know you and your friends through the country, you hold very close to the ancient imperatives – the imperatives of Christianity, of our traditions, of our country. I think you are not after novelty and improvisation in art or politics or philosophy, or manners. I think that, even if the end of our time should come, you are quite content that we live out these days faithful to the gospels, faithful to the ethic, faithful to the sense of responsibility which we have from times past."

And what is the central principle from which these values expressed by J. Robert Oppenheimer, who led the Manhattan Project that first developed atomic weapons, expressed here and had confidence were generally shared by the American youth of 1958?

These values have, in my opinion, one goal – to optimize as much as possible the value of human life. They represent the result, in 1958, of the efforts of mankind, through two millenia, to build the best possible human system of thought and action to enhance human life.

For what possible greater thing can we even comprehend than the opportunity to live a human life upon the Earth?

Some will argue that the forests must be preserved, but to what purpose? In enriching human life, they are a part of this great gift. Some will argue that the oceans and ocean life should be preserved, but from what do the oceans derive their value? From human life.

The "ancient imperatives" that Oppenheimer credits the students with holding, are the principles and products of thousands of years of trial and error wherein people sought better ways to enhance the value of their lives – and to understand the source of those lives.

Our astronomers, in their struggle to understand the physical universe, have shown that this universe is so vast that just its physical size and composition far surpasses human comprehension. To place value, per se, in the natural phenomena that we can observe and to contend that we can actually play a significant role in the preservation of physical reality, through actions on one planet, is ridiculous.

Our Creator has provided guidance to us in the ways that we can optimize our lives and has expressed His preference that we follow those ways. All of that guidance relates to the question of how to live the best possible human life.

Oppenheimer has confidence that the students want to be "faithful to the responsibility which we have from times past." We can exercise that responsibility and evaluate our own actions by measuring always our effects on the quality, quantity, and length of human life.

LIBERTY

Access to Energy is mailed by First Class mail. We use an indicia for this because there are so many letters to mail that stamps would be too time consuming. For ordinary letters, we prefer our First Class stamps. Several years ago, the USPS put out a terrific stamp. Our supply is dwindling, but we will use them as long as we can.

These are an issue of "Forever" stamps, designating their use for one ounce First Class regardless of current rates. There are four types. Each has a beautiful American flag and the printing reads "Liberty FOREVER," "Freedom FOREVER," "Justice FOREVER," and Equality FOREVER." The last one should say "Equality of Opportunity." We are created equal, but not required to remain that way.

We purchased all of these stamps we could afford.

Richard Maybury recently published a paragraph about this. He wrote, "One of the most enlightening things I ever heard was from economist Murray Rothbard. He said we can never understand very much if we see the world in terms of liberals and conservatives, or democrats versus republicans. But it all starts coming clear when we see it in terms of liberty versus political power."

Moreover, political power is not the only way liberty can be abridged. Most *AtE* readers are familiar with ways that the personal liberty of individuals is revoked by other unprincipled kinds of power. These are not usually illegal, but they are immoral just the same.

DEMONIZING CEMENT

"Climate change: The massive CO2 emitter you may not know about" by Lucy Rodgers, *BBC News*, December 17, 2018, reports that the manufacture of cement is the source of 8% of human carbon dioxide emissions.

Human industries add (before natural subtractions) about 8 gigatons of carbon (Gt C) to the 800 Gt C atmospheric carbon content each year. Emission of carbon dioxide from concrete manufacture adds 0.6 Gt C or 0.08 % to the total – minus the comparable amount of cement-derived carbon dioxide from earlier years that is leaving the atmosphere at a rate of 50% per 7 years.

This article lists carbon capture and storage and the creation of "novel" cements (substitutes for this 8,000-year-old mainstay of human construction) as solutions to this "planetary threat."

Touted as a "novel" cement in this *BBC* article is the growing of "biobricks" using bacteria. Carbon capture would cost $(.6)(10^9)(700) = \$420$ billion per year at current costs or $70 billion per year at enviro-estimated eventual costs – paid largely by U.S. taxpayers and rendered almost useless by ocean-atmosphere equilibrium, while the world's largest cement producer, China, is exempted from payment by the "Paris" agreement.

Will this insanity never end? Not only is there zero experimental evidence that human carbon dioxide release is affecting the environment in any significant way (except for the rich increase in plants and animals caused by atmospheric carbon dioxide fertilization of plants), the costs of this carbon demonization are very great.

And, they are borne by the entire human race. This $420 billion per year proposal, a tiny part of the "climate change" crusade, would take $60 from every man, woman, and child on the planet every year. When the costs of a basic industry are raised, these costs spread through general commerce to essentially everyone.

And, this is just cement. The "carbon footprint industry" has similar plans for all other human "carbon criminals." Carbon capture of yearly human carbon emissions would cost $700 per person per year – all for a "threat" that does not exist.

Climate change, a natural – not a man made – phenomenon, does affect human welfare. Sometimes climate changes are beneficial, and sometimes they are not. When they are not, the solutions require use of large amounts of energy. Reducing humanity's energy supplies reduces the technology available to respond to undesirable changes. Now (late January 2019) the weather has turned very cold. So, is the solution to ban the gas, oil, and coal that is warming us?

STARK RAVING MAD

• The President of the United States fulfills his duties as head of the Constitutionally specified Executive branch of our government from his office in Washington. He cannot do this by himself.

While his cabinet officers and the occupants of a few dozen other high-profile offices are frequently in the news, the President's ability to project his efforts out into our nation depends primarily upon about 1,000 men and women whom he appoints to supervise the innumerable agencies of the Administrative State. These are the people who carry out his instructions to run our government.

To be sure, this vast bureaucracy is far too invasive. In the news yesterday was a report that the "partial government shutdown" is preventing the shipping of the 2018 wine crop. It turns out that the government requires that it each year approve the labels placed on wine bottles. The wine bottle label approvers are currently laid off. This sort of insanity is everywhere now in our nation.

Yet, the President must do his work, including the reduction of government regulatory intrusion, which is one of his principal goals.

"Return of the Nominations Blockade" in *The Wall Street Journal*, January 10, 2019, reports that of the 934 people that the President has nominated to run the government under his direction, 394 have still not been confirmed by the Republican-controlled Senate – more than two years after the President took office.

Therefore, 42% of the Administrative State head offices are still being run by holdovers who are mostly opposed to the President's policies. About 40% of the people the President has chosen to lead the execution of his policies are still waiting to begin doing so.

While many pro-liberty Americans are not at all disappointed that part of the government is shut down, this is temporary. It does not mean that the Administrative State is not functioning. It is functioning, but without the President's people.

Since the first day after President Trump's election, self-interested people have been striving in every unprincipled way imaginable to prevent him from doing the job of President. Depriving him of the people he has chosen to project his objectives from his desk in Washington is one way in which they have been succeeding.

GOOD READING

• *Saxon Math* the nine books from Saxon 5-4 through Calculus by John Saxon; *The Mechanical Universe* and *Beyond the Mechanical Universe,* two books by Richard P. Olenick, Tom M. Apostol and David L. Goodstein; and *Chemical Principles:Second Edition* by Richard E. Dickerson, Harry B. Gray, and Gilbert P. Haight, Jr.

A Robinson curriculum student reads these books and works all of the problems in the 12 books by the age of 18. They are either digitally provided for printing with the curriculum, or they are available for sale on Internet new and used book sites. They are superb.

If your son or daughter, grandson or granddaughter, or any other young person you know seeks a an excellent K-12 education, they should definitely own these books.

• *Professor Klugimkopf's Old-Fashioned English Grammar* and *Professor Klugimkoff's Spelling Method,* are two books by Jane Orient both used in our curriculum. Your *AtE* editor learned his spelling, grammar, and punctuation primarily from reading and custom and culture. You are protected from the vagaries of this through the proof reading of *AtE* by Dr. Orient.

ACCESS TO ENERGY

Publisher and editor Dr. Arthur B. Robinson, President and Research Professor, Oregon Institute of Science and Medicine. Subscriptions (first class mail): individuals $35 for 12 monthly issues (Canada $37, overseas, air mail only, $40). Corporations $60. US tax-subsidized organizations $150. Order from Access to Energy, Box 1250, Cave Junction, OR 97523. Checks must be in US$ drawn on a US bank. Past issues $3 each. CD-ROM of 35 years of back issues $95. Printed 38 years of issues $145.