

7. sip, don't go down the hatch. Smoking (tobacco) is going to be out, too. Do we want a Justice who gives instant lung cancer to several hundred patrons each time he lights up in a restaurant? Or to his guests or family when he lights up at home? A few smokes behind the barn in college will be OK, but not later.

8. And of course, you must have no discernible opinions on any topic that is important or that even might *become* important in the future. Write no opinions or law review articles, that might give your views away. Discuss nothing important with anyone, so that the next time you're called on to say if you've ever discussed *Roe v. Wade*, you can say No, Sir, with full credibility.

Well there you are, old son: no fun, and no opinions, at least after you become a certified adult. You will sail through the nominating process, provided, of course, you can get someone to nominate you.— M.N.R. •

Arts and Movies

by Mr. First Nighter
For the Bourgeoisie

My Father's Glory, and *My Mother's Castle*. One movie in two parts, directed by Yves Robert. French, with subtitles.

Since World War II, with only a few exceptions (usually the films of Eric Rohmer), French cinema has been, for all of us cultural reactionar-

ies, abominable. Almost to a movie, they have been absurdist, snail's-paced, static, camera lingering lovingly on the pores of the faces of the main actors, plotless, dialog-less, morbid and irrational. In short, aesthetically and politically leftist and *avant-garde*.

And yet it was not always thus. French movies before World War II were often splendid: rich, buoyant, funny, worldly-wise, and many of them were the marvelous comedies of the French playwright and moviemaker, Marcel Pagnol. The wonderful trilogy, *Marius*, *Fanny*, and *Cesar*, and *The Baker's Wife*, all featuring the incomparable character actor Raimu, were justly celebrated as some of the best movies ever made.

The late Pagnol is now, happily, very much back with us in spirit, in these two superb gems (they *have* to be seen in the above order), based on the memoirs that Pagnol published shortly before his death. The movies are brought to us, in a wonderful tribute to Pagnol, by his old friend and movie director Yves Robert. The movies are remarkably evocative of Pagnol's childhood in turn-of-the-century southern France.

His father was a school teacher in Marseilles, and the family would take the traditional French August vacation in the hills of Provence. At first the family rented the house, and then bought it, and the two films portray young Pagnol growing up, and learning about and falling in love with the Provencal hill country.

And what a childhood it was! The increasingly common modern view is to heap abuse on one's parents, for (a) psychologically messing you up, and being responsible for all your ills;

and (b) for being part and parcel of hateful, insensitive, cloddish, comfortable, upper-middle-class bourgeois life. Much of modern culture consists of dumping on the bourgeoisie, on one's own parents, relatives, neighbors, etc. as being guilty of exploitation of the poor as well as of psychological destruction of the author.

This Pagnol-Robert film is produced as if in defiance of modern convention. For it is, *mirabile dictu*, a portrayal of a very happy childhood, a childhood, as Mencken once wrote of his own, "encapsulated in love." Pagnol loves

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and admires his father, his mother, and even his wealthy, reactionary, Catholic uncle, who, in a more trendy film, would be set up as the villain of the piece, but is actually a fine and admirable person. Pagnol's memoirs are a portrayal of a wonderful lost world: a paean to the bourgeois world of pre-World War I France. And the Provencal hills are so rhapsodically displayed that even I, an inveterate urbanite, felt a tug of empathy.

It must be pointed out: none of this is gushing or overly sentimental, in the cornball Hollywood tradition. The conclusion emerges out of a simple, underplayed story line. The photography is superb yet unobtrusive. And it's not as if there were no problems in Marcel's growing up. They were not major, but they are handled with great charm, insight, and affectionate wit. His finding a country friend, learning about nature, his losing his heart to a young vixen and potential dominatrix, are all the more effective for being underplayed and done with a light hand. So lulled are we into an elegiac mood, that the heartbreaking end of the second film, *My Mother's Castle*, brings the two-movie set to a powerful two-handkerchief climax.

Many of the reviewers of these movies, arrogant in their trendy negative view of the world, claim that Pagnol could not actually be right, that he must be "repressing," that his childhood simply *couldn't* have

been that happy. Rubbish! See these two movies and find yourself back in a world where a happy bourgeois family life was possible; where it happened; and where artists had the simple honesty to defy nihilist convention and proclaim this happy fact to themselves and to the world. And as long as such artists, and such movies, exist, we too can be happy in the knowledge that someday this kind of world can be recovered from memory and nostalgia, and become part of our present and future reality. Some day, when the poisoners of our culture have been sent packing, and our world can be green again.—M.N.R. ●

The Kochtopus Bobbles Term Limits

by Joe Melton

They all said that term limits on the Washington State ballot couldn't lose. The polls confirmed it. The Washington initiative, in contrast to those already passed in other states, was magnificently tough. It applied to all elected officials, including the governor; it was retroactive, applying to all existing officials, and above all, it applied to Congress and the

U.S. Senate. Despite the babbling about "unconstitutionality," and about the martyrdom of the beloved House Speaker Tom Foley, it seemed to all observers that the Establishment was on the ropes. At

last, a libertarian victory at the polls, striking at the heart of self-perpetuating legislative machines. Public support in Washington and in the rest of the country was supposed to be overwhelming. So confident was the *Wall Street Journal* that, on the morning of election day, it published an article

by libertarian John Fund hailing the victory and the projected term limit sweep across the nation.

And yet, term limitation flopped, and by a substantial margin. What happened? Conservatives are charging late scare tactics, or anguish about the loss of the beloved Foley, but none of this accounts for the sudden last-minute reversal. More astute observers are pointing to press exposure of the term limits campaign in Washington, which had seemed to be an authentic prairie fire of populism, run out of her living room by long-time left-liberal activist Sherry Bockwinkel. But then, the influential *New York Times*, in a brilliant piece of front-page reporting by

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