5

Homer's Autopsy

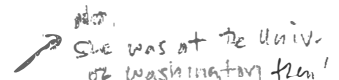
"In the form in which it has existed up to the present philology is dying out; the ground has been swept under its feet. Whether philologists may still hope to maintain their status is doubtful; in any case they are a dying race."

—Friedrich Nietzsche, *We Philologists* (1874)

"Our professors and graduate students now compete only for professional plums, even fatter professorships and fellowships. When it comes to their lives, they live as unclassically, as untouched by the humanities, as any barbarian."

—William Arrowsmith, "The Shame of the Graduate Schools" (1966)

A Derridean Dinosaur



One day in mid-March 1998, Joy Connolly, then an assistant professor at New York University, arrived at her campus office to discover an unusual sight: a cartoon drawing of a dinosaur pinned to the door. Its appearance confused her; Connolly is a classicist, not a paleontologist. All became clear, however, when she took in a response to a book review she had written. A few days earlier, the *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, a pioneering online scholarly journal in the humanities, had published Connolly's negative evaluation of *Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom* (1998), a polemic cowritten by classicists Victor Davis Hanson and John Heath.[1] Like studied practitioners of the academic culture wars, Hanson and Heath favored a take-no-prisoners approach. In a response to Connolly's faultfinding review of their book, the authors wrote a flippant rebuttal. Lampooning the theoretical lingo in which Connolly had couched her review, they asked, "What 1980s tar

1. Connolly 1998.

pit did this postmodern stegosaurus lumber out from?"[2] A graduate student at New York University, after reading Hanson and Heath's retort, affixed a scribbled dinosaur to Connolly's door as a humorous gesture of support.[3]

Although some could chuckle at the controversy it sparked, for many *Who Killed Homer?* is no laughing matter. A fire-breathing jeremiad on the disintegration of American classical studies,[4] the book made arguably the strongest connections between the academic culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s and the discipline of classics.[5] To this day, mention of *Who Killed Homer?* and its authors still gets some people's dander up. This seems especially true of Victor Davis Hanson, whose work on the book helped transition him from a highly regarded scholar of ancient Greek military history to a prominent neoconservative pundit and public intellectual. As Diana Wright expressed in 2006 on the Classics-L, an Internet discussion board for classical scholars, "It is very strange that almost any other scholar's background [and] influences can be discussed here without vituperation, but [Hanson] brings out the worst in people. Every single time he is mentioned."[6] Even many years later, *Who Killed Homer?* still packs a punch.

This chapter examines Hanson and Heath's book, investigating its relationship with the academic culture wars and analyzing the reaction it engendered in both the field of classics and the popular press. *Who Killed Homer?* presents a vital—and still timely—challenge to American classicists and raises issues of cardinal importance to the discipline's survival in contemporary US higher education. Benefiting from interviews with numerous participants in the controversy surrounding the book,[7] the chapter also demonstrates the ways

2. Hanson and Heath 1998a. Carol G. Thomas (2005: 37) viewed this quip as an example of ideological combat in classics that "extends to the personal level."

3. E-mail interview with Connolly, July 20, 2014.

4. Hanson and Heath (1999b: 167) called their book "cranky." Cf. Hanson and Heath 1999b: 173, 2001a: 289, which refer to the book's "infamous" third chapter.

5. Numerous scholars and critics noted similarities between *Who Killed Homer?* and earlier traditionalistic tracts from the culture wars. See, e.g., anonymous 1998b; Connolly 1998; Peter Green 1999a: 45; Martindale 1999: 111; Simmons 2001: lii; Marrs 2007: 43; González Garcia and López Barja de Quiroga 2012: 144–45. Cf. anonymous 1998a; Beye 1998; Stentz 1998; Willett 1999: 84; James Davidson 2000: 10; Allemang 2002. In their book, Hanson and Heath (1998b: 146, 252–57) refer approvingly to traditionalistic tracts from the academic culture wars. They also suggest (xvi) that the book's readers will not "find here a direct engagement with the Culture Wars." But one finds a great deal of such engagement. According to Heath (e-mail interview, September 8, 2014), "Basically, we were trying to say that the book would not be another *Tenured Radicals* kind of broad-sweeping condemnation of the academy, or a specific critique of contemporary culture."

6. Quotations from the Classics-L in this chapter come from the forum's archives, which can be found at http://lsv.uky.edu/archives/classics-l.html (for posts from June 2003 onward) or https://web.archive.org/web/20040223120846/http://omega.cohums.ohio-state.edu/mailing_lists/CLAL/Older/ (for posts prior to June 2003). Wright's message was written on April 14, 2006.

7. Interviews via telephone, e-mail, or in person were conducted with Charles Rowan Beye, Joseph Bottum, Joy Connolly, Page duBois, Frank Frost, Herbert Golder, Peter Green, Erich Gruen, Judith Hallett, Victor Davis Hanson, John Heath, Donald Kagan, David Konstan, Mary Lefkowitz, Charles Martindale, Thomas Palaima, Seth Schein, Bruce Thornton, Kate Toll, and Steven Willett.

in which the rhetoric of the culture wars helped to win a wide audience for *Who Killed Homer?* but derailed substantive conversations about the issues it addresses. Many years later, classical scholars still lack definitive answers to the challenge that Hanson and Heath posed. This is a sign of the discipline's aimlessness in the period following the demise of Renaissance humanism and the Great Books tradition.

The Hesiod of Selma?

In many respects, Victor Davis Hanson is an atypical classical scholar.[8] A native of California's San Joaquin Valley, Hanson, born in 1953, grew up on a raisin farm in Selma, a tiny town twenty-five miles outside Fresno. To this day residing in his childhood home, Hanson is the fifth generation in his family to work the land there.[9] The trials and tribulations of family farming shaped Hanson's worldview; as he details in numerous autobiographical writings, Hanson was raised with the plainspoken, no-nonsense, traditionalistic values of many rural Americans.[10] In *Fields without Dreams* (1996), a bitter memoir lamenting the demise of the yeoman farmer in the US, Hanson describes the outlook of the typical American agrarian: "His political views—nearly exclusively Republican—are incidental to his conservatism. He expresses more a knee-jerk and blanket distaste for fashion, affluence, and leisure the current cradle of criminality for the urban rich and poor alike. In other words, his own world is an island of absolutes in a sea of relativism."[11] Not for nothing did one classics professor characterize Hanson as "a reincarnation of Hesiod."[12]

After graduating from a rural public high school in central California, Hanson not surprisingly experienced culture shock as an undergraduate at the Uni-

8. On Hanson's life, see, e.g., Hanson 1996, 2000, 2003a; Curry 2003; Secor 2003; Kay 2005.

9. Hanson's parents, however, were not farmers. His mother, Pauline Davis Hanson, was a prominent jurist (Hanson 1995: xiv), and his father, William Frank Hanson, was a junior college administrator (Hanson 1996: 15).

10. Hanson discusses his agricultural roots in many writings: e.g., 1998a: 101, 1998b: ix–x, 1995: xiii–xiv, 5 6, 8–11, 63–64, 75, 102, 131–32, 137–38, 142, 165, 185; 1996, 2000, 2002a: xvi–xvii, 2003a, 2004: xvi, 2005b: xvi, 2010d, 2012b. See also Hanson and Heath 1998b: xxii.

11. Hanson 1996: xx. Cf. Hanson 1995: 161,

12. David Lupher, University of Puget Sound, Classics-L, April 16, 1998. The full sentence from which the quotation comes reads, "Which inspires me to pass on a comment made to me by a colleague once (apropos of *The Other Greeks*): 'Victor Hanson is a reincarnation of Hesiod.'" Hanson's blog for PJ Media is "Works and Days."

versity of California at Santa Cruz (UCSC).[13] Matriculating in 1971, Hanson perceived that life on campus was anathema to the cultural conservatism of his upbringing. Seeking refuge from the drugs and radical politics that enveloped him, Hanson found his way to UCSC's classics department, where he "took almost every classical language course offered from the small, but excellent UCSC classics staff."[14] Having earned a B.A. in classics in 1975, Hanson enrolled in the classics Ph.D. program at Stanford University.

As he has related in various writings, Hanson's years in graduate school do not appear to have been happy ones. Already alienated from the values dominant on many college campuses, Hanson found the culture of Stanford's classics department and aspects of graduate education in the US unappealing. The field seemed to be awash in snobbery. In his telling, many of his acquaintances at Stanford expressed disdain for his agrarian background.[15] Although he excelled at the ancient languages, Hanson discovered that he failed certain cultural litmus tests: the hardscrabble farm boy lacked the elite pedigree prized by many of his contemporaries.[16] A year at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens in the late 1970s proved especially trying. Hanson and his wife felt estranged from the East Coast, Ivy League elitism then prevalent at the institution. Hanson revered Colin Edmonson, a legendary professor at the American School, and despised many of his fellow students, who with their pedantry dismissed Edmonson's gruff demeanor and boundless enthusiasm for the ancient Greeks.[17] Graduate study in classics, Hanson surmised, was designed to produce plodding quibblers rather than intellectually capacious philhellenes.

In June 1980, Hanson earned his Ph.D. from Stanford, having completed a dissertation under the direction of Michael Jameson.[18] Hanson's dissertation, published as his first monograph in 1983, ably demonstrates the value of the author's atypical background to classical studies. *Warfare and Agriculture in Classical Greece* argues that "agricultural devastation during the classical age of ancient Greece was more a tactic designed to instigate decisive infantry battle than a comprehensive mechanism for economic warfare."[19] Previous ancient historians, lacking experience on the farm, misunderstood the role of agricultural devastation in Greek antiquity. Although narrower than Hanson's later works of classical scholarship, the book is marked by the author's inclination to draw parallels between the ancient and modern worlds.[20]

13. See Secor 2003. Hanson (1996: 17) writes that he chose the school because it was the cheapest and closest university to his family's farm.
14. E-mail interview with Hanson, August 3, 2014.
15. See, e.g., Hanson 1995: 9–10, 1996: 19, 21–22, 56, 2010d; Isaac 2004: 15. Cf. Kay 2005. Elsewhere in his work, Hanson suggests that agrarians are the true heirs of the ancient Greeks and Western civilization: e.g., 1995: 14, 1996: 123, 217. See also Hanson and Heath 1998b: 59.
16. E-mail interview with Hanson, August 3, 2014.
17. See Hanson and Heath 1998b: 172–75.
18. Hanson 1998b: xvii.
19. Ibid., xii.

By the time his first monograph appeared in print, Hanson had abandoned an academic career. After completing his graduate work, disillusioned with the nature of professionalized classical studies, he returned to the farm in Selma, aiming to help his family with their grape crop.[21] These turned out to be the dying days of the American small-time agrarian. What Hanson later called "the raisin cataclysm of 1983" destroyed his family's already ailing finances.[22] Recognizing the farm's untenable economic future, he hatched a plan to rustle up a job at the nearby campus of the California State University at Fresno, and he was hired as an adjunct professor of classics in 1984.[23]

In this regard he proved a great success. By all accounts an extraordinary talent in the classroom, Hanson painstakingly built a classics program at Cal State Fresno, soon earning a tenure-track appointment while teaching ten or more courses per year.[24] His efforts to attract many minority and first-generation college students to classics did not go unnoticed: in 1991 Hanson received the Excellence in Teaching Award from the American Philological Association (APA). In addition to his teaching and farming responsibilities, Hanson somehow found time to publish. Encouraged by the positive reaction to his first monograph,[25] he contributed articles on Greek military history to scholarly journals.[26] Hanson also tried his hand at new book projects. In these efforts, he acted on his criticisms of both his graduate program and the nature of contemporary scholarship in the humanities. Hanson sought to write broad, readable books that appealed to both classicists and general readers.

His second monograph appeared in print in 1989, published by the trade giant Alfred A. Knopf. An application of John Keegan's face-of-battle scholarship to Greek antiquity, Hanson's *The Western Way of War* is a triumph, a riveting account of the ordinary Greek soldier's experiences in hoplite warfare.[27] The book also inaugurated a controversial thesis prevalent in much of Han-

20. E.g., ibid.: 14, 20 n. 1, 37 n. 29, 50 n. 21, 58 n. 40, 71 n. 67, 117 n. 22, 178 n. 4. For more examples of this tendency in other books by Hanson prior to the publication of *Who Killed Homer?*, see, e.g., Hanson 1995: 83, 148–51. Cf. Hanson 1999a.
21. Hanson 1996: 4, 2003a: 57–58. See also Isaac 2004: 15.
22. Hanson 1995: 10. On this disaster, see Hanson 1995: 10–11, 102, 185, 1996: xxii, 74, 2000: 202, 207.
23. See Hanson 1996: 18; Secor 2003.
24. Hanson 1995: xiii.
25. Hanson 1998b: xiv.
26. E.g., Hanson 1988, 1992. See also Hanson 1991, an edited volume on the nature of hoplite warfare.
27. Hanson 1989. For reviews, see Wheeler 1990; Buckler 1991.

son's later work on military history: the ancient Greeks pioneered a manner of warfare that has remained the dominant paradigm for Western fighting forces, ensuring the superior lethality of the West.[28]

More trade books followed. In 1995, the Free Press (then the most prominent conservative publishing outfit in America) released Hanson's *The Other Greeks: The Family Farm and the Agrarian Roots of Western Civilization*.[29] As the title intimates, Hanson connected his personal background to his subject matter, contending that "agrarian pragmatism, not intellectual contemplation, farmers not philosophers, 'other' Greeks, not the small cadre of refined minds who have always comprised the stuff of Classics, were responsible for the creation of Western civilization."[30] Peppered with autobiographical asides and unfashionable reflections on the nature of contemporary classical scholarship, the book, though overargued in places, is perhaps Hanson's finest achievement, a testament to his contention that serious writing on the ancients need not be narrow.

In *The Other Greeks*, Hanson, ever eager to connect classical antiquity to the present, adopts a populist stance.[31] Toward its conclusion he writes, "I no longer entirely believe in the traditional scope and presentation of much academic research in the humanities, at least as it is practiced now in the country. Nor do I have much confidence in the methods accompanying that inquiry, nor even in the present environment in which such work takes place. In their present evolved forms, these scholarly practices at times deliberately limit, rather than encourage, access to literature and history."[32]

His work had found an audience, and Hanson's editor at the Free Press, Adam Bellow, encouraged other projects.[33] In 1996 the Free Press published

28. For the "Western way of war" thesis, see Hanson 1989, 1999b: 19–27, 2001, 2002a: 6–8, 2003b. For criticism of this thesis, see Wheeler 1990: 124–25, 2008: 57–59, 2011: 58 n. 16, 66–67, 72–74; Willett 2002; Lynn 2003: esp. xxiii, 1–27; Sidebottom 2004: xi–xiv, 1–15, 112–28; Heuser 2010: esp. i, 30, 89; González Garcia and López Barja de Quiroga 2012: 136–41. Hanson (2001: 5) recognizes that his generalizations on this topic will irk military historians.

29. Notable conservative books published by the Free Press during the era of the culture wars include Dinesh D'Souza's *Illiberal Education* (1991), Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray's *The Bell Curve* (1994), William Bennett's *The Death of Outrage* (1998), and John McWhorter's *Losing the Race* (2000).

30. Hanson 1995: xvi. For Hanson's views on the agrarian foundation of ancient Greek society see Hanson 1989: 6, 1995, 1998b: 1–3. Cf. Hanson 1996: xxi.

31. Hanson employs the phrase *academic populism* (1995: xii, 418), a concept that reasserted itself in his later collaborative work with Heath and Thornton (see Hanson, Heath, and Thornton 2001, esp. ix–xx). Cf. Hanson and Heath 1998b: xxii. For a discussion of Hanson, Heath, and Thornton's use of the phrase, see Corey 2002.

32. Hanson 1995: 417.

33. Bellow's work as Hanson and Heath's editor at the Free Press provides one connection—among many—between *Who Killed Homer?* and the academic culture wars. Bellow is the son of the novelist Saul Bellow, Allan Bloom's friend who contributed the preface to *The Closing of the American Mind*. Adam Bellow, who had studied with Bloom at the University of Chicago, was the protégé of Erwin Glikes (1937–94), Bloom's original editor at Simon and Schuster. Glikes had urged Bloom to turn his *National Review* article (Bloom 1982) into the book that ultimately became his best seller. See Bernstein 1994; Adam Bellow 2004; Piereson 2007.

Hanson's *Fields without Dreams*, an angry threnody for the American agrarian, who had all but disappeared as a consequence of the ravages of corporate farming. Although not a work of classical scholarship, the book allowed Hanson to offer further biting assessments of the field. "True, classics and family farming," he writes, "have now both become dying, unsustainable professions. But at least there is an element of tragedy in the doomed industriousness of the latter. There is really none in the former's elite and calculated sloth."[34]

By the time *Fields without Dreams* arrived in bookstores, Hanson and his coauthor were at work on *Who Killed Homer?*, the jeremiad that gave full expression to Hanson's disparaging assessment of contemporary classical studies in America.

"Genitives and Genitals"

Traces of Hanson's biography are apparent in *Who Killed Homer?* The same can scarcely be said of his coauthor, John Heath. In fact, Heath suggests that "there is no obvious connection" between his background and the polemic he wrote with Hanson.[35] Born in 1955, Heath, a product of the Los Angeles suburbs, received a B.A. in classics from Pomona College in 1977. Like Hanson, Heath adored the classics department at his undergraduate alma mater. A newcomer to the subject in college, Heath enrolled in numerous Latin, Greek, and German courses. After graduation, he headed to Palo Alto to do graduate work at Stanford, where he focused on Greek and Latin poetry.[36]

Heath apparently did not find graduate school as trying as did Hanson.

34. Hanson 1996: 22.

35. E-mail interview with Heath, September 8, 2014. Unlike Hanson, Heath has written very little about his background (see Hanson and Heath 1998b: xx–xxii; Heath 2005b: 1). In his interview with me, he dismissed a question on this topic as "the old biographical fallacy." Heath's work prior to *Who Killed Homer?* contains ideas similar to those found in the polemic: e.g., Heath 1985: 344 (supportive of classics courses in English), 1995a, 1995b: esp. 58–59. Cf. Heath 2005a esp. 531 (he criticizes a fashionable view of the Other in Homer). But some points in Heath's earlier work seem antithetical to ideas in *Who Killed Homer?*: e.g., Heath and Thompson 1990 (amenable to the social sciences); Heath 1992a: 2 (supportive of the work of Detienne). Cf. Heath 1999a: 17 n. 1 (praises Peradotto, who is strongly criticized in *Who Killed Homer?*), 2005b: 346, 370 (employs the ideas of Doherty and Peradotto); Lisa Adams and Heath 2007: 13, 91–116 (criticizes polemics). See also James Davidson (2000: 11), who notes that Heath praised the work of Detienne and Winkler in his work, though *Who Killed Homer?* criticizes such scholarship.

36. E-mail interview with Heath, September 8, 2014.

He praises his dissertation adviser, John Winkler, and generally believes that his career in classics ran "abnormally smoothly."[37] But from his early days at Stanford, Heath harbored some doubts about the field. He and Hanson found themselves together in a course on Panhellenic sanctuaries, and Heath discovered that Hanson "and a couple of his peers shared my growing skepticism about the quality of the class, some of our professors, and the profession as a whole."[38] Hanson said of their Stanford years: "We were both sort of dissidents that objected to the culture of graduate school, especially the narrowness of the curriculum and the snobbishness of the culture, at least as we in our wisdom of our twenties saw it."[39]

Although in the spring of that year the two men played together on a pickup baseball team, when Hanson left California for the American School in Athens, he and Heath lost touch.[40] In 1982 Heath completed his Ph.D. and worked for a couple of years as a visiting lecturer at the University of California at San Diego. He then transitioned to a tenure-track job at Rollins College in Florida, where he would restart a lapsed program in classics.

A masterful and engaging teacher, Heath won the APA's Excellence in Teaching Award in 1989. By this time, having also contributed a series of solid articles on Greek and Latin literature,[41] he had earned tenure at Rollins. In 1991 Heath landed a tenured job in the classics department at Santa Clara University, which allowed him to return to his beloved California. Having published his first book, *Actaeon, the Unmannerly Intruder*, in 1992, Heath was by all measures a happy, productive, and successful scholar.[42] His early published research gives little if any sense of dissatisfaction with the state of classics and classical scholarship.[43] All of Heath's writing tends to be straightforward and lucid, comparatively bereft of buzzwords, although his first monograph seems too narrow in focus to appeal to a broad audience.

Yet Heath soon began work on a project strikingly different from his earlier scholarship. Inspired by the contributions to an edited volume, *Classics: A Discipline and Profession in Crisis?*, he decided to voice his objections to the debates then prevalent in the field:[44] "I just came to see my profession had what I thought were inverted priorities—the folks doing the most to keep the Greeks and Romans alive were never heard from, and the folks doing the most to promote themselves (and in the process demote the place of the classical world in both the university and the public) wouldn't shut up."[45]

37. Ibid.
38. Ibid.
39. E-mail interview with Hanson, August 3, 2014.
40. Ibid.
41. E.g., Heath 1985, 1986, 1988.
42. Heath 1992a.
43. See also Heath 1991, 1992b, 1994a, b.
44. Heath 1995b: 3–4. For more on this book, which was inspired by the *AJP* affair, see chapter 3.

In January 1993 Heath submitted to the scholarly journal *Classical World* an essay offering his perspective on the state of classical studies in the US.[46] Advancing a novel and interesting thesis, the submission possessed an engaging and combative tone unusual for works of contemporary classical scholarship. Its original title gives a sense of its punchiness: "Genitives and Genitals: Self-Promotion and the 'Crisis' in Classics." Matthew Santirocco, then the editor of *Classical World*, sent the piece along to Judith Hallett, one of the journal's associate editors, who was tasked with helping Heath revise it for publication.

The resulting essay contended that disputes between old-school philologists and fashionable theorists were a distraction from the real troubles plaguing classics.[47] Such rows (the *AJP* affair presumably among them) ignored the fact that classical studies in the US were home to a de facto two-tiered system that allowed the philological and theoretical heavy hitters to hog the spoils. Heath wrote, "The present theory/philology wrangling among elites must cease to dominate the discussion. As long as what I would call working classicists—the vast majority of the profession—allow a minority of *optimates* to direct this debate, we are doomed."[48]

Heath detected a species of careerism in the battles between philologists and theorists: "So, the division as it now dominates the headlines is left versus right, but the real dichotomy in the profession is between on the one hand the elites, *both* left and right, whose primary concern is with self-promotion (grounded in ideological posturing and research 'agendas'), and on the other the vast majority of classicists whose careers depend upon quality teaching, successful program development, institutional service, and research."[49] Fastening on his thesis, Heath was not inclined to tread lightly. The article contains candid criticism of "grandees" in classics and their deleterious effects on the field.[50]

The editors of *Classical World* devoted much of an issue to Heath's piece, publishing it alongside responses from various scholars as well as Heath's retort

45. E-mail interview with Heath, September 8, 2014.
46. For background on this piece, see Heath 2001b: 195–203. I corroborated many details Heath mentions in an August 12, 2014, interview with Hallett. Hallett, however, has a different impression of the editorial controversy surrounding Heath's essay. See below.
47. Heath 1995b.
48. Ibid., 4.
49. Ibid., 5; emphasis in the original.
50. Ibid., 6.

to his critics.[51] But the article was published only after a grueling editorial process that lasted more than two years.[52] The chief participants in that process disagree markedly on the rationale behind it. Hallett informed me that she found elements of Heath's piece valuable and worthy of expression. She suggested that Heath's criticisms of elitism in the field—of classism in classics, if you will—were especially compelling. "There was a lot I sympathized with in the paper," she said.[53] But Hallett also believed that the submission was replete with factual errors and "completely un-provable opinions," especially in its estimation of other scholars' motivations.[54] Heath, for his part, contended that the editors of *Classical World* sought to defang criticism of Hallett's feminist allies. It was all fine and good to lament elitism, but it was another matter entirely for Heath to assert that feminist classical scholars were partly responsible for the problems afflicting classics.[55] Heath was especially troubled by the fact that the editors of *Classical World* showed his rebuttal to his critics, offering them a chance to alter their remarks in light of his response.[56] Hallett believed that this step was necessary to ensure that Heath's claims received the scrutiny they required.[57]

Under the more delicate, truncated title "Self-Promotion and the 'Crisis' in Classics," Heath's article appeared in the September–October 1995 issue of *Classical World*. The accompanying responses to it varied from largely supportive to largely faultfinding. David H. Porter, then a distinguished professor of classics at Skidmore College, suggested that it was imperative that the field close the divide between the two tiers in the profession.[58] He further advised that scholars should respond helpfully to Heath's criticisms, rather than act defensively.[59] Barbara Gold, who had hired Heath as her replacement at Santa Clara University prior to departing for Hamilton College, also agreed with many of Heath's points, though she disliked his inclination to paint all feminist classicists with

51. See Gold 1995; Tamara M. Green 1995; Heath 1995a, b; Konstan 1995; McManus 1995; Mellor 1995; Porter 1995; Solomon 1995; Carol G. Thomas 1995. In an April 19, 1999, post to the Classics-L, Hallett mentions that other scholars were invited to respond to Heath's piece but declined to do so.

52. Heath (2001b: 195) relates that he originally submitted the article in January 1993. After much editorial wrangling, it was ready for publication in early September 1995.

53. Interview with Hallett, August 12, 2014. Cf. Hallett's April 19, 1999, post to the Classics-L: "It was the emphasis on class in Heath's original submission that most impressed me."

54. Interview with Hallett, August 12, 2014.

55. For Heath's take on the matter, see Heath 2001b: 195–203. Cf. Heath 1995b: 24 n. 44, in which he laments that his original submission had been toned down. The article still comes across as quite heated.

56. Heath 2001b: 200–201.

57. Interview with Hallett, August 12, 2014.

58. Porter 1995: 42.

59. Ibid., 44.

the same broad brush.[60] David Konstan supplied a more combative response. Defending professionalized classical scholarship, he dismissed Heath's piece as "a jumble of complaints dressed up in journalistic prose."[61]

Gearing up to Be Gadflies

By the time Heath's article was published, he and Hanson had decided to collaborate on a book-length project that expanded on many of the ideas they had articulated in their earlier discussions of the field.[62] Heath's move to Santa Clara in 1991 had rekindled their friendship, and Hanson had expressed bewilderment regarding the rough editorial process Heath had endured with *Classical World*.[63] Adam Bellow asked Hanson what he planned to work on next. Hanson "decided to take a brief break from writing about modern agrarianism and military history, and mentioned [to Bellow] something like 'a call for academic populism to save classics.'" Bellow, Hanson said, "was oddly intrigued and took a gamble." Hanson then suggested Heath as his coauthor.[64]

The two friends thus set about the task of composing their cri de coeur. The resulting manuscript was the product of numerous false starts and rewrites. According to Heath, "Our first efforts were either too dry or too personal, and our agent and publisher kept pushing us to find a more original and persuasive tone. So we would dump huge chunks and take what was working and turn that into a new section, ad nauseam. Eventually the chapters as they now exist came into view, and by then we had written over the other one several times, so it's hard to tell exactly who wrote what first."[65] Cognizant of the controversy they would court, Hanson and Heath agreed to an important pact. Hanson said,

60. Gold 1995: 25–26.

61. Konstan 1995: 31. In a July 8, 2014, e-mail interview, Konstan said that he enjoyed his polemical duel with Heath and was disappointed that the editors of *Classical World* chose to tone down Heath's rebuttal: Heath "had characterized me as riding to the rescue with my Red Ryder BB gun, an allusion that would probably be lost on the younger generation but which tickled me plenty—I was sad to see that it was omitted in the published version."

62. According to Heath (e-mail interview, September 8, 2014), he and Hanson were working on the book by 1995, though they may have contemplated it slightly earlier: "I remember we were working on it in 1995, but I don't remember how much before that we actually made the decision."

63. E-mail interview with Hanson, August 3, 2014.

64. Ibid.

65. E-mail interview with Heath, September 8, 2014. Both Hanson and Heath elaborated a bit more on the process in their interviews. Heath wrote, "Victor certainly wrote the first versions of some things like the stuff on the *Antigone*; I wrote the first versions of some things like the breakdown of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But in general we each wrote sections and the other one could cut or add or re-write at will." Hanson (e-mail interview, August 3, 2014) offered a compatible account of the process, adding, "John worked a bit more on Latin and literature, I on Greek and history."

"We had a general rule that if either of us found something unfair, then we both would agree to cut it. That way, when the storm broke, we were united in standing behind everything we co-authored."[66] They approached their polemic with foresight about the consequences: Hanson told me, "Of course, we both knew that we would be despised in classics."[67]

In Praise of Populism

The spirit of the academic culture wars can be detected throughout *Who Killed Homer?*[68] The book's prologue commences dramatically, lamenting the many job applicants at a typical APA annual meeting, desperate to land one of the shrinking number of professorial gigs.[69] Announcing from the start their desire to engage with a nonacademic audience, Hanson and Heath write, "You the public will never know who they are, read what they write, or listen to what they say."[70] Such pitiable aspirants to the professoriate, along with their more established mentors, have presided over the decay of classical studies in the university, thanks to their perverse priorities. "If only," they exclaim, "we who teach the classical worlds had as many undergraduates—or just interested Americans—as there are professors and graduate students! But then we would need people who think and act like Greeks, not Classicists, to teach us about Greece."[71] Their aim, they tell us, is to investigate "why the Greeks are so important and why they are so little known."[72] The book traces the demise of the ancient Greek vision of the world—what the authors in their shorthand term "Homer"—and implicates the current crop of classics professors in its murder.

Hanson and Heath sum up three core arguments in their work. First, taking a page from the Great Books tradition, they assert that the "*core values* of

66. E-mail interview with Hanson, August 3, 2014.
67. Ibid.
68. Cf. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 251–59, which discusses these battles directly, largely in support of traditionalistic perspectives. The book seems in tune with such struggles, despite the authors' suggestion that readers will not "find here a direct engagement with the Culture Wars" (xvi). Hanson informed me, "Oh, by that we meant that we were not writing an *Illiberal Education* or *Tenured Radicals* that charted how the Left had hijacked universities. We knew by 1998 that was old hat and others had done the critique far better than we could" (e-mail interview with Hanson, August 3, 2014).
69. Hanson and Heath 1998b: xiii–xv.
70. Ibid., xiv. Cf. Hanson and Heath 1999a: 156, in which the authors again suggest that the book is aimed at general readers, not classical scholars. Gould (1998: 518) concludes that she is not certain about the book's intended readership.
71. Hanson and Heath 1998b: xv.
72. Ibid.

classical Greece *are* unique, unchanging, and non-multicultural" and are responsible for "the duration and dynamism of Western culture."[73] They further contend that "*the demise of Classical learning is both real and quantifiable.*"[74] And finally they stress that the "*present generation of Classicists*" bears much of the responsibility for the death of classical education in the United States.[75] The careerism and fashionable anti-Western politics of these professors, hungry for perquisites and professional advancement, have destroyed the spirit of the Greeks. Moreover, this has all taken place at a perverse point in history: just as the world embraces Western values, America has forgotten the Greeks, the fathers of the West.[76]

The book's first chapter attempts to demonstrate that classical studies in the US are moribund. It does so by citing some alarming statistics. "Of over one million B.A.'s awarded in 1994," the authors announce, "*only six hundred* were granted in Classics."[77] Emphasizing the dramatic drop in recent high school and collegiate Latin enrollments, Hanson and Heath argue that the field, in good health prior to the conflagrations of the late 1960s, has taken a dramatic turn for the worse.[78] And this quantifiable demise has occurred in the face of a glut of narrow research produced by classical scholars. Surveying the immense number of recent monographs and journal articles, Hanson and Heath assert, "We are a very busy profession in our eleventh hour."[79] Like many traditionalists in the academic culture wars, they bemoan the arcane narrowness of much professionalized scholarship.

Hanson and Heath conclude the chapter with a potted history of classical studies in the West.[80] The Greeks have always had their share of detractors, they stress, but only in the past three decades have classicists failed to defend them. This survey seems misleading in places, crafted to give readers the impression that all was fine and good for classical studies prior to the 1960s.[81] For example,

73. Ibid., xix (emphasis in the original).
74. Ibid. (emphasis in the original).
75. Ibid. (emphasis in the original).
76. Ibid., xvii. Cf. 28, 70–80. For a similar sentiment, see Settis 2006: 2.
77. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 3 (emphasis in the original). The numbers I found for classics majors in 1994 differ from theirs. According to the 1996 *Digest of Education Statistics* of the National Center for Education Statistics, 756 students received B.A.s in classics (including Greek and Latin) (http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d96/d96t244.asp). This is still not a robust number. For the problems and complications involved in using the number of majors to determine the vibrancy of classical studies in American higher education, see chapter 6.
78. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 3. On the decline in Latin enrollments during this period, see chapter 2. Other examinations of these figures present a more optimistic portrait. See, e.g., LaFleur 1987, 2000.
79. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 2. Peter Green (1999a: 46 n. 3) criticizes their use of statistics.
80. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 6–20.
81. Cf. Hanson and Heath 1997: 112; Hanson 2002b. See also Hanson and Heath 1998b: 81,

they write, "Classics remained the core of all education throughout the nineteenth century, a time when our knowledge of Classical antiquity itself grew in quantum leaps."[82] This is incorrect: the end of the Civil War signaled the demise of Renaissance humanism in the US and the concomitant removal of the classics from the heart of the liberal arts.[83] In fact, this change has amounted to the most profound challenge in the history of American classical studies. The impetus to produce highly specialized scholarship, furthermore, commenced in the nineteenth century, a period that Hanson and Heath here laud.[84] Their desire to foist the blame on the current generation of classicists, of course, conforms to ideas promoted in the traditionalistic tracts of the academic culture wars, which viewed the late 1960s as the death knell for American higher education.[85]

In their second chapter, Hanson and Heath elucidate what they suggest are the quintessential values of the ancient Greeks—a collection of ideas foundational to the West that the authors call "Greek wisdom."[86] Defending their unfashionably broad characterization, the authors reduce ancient Greek history to several core ideals: the disconnection of science and research from religious and political power; civilian control of the military; support for consensual and constitutional government; the separation of church and state; the dominance of middle-class values; private property and laissez-faire economics; and societal self-criticism.[87] They assert that these principles resulted from "the self-reliant way of the agrarian *demos*, which rested on (1) seeing the world in more absolute terms; (2) understanding the bleak, tragic nature of human existence; (3) seeking harmony between word and deed; and (4) having no illusions about the role culture plays in human history."[88]

The chapter offers strikingly specific lessons to be learned from the ancient Greeks, including disdain for political correctness,[89] moral relativism,[90] and

in which they incorrectly suggest that the Great Books approach to general education required students to learn Latin and Greek. For useful criticisms of Hanson and Heath's views on the history of higher education, see Marrs 2007.

82. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 13. This knowledge grew as a result of the professionalization of the discipline and the rise of the *Altertumswissenschaft* ideal, which Hanson and Heath implicitly criticize throughout the book.

83. See also ibid., 225, in which the authors assert that departments of Greek and Latin existed in US higher education in the eighteenth century. The organization of academic disciplines into departments is an innovation of the nineteenth century.

84. Cf. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 25.

85. E.g., Roger Kimball 1990 and, to a lesser extent, Bloom 1987. On this topic, see chapter 1.

86. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 21–80, esp. 36–58. Cf. Hanson and Heath 1997: 109, 115, 124, 152.

87. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 29–35.

88. Ibid., 36–37.

89. Ibid., 49–52.

90. Ibid., 43–44.

the social sciences.[91] Interestingly, given Hanson's later career as a hawkish foreign policy pundit, the authors write, "No ancient Greek would believe that the Islamic world, with a bit more patience, will learn the advantages of our democracy."[92] The failure of contemporary American classical scholars to explain and plump for this Hellenic legacy and to live according to its precepts accounts for the dilapidated state of the field.

Hanson and Heath's notion of Greek wisdom overlaps with ideals associated with Renaissance humanism. The authors of *Who Killed Homer?*, like Salutati and Bruni before them, stress that students must take in the sagacity of the ancients.[93] Hanson and Heath also focus on moral issues: education should be a guide to life, and professors thus must practice what they preach.[94] But Hanson and Heath offer a Great Books twist: to them, "Greek wisdom" is crucial because it informs modern Westerners about their roots and thus explains how to deal with the vicissitudes of the present. Whereas the Renaissance humanists connected ancient authors to individual self-improvement, Hanson and Heath's approach is more historically informed, the product of a grand narrative espoused in many of the old Western civilization courses.[95]

Their desire to have classical scholars stress "Greek wisdom" in their classes may sit awkwardly with criticisms Hanson and Heath offer of politicized, "therapeutic" disciplines.[96] Elsewhere in his oeuvre, for example, Hanson has lambasted ethnic studies professors for presenting rosy views of their subjects.[97] Would gender studies courses stressing "women's wisdom" not draw ire for presenting too sanguine an approach to their subject? Although Hanson and Heath note the downsides of Greek culture,[98] they suggest that classicists should focus on the positive, which will demonstrate the importance of the ancient Greeks and appeal to more students. How does this differ from an "ethnic pride" approach to Chicano studies, which Hanson's later work criticizes as simplistic ego stroking?[99]

91. Ibid., e.g., 42.

92. Ibid., 54.

93. On the pedagogical programs of Salutati, Bruni, and other Italian humanists, see chapter 2

94. Cf. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 218; see also 221, in which the authors recommend that professors be able to teach in a variety of fields; this hearkens back to American higher education prior to its professionalization.

95. Neither Hanson nor Heath experienced a core curriculum as an undergraduate: both men studied under a system of distribution requirements (e-mail interviews with Hanson, August 3, 2014, and Heath, September 8, 2014).

96. E.g., Hanson and Heath 1998b: xix, 82, 212.

97. E.g., Hanson 2003a: 23–24, 76–77, 105–8, 110, 116–17, 2004: 117. Cf. Isaac 2004: 15.

98. See esp. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 98–101.

99. Hanson 2003a: 105. Cf. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 91, in which the authors lament the absence of truth as a goal for contemporary academics.

The authors' appeal to classicists to live like Greeks could have similar pitfalls. Should other specialists in the contemporary academy embody the ideals of the subjects they study? Should African historians live like Africans? Should biologists live like biologists? If this approach is reserved for classical scholars, it naturally betrays a connection with pedagogical ideals in early America. But one wonders how, pragmatically speaking, this could be accomplished in an institutional environment at odds with Hanson and Heath's recommendations for the field.

Tenured Radicals—and Tenured Philologists

Although such notions were unlikely to win much approbation among contemporary classicists, the authors pulled out all the stops and kicked up the book's most tremendous fuss in the third chapter. Seemingly channeling Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals*, Hanson and Heath excoriate a variety of recent works in classical studies, suggesting that their authors are responsible for murdering the ancient Greeks.[100] The chapter includes a merciless whirlwind tour of purported excesses, quoting and ridiculing snatches of writings on Homer. The authors perceive that such work is indicative of the academy's abandonment of "Greek wisdom" in favor of self-promoting obscurantism.

Some of the authors' barbs are directed at philological traditionalists, scholars producing the sort of narrow, technical work that Georg Luck esteemed. Such professors, Hanson and Heath contend, seldom had much interest in teaching[101] and in the face of new institutional and ideological pressures "sadly became even more reactionary," refusing to produce work accessible to the public.[102] Quoting dense passages from the scholarship of David Shive, Ahuvia Kahane, and Stephen Timothy Kelly, Hanson and Heath conclude, "It is a fair generalization that even Classicists find their own philologists as obscure as their theorists."[103]

But the chapter reserves the lion's share of its scorn for classicists influenced by the multicultural movement and postmodern literary theory. Such modish types, the authors aver, have sold out the Greeks by aping the radical anti-Western politics regnant in the academy. These classicists have done so, Hanson and Heath contend, in search of professional privileges. Although these professors trumpet their left-wing egalitarianism, their writing exposes them as self-obsessed elitists. The authors pillory examples from a range of such works, produced by scholars such as David Halperin,[104] Marilyn Katz,[105] and Charles Martindale.[106] In conformity with traditionalist tracts from the academic culture wars, Hanson and Heath complain that "Classicists now 'privilege,' 'uncover,' 'construct,' 'cruise,' 'queer,' 'subvert,' and 'deconstruct' the 'text.'"[107]

Despite acknowledging that the ancient Greeks had their faults—slavery and the subjugation of women most obvious among them—the authors contend that voguish classical scholars have overplayed these sins and thus undermined the Greeks' accomplishments. Hanson and Heath assert that these professors are walking down a well-trodden path: "The most important legacy of the Greeks and Romans," they write, "is this uniquely Western urge to pick apart everything—every institution, tradition, and individual."[108] This point may cause problems for their broader thesis. After all, if societal self-criticism remains such a fundamental aspect of the Greek legacy, in what way are the radical scholars Hanson and Heath criticize failing to hold true to the spirit of "Greek wisdom"?[109]

The tone of the book then alters dramatically in chapter 4, in which the authors provide a heartfelt description of the trials and tribulations associated with the teaching of the ancient Greek language.[110] Given its rigors, Greek remains countercultural in the contemporary university setting, especially at the introductory level.[111] Fastening on to the ideal of education as character devel-

100. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 81–160.
101. Ibid., 149.
102. Ibid., 84.
103. Ibid., 140–41.

104. Ibid., 139. This is an odd choice, since Halperin's work has appealed to a broader audience, as James Davidson (2000: 10) notes. The same could be said for Keuls 1985, a work Hanson and Heath also criticize (1998b: 102–3), despite the fact that it has engaged a wide readership.
105. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 138.
106. Ibid., 135. Hanson and Heath rely heavily on Rabinowitz and Richlin 1993 and Goff 1995 for examples. If such scholarship dominates classics, why do they focus so much on a few books?
107. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 137.
108. Ibid., 100. The theme of Western self-criticism is an important component of Hanson and Heath's conception of the Greeks: e.g., Hanson and Heath 1997: 124, 126, 1998b: 99–102, 122. Cf. Hanson 2008b: 25.
109. Cf. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 102. Further, if, as Hanson and Heath assert, multiculturalist classical scholars who condemn the Greeks are hypocrites (see, e.g., 94), were not some ancient Greeks and Romans themselves susceptible to the same charge? After all, many of them criticized aspects of their own society in stark terms, but would they have preferred to live in Thrace or Nubia?
110. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 161–208. This does not mean, however, that the chapter lacks strong opinions. The authors, for example, dismiss archaeology as "a rather minute field" (184), an opinion that troubles Miles (1999). They also disparage the perceived politicization of classical studies (189).
111. Hanson and Heath assert (1998b: 162) that the "obedience, compliance, and deference" necessary to learn Greek are skills opposed to the spirit of the Greeks. This characterization fits well with Bernal's (1987: 3) views on instruction in the classical languages, which he perceives as partly responsible for the traditionalism of the field. See chapter 4.

opment, the authors suggest that the goal for a contemporary classics professor is "in figuring out how to convince today's eighteen-year-olds to undertake grueling memorization, to read Plato, to understand Socrates, to alter the way they think and act—to become the good citizen of a good community."[112] The chapter includes an appreciation of the careers of Colin Edmonson and Eugene Vanderpool, whose infectious enthusiasm for the Greeks lives up to the authors' model for classical scholars.[113] It also presents reflections on Homer's *Iliad*, which the authors, taking a detour from their populism, deem superior to the *Odyssey*.[114]

Utopian Reforms

Hanson and Heath's final chapter presents a list of proposed reforms.[115] Despite its title, "What We Could Do," the chapter offers suggestions that are obviously utopian, and the authors inform their readers that they do not expect these ideas to be adopted.[116] In regard to the undergraduate curriculum, many revolve around a supercharged approach to the Great Books that would require students to enroll in numerous core courses in Western history and culture,[117] along with two years of obligatory Latin or ancient Greek.[118] Skeptical of vocationalism[119] and condemning of the social sciences,[120] the authors tout an ideal undergraduate curriculum that fits reasonably well with traditionalistic perspectives from the academic culture wars, although Hanson and Heath's focus on the classical languages connects with an antebellum

112. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 166–67.

113. Ibid., 172–77. The choice of these professors as models caused some controversy. See Beye 1998; Palaima 1999: 203–4 n. 11. In the hardcover edition of *Who Killed Homer?*, the authors misspell Edmonson's last name, an error they regret in the paperback (Hanson and Heath 2001a: xvii).

114. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 194.

115. Ibid., 209–50.

116. Ibid., 248–49. Asked to reflect on the unrealistic character of their reforms, Heath suggested (e-mail interview, September 8, 2014), "we didn't see our task as consultants—we took a philosophical approach, and we all know how influential philosophical approaches are." Hanson informed me (e-mail interview, August 3, 2014), "In retrospect, I think we were trying to be purists and idealists in our advocacy for mandatory languages [i.e., Latin and ancient Greek], and we were suggesting this was the way things might be in utopia—but should have emphasized that they could not be in reality." Hanson and Heath later stressed (1999b: 179, 2001a: 304) that their recommendations were quixotic.

117. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 212, 216–17.

118. Ibid., 214.

119. Ibid., 211–13.

120. Ibid., 212. Still, political science is included in their ideal undergraduate curriculum. The authors arguably subordinate the natural sciences to the humanities (see 216).

educational tradition missing from the work of traditionalists such as Bennett, Kimball, and Sykes.[121]

The advice that *Who Killed Homer?* offers to professors of classical studies seems more dramatic and controversial. Stressing the misplaced priorities of many in the field, the authors recommend a minimum of a six-course teaching load per year[122] and a concomitant diminution of scholarly publication. Such published work, they further suggest, should be broad and accessible to the public.[123] Teaching, not esoteric research, should be the chief criterion for advancement.[124] As for graduate study in classics, Hanson and Heath argue in favor of major alterations: a dramatic shortening of time to degree and the scrapping of dissertations, inter alia.[125] Given the unlikelihood of the adoption of these reforms, the chapter closes on a pessimistic note, foreseeing a Dark Age for Greek wisdom.[126] More hopefully, the book ends with an appendix in which Hanson and Heath present an ancient and modern reading list that will enable nonclassicists to gain familiarity with the Hellenic legacy.[127]

Ready for a Brawl

Unlike most books written by classical scholars, *Who Killed Homer?* arrived in bookstores only after some attention-grabbing advanced publicity. Herbert Golder, the editor of *Arion*, found out about the forthcoming book from Bruce Thornton, Hanson's colleague at Cal State Fresno, and asked Hanson and Heath if he could publish an advanced extract in his journal.[128] *Arion*, a classics journal linked to the legacy of William Arrowsmith and devoted to publishing broad and accessible work, seemed like the perfect outlet for Hanson and Heath's bold jeremiad. In keeping with the spirit of the journal, Golder was hunting for material that would challenge the status quo of classics. Although he agreed only with some of Hanson and Heath's arguments, he considered

121. On this topic, see chapter 1.

122. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 219, 234–37.

123. Ibid., 220, 238–40, 243–44. Hanson and Heath rightly note that the field often undervalues such work.

124. Ibid., 221–22, 239. They also (222) propose the elimination of tenure in favor of five-year contracts.

125. Ibid., 226–30.

126. Ibid., 248–50.

127. Ibid., 251–73.

128. Telephone interview with Golder, July 24, 2014. Thornton was in contact with Golder because they were working on Thornton 1997.

their work a valuable addition to a crucial debate.[129] Thus the fall 1997 issue of *Arion* carried a truncated foretaste of Hanson and Heath's thesis, titled simply "Who Killed Homer?"[130]

This article assisted in spreading the word about the book in academic circles. But broader publicity helped announce Hanson and Heath's work to the general public. In early March 1998 the *New York Times* devoted column space to the forthcoming book. The piece casts recent disagreements among classical scholars as struggles between philological traditionalists (such as Georg Luck, whose "*AJP* Today" manifesto is mentioned) and innovative theoreticians.[131] The author of the *Times* piece, Paul Lewis, also quotes a gloomy John Heath: "The dumbing down of the classics is under way," he complains. "There will be nothing left in a generation."[132] The archives of the Classics-L suggest that some were keenly anticipating the publication of *Who Killed Homer?* Steven J. Willett, for example, asserted that the book "should explode quite nicely in the midst of Classics' afternoon tea."[133]

A Divided Reaction

Who Killed Homer? hit bookshelves later in March and soon received a spate of reviews in the popular press. As Hanson and Heath noted,[134] most newspapers and general-interest magazines provided positive—though in many cases not entirely praiseworthy—estimations of the book.[135] In the *Washington Post*, Camille Paglia, whose own fearsome prose seems like a model for Hanson and Heath's, lauded *Who Killed Homer?* as "the most substantive by far of the academic critiques that have appeared in the past 15 years."[136] Although many favorable reviews appeared in right-of-center outlets,[137] George Scialabba's fawning write-up in the democratic-socialist quarterly *Dissent* demonstrated that the book had potentially wider appeal.[138]

Reviews in academic journals were, on the whole, more condemning.[139] Connolly, for example, considered the book's approach to the Greeks "unscholarly" and "inexcusable."[140] Classical archaeologist Margaret Miles asserted that "the presumed moribundity in the university is largely owed to attitudes like those of the authors, who dismiss archaeology as merely peripheral and ancillary."[141]

The book's detractors offered a number of reasonable criticisms. Many noted that *Who Killed Homer?* directs the brunt of its wrath at the moral failings of individual classical scholars and devotes insufficient attention to American academia as a system.[142] In contemporary American higher education, many classics professors place great emphasis on narrow scholarly research because the professionalized university has since the late nineteenth century incentivized this aspect of their jobs. College administrators, ever on the hunt for institutional prestige, recognize that peer-reviewed scholarship—along with research grants and healthy endowments—is the coin of the realm. If most professors want to keep their jobs, have an opportunity to move to other institutions, or raise their salaries, producing scholarly research is the key.

This hyper focus on publication is in many ways regrettable, and *Who Killed*

129. Telephone interview with Golder, July 24, 2014.

130. Hanson and Heath 1997.

131. Paul Lewis 1998. On this article, see also chapter 3. This framework must have disappointed Hanson and Heath, who argue in their book—and in Heath's earlier *Classical World* article (1995b)—that setting up the debate as a contest between philology and theory was a red herring.

132. Paul Lewis 1998.

133. Steven J. Willett, Classics-L, December 4, 1997.

134. Hanson and Heath 1999b: 167, 2001a: 277.

135. For largely positive reviews from the popular press, see, e.g., anonymous 1998a; Driscoll 1998; Dunlap 1998; Fleming 1998; Fukuyama 1998; Howard 1998; Knox 1998; Kovacs 1998; Lefkowitz 1998; Paglia 1998; Scialabba 1998; Stentz 1998; Thornton 1998; Simmons 2001. See also Fields 2003. Negative estimations of *Who Killed Homer?* in the popular press include Peter Green 1999a; Slavitt 1999; Carol G. Thomas 1999; James Davidson 2000. Cf. Szegedy-Maszak 2002: 102–3; Beard 2012: 50. Mixed reviews in the popular press include anonymous 1998b; Clements 1998; Rothwell 1998; Frank M. Turner 1998; Valiunas 1998.

136. Paglia 1998.

137. E.g., Dunlap 1998; Kovacs 1998; Lefkowitz 1998; Thornton 1998. But note Slavitt's (1998) critical take, which appeared in the right-leaning *Hudson Review*.

138. Scialabba 1998. Given the views on the academic culture wars of Irving Howe, *Dissent*'s founder, it is not as surprising that Scialabba praised Hanson and Heath's book. On this topic, see chapter 1. Hanson and Heath's antiagribusiness stance seems important to Scialabba's estimation of their book. This demonstrates that some unfairly deemed *Who Killed Homer?* right-wing. On this topic, see below.

139. E.g., Beye 1998; Connolly 1998; Gould 1998; Peter Green 1999b; Martindale 1999; Miles 1999. Cf. Galinsky 1999: 161–62; Palaima 1999: 203–7; duBois 2001: 38–41; Perkins 2003: 425–26. Positive academic reviews of the book include Steinmayer 1999; Willett 1999. Mixed academic reviews of the book include Caesar 1999; Frost 1999. Hanson and Heath arguably overemphasized the divide (2001b: 239–40) between popular and academic impressions of their book, since a number of supportive reviews in the popular press were the work of classical scholars (e.g., Knox 1998; Kovacs 1998; Lefkowitz 1998; Thornton 1998).

140. Connolly 1998.

141. Miles 1999: 174.

142. E.g., Beye 1998; Connolly 1998; Peter Green 1999b: 134–35; Scialabba 1998: 130; Martindale 1999: 106–7; Miles 1999: 174; Palaima 1999: 204–6; duBois 2001: 40 41; Marrs 2007. For Hanson and Heath's response to this argument, see Stentz 1998; Hanson and Heath 1999a: 168–69. Cf. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 210, 225, 257. In a July 30, 2014, telephone interview, Charles Martindale asserted that Hanson and Heath see all issues through "moral spectacles." According to Heath (e-mail interview, September 8, 2014), the "focus on individual behavior—silly, hypocritical publication (which we documented, to the individual's shame) at the expense of being a good academic citizen—was what separated the book (in our minds, at least) from most of the more political books that formed the heart of the culture wars."

Homer? is correct to bemoan this pervasiveness. But American academia has been moving in this direction for well over a century, and individual classical scholars can do little on their own to change course. Classical studies, moreover, do not seem to be a primary offender in these matters. Especially given the fragility of enrollments in the classical languages at most colleges and universities, classicists are often more concerned about effective instruction than are their colleagues in other departments.[143]

In some ways *Who Killed Homer?* reads like an extended ad hominem argument: it blames careerist classical scholars for blights in academia that are broader in nature. How were classical scholars to eschew narrow research if its creation remains the most crucial prerequisite for job security in the contemporary university? How would the field survive if its practitioners cut themselves off from the research culture of American academia? Given the bleak vision of human nature offered in *Who Killed Homer?*, it is odd that its authors put so much stock in what is, in essence, a moral appeal. Professors of all stripes have long been incentivized to prioritize scholarly research at the expense of other aspects of their jobs. Thus they often devote great attention to that area. Without far-reaching structural changes, this is precisely what pessimists such as Hanson and Heath should expect.

This hints at another potential shortcoming: numerous problematic features of contemporary American academic culture justly criticized in *Who Killed Homer?* have a longer pedigree than Hanson and Heath allow. Like many critiques of higher education from the academic culture wars, their polemic objects to the workings of the German-style research university. German influence on American academia owes its origins to the nineteenth century. Thus a number of Hanson and Heath's criticisms of professionalized classical study can be found in the writings of earlier authors. Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900), who resigned from his post as the chair of classical philology at the University of Basel in 1879, for example, excoriated the lifelessness and trivialization of the field. His work *We Philologists*, unpublished during his lifetime, disdains the abandonment of humanistic ideals in favor of the pseudoscientific quibbling of *Altertumswissenschaft*.[144] According to a 1966 article by William Arrowsmith,

143. On-campus job interviews for prospective classics professors, for example, typically require a teaching demonstration, something not obligatory for some other academic departments. Many classicists are also likely to teach overload courses to keep their departments' language programs afloat.

144. Willett (1999: 99–100) and James Davidson (2000: 10) rightly compared *Who Killed Homer?* to the work of Nietzsche. In an August 3, 2014, e-mail interview, Hanson said, "Of course, we admired Nietzsche's efforts, after mastering philology, to transcend it with works aimed beyond classics and sympathized with his inability to get along with the profession."

academic humanists "have betrayed the humanities" in a lame attempt to ape the sciences.[145] These laments seem similar in spirit to *Who Killed Homer?*, and their existence demonstrates that one cannot consider 1968 the first annus horribilis for classical studies in America.[146] The further American higher education retreated from the curricular traditions of the antebellum colleges, the more problems would brew for the classics. Both narrow philological work and poststructuralist approaches may prove unpopular with contemporary undergraduates, but this is not necessarily a primary cause for a decline that would be expected without them.[147]

Hanson and Heath's critique of narrow philology seems open to the same charge, as a glance at a mainstream scholarly classics journal produced prior to the late 1960s illustrates. Readers of a 1935 issue of the *American Journal of Philology* will find Aubrey Diller's "Codex *B* of Strabo," W. H. Worrell's "An Early Boharic Letter," Herbert C. Youtie's "Note on ΑΡΧΙΛΛΑΝ," and J. E. Harry's "Sophocles, *Electra*, 363–64."[148] They will happen upon oodles of untranslated Latin and Greek throughout these articles, which were obviously intended for a scholarly audience. This does not suggest that Hanson and Heath's critique of professionalized classical scholarship lacks merit. Indeed, their bold and unflinching criticisms offer a vital opportunity for classicists to take stock of the direction of their field. But there are problems with Hanson and Heath's timeline. American scholarly classics journals from their inception in the late nineteenth century courted a readership of professionals alone.[149]

Both Hanson and Heath responded candidly to this point. "Well," Hanson said, "the Free Press was not going to publish an account of flawed nineteenth-century classical education."[150] Heath elaborated: "We wanted to write a book

145. Arrowsmith 1966: 160. See also anonymous 1962.

146. Hanson and Heath (1998b: 5) pinpoint 1968 as the year when all began to go wrong for classics in the US. For other relevant pre-1968 critiques of classical studies, see Peter Green 1960: 1–25; Finley 1964. Numerous classical scholars prior to the late 1960s fretted about the future of the field: e.g., Kelsey 1927; Kirsch 1928; William Hardy Alexander 1937.

147. Hanson and Heath also assume that scholars who produce narrow research teach their classes in narrow ways. Lefkowitz (1998: 54) rightly questioned this presumption. Hanson and Heath (1998b: 16) praise Milman Parry for his ability to "set aside his seminal but dry and statistical research once he walked into the undergraduate classroom." How do they know that others do not do the same? This was my experience with John Peradotto, from whom I took two Greek seminars as a master's student at SUNY Buffalo. Although Hanson and Heath (1998b: 132) criticize Peradotto as a postmodern obscurantist, my studies with him suggested a very different sort of presence in the classroom. He struck me as a wonderful teacher and masterful philologist. Students unaware of his published work might have guessed that Peradotto was traditionalistic in his approach.

148. Diller 1935; Harry 1935; Worrell 1935; Youtie 1935.

149. On the establishment of such journals, see chapter 2.

150. E-mail interview with Hanson on August 3, 2014. He added: "And in some ways, Allan Bloom had done some of that as a bridge to his contemporary charges in *The Closing of the American Mind*."

that would be of interest to *non*-academics, and we felt that there was no need to rehash that story. What was interesting to us was what was killing classics in the 80s and 90s, and why non-academics should care." The book's focus on the late 1960s as the turning point for classics in American higher education also had the benefit of conforming to the portrait of decline promoted in other manifestos from the era of the culture wars.

A Spirit of High Dudgeon

Nor was this the only overlap between the academic culture wars and the debate surrounding *Who Killed Homer?* Unsurprisingly, given the book's acerbic tone and message, some reviews took issue with Hanson and Heath's arguments in bellicose fashion. Peter Green, a distinguished historian of Greek antiquity, offered two strong-worded replies to the book.[151] In one he concluded that "the cumulative impression made by Hanson and Heath in this manifesto is of two muddled, romantic, but power-hungry would-be Guardians, raiding antiquity indiscriminately for ammunition, irritated by the need to 'entice' students, and jealous of their more apparently successful colleagues, against whom they level repeated charges of arrogant and destructive elitism."[152] Karl Galinsky, Green's former colleague at the University of Texas at Austin, despaired of Hanson and Heath's "blowhard rhetoric."[153] In a trenchant review in the *Times Literary Supplement*, James Davidson dubbed Hanson "Mr. Angry" and contended that his "true vocation" was "seething."[154]

Hanson and Heath's replies to such tough-worded criticisms helped grant the debate the trappings of a culture wars vendetta. In 2003, Hanson explained to journalist Laura Secor, "When someone attacks me, I reply with twice that."[155] This was clearly Hanson and Heath's modus operandi in their responses to negative estimations of their book. Like Martin Bernal, whose umpteen published replies helped drive the debate over *Black Athena*, Hanson and Heath became

151. Peter Green 1999a, b. In a July 26, 2014, e-mail interview, Green said that he reviewed *Who Killed Homer?* twice "because in each case I was asked to."

152. Peter Green 1999b: 127–28. Hanson and Heath (1998b: 270) had praised Green's scholarship, offering it as an example of accessible and well-written work. Peter Green (1999c: 48) and James Davidson (2000: 10) elsewhere suggested that Hanson and Heath were jealous of the scholars they target. Hanson and Heath (1999b: 171, 1999c) said that this was false.

153. Galinsky 1999: 162.

154. James Davidson 2000: 10.

155. Secor 2003. Secor notes that Hanson "has penned many a blistering response to a negative review."

prolific responders to their critics.[156] In these retorts they demonstrated their flair for bruising polemic. A response to Charles Martindale's largely faultfinding estimation of *Who Killed Homer?* labeled him a charlatan.[157] In response to comments in the *Classical Bulletin*, Hanson and Heath ridiculed Thomas Palaima's "wrong-headed pomposity" and called him "a Europe-trotting careerist."[158] But surely they were toughest on Green, whose disparaging review in the pages of *Arion* earned him castigation as a self-serving hypocrite.[159]

This was the rhetoric of the academic culture wars, and its use lent an attention-grabbing but dispiriting character to the debate over *Who Killed Homer?* All the qualities of culture wars disputes appeared in the fracas: the spirit of high dudgeon, the sledgehammer prose, the harping on weaker arguments and the ignoring of more substantive charges, and the penchant for preaching to the converted. In Martindale's view, Hanson and Heath's aggressive retort "did not engage with what I had to say."[160] Martindale agreed with many points in *Who Killed Homer?*—for example, he believes that the contemporary academy overemphasizes research at the expense of teaching. But Hanson and Heath's acerbic riposte, Martindale said, turned him into a caricature, "the hated postmodernist."[161] Palaima had a similar impression: Hanson and Heath seemed content to disregard substantial criticisms of their positions in favor of "scoring points."[162]

Green offered an even stronger reaction to the debate: "With the benefit of hindsight, I wouldn't have touched the debate with the proverbial bargepole. It became very clear that [Hanson and Heath's] main objective was to get publicity through provocation, something at which they showed themselves past masters. The wisest thing would have been to ignore their book entirely."[163] Hanson and Heath had combed the polemics from the academic culture wars and followed that style to a T.[164] As was the case with Bloom's and Kimball's

156. E.g., Hanson and Heath 1998a, 1999a, b, c, 2001a: 275–309. Cf. Hanson 2008b, which provides a reflection on the book after a decade had passed. For Bernal's responses to his critics, see chapter 4.

157. Hanson and Heath 1999a: 186: "Each generation must confront the latest epidemic of false knowledge promulgated by charlatans like Martindale and others."

158. Hanson and Heath 2001a: 284–85.

159. Hanson and Heath 1999a: 150–77. In a September 8, 2014, e-mail interview, Heath wrote: "I have no misgivings about *WKH?*, but I feel a tinge of regret now and then for what we did to Peter Green."

160. Telephone interview with Martindale, July 30, 2014.

161. Ibid. Cf. Martindale 1999.

162. Telephone interview with Palaima, July 21, 2014.

163. E-mail interview with Peter Green, July 26, 2014.

164. Although a more substantive and helpful debate could have arisen from less flippant responses, Hanson and Heath did not seek to start such a dialogue. Their book demonstrated no faith in reforming the classics establishment. Instead, they hoped to reach a broader audience of general

work, this combative tone drew the attention of nonacademics, but also gave the debates surrounding *Who Killed Homer?* a highly partisan character.

By proving so bruising to their critics, Hanson and Heath paradoxically reduced the likelihood that classical scholars would join the fray and engage in a topic of both paramount concern and general importance. The authors' trenchant replies suggested to those without the stomach for fierce rhetorical combat that it remains better for classical scholars (especially early in their careers) to stay out of the fray, to write comfortably arcane scholarship that will not cause hullabaloos. Such a reaction is regrettable, especially since *Who Killed Homer?* lucidly articulates many faults of the contemporary academic universe. Even scholars at odds with Hanson and Heath's vision of classical studies should come to terms with the book's potent challenge to the profession.

Are You Now, or Have You Ever Been, a Republican?

Ideological factors undoubtedly contributed to the combative quality of the debate surrounding *Who Killed Homer?* Many academic reviewers highlighted the political character of the book, explicitly or implicitly labeling Hanson and Heath (neo)conservatives. Green, for example, likened them to Newt Gingrich.[165] Connolly asserted that the book was couched in a "thick layer of familiar neo-conservative slogans."[166] Martindale argued that *Who Killed Homer?* at times lapses "into that more mindless form of conservatism which projects as timeless whatever it regards as 'traditional.'"[167]

The inclination of numerous scholars to emphasize the authors' political leanings marks an interesting difference between the field's reactions to *Who Killed Homer?* and to *Black Athena*. Despite the deliberate emphasis Bernal granted to the political character of his work, classicists responding to *Black Athena* by and large shied away from discussions of Bernal's Marxism. The reaction to Hanson and Heath's book was markedly dissimilar. To journalist John Allemang, *Who Killed Homer?* "naturally attracted charges of elitism and right-wing intellectual jingoism, especially since Hanson and Heath placed their arguments for rescuing Homer and company in a context that was defiantly pro-Western."[168]

This is not to suggest that critics of *Who Killed Homer?* were incorrect to note numerous parallels between arguments appearing in the book and the conservative polemics of the academic culture wars. Hanson and Heath, for example, refer to Kimball's *Tenured Radicals* as a "classic"[169] and more generally demonstrate their affinity for traditionalistic critiques of American higher education.[170] *Who Killed Homer?* also largely condemns feminist classical scholarship as well as research on sexuality.[171] Further, Hanson and Heath broadcast throughout their book the superiority of Western civilization,[172] and this position, though perhaps unremarkable in American intellectual history prior to the late 1960s, these days betrays conservative affinities.[173]

But the desire of critics to foreground the conservative political character of *Who Killed Homer?* is intriguing also because Hanson and Heath took pains to suggest that they were not typical American right-wingers. They stressed, for example, that neither had ever voted for a Republican.[174] The book also criticizes economic inequality[175] and contemporary corporatism[176] and appears un-

readers. Those sympathetic to Hanson and Heath's book also likely found the highly charged responses to it from some in the field unhelpful. In a July 25, 2014, telephone interview, for example, Donald Kagan said that he thought the establishment's reaction was "pretty bad," amounting to "defensive denial."

165. Peter Green 1999b: 123.

166. Connolly 1998. But Connolly's review also pointed out that Hanson and Heath promoted ideas found on both sides of the culture wars.

167. Martindale 1999: 107. Cf. 109: "Like many cultural conservatives Hanson and Heath love military metaphors, as well as metaphors of salvation and of health and sickness, which they use to articulate a profound cultural pessimism." For further discussions of Hanson and Heath's likely political views, see, e.g., Beye 1998; Schneider 1999: A13; Allemang 2002; González Garcia and López Barja de Quiroga 2012. According to Donald Kagan (telephone interview, July 25, 2014), *Who Killed Homer?* offers views that were deemed liberal prior to the late 1960s. To him, it is a mark of how far to the left the field is today that the book is considered conservative.

168. Allemang 2002. See also Stentz 2008, which quotes Mary-Kay Gamel, one of Hanson's undergraduate professors at UCSC, who hopes that the book will not be dismissed as the work of right-wingers. Bernal's attack on the classics establishment had focused primarily on nineteenth and early twentieth-century scholars who had already died. Hanson and Heath blamed the demise of classics on contemporary scholars—and named names in their third chapter. This could account for the more emotional response to *Who Killed Homer?* and perhaps for the desire on the part of some to highlight the book's political character.

169. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 253. Kimball provided a blurb for the book.

170. Ibid., 252–57; cf. 146.

171. See ibid., 98, 102–14, 128, 135–38. See also James Davidson 2000: 10; duBois 2001: 39. Cf. Hanson 1991: 11; Heath 1995b: 9–10.

172. They stress (Hanson and Heath 1998b: xviii, 25–27), however, that this superiority is not a matter of race. Even so, Connolly (1998) detects racial undertones in their discussions of the Greeks and other cultures. In a July 20, 2014, e-mail interview, Connolly said, "Hanson and Heath didn't strike me as members of the political right wing. The book seemed more akin to the work of cultural conservatives like Allan Bloom."

173. See Connor (1989), who separates the spirit of an Old Humanities from that of the New (post–late 1960s) Humanities. Hanson and Heath's views seem to conform to the Old Humanities, and this position is often deemed traditionalistic and conservative.

174. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 258. Cf. Curry 2003; Secor 2003; Kay 2005; Hanson 2007; Stentz 2008. Adam Bellow (2004) calls Hanson a convert to conservatism.

175. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 75.

176. Ibid., 155–56. See also Hanson and Heath 1997: 147.

enthusiastic about American attempts to promote democracy abroad.[177] Hanson's post-9/11 transformation into a hawkish political pundit may lead readers to presume that his views were more reliably conservative when he cowrote the book than was in fact the case.[178] To this day, Heath does not self-identify as conservative: "With the publication of *Who Killed Homer?* I found myself an atheistic, vegetarian, pro-choice, gun-control advocating, never-voted-for-a-Republican *conservative*. This could only happen in the academy."[179]

Political Suspects

The conservative character of *Who Killed Homer?* played a prominent role in many scholarly reactions to Hanson and Heath's opus. Even before it appeared in print, the book was the focus of heated debates on the Classics-L. This included very critical assessments. James O'Donnell, then a professor at the University of Pennsylvania,[180] wrote, "The basic argument contradicts itself with a degree of unselfconsciousness not often seen outside Washington DC. The study of the classics has a good effect on those who pursue it. But the people who have studied classics the most are a bunch of hypocrites and have thus ruined the study of classics for others."[181] Some were less mannered in their response. One labeled Hanson and Heath "fucking assholes" and "bitter, envious pricks."[182] Still others clamored to defend the book, suggesting that those whose hackles it raised were out of touch with the serious troubles plaguing the field.

All this online hand-wringing—which suggested that *Who Killed Homer?* had touched a nerve with many classicists—led to a much-discussed episode. On May 11, 1999, more than a year after the book had been published, Mark F. Williams, a classics professor at Calvin College, noting a martial metaphor in Hanson and Heath's jeremiad, asked on the Classics-L (in jest, one presumes),

177. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 54. Despite his post-9/11 embrace of the Right, Hanson remains critical of laissez-faire economics. See, e.g., Hanson 1996: xix–xx, 61, 63, 68–69, 156–58, 2000: 18, 23, 240–41, 2003a: xii; Isaac 2004: 16; Kay 2005. Hanson has also criticized the "utilitarian right's" views on education: see, e.g., Hanson 2000: 240–41, 2003a: 123. Cf. Hanson and Heath 2001a: 287; Hanson, Heath, and Thornton 2001: xii–xiii.

178. For a taste of Hanson's voluminous work on American foreign policy, see Hanson 2002a, 2003b, 2004, 2009, 2010a: 31–49. Cf. Hanson 2003c.

179. E-mail interview with Heath, September 8, 2013. For the (few) inklings of Heath's political views from his published work, see Lisa Adams and Heath 2007: 87, 115, 101–3. Connolly (1998) correctly noted that Hanson and Heath's views were a hodgepodge of traditionalist and antitraditionalist stances regarding the university, though the former certainly predominated.

180. Hanson and Heath (1998b: 87–88) had criticized O'Donnell's views on ancient Mediterranean studies.

181. O'Donnell, Classics-L, April 9, 1998. For criticism of O'Donnell's conception of classical studies, see Willett 2004.

182. Jeffrey S. Carnes, Classics-L, May 12, 1999.

"Have H&H ever been shot at?"[183] This led to a response on the forum from Judith Hallett: "Their names were given to the FBI during the nationwide effort to find the Unabomber, at a time when he was thought to be in his early 40's and based in northern California."[184]

Asked on the Classics-L how she could conceivably know this information, Hallett spilled the beans: "It was I who phoned the FBI hot line, to say that while I didn't suspect either of any bombings, I thought that both might have leads as to the bomber's identity since they shared views and a similar mode of exposition. . . . At the time I was working on Heath's contribution to that 1995 [*Classical World*] issue we kindly agreed to center on his prequel-to-WKH?-essay, and I was struck by many similarities between his and VH's message and style, and those of the Unabomber's manifesto (as well as a physical resemblance: the drawing of what he was supposed to look like depicted as a handsome blonde male in a hooded sweatshirt with a strikingly sculpted chin)."[185]

Hallett's message was met with an avalanche of replies, mostly from outraged classical scholars. "I cannot conceive of anyone taking the initiative in giving names to the FBI," wrote Diana Wright.[186] Debra Hamel asked, "Having discovered you were incorrect in associating H&H with the Unabomber, did it *really* strike you as a wise choice to sully their reputations by mentioning them in this public forum in connection with him?"[187] Hallett was greatly distressed by the heated responses to her confession. Although she told me that for some time she had wrestled with the appropriateness of contacting the FBI about Hanson and Heath, she maintains to this day that she did the right thing.[188]

The scandal soon caught the attention of Joseph Bottum, the literary editor of the *Weekly Standard*, a conservative political and cultural magazine. Amused by the contretemps, Bottum decided to pen a column on the topic, which he sent on to the *Wall Street Journal*.[189] On May 28, the *Journal* ran Bottum's piece, which ridicules Hallett for her actions. According to Bottum, Hallett had "in-

183. The passage that drew Williams's attention is, "Classicists can no longer huddle to the rear in the surf as waves of their greenhorn Greek and Latin1A-ers are machine-gunned in the sand. If we are going to lose Greek, let us do so with burly, cigar-chomping professors, red-eyed from overload classes, wounds oozing from bureaucratic combat, chests bristling with local teaching medals and complimentary Rotary pens from free lecturing, barking orders and dragging dozens of bodies forward as they brave administrative gunfire, oblivious to the incoming rounds from ethnic studies and contemporary cinema" (Hanson and Heath 1998b: 171).

184. Judith P. Hallett, Classics-L, May 11, 1999.

185. Ibid., May 12, 1999.

186. Diana Wright, Classics-L, May 12, 1999.

187. Debra Hamel, Classics-L, May 12, 1999; emphasis in the original.

188. Interview with Hallett, August 12, 2014.

189. E-mail interview, July 9, 2014. Bottum said that he sent the piece to the *Wall Street Journal* rather than publishing it in the *Weekly Standard* because he feared that he would "get scooped if the [New York] *Times* or someone else found the story."

vented the first new technique in years for answering one's academic critics."[190] Bottum suggested that Hallett's timeline of events was problematic: though she claimed to have contacted the FBI in 1994, Hanson and Heath had not published anything in tandem until their *Arion* snippet from *Who Killed Homer?* appeared in 1997. How could she have deemed both men suspects prior to the appearance of their coauthored work?[191]

Bottum found the brouhaha delicious: "All academic comedy runs on the irony of the gap between professors' dreary lives and petty ambitions, on the one hand, and the elevated nobility of the humanities they study," he said. "But the discipline of classics, in particular, expands that comic irony into the broadest of slapstick—for surely the Greeks and Romans ought to have taught their professors something through the long years."[192] In a full-scale 2001 examination of the fiasco, Heath supplied a sober take, viewing the episode as indicative of the academy's ideological imbalance.[193] He doubted that Hallett had contacted the FBI. Rather, he suggested that she invented the story as revenge for Hanson's brutal 1998 review of a book she coedited.[194] The field's failure to ostracize Hallett for her actions, Heath declared, demonstrated its political tilt. If Hanson and Heath, the "conservatives" in the conflict, had called the FBI on Hallett, classicists would have treated this matter very differently.[195]

An Explosive Paperback

Nor was this the only kerfuffle associated with *Who Killed Homer?* Another volatile episode surrounded the book's paperback edition.[196] Soon after the

190. Bottum 1999.

191. In an August 12, 2014, interview, Hallett told me that she believes Hanson and Heath collaborated on Heath's *Classical World* article (Heath 1995b). In separate e-mail interviews, Hanson and Heath denied this contention. The FBI arrested Theodore Kaczynski in Lincoln, Montana, on April 3, 1996.

192. E-mail interview with Bottum, July 9, 2014.

193. Heath 2001a. Other discussions of this scandal include Schneider 1999: A12–A13; James Davidson 2000: 10; Hanson 1998a: 95–97, 2007; Hanson and Heath 2001a: 276, 307–8, 2001b: 244–45, 356 n. 1; Corey 2002; Secor 2003. In an August 3, 2014, e-mail interview, Hanson said, "For a while when I spoke at universities on other topics, people in the Q and A would ask me if I knew the Unabomber, which was sort of weird."

194. Heath 2001a: 328. For the review, see Hanson 1998a.

195. Heath 2001a: 333. In an August 12, 2014, interview, Hallett said that a few people wrote to the APA about removing her from her position as the director of outreach. But this did not amount to much. The controversy distressed her, she said, because it unfairly mischaracterized her as a villain. I am not certain that the field would have reacted differently to events if the roles were reversed. Corey (2002) concluded that Heath cannot prove that his version of events is correct.

196. For discussions of this episode, see Hanson and Heath 2001a: xii–xvii, 2001b: 244–45, 356 n. 1.

hardcover version appeared in print, James H. Clark (1931–2013), the director of the University of California Press, contacted Hanson and Heath, hoping to win the rights to the paperback.[197] Erich Gruen, an ancient historian at the University of California at Berkeley and Clark's friend, explained that the press was experiencing "some financial strains, and the prospect of a book that might actually make money had its attractions."[198] Clark, who had been a formative figure at the press and a staunch supporter of the classics, also enjoyed publishing books that pushed the envelope, and this helped attract him to *Who Killed Homer?*[199]

For the book to appear under the auspices of a university press, it would now have to pass through at least a perfunctory peer review and earn the favor of the University of California Press's editorial committee. Given the waves *Who Killed Homer?* had caused in scholarly circles, this could prove a tall order. Luckily for Clark, the representative for classics on the committee at that time was John Lynch, Hanson's undergraduate mentor from UCSC.[200] On June 19, 1998, Lynch reported on the book to the committee, which officially approved publication.[201] All seemed to be going smoothly.

But complications soon developed. Kate Toll, then the classics editor at the press, informed me that she opposed the book's publication "from the outset." She thought that Hanson and Heath presented tendentious assessments of valuable research in the field and feared that the press's publication of the paperback would signal to scholars that she had given it her imprimatur.[202] Seth Schein, who soon took Lynch's place as the classics representative on the committee, also disapproved of publication. When Clark informally asked for feedback, Schein declared that *Who Killed Homer?* "wasn't a scholarly book, and it wasn't the sort of book that a scholarly press should publish." Much material in the polemic, Schein thought, was "intellectually irresponsible and unscholarly."[203] Such responses appear to have given Clark misgivings about

197. This occurred in April 1998, say Hanson and Heath (2001a: xii). Clark has passed away, and so cannot provide his take on the controversy.

198. E-mail interview with Gruen, August 28, 2014.

199. Ibid.

200. Hanson (1995: xii) thanks Lynch for reading the manuscript of his book and offering suggestions.

201. Eric Schmidt, the University of California Press's current classics editor, confirmed this information in a September 19, 2014, e-mail.

202. E-mail interview with Toll, September 2, 2014.

203. Telephone interview with Schein, September 4, 2014. Schein is surely correct to contend that *Who Killed Homer?* is a polemic, not a work of scholarship. He informed me that no book that was similarly polemical passed muster with the editorial committee during his term. One notes that the University of California Press's views may have subsequently altered on this score, however. It is the publisher of Norman Finkelstein's *Beyond Chutzpah: On the Misuse of Anti-Semitism and the Abuse*

the book—misgivings that were only strengthened by negative feedback he received from other scholars.[204]

Both Toll and Schein surmised that Clark had not read *Who Killed Homer?* prior to contacting Hanson and Heath about the paperback version; rather, he likely got the idea from some early positive reviews in the popular press.[205] Clark found himself in a bind: he had agreed to publish a book that he suddenly recognized was polarizing and widely scorned. As Hanson and Heath later related, the press started to drag its feet, seemingly in an attempt to compel the authors to withdraw their book. Although they were originally told that the paperback edition would appear in the spring 1999 catalog,[206] this soon changed.

Hanson and Heath added a spirited afterword that replied to the book's critics. The authors explained the University of California Press's response to the new material: "Quite mysteriously we heard literally nothing from UC Press for several months—aside from a few anguished e-mails from Kate Toll, the Classics editor, informing us that a few Classicists had requested that UC change sections of the text they did not like."[207] Following further delays and demands to cut—or greatly condense—the acerbic afterword, Hanson and Heath withdrew the book.[208]

They then sought out a trade publisher, and Encounter Books, a small conservative outfit, produced the paperback in 2001. This version contains a preface in which Hanson and Heath detail their run-in with University of California Press. With characteristic forcefulness, they excoriate the press, asserting that it preferred to cater to academic orthodoxy, rather than to engage in open debate about important issues facing classics.[209]

of History (2005), a similarly spirited and journalistic tract on a controversial topic. Did the press's views on the acceptability of such work change—likely as a result of financial concerns? Or were the conservative aspects of *Who Killed Homer?* to blame for differing attitudes toward the book?

204. Hanson and Heath (2001a: xiii) were incorrect, however, to suggest that Peter Green played an active role in this affair. When contacted, Green did not recognize that the book never ultimately appeared under the auspices of UC Press (e-mail interview with Green, July 24, 2014). Schein informed me (telephone interview, September 4, 2014) that Hanson and Heath's account overplays Green's influence on the press at that time.

205. E-mail interview with Toll, September 2, 2014; telephone interview with Schein, September 4, 2014.

206. Hanson and Heath 2001a: xi.

207. Ibid., xiii.

208. In her September 2, 2014, e-mail interview, Toll said that Hanson and Heath's account of what transpired (2001a: xii–xvii) is essentially accurate. Their suggestion about Green's active involvement in the process, however, is incorrect.

209. Hanson and Heath 2001a: xvi–xvii. The book also includes their afterword (275–309), which the University of California Press had sought to alter or remove.

Points of Agreement

The rancorous debates inspired by *Who Killed Homer?* are a testament to the bellicose spirit of the culture wars that informed it. But they also can obscure important examples of consensus among the authors and their critics. Despite the condemning assessments of the book from many in the field, numerous scholars suggested—both in their original print reviews and later interviews with me—vital points of agreement between their positions and those articulated by Hanson and Heath. Although admitting as much may have been unpopular, this intimated that *Who Killed Homer?* presented a provocative and compelling challenge to the status quo. When the book was first published, some observers agreed that classical studies *were* experiencing a crisis.[210] The conversations spurred on by the publication of Culham and Edmunds's *Classics: A Discipline and Profession in Crisis?* undoubtedly contributed to a feeling of alarm, but many American classical scholars in the late twentieth century believed that something was amiss in their field.[211]

In interviews with me, numerous scholars demonstrated that they continue to agree with points that Hanson and Heath articulated. Many perceived that contemporary classical studies place too much emphasis on the creation of peer-reviewed scholarship for advancement. Some were outspoken about the problem. According to Charles Rowan Beye, whose critical estimation of *Who Killed Homer?* appeared in the *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*,[212] "Research is in many, many ways a waste of time." Not much is new in classics, he said, so scholarship in the field often mulls over the same topics, most often advancing some small new point.[213] Connolly worries "about the pressure on young

210. E.g., Gould 1998: 518; Thornton 1998; anonymous 1999: 6–7; Steinmayer 1999: 182. Some posters on the Classics-L at the time agreed with this assessment: e.g., on April 9, 1998, Jacob Rabinowitz posted, "Classics as a profession is rapidly dying, and the APA dithers about awarding themselves honors and agonizing about whether they've hired enough women (n.b., I don't honestly care if they hire women or not—when it was a boy's club, classics was ruled by mediocrities, now that it's 'integrated,' it's still a bunch of mediocrities)." Gold (1995: 25), prior to the book's publication, saw a crisis. Others, however, were less sure: e.g., Frost 1999: 45–46. And some resisted this notion: e.g., Peter Green 1999a, c; Herbert 1999: 123; Miles 1999: 175; duBois 2001: 38–39. Cf. Damrosch 1995 (offering some numbers that suggest crisis); Beard 2012 (cleverly noting that laments about the demise of classics have been inherent to their study since antiquity).

211. A number of interviewees expressed similar concerns about the future of classics. E.g., Charles Rowan Beye (telephone interview, August 23, 2014) said that the sciences are far more important than the humanities today, adding, "Maybe it's too bad; maybe it will be the end of classics. Maybe antiquity comes to an end." Thomas Palaima (telephone interview, July 21, 2014) suggested, "You'd have to be a blind fool" to think that classics will prosper in the future. Bruce Thornton wrote (e-mail interview, July 18, 2014), "During the whole controversy the *New York Times* did a story about it. I doubt very much it would do so today." For more on this topic, see chapter 6.

212. Beye 1998.

213. Telephone interview with Beye, August 23, 2014.

scholars to produce a book within six or seven years of getting the doctorate; not every dissertation makes a good book, so there are a lot of mediocre books out there that exist primarily for the purpose of job security."[214] Green agreed, stressing that "the pressure on young scholars to publish, especially to publish books, is excessive."[215] Golder criticized the peer review process. Although some peer review is necessary, he contended, "it is antithetical to originality."[216]

In a similar spirit, some critics expressed sympathy for Hanson and Heath's portrait of the field's elitism.[217] Others esteemed the Great Books.[218] Still others supported a focus on broader, more accessible scholarship.[219] In a further example of consensus, Martindale stressed that Hanson and Heath were correct to center classical studies on the successful teaching of undergraduate students.[220] Palaima agreed. He benefited from a fabulous undergraduate education in classics at Boston College. If his mentor had been as tied to the research imperative as is essential nowadays, Palaima suggested, he might not have been such an inspiring teacher.[221]

We should not overstate such points of agreement. Many critics opposed Hanson and Heath's contentions and often did so spiritedly. The authors' views on "Greek wisdom" proved especially unpopular.[222] Some scholars deemed Hanson and Heath's approach to the ancients simplistic, reductive, and even jingoistic. Their proposed reforms also met with strong objections, even from those who esteemed the book.[223] But the bellicose rows inaugurated by *Who Killed*

214. E-mail interview with Connolly, July 20, 2014.

215. E-mail interview with Peter Green, July 26, 2014. He continued, "There should be more emphasis, for an assistant professor, on publishing serious articles, building on scholarship as s/he advances; the books should not be mandatory before associate level."

216. Telephone interview with Golder, July 24, 2014. Charles Martindale (telephone interview, July 30, 2014) agreed, suggesting that peer review often encourages unoriginal work.

217. E.g., Beye (telephone interview, August 23, 2014) contended that it can be hard to break into the Ivy League monopoly in the field.

218. E.g., ibid.; Martindale (telephone interview, July 30, 2014).

219. E.g., Frank Frost (telephone interview, August 5, 2014), who reviewed *Who Killed Homer?* for *New England Classical Journal*, argued that narrow research is a problem, since it can make the field seem less attractive to potential students. Unsurprisingly, Golder, editor of *Arion*, also supported accessible, readable scholarship (telephone interview, July 24, 2014). David Konstan (e-mail interview, July 8, 2014), wrote, "As for writing for wider audiences, this is very much in vogue: we'd all like to, but it's not easy, and there's no market for it in the US." In this respect, Hanson may underestimate his talents: not every classicist has the ability to attract big-name trade publishers, even if s/he has the inclination.

220. Telephone interview with Martindale, July 30, 2014.

221. Telephone interview with Palaima, July 21, 2014. David Konstan (e-mail interview, July 8, 2014), however, wrote, "I don't think publication has been at the expense of teaching, by and large; one can be a good teacher without publishing, and that's important too, but I doubt teaching was any better half a century ago."

222. E.g., Valiunas 1998: 48; Peter Green 1999a: 46–48, 1999b: 122, 124–25, 129; Martindale 1999: 117; Willett 1999: 99.

223. E.g., anonymous 1998a; Knox 1998; Kovacs 1998; Valiunas 1998: 48; Rothwell 1998: 39;

Homer? must not lead us to overlook the fact that classical scholars of disparate outlooks have harbored similar reservations about the field and its relationship to the culture of the contemporary American multiversity. It remains unfashionable to say so, but Hanson and Heath's book has a lot to recommend it.

Contacts with the Culture Wars

Who Killed Homer? is almost a paradigmatic example of a culture wars polemic. If anything, Hanson and Heath's tome was even more designed to irk professorial sensibilities than the work of Bloom, D'Souza, and kindred traditionalistic critics. Books such as Roger Kimball's *Tenured Radicals*, for example, inadvertently flattered leftist scholars. Kimball viewed them as earnest threats to the tradition of Western high culture and perceived their attempts to indoctrinate students as dangerous. Kimball, in short, contended that the efforts of "tenured radicals" in print and in the classroom were important, albeit pernicious.[224]

Hanson and Heath, conversely, though similarly critical of the postmodern academic Left, undercut such pretensions to its importance. In their view, these pseudoradicals were engaged in a careerist parlor game—one that involved padding their CV's rather than cramming radical politics down the throats of unsuspecting students. *Who Killed Homer?* portrays academic leftism as a self-delusional joke, a hypocritical stance from those itching to climb the totem pole of American academia.[225] Such an assessment was likely to incite heated reactions.

Peter Green 1999b: 124, 128, 141, 144–45; Martindale 1999: 105–6. Cf. Clements 1998; Driscoll 1998; Dunlap 1998; Fleming 1998: 28; Willett 1999: 85–86, 88; Caesar 2000: 613–14; Simmons 2001: liv.

224. Roger Kimball 1990. For a discussion of this book, see chapter 1. It is not surprising that Kimball's jeremiad has spawned tongue-in-cheek homages from opponents. Claire B. Potter, a professor of history at the New School for Social Research, for example, has long operated a popular academic blog, "Tenured Radical" (http://chronicle.com/blognetwork/tenuredradical). Cary Nelson, a former president of the American Association of University Professors, wrote *Manifesto of a Tenured Radical* (1997).

225. One example (among many) in the book of this approach to the topic (Hanson and Heath 1998b: 57): "It is not reductionist or fantastic to ask why it is that even the most vociferous academic critic of the West would prefer to fly Swiss-air, check into the Mayo Clinic, scream obscenities in Times Square, run a red light in Omaha, swim with his girlfriend on Santa Cruz beach, or live next to a U.S. Army base in Texas—rather than board a Congolese airliner, leave his appendix in Managua General, use Allah's name in vain in downtown Jeddah, jump the curb in Singapore, wear a bikini and Speedos in Iran, or vacation near the home of the Korean National Guard." For other examples of the authors' focus on hypocrisy, see, e.g., Hanson and Heath 1997: 120–21, 139, 149–50, 1998b: xvi, xix–xx, 94–101, 157, 259, 1999a: 161, 1999b: 176. Curry (2003) asserts that hypocrisy is Hanson's favorite charge against opponents. Cf. Hanson 2000: 11, 2003a: 84–85, 109, 2005b: 9.

In part for this reason, the field's response to *Who Killed Homer?* differed notably from its reaction to *Black Athena*, despite the fact that both were polemical works in tune with the spirit of the culture wars.[226] For example, fewer classical scholars chose to discuss Hanson and Heath's work than Bernal's opus.[227] To some degree, this must be related to the fact that Hanson and Heath's book did not generate the same sort of buzz as *Black Athena* did. In many respects, *Who Killed Homer?* reads like a classically inspired version of Kimball's *Tenured Radicals*. By the time Hanson and Heath's book was published, Kimball's book was already eight years old and provided the blueprint for many other traditionalistic attacks on American academia.[228] If classical studies had been such a conspicuous offender in the realm of politicized, reader-repellent scholarship, surely the well-read Kimball would have mentioned it.[229] Yet neither Kimball nor his fellow traditionalists included classical scholars in their rogue's gallery of radical humanists.

But the disinclination of many in the field to respond in print to *Who Killed Homer?* must be related to the nature of its topic. Bernal, for all his unconventional academic derring-do, offered an argument in *Black Athena* about the nature of Greek prehistory. Many scholars were experts on this topic and thus were qualified to respond. Hanson and Heath, however, attempted to connect classical studies to the contemporary world. As Golder noted in an interview with me, most classical scholars—lacking formal training in this area—do not possess the background and vocabulary necessary to make such connections. Although it was easy to dismiss the idea of "Greek wisdom" as simplistic, it proved far more difficult to suggest an alternative rationale for the study and teaching of classics in the late twentieth century—and beyond. Whatever one's views on *Who Killed Homer?*, Hanson and Heath possessed the courage to supply their own vision. Especially in the wake of the demise of the Great Books and obligatory Western civilization courses on the large majority of American campuses, few could articulate a compelling raison d'être for study of the classics. This remains a major problem, insofar as Hanson and Heath's appeal to the relevance of classics appears as timely as ever, in an era uncongenial to the humanities.

226. Interesting similarities also exist between the projects. The authors of both works lauded Schliemann and Ventris as daring outsiders (Bernal 1987: 5; Hanson and Heath 1998b: 13–14, 17–20). They also supported the creation of broad and ideologically engaged research—research that would appeal to general readers as much as classical scholars (cf. Hanson 1995: 419). All the authors were, in Bernal's terms, "lumpers" rather than "splitters." (On this distinction, see Bernal 1989a: 26, 2006: 39–40, 2012: 399.) Cf. Molly Myerowitz Levine 1990: 33.

227. Hanson and Heath (1999b: 167–68) thought that many scholars supportive of *Who Killed Homer?* did not want to write about it.

228. On this topic, see chapter 1.

229. In a July 24, 2014, telephone interview, Golder proposed that *Who Killed Homer?* arrived rather late in the game—a "Johnny-come-lately" in some respects. He noted that *Arion*'s publication of Paglia's review (1991) had caused a far greater stir than did the excerpt of Hanson and Heath's work in the journal.

Long-Standing Dissatisfaction

Some of Hanson and Heath's criticisms have resonance because they point to serious shortcomings associated with the research culture of the contemporary German-inspired university. One can quibble with aspects of their analysis. The teaching and advising of graduate students can be toilsome, for example, and it seems myopic to push the blame for the demise of classics on a small assortment of "grandees." But American academia *does* fetishize scholarly research productivity at the expense of good teaching, *does* rely on exploited adjunct labor,[230] and *does* encourage minute specialization rather than broad thinking. And it does these things in an effort to compel the humanities to fit a model of scholarship more appropriate for the natural sciences. Although classical studies are not a primary offender in these regards, Hanson and Heath's plea for a less research-obsessed approach to higher education has great merit. Their book connects with a long tradition of criticism that knowingly or unknowingly bemoans the demise of the old spirit of Renaissance humanism.

Who Killed Homer? also points to serious pitfalls for classical studies in the future. The field's survival in American academia assuredly relates to its former primacy and as a result to the prestige it accords to colleges and universities that house classics departments. In many cases, this may well remain the chief argument in the classicist's arsenal when faced with an administrator who aims to put the department on the chopping block. If classicists are unwilling to vouch for the cardinal importance of Greco-Roman studies—whether in the manner of Hanson and Heath or through some other intellectual means—how will the field thrive?

Despite the timeliness of such questions, classical scholars remain divided on the impact of *Who Killed Homer?* Many perceived it as having minimal influence. According to Page duBois, a professor of classics and comparative literature at the University of California at San Diego, Hanson and Heath's tome had "no impact, as far as I can see."[231] Donald Kagan, a Greek historian far more amenable to the book's thesis, agreed, lamenting that it had "no ef-

230. As Hanson and Heath (1998b: xix) correctly note. Cf. Hanson and Heath 1998b: 155–56.

231. E-mail interview with duBois, August 1, 2014.

fect at all."[232] Even Heath doubted that *Who Killed Homer?* made much of a lasting impression, though he suggested that its publication could be related to the lesser prestige the field currently accords to "postmodern theoretical publication."[233] To some observers, the book's minimal influence is troubling. Connolly asserted, "I regret that nothing more substantive occurred as a result of the book" especially because the questions Hanson and Heath "raised at the end of the book are important. It is both good and bad news that many classicists are still asking them."[234]

Others, however, believe that *Who Killed Homer?* had important repercussions. Frank Frost, who reviewed the book for *New England Classical Journal*, said that "For all the distaste for [the book's] tone, it made people look a little more carefully at how much teaching they were doing."[235] Palaima, though critical of *Who Killed Homer?*, asserted that it was useful insofar as it made clear to holdouts that they could no longer get by teaching nothing but tiny advanced courses in Latin and ancient Greek. "It couldn't have hurt to have a wake-up call," he stressed.[236] Bruce Thornton supposed that Hanson and Heath's book "at least gave heart to many in the profession who were equally disturbed by what was happening and grateful to have the issues articulated and brought into the open."[237]

In Praise of a Big Tent

Though almost two decades have passed since the publication of *Who Killed Homer?* and the raucous debate that ensued, the most crucial questions implicitly posed by the book remain unanswered. What sort of ideological rationale can best defend the study of the classics in contemporary academia? Can the field blossom—or survive—without it? Hanson and Heath's book did not provide definitive answers to these queries, but their continued pertinence seems like cause for worry.

In the meantime, life has continued for most classics departments across the country. And Hanson and Heath have gone on to different sorts of careers. Heath, now a full professor at Santa Clara University, has continued to write

232. Telephone interview with Donald Kagan, July 25, 2014.

233. E-mail interview with Heath, September 8, 2014. Cf. Hanson 2008b, which argues that *Who Killed Homer?* had minimal impact on the discipline of classics.

234. E-mail interview with Connolly, July 20, 2014.

235. Telephone interview with Frost, August 5, 2014.

236. Telephone interview with Palaima, July 21, 2014.

237. E-mail interview with Thornton, July 18, 2014.

mostly conventional classical scholarship.[238] He recalled, "For the next five years or so after publication [of *Who Killed Homer?*], I didn't bother to send any prospective article to an American journal. . . . I didn't trust American editors to be impartial." When he perceived that the storm had passed, Heath resumed contributing to such outlets.[239]

Hanson, now retired from Cal State Fresno and a senior fellow at the conservative Hoover Institution, used his expertise in ancient military history to transition to a notably successful career as a pundit and political analyst. A prominent defender of the 2003 American invasion of Iraq, Hanson writes at a feverish pace, penning a variety of nonfiction books and columns and even a novel.[240] He has remained true to his populist vision for the classics, writing, for example, *A War Like No Other: How the Athenians and the Spartans Fought the Peloponnesian War* (2005) for the trade publisher Random House. Surely to his critics' chagrin, Hanson has emerged as among the most famous classical scholars in America and an influential writer in conservative circles.[241]

Many in the field disagree with Hanson's politics.[242] Some may decry his high profile, since it could offer Americans outside academia the misimpression that classical studies are the preserve of conservatives. But benefits can accrue from his prominence, especially given the profile of his audience.

On November 1, 2011, conservative radio host Rush Limbaugh was busy lambasting the Occupy Wall Street movement on his nationally syndicated program.[243] He began his excoriation with a description of a photograph taken by a college student linked to the movement. In the photo, a young woman holds a sign that reads in part, "I graduate in seven months with a useless degree in Classical Studies." Warming up to his subject, Limbaugh revels in disdain for the field. "Tell me, any of you at random listening all across the fruited plain," he implores, "what the hell is Classical Studies? What classics are studied? Or, is it learning how to study in a classical way? Or is it learning how to study in a classy as opposed to an un-classy way?"

This leads Limbaugh to trot out a conspiracy theory. "Socialists" and "liberals" have knowingly diluted American higher education so that students are unqualified for jobs and must turn to the government for aid. Reveling in utili-

238. E.g., Heath 1999b, 2001c, 2005a, b, 2011. See, however, Lisa Adams and Heath 2007, an effort to reach a broader readership on a nonclassical topic.

239. E-mail interview with Heath, September 8, 2014.

240. See, e.g., Hanson 1999a, b, 2000, 2001, 2002a, 2003a, b, 2004, 2005b, 2009, 2010a, 2011, 2013. See also Hanson 2010c.

241. Hanson commanded influence with the George W. Bush administration, a topic of discussion among some observers. See, e.g., Sleeper 2001; Curry 2003; Secor 2003; Bob Woodward 2004: 428–29; Kay 2005; Melia 2012. Cf. Hanson 2007.

242. See, e.g., González Garcia and López Barja de Quiroga 2012.

243. See Limbaugh 2011.

tarian contempt for the liberal arts, he barks, "If you go to college, do not do Classical Studies."

After a commercial break, however, Limbaugh began backpedaling. It seems a number of his listeners wrote to him with their objections. He announced, "Well, you know, it's obvious as I look into this Classical Studies business it is obvious at one time it was something of great esteem, something of tremendous import and value. . . . Victor Davis Hanson, he actually created the classics program at California State University Fresno in 1984, and he was a professor there until recently."[244] Although reluctant fully to admit his error, Limbaugh informs a caller whose children attend a "classical Christian school" and learn Latin that such studies are inherently valuable. Once Limbaugh discovered that Hanson was a classics scholar, he changed his mind about the field.

Whether or not one agrees with him, Hanson has done a great deal to make classical studies appeal to many in the general public—chiefly among adherents of a political movement that has grown increasingly vocational and antihumanistic in its views on education. From his perch as a columnist for *National Review Online*, for example, Hanson has defended the humanities from what he calls the "utilitarian right." "America has lots of problems," he wrote. "A population immersed in and informed by literature, history, art, and music is not one of them."[245] On their own, such pieces cannot turn dyed-in-the-wool pragmatists into devotees of classical studies. But they are a step in the right direction and an important ingredient in the defense of the study of the ancient Greeks and Romans in America.[246]

Ostracizing Hanson and Heath repeats their mistake: in our current intellectual and pedagogical climate, the field needs to attract all sorts of supporters, from conservative traditionalists to idol-smashing radicals. *Who Killed Homer?*, by virtue of its culture wars rhetoric, became the source of fearsome feuds and angry recriminations. It seems unfortunate that the fuss kicked up by the book, understandable as it was, left the field incapable of coming to terms with the serious—even existential—issues discussed in its pages. For the field to thrive in the decades to come, we should drop the defensiveness and begin the search for answers.

But how do we do that? The final chapter aims to chart a course ahead.

244. In what seems to be a nod to Hanson's work on *Who Killed Homer?*, Limbaugh continues, Hanson "created [the Fresno classics department] because of the deterioration in the whole field because of how it's lost whatever specialness that it once had. But I think there's all kinds of theories to explain what's going on in higher education."

245. Hanson 2010b.

246. This makes all the more regrettable Hanson's move in the direction of a libertarian critique of the academy, something that was anathema to traditionalists such as Bloom and Kimball. See, e.g., Hanson 2005a, 2008a, b, 2010a, 2012a.

Classics, the Culture Wars, and Beyond

Eric Adler

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