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Bet You Missed It: What do the Clintons and Harvard have in Common?

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Bet You Missed It

Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths

Column Editor: **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Editor's Note: Hey, are y'all reading this? If you know of an article that should be called to *Against the Grain's* attention ... send an email to <kstrauch@comcast.net>. We're listening! — **KS**

AH, THE POIGNANCY OF MIDWEST YEARNINGS by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Here's some good old stand-bys about the Midwest. (1) **Theodore Dreiser**, *Sister Carrie* (1900) (Carrie takes to the Chicago stage; becomes rich and famous; all her lovers end up in the gutter); (2) **Sinclair Lewis**, *Main Street* (1920) (desperate for culture in Gopher Prairie); (3) **F. Scott Fitzgerald**, *This Side of Paradise* (1920) (not sure how this one quite fits, other than **Fitzgerald** being Midwestern and filled with yearnings to be rich); (4) **Booth Tarkington**, *Alice Adams* (1921) (desperation to escape middle class-dom); **Jetta Carleton**, *Moonflower Vine* (1962) (a four-women-go-out-in-the-world novel; 1962 bestseller often compared to *Little Women*).

See — **Diane Johnson**, "Five Best," *The Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 18-19, 2014, p.C10.

(Diane is, of course, the author of the marvelous "*Le Divorce*," and "*The Marriage*," in which she captures all the subtleties of the French. Her new book is "*Flyover Lives: A Memoir*.")

MEMORY LANE ROCK by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

One of the forgotten giants of early rock was **Jerome Feldman** AKA **Doc Pomus**. Born in 1925, crippled from age 7 by polio, he spent his early years in an iron lung and casts and fell in love with music. At 17, he staggered into a Greenwich Village club on crutches and in leg braces, announced he was a blues singer. He was given a \$40-a-week gig and went on from there to write and record 50 blues numbers in the 1950s for **Atlantic**.

"Save the Last Dance for Me," "This Magic Moment," "Little Sister," "Can't Get Used to Losing You," and "Teenager in Love" were among his greats.

Business fell off in the '60s when rockers started writing their own music. Then he was hit by a wrecked marriage and big back taxes owed.

In the '70s and '80s he staged a comeback, collaborating with **B.B. King**, **Dr. John**, and **Bob Dylan**.

See — **Marc Myers**, "From Pain, Magic Moments," *The Wall Street Journal*, Oct. 4, 2014, p.D4.

WHITHER WARNER MUSIC? by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

Leonard "Don't call me an Oligarch" **Blavatnik** was born in Odessa, immigrated with his family to NY aged 21 in the '70s when Jews were allowed to leave the Soviet Union. He did **Columbia** and **Harvard B-School**. When Russia began selling off state industries, he bought into aluminum manufacturing, mixed it up with the crime groups, sued and was sued by partners, survived, and is now billionaire rich.

He lives in a £41 million mansion on Kensington Palace Gardens, lunches with **Lord Weidenfeld**, shmoozes with the **Clintons**. Gave £117 million for a **Blavatnik School of Government** at **Oxford**; gave \$50 million to **Harvard**.

In 2011, he bought **Warner Music** for \$3.3 billion. It's said he bought it not out of a love for music but for social cachet. The execs were shocked by his tastes which run to *Fiddler on the Roof*. **Blavatnik** got rid of the wild overcompensation to execs, making them take dividends from increased value in the company.

The coke-fueled heady days of the '70s music biz are gone. Doomsters talk about the "CD cliff," the point when CDs vanish from retail. Listeners don't want to pay for streaming subscriptions.

Blavatnik seems to see **Warner** as a real estate buy rather than media-and-entertainment. He'll profit from the gigantic catalogue of recordings dating to the '60s.

See — **Connie Bruck**, "The Billionaire's Playlist," *The New Yorker*, Jan. 20, 2014, p.40.



	Future Dates for Charleston Conferences	
	Preconferences and Vendor Showcase	Main Conference
2014 Conference	5 November	6-8 November
2015 Conference	4 November	5-7 November
2016 Conference	2 November	3-5 November
2017 Conference	8 November	9-11 November



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Website and hope to unveil it very soon! In the meantime **Tom Gilson** and **Leah Hinds** are doing their very best to keep us informed. Be sure and visit the Website frequently and set up RSS feeds! Have you renewed your subscription yet?

<http://www.against-the-grain.com>

Speaking of *Against the Grain*, in the current print issue **Ramune Kubilius** has done her usual thorough job of updating us on the state of the medical library community. There is a whole lot of library rethinking going on which is necessary in this environment that we find ourselves in, and this issue focuses on the medical library community. I was especially fascinated by **Elizabeth Lorbeer's** article about being a library director of "nothing" and making it into something

that is viable — building an opening day collection for a virtual health science library. The school received over 3,570 applications for 50 spots in the first class which begins August 2014. **Elizabeth** says that there is no physical space for print material but an adjoining information commons allows students to pass through easily between lecture hall and the learning community. See this issue, p.36.

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