

fir is 450 years or more. Chase is right that more big trees cover the Pacific Northwest today than a century ago. But most of them are under 200 years of age—old enough to be gargantuan but too young to recreate the habitat that covered 70 percent of the region's coastal forests at the time of Anglo settlement.

When Chase attacks ecologists for embracing static models of nature he is dead wrong. Ecologists embrace the same dynamic ecology he does. The only difference is that advocates of old growth want fire, insects, and disease to do what Chase wants to do with timbering. The crux is that Chase abhors waste and inefficiency. Redwood and Douglas fir trees can't last forever, so why not log rather than squander them?

In A Dark Wood is really a manifesto for the Wise Use movement, and an apology for socialism in the name of community stability. Chase believes that government has a duty to save rural logging communities dependent on public lands. To that end, he lashes out at free market critics of subsidized timber sales.

Chase bogs down in eco-bashing. By innuendo (noting that Nazis were green) he tries to link green ecology to tyranny. He points to environmentalists like Dave Foreman—founder of Earth First!—and groups like The Wildlands Project to conjure a green conspiracy that entails “perhaps the forced relocation of tens of millions of people.” Ecology come of age is, for Chase, totalitarian to its Green core.

This is nonsense. In the Fall 1995 issue of *Wild Earth*, the official publication of the Wildlands Project, publisher Dave Foreman called on Greens “to use libertarian ideas to protect biological diversity and wilderness.” In the same issue, Wendell Berry made an impassioned plea to safeguard private property as the bulwark of conservation. Such subtleties are lost in Chase's tirade against ecology.

The Pacific timber war was never about biocentrism. It was about an epic struggle to control a common resource. Greens won in the Pacific timber war because they rode the wave of urban values sweeping the Northwest. An emergent majority claimed the towering forests that had fed, clothed, housed, and employed a tiny speck of the American population for

the better part of a century. Greens merely played the game mastered by loggers for decades: manipulation of the massive powers of the federal government.

Chase concludes *In A Dark Wood* as if he understands this. In the final three pages he assails government ownership of “a third of the real estate in America,” and the “numbing uniformity” it promotes. Chase should have heeded his own warning; he should have made *In A Dark Wood* a celebration of landscape diversity, and welcomed the break from half a century of federal, monocultural forestry.

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PARADISE LOST

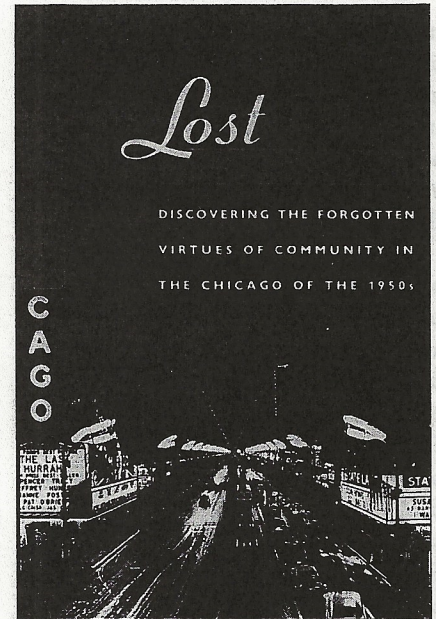
By Rabbi Mayer Schiller

The Lost City: Discovering the Virtues of Community in the Chicago of the 1950s
By Alan Ehrenhalt, Basic Books, 310 pages, \$24

This book tells the haunting story of a happy and enchanted land, safe and secure, full of faith and character, of meaning and consolation, whose very existence seems mythical to those who never lived there. Some who did live there have come to doubt whether it was quite as marvelous as their memories tell them. *The Lost City*, Alan Ehrenhalt's moving portrait of 1950s Chicago, reminds us that many of our sweet memories of that very different era are true, and in the process challenges many of the imposed beliefs of our time.

“Millions of Americans now reaching middle age,” observes Ehrenhalt, currently “mourn for something of” the 1950s. They yearn for the “loyalties and lasting relationships that characterized those days.” Their longing is essentially for “a sense of community that they believe existed during their childhoods and does not exist now.”

The Lost City does not issue a uniform endorsement of the '50s. Its author tends to accept popular dogmas on everything from “sexism” and “homophobia” to



racial egalitarianism and Vatican II. It is the basically liberal cast of Ehrenhalt's mind which makes this book so painful to read. He realizes that “every dream we have about re-creating community in the absence of authority will turn out to be a pipe dream in the end.” He exhorts the “generation that launched the rebellion” to “recognize that privacy, individuality, and choice are not free goods and the society that places no restrictions on them pays a high price for that decision.” Yet in the end one searches his book in vain for ideas of how we are to restore the vibrant local parish in the post-Vatican II Church, how discipline is to be enforced in schools and homes without the old-time methods of which Ehrenhalt consistently disproves; how we are to have a “majority culture strong enough” to teach children behavioral standards when that culture is undefended.

We can only feel sorry for Ehrenhalt and his “millions” of middle-aged Americans. For the simple truth they find impossible to admit is that the slide into the abyss they rightly worry over cannot be halted unless one is pledged to a robust, Orthodox version of Catholicism, Protestantism or Judaism or, at the very least, to a firm vision of our European culture and its traditional standards.

The safe, efficient, livable Chicago of the 1950s will not be restored by Republicans peddling “balanced budgets” or De-

mocrats chattering about "building diverse community." The restoration of our civilization—whose byproducts of stability, safety, loyalty, and meaning Ehrenhalt so desires—will only be achieved by leaders who understand the depth of our decadence and attack its roots.

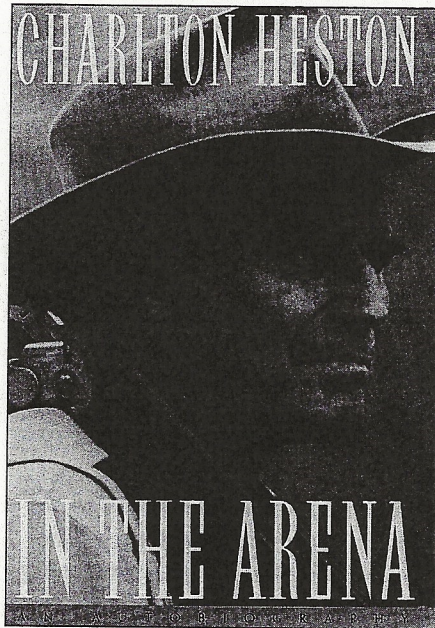
When Americans accept every aspect of the decadence that envelopes us, from informality in dress and disrespect for all authority to the sinlessness of homosexual acts and the secular nakedness of the public square, the battle is lost. Defenders of tradition have never developed a world view capable of standing firm against protracted "progressive" assaults. One explanation may be the negativism of traditionalist rhetoric. Ehrenhalt presents the defenders of norms in 1950s Chicago as primarily interested in discouraging evil. A more joyous advocacy of the blessings of faith, honor, and decency for instance, Catholics spreading the glad tidings of Chesterton or von Hildebrand might have been more enduring.

In truth, the Lost City was never entirely lost. It still exists among those who keep it alive as individuals, families or communities. Ehrenhalt is clearly wrong when he writes, "What is past is past."

There still are churches and schools similar to those of his youth. They are no longer in the mainstream, but their doors, and lessons, remain open to all. There are still individuals and families and neighborhoods who refuse to accept the ugliness and evil of "modern" culture, speech, dress, and entertainment. Their souls are nurtured by the standards and creations of previous generations. They have maintained their links to the *pietas* and *gravitas* of their ancestors.

Will such institutions and individuals ever possess the numbers and leaders necessary to rescue their nation? To that question only God knows the answer. Meanwhile, what we can do is join their ranks. If we are to be led off the main stage of history, let us do so with flags unfurled and trumpets blaring, forever loyal citizens of the Lost City.

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CHARLTON HESTON, REAL PERSON

By Nick Gillespie

In the Arena
By Charlton Heston, Simon & Schuster,
592 pages, \$27.50

When Charlton Heston slips off his mortal coil, the American landscape will lose a distinguishing landmark. In his own way, the Academy Award-winning actor (he got it for *Ben-Hur*) is as iconic as Mt. Rushmore or the Statue of Liberty. He may also be the last of the old-style movie stars.

As sketched in his new autobiography, *In the Arena*, Heston's life story sounds like something cooked up by a Hollywood publicity agent. His famous profile, for instance, is the result of his nose being broken playing high school football. Born into obscurity and poverty in northern Michigan in 1923, Heston managed to win a scholarship to Northwestern University's School of Speech, where he met his wife of 50-plus years, Lydia. Following service in World War II, Heston and his wife struck out for Broadway, where he eventually lied his way into an audition and got his big break in a production of *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Heston's initial encounter with Cecil B. DeMille, the director who would make him a star with such movies as *The Greatest Show on Earth* and *The Ten Commandments*, is legendary. As Heston tells it, he

was driving out of the Paramount lot after losing the lead in what would have been his second movie when he saw DeMille, who waved at him. Heston waved back and DeMille, taken by the gesture, eventually cast him in *The Greatest Show on Earth*, which went on to win the Best Picture Oscar of 1952.

With half a century of acting and over 70 films under his belt, Heston has many tales to tell. His experiences with live TV make for good reading, as do his accounts of well-known directors, truculent co-stars, and the difficulties of location shooting. The book is filled with great moments, such as his ruminations on Edward G. Robinson's death scene in *Soylent Green* (only days later, the ailing Robinson actually did die), and his exposure of Steven Spielberg as a secret gun owner.

Heston's prose—written "entirely by himself" boasts his publisher—is as lively as the best Hollywood banter, even as it occasionally goes over the top. To make a living acting, Heston writes at one point, "you need the guts of a burglar and skin thick enough to turn cold steel, or at least the cold eye of a casting director." Recalling the grueling schedule of summer stock, he notes, "It was hell, but it was heaven for a kid with acting ants in his pants."

Like all stars, Heston exudes self-assurance, and he is willing to undercut his own pretentiousness. In recent movies like *True Lies* and *Wayne's World II* he has proven comfortable enough with his screen persona to deftly lampoon it. That same streak of self-deprecation surfaces in *In the Arena*, and it helps make the story wonderful to read.

But what animates the book—and elevates it above most star autobiographies—is Heston's clear engagement with the world around him. His devotion to his family, to his craft, to his causes, is really quite touching. From the descriptions of his children and grandchildren, to critiques of his leading roles, to defenses of his involvement with the civil rights and gun rights movements, Heston comes across as a man who, though sure of himself, is not overly full of himself.

Remembering an afternoon spent at the Emperor Hadrian's Roman villa, Heston writes, "Never having played Hadrian, I'm afraid I'm not enormously well-read on him, but it occurs to me he