

Trigger Alert

Members of the family have indirectly asked that I take this down. None of them has ever suggested that anything I write here is incorrect, but there are hurt feelings.

The behavior I write about makes it clear that you kids have no regard for my feelings. What you have done with your lives hurts me deeply. What you say about my wife and me, however, does not. You are simply being mean, and transparently wrong.

All but Naomi had cut me off years before I posted any of this. Now she also is gone. She intuited what I might think about her most recent ex-husband, and cut me off the moment she met him.

What I write is merely an explanation of the situation as I see it. Send me counter-arguments to post and I'll be glad to do so. I have never heard any complaint about anything I have done other than that I have had the temerity to post this piece on the Internet. That's all you have. If the truth hurts, so be it.

If you don't like it, don't read it. Aug 2015

Addressed to the people who do not answer my calls and letters since I left my wife Mary Ann McCleary in 2006: every member of her family, several female mutual friends, and some female clergy.

You hurry to dismiss a person who writes a piece such as this as "bitter." That's wrong. Bitter is a word you would use if I were drinking myself into a stupor every night, lamenting the lost marriage. That is the opposite of the case.

The disintegration of our marriage to its breaking point is the best thing that could have happened. I was leading a pointless life. I was retired, with no grandchildren, and no prospect of same. Our three children and Mary Ann herself all refused to speak to me for fairly extended periods of time.

With the children grown, I decide not to put up any longer with this childish and extremely destructive dynamic. The bright side of the total failure of that marriage is that I was prompted to leave, inspired to find a new country, and find what I had been looking for all my life: a woman who loves me. As a bonus, we have a son and a daughter. As a retiree, and with Oksana's

support, I have time to spend with Eddie and Zoriana and raise them the way I thought my first family should have been raised.

"Bitter" is thus an inappropriate adjective. "Bemused" would be better. And reconfirmed in the hypocrisy of you supposed lovers of all mankind who don't deign to deal with actual people. "Disgusted" with your cowardice might be better still. If any of you thought I was wrong, you might have approached me, over the 25 tranquil years of our marriage, and said so. It appears to be your fear that I may be right and that makes me impossible to deal with. "Contemptuous" is the word that comes at last to mind. Contemptuous of your smug assurance that your moral superiority trumps the need for logic to support your arguments – your assumption that the moral unassailability of your stands on race, sexuality, global warming and the history of the evils of white men automatically means the facts must support you, and your lazy refusal to investigate implausible "facts" that support your preconceptions. Logicians call this the moralistic fallacy. Following Alinsky's [double standard](#), you break the rules while expecting this white conservative to observe them. In matters of sex, [feminism insists that men continue our traditional deference and chivalry](#), even while women remove

every vestage of the quid pro quo that used to accompany it: commitment to husband and family.

I am also contemptuous also that you violate the standards of civil discourse. When somebody you know well addresses you politely, in person or otherwise, it is only good manners to respond in kind. Civil discourse is fundamental to civilization. Preserving rather than carelessly throwing away relationships is only good sense. It costs nothing, and you don't know when they might come in handy.

What observations of mine do you fear?

There are objective observations with which you cannot argue. Starting in high school, our children drank, smoked and took drugs, neglected their bodies, swore and did little to stay in shape. They did not show respect for their heritage, their society or their elders in general, or their bodies. They retain these attitudes. None are successful in relationships

A Postive Note

Naomi quit drinking when she was still talking to me. It appears she has stuck with it. More than that, I hear she is giving up smoking. You don't do these things unless you think that life is worth living. What a wonderful sign.

On the negative side, Naomi broke off communication yet again after we enjoyed an hour-long conversation in April 2017. The last piece of news I offered, that Oksana was pregnant with a baby girl, may have been too much.

The fact that it is me, the patriarch, who is happily married with two young kids is backwards. I should be bouncing grandchildren on my knees. But it didn't work out that way. No doubt it is not lost on my children that the old man is succeeding at that which they ought to be doing. [All the more reason to cut me off.](#)

November 2017

Little did I realize when I left in 2006 the magnitude of the train wreck I was jumping clear of. All I knew was that the directions my children were taking were beyond my control, and they were not promising.

The wreck is accelerating as I write this. The family is all the more resolute about not talking to me precisely because what has been written here for four years is proving, in a particularly ugly fashion, to have been prophetic.

You McClearys rose in one generation from Fishtown to Bethesda and Vassar. Your values took you there. Are you going to let a lack of values, the pursuit of alcohol and drugs, reckless sex and romance, and indolence drag your children and grandchildren back down to Fishtown? What a tragedy! Say something!

Some adult needs to intervene. I was thwarted in my attempts over the last 30 years. Is there anybody who cares and still has influence? Or are you all so non-judgmental as to deny an obvious catastrophe in progress? July 2015

and two have done nothing to form careers. I suspect that they don't talk to me in part because they share this assessment and are embarrassed.

During the course of our quarter century marriage I had fairly extended relationship with all of you in the family. We loaned

money to each of you siblings. We took care of your father the last four years of his life, 2001 to 2005. At my insistence he lived in our house instead of a nursing home. We had the room, we had the wherewithal, and as a retiree I had the time to do it. I don't regret it whatsoever. John was a delightful man and it was a pleasure to make his last four years as comfortable as possible. You visited frequently and expressed your appreciation for what we did. It is hypocritical to forget all that and to cut me off entirely simply for having left Mary Ann. You supposed friends – to whom I gave jobs and sent clients. Whose stories I listened to sympathetically as you divorced Steven, Stephen, Craig, Herb, Paul and others. You clergy, whose plates I filled. Is there no gratitude?

It's human instinct to attempt to assign fault in a divorce. Since nobody was speaking to me, I [posted here](#) my reasons for leaving. Nobody has contradicted my assessment. Rather, you have simply chosen to make me an unperson. Not to think about it.

Members of the Saito family have shunned one another for generations. Mary Ann, for instance, knows nothing of her grandfather from Nagoya: Grandmother Nao never talked about him. Mary Ann's sister has never had contact with her own out-of-wedlock daughter Shawn, whose 1975 birth ruptured for several years her relations with Mary Ann's mother Fusako, who wound up raising the baby. Shawn herself got love only from her grandfather, not the stern grandmother who raised her. She detested her mother and aunts, and cut off contact with the family after her grandfather's funeral in 2005. In Japan, Uncle Mutozo was estranged from the family for several years. Aunt Koko's husband lived with another woman – a fact everybody knew but nobody talked about. Sweeping problems under the rug is the family tradition. Save face at all costs...and those costs are unbearably high. To those who have not done so, I recommend that reading up on Japanese psychology. Their mentality and traditions, such as this extraordinary emphasis on face, may have worked in homogeneous, insular, traditional Japan. It is a disaster today, even there. Men and women simply don't like each other and are not dating, marrying or having children. It is no better among Japanese living overseas. I encourage my family to be un-Japanese and try a bit of introspection.

Any list of negative things which I might have done to Mary Ann would be short. I always treated her with respect. I never insulted her or got into a shouting match, and certainly never hit her. Even our divorce was civil. Any complaints you may remember my making had to be mild. I never cheated on her. I was honest, and I shared my property with her to my own detriment. My money and support made it possible for her to start her own business. I did, however unsuccessfully, do my best to get her to love me. If you, or Mary Ann herself, could have reproached me, you would have. Though it now appears that Mary Ann complained about me behind my back, she never brought things up face to face. I feel marvelously vindicated in the fact that another beautiful and intelligent woman does appreciate me, and trust me enough that we can surface, discuss and resolve our small differences.

Shunning me has more than a little bit to do with my politics. I was the only conservative in the family. I'm sure that I was called worse things than conservative. Probably a hater, a

racist, a homophobe, a male chauvinist, and whatever other epithets are in currency. A look at my life would say that none of this is true. I have friends and acquaintances of all races, sexual persuasions and so on. My fault is that I tend to see things as they are and call them as I see them. That is definitely out of step with the fashion of celebrating diversity and shutting one's eyes to whatever downsides it may entail.

It would be easier for you had I been wrong. The fact that I'm not puts you in an awkward position. It is human nature not to want to confront contradictions within one's own value system. Cowardly dismissing me from your lives is the easiest course of action. My children, for example, violently resist my asking mutual acquaintances how they are doing. They don't want me to know, obviously because the answers are not very flattering to them. I am pleased that a few mutual acquaintances are still in touch. Our conversations are just as normal and natural as ever. We talk about the present rather than the past, but they do not tell me I was wrong.

How has liberalism worked out for the McCleary progeny? John and Slim, for all their four children and seven grandchildren, have no great grandchildren. The three oldest grandchildren quite clearly will not produce them. None of them has achieved career success either. If my daughters do, it looks unlikely that there will be a supportive household of two loving parents, or that such children would be raised in any tradition I would recognize. John and Anthony appear to be headed the right direction, graduating from good colleges in demanding fields of study.

I wonder about Charlie, the Gypsy adopted by Mary Ann's friend Marsha. Did he ever turn around? How did the three bright, personable cousins in Rockville turn out? I'm curious. They had everything going for them. Will they find partners? Happiness? Success? Have you successfully passed the blessings you received down to another generation? NB: To answer my own question, since there is nobody else to ask, I used Google. They appear to be classes of 2014 (Alexis), 2016 (Rebecca) and 2017 (Carly). All on the Bethesda Chevy-Chase HS honor roll. Congratulations to the girls, and to Phil and Terry. It is too early to look for nuptial announcements in the society pages for any of these former relatives, but the portents are good. Hope that college doesn't convince them that marriage and family are old-fashioned nonsense. They have qualities worth passing on. Regrettably, it now appears (2016) that the younger two are enthusiastic SJWs. In my unsolicited opinion, devoting oneself to family leads to happier results than taking on the whole world's problems, and especially, attempting to assign blame for the world being as it is. The SJW business has not led to satisfaction for my own children, but I hope it works out otherwise for Phil and Terry.

Clergy ladies of the Episcopal Church, pastors of the flock, why are you so discourteous as to not even answer my letters? Not even tell me that you don't want to hear from me? I know I made you uncomfortable because I have called [attention to things](#) that you didn't want to see. Shouldn't the question of our eternal souls be larger than questions of politics? Is the church so far to the left that secular issues dominate spiritual considerations?

Some readers have found the biographical material on this web site and my book uncommonly candid, expressing surprise that I would talk so openly about my life.

Writing openly about my life violates the family code of omertà – the refusal to recognize, much less deal with problems. Her refusal to acknowledge the difficulties made it impossible for my ex-wife and I to find the compromises that make a marriage. This same kind of refusal has made it impossible for our grown children to enter trusting, loving relationships. Abetted by a mother who refused to discipline them and stood by impassively, my children cursed me and rejected whatever advice I might have offered. My top advice would have been to rein in their tempers and develop some self-control. They easily discovered, however, that I stood alone in attempting to deliver this message.

Without self-control, their relationships with significant others, with employers and even each other, are fractious. They did not even learn from the model of Mary Ann and my behavior. Though not warm we were at least cordial to each other. The children seem appalled and repelled by the open affection in my present marriage. Why? What is there to fear? How perverse it is that I must be banished for having figured out how to live successfully!

Sense of Humor

An observation that I never considered much before is that Mary Ann lacks a sense of humor. The children are pretty much the same. I cannot recall an instance in which they laughed at themselves. This makes them terribly vulnerable. If they make a mistake, they cannot simply laugh it off. They take any error as something serious, loss of face. They either deny it, and if that is impossible, confess to it as if it were a great sin. Neither is appropriate. They should simply recognize they are human.

The inability to laugh at themselves is probably related to their inability to accept criticism. They regard any criticism as a mortal threat, going right to the essence of their being. They don't recognize that criticizing one another is a way that people improve themselves. There is a biblical quote to this effect. Proverbs 27:17 (King James): "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

The ability to laugh at yourself is essential in relationships. When you make a mistake, you admit it, ask for forgiveness, and you go on. This preserves relationships, allows you to overcome your errors, and allows you to continue to be brave enough to make mistakes and to go on. This could be the major shortcoming in their psychic makeups. The children are afraid to attempt things because the downside, making an error, seems to them to be so threatening.

I think that a sense of humor is an innate part of one's temperament. My children seem to have come into this world lacking this precious gift. It may be nothing that could be fixed, nothing that could have been otherwise.

That's enough armchair psychology. I have little faith in real psychologists – why should I have much in myself in that role? But it is an angle I think about as I tease and joke with my self-assured young son, who already has quite a sense of humor of his own. March 2015

I was constantly shocked by how the children treated their partners. Without stable relationships they are unlikely to find much satisfaction in life or have families of their own. Each child is an individual, with issues of their own. I hope they eventually feel comfortably enough settled to raise children in a family setting.

Having few relationships left to preserve makes it easier to be objective, unsentimental, and, without malice or invective, to tell it as I see it. I have little to lose. It is self-justifying - a way for me to release the frustrations built up over a quarter century marriage in which issues could even be raised, much less resolved. Though I know they hate my violating the family code of omertà, it is the only vehicle I have for communication. Kids, if you don't like it, please talk to me. I also have a hope, however vain, that some who read this may appreciate my point of view and my children might find the self-confidence to examine their lives rather than blindly defend themselves against anything they might interpret as criticism.

One has to hope that would be possible. Temperament is heritable. Uncontrollable temper appears to run in the Saito family. Nobody dared cross grandmother Nao or mother Fusako. On the positive side, fear of her wrath appears to have inspired Fusako's four natural children to rise above their lower class surroundings. On the negative, Shawn, the grandchild she raised, is given to such violent outbursts that Mary Ann and I quaked, struck to the marrow of our bones even in phone conversations with her. Mary Ann has a streak of the same lack of control. Sensing some imagined slight, she turned to stone and would not speak for weeks on end. Once, in an attempt to romantically complement her niece, slim figure I said she had "cute little breasts." It was a bad choice of words. She took the "little" (B cup, actually) as an insult. Only after several days of being totally frozen out would accept an apology for what had been intended as a compliment. Our daughters share the same tendency towards violent, irrational outbursts. I don't know if it might have been possible to learn to control them. I do know that aside from me they were rarely encouraged to try, and they learned that their mother would not back me up when I made such an attempt.

My children hide themselves from the world. They are hard to find via Google, Facebook and other social media. If they were happy with their lives I suspect it would be otherwise. Though I know less and less about what they are up to, I have a strong conviction that I would learn, by whatever roundabout way, if they enjoyed success in their jobs and relationships.

In the family setting I could be ignored or rudely shouted down. The family did not want to hear my words. In writing this I am finally getting the last word. Moral lectures and "I told you so's" are out of place in today's relativistic, therepeutic society. It used to be different. Solomon's 3000-year-old wisdom expressed in [Proverbs](#) is still applicable, however much one may want to avoid it.

Most of my friends now are here in Kiev. They are unlikely to read this, and if they do they won't be shocked. Their sensibilities are different, and they don't know the personalities.

Past periods of my life are differently represented among my friendships and in my writing. My relationships with childhood friends remain strong. I have only a couple of friends left from Reed college days. Some doctrinaire progressives cannot get beyond calling me names, and I was the one to write them off. I have reconnected with friends from UC Berkeley, and I have two friends left from my Army days, several from my IBM days in Vietnam and Germany and my career in Washington, and a couple of friends from St. Patrick's church. My beloved Bethesda Starbucks group has largely passed away; I'm in contact with Rockville. With the exception of Mary Ann and Josée, I am in touch with all the loves that were important in my life. Please, anybody, let me know if I have shocked you.

I expect that contemporary liberalism, the twilight of the Enlightenment, with its exaggerated personal freedoms, self-indulgence, unwillingness to defend itself against alien interlopers, and failure to invest in the next generation will lead to a financial and social collapse. Our young son will come of age among a smaller, less intelligent and less well

Hateful words and excommunication

Two of children now call me a terrible husband and father, a male chauvinist, a member of the patriarchy and other names. Why? It started with Suzy, the youngest, and only in the last couple of years of my marriage to her mother. She was a member of a dance troupe of older single women with bad attitudes about men. She never named specific things I had done – there were none. However, as is often the case, the very absence of substance made her that much more angry. After something of a reconciliation, Suzy spent a pleasant week and a half with Oksana and me in late 2009, cajoled me into buying her some expensive Christmas presents, then abruptly cut off communications after she left. That's how things remain.

Jack managed to take offense one way or another every time we talked. I had hoped to meet him when I visited the US in 2011, but something in our emails set off his hair trigger. We didn't meet, and we haven't talked since. The sad truth is that he is doing nothing with his life and there is really nothing to say.

Naomi broke off communications many times, starting in high school. Relations had, however, returned to cordial when she visited Oksana and me in January 2014. It was broken again over the course of a short, disastrous marriage, but we are back on again.

That's where things stand. The prospects of my having grandchildren born into two-parent families is slim; chances they would be raised anything like me, or that I would even see them, seem distant. The only bright spot is that Naomi is good at what she does and appears to be building a successful career as a professional.

I first posted notes about my former family in June, 2011, when other channels of communication had failed. I wanted to hear from them if possible, about them in any case. Except for Naomi, this document remains pretty much our only communication. They do not like having light shone into their lives, and they wish it did not exist. For my part I would like nothing more than normal communications. However, if this is all there is, so be it. I have communicated.

May 2016

It appears that Jack has moved back from Portland to live with his mother in Bethesda. It makes good sense. The apartment in the basement of the 5000 sq. ft. house where he was raised will offer him ample space and privacy, and his mother can probably use a man around the house. Notions that he would be better off moving out and establishing his own life, career and family seem to belong to a distant past.

November 2017

educated generation of people sharing our European lineage and culture. Very likely poorer as well. I pray that he has been born with the smarts, and that we can give him the education to stand out in the rough times to come, find a partner and pass on our heritage. At any rate, preparing him gives meaning to our lives at the present.

Graham Seibert
September 2015