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"The New Censorship": Inside the Global Battle for Media Freedom

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John Marshall: The Chief Justice Who Saved the Nation.

By Henry J. Steiner

Oct. 2014. 400p. Da Capo, \$27.99 (9780306822209); e-book (9780306822216). 347.73.

After a sterling career as an officer in the Revolutionary War and as a Virginia politician, John Marshall was appointed by John Adams as chief justice of the Supreme Court. For Adams, defeated in his bid for reelection by Thomas Jefferson, this was the culmination of a last-ditch effort to "pack" the national court with Federalist-leaning judges. In his 35 years as chief justice, Marshall enhanced the power of the Supreme Court well beyond what Adams would have anticipated. Historian Unger offers a comprehensive account of Marshall's life and career that provides interesting insights into his personal qualities and political sympathies. Roughly half of the book covers Marshall's earlier career as a soldier and politician as well as his family life. But Unger is at his best covering the history-altering judicial activities of the court under Marshall, especially as the court clashed with the executive power of the Jefferson and Jackson administration. Unger's admiration for Marshall sometimes leads him to unfairly demean his opponents, especially Jefferson. Still, this is a well-done tribute to the man who made the judiciary a truly coequal branch of the national government. —*Jay Freeman*

Knife Fights: An Education in Modern War.

By John A. Nagl

Oct. 2014. 272p. Penguin, \$27.95 (9781594204982). 355.02.

Nagl's *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife* (2002) is now considered an indispensable text on the techniques of counterinsurgency. But when he wrote the book, he was widely criticized for saying that many of the American military's key procedures and tactics would not serve them well in future wars. Here, he shows how the post-9/11 wars in Afghanistan and elsewhere demonstrated that, as he had predicted, American forces were unprepared for the sort of wars they were now fighting, wars involving small pockets of enemy insurgents and localized dissidents. After many years in combat—this book is, in part, a combat memoir—the author was reassigned to the Pentagon, where he was tasked with rewriting the long-standing military principles of making war in the modern era. It was an exhilarating assignment, turning his once-criticized theories into reality, but Nagl soon discovered that the battles he would need to fight inside the walls of the Pentagon could be as dirty as those he fought in combat. An essential addition to military-history collections. —*David Pitt*

My Wild Life: A Memoir of Adventures within America's National Parks.

By Wauer D. Wauer

Sept. 2014. 288p. illus. Texas Tech Univ., \$39.95 (9780896728851); lib. ed. (9780896728868). 363.6.

Naturalist and author Wauer began a long

career with the National Park Service as a seasonal ranger at Crater Lake in 1957. Before retiring, in 1989, he served in numerous positions of increasing responsibility at parks across the country and at NPS headquarters in Washington, D.C. In each position, he kept journals, from which he has now written a detailed memoir. Although his main duties were conducting wildlife studies, presenting ranger talks, and occasionally taking tickets or directing traffic, he served as a catalyst to the awakening of the NPS to its role in wilderness preservation and the conservation of endangered species. Throughout his account, Wauer keeps the tone light, letting readers know the birds he saw at each park and the names of the naturalists and park officials with whom he worked, noting but not dwelling on the fights with political appointees in the Interior Department. With a bit of envy, readers may wish they had led such a life as Wauer's. —*Rick Roche*

The New Censorship: Inside the Global Battle for Media Freedom.

By Joel Simon

Nov. 2014. 240p. Columbia Univ., \$27.95 (9780231160643); e-book, \$26.99 (9780231538336). 363.310.

Simon, a freelance correspondent in Mexico during the 1990s and currently the executive director of the Committee to Protect Journalists, brings a wealth of on-the-ground reporting expertise and experience with defending journalists to this wide-ranging and shattering assessment of threats to contemporary journalism.

Simon takes the position that journalists (including citizen journalists) have been a huge part of setting the humanitarian agenda of shining the light on atrocities and abuses that would remain unseen if the photo weren't taken or the report not filed. This uncovering has always been a dangerous business. However, a perfect storm of economic strain on newspapers, resulting in hurried, big-story-only visits by foreign correspondents; the widespread killings and kidnappings of journalists who do venture abroad or within their own country; and governmental manipulation and control of the media, especially through technology, has made current foreign reporting an increasingly lethal profession.

The result is that the public is kept ignorant of the depths of human-rights abuses and conflicts. This book is far more wide ranging than its title indicates. Simon writes about the effects of social media on the production and consumption of news, the ways that corporate and partisan control of the media impoverishes us all, and how governments prevent their own people and a worldwide audience from knowing what's really going on. Most moving are Simon's wrenching stories of the ordeals journalists have suffered, from kidnappings through imprisonment through

death. Simon's assessment of what it means to be a journalist and his call to action at book's end are moving and practical. A must-read. —*Connie Fletcher*

Silent Witnesses: The Often Gruesome but Always Fascinating History of Forensic Science.

By Gilbert Taylor

Sept. 2014. 288p. illus. Chicago Review, paper, \$16.95 (9781613730027). 363.2509.

A former British police officer who now produces crime entertainment in the form of novels and TV series, McCrery surveys cases that were signal advances in the history of criminal detection techniques. Prefacing his subject by noting the difficulty, prior to the late 1800s, of correctly identifying murder suspects, McCrery launches into the first system devised to apprehend malefactors, that of French detective Alphonse Bertillon. While effective, Bertillon's method was superseded by fingerprinting. Its superiority evidenced in cases from a century ago, fingerprinting's quality of identifying unique individuals, like that of DNA today, guides McCrery's narratives of murder investigations. Ballistic evidence offers comparable probative power for discovering murder weapons, as McCrery shows in his technical explanation and his account of a 1928 conviction of a British cop-killer. Covering additional objects of forensic analysis, such as blood, hair and fiber, and poisons, McCrery completes his presentation of the major tools used in modern criminal forensics. While true criminal forensics accounts are legion, a knowledgeable book like McCrery's will spark interest and circulation. —*Gilbert Taylor*

Thunder in the Mountains: A Portrait of American Gun Culture.

By Dan Baum

Oct. 2014. 272p. Rowman & Littlefield/Lyons, \$24.95 (9781493003853). 363.33.

Last year's *Gun Guys*, by Dan Baum, explored America's gun culture: its enthusiasts, its debates, its personalities. Collins' new memoir inevitably covers some of the same ground, but it's a more personal story, focusing (mostly) on the author's own family and friends, exploring how their lives have been affected in various ways by America's attitude toward firearms. The story, which recounts the author's childhood in a family in which guns were a part of everyday life, is punctuated by tragedy: a friend is seriously injured by a gunshot to the head in a hunting accident; another friend's father commits suicide by shooting himself; the author shoots himself in the foot in another hunting accident; and so on. It's not really a book about the broader side of America's gun culture; it's a book about the way a man's life was shaped by that culture and how gun violence touched his life. Collins views a subject that elicits seemingly endless topics for debate and gives it a single, highly personal point of view: this is how all