

REVIEWS

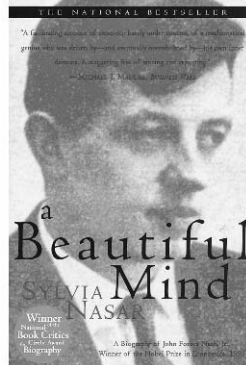
## Perverse Pictures of Creativity

Producer/director Ron Howard is now bringing to the screen Dan Brown's best-selling novel, *The Da Vinci Code*. Howard and his screenwriter Avika Goldsman plan to perform the same lobotomy procedure on the American mind with *The Da Vinci Code*, that they did to viewers of their 2003 production, *A Beautiful Mind*, now released on DVD.

The difference between the two movies is that the *Code* will be riding the popularity wave of a book that has broken all known records for adult fiction, with 36 million copies in print internationally (only the similarly cultish Harry Potter children's novels have produced comparable sales). And these are sales of a hardcover edition, with a \$24.95 cover price; in fact, two years after its release, there are no plans for Doubleday to bring out a paperback version, since sales are only expected to climb as publicity for the movie kicks in. On the other hand, Sylvia Nasar's biography, *A Beautiful Mind*, received notice only after the success of the Howard movie version.

The distinguishing characteristic shared by both sets of books/films is the underlying intention to strengthen the public's belief in a perverse notion of the process of creativity, as the world has known that expression of creativity in the great geniuses of history—promoting, in the one case, lies about the Italian Renaissance, and, in the other, the scientific culture of Weimar Classic-inspired Germany.

The irony that is certainly lost on the creators of such trash is, that their very attempt to sling arrows in a sophisticated war on the level of philosophy, can backfire on them greatly, as the opposing force of the LaRouche Youth Movement—now active on the major campuses of the United States and in campaigns in the streets of America's cities—engenders a desire among young people for genuine dialogue on the “heavy” ideas of science and culture. It is only a citizenry



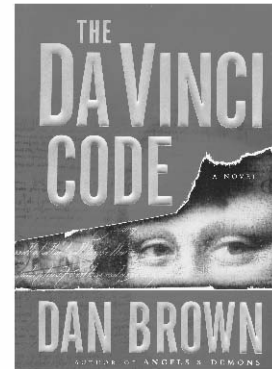
**A Beautiful Mind**  
by Sylvia Nasar  
New York, Simon & Schuster, 1998  
464 pages, paperback, \$16.00

**A Beautiful Mind**  
DVD, Academy Award-winning movie, 2003  
Ron Howard/Avika Goldsman,  
Director/Screenwriter  
Starring Russell Crowe, Paul Bettany

that has been deprived of the opportunity to exercise its own creative powers (like America's Baby Boomers), which finds itself vulnerable to such Hollywood poison. Otherwise, there is a new generation in our nation that is being marshalled, by the LYM, to complete the mission of our Founding Fathers, and rebuild the culture of the European Renaissance on American shores.

### Riemann and Leonardo, According to Hollywood

It was in 2003 that Howard won an Academy Award for his production/direction of the movie based on Sylvia Nasar's biography of John Forbes Nash, Jr., the MIT professor who won a 1994 Nobel Prize for his “Game Theory” system of economics. Nash's theories were based explicitly on perverting the work of the great German mathematicians of the Nineteenth century, Carl Gauss and Bernhard Riemann, and, not coincidentally, were developed in collaboration with the two leading targets of Lyndon



**The Da Vinci Code**  
by Dan Brown  
New York, Doubleday, 2003  
454 pages, hardbound \$24.95

**The Da Vinci Code**  
Movie to be released  
Spring 2006  
Ron Howard/Avika Goldsman,  
Director/Screenwriter  
Starring Tom Hanks, Paul Bettany

LaRouche during the 1950's: Norbert Wiener and John von Neumann. Today, it is the work of Gauss and Riemann that is a central focus of the LYM, in its effort to study and further elaborate the physical economics of LaRouche. And, as LaRouche insists, the LYM's studies of Gauss and Riemann are situated within a comprehensive study of the Fifteenth-century Golden Renaissance, as that Renaissance is, in turn, situated as a “rebirth” of the Egyptian/Greek Platonic culture of two millennia earlier.

Howard's *The Da Vinci Code* is based on Brown's novelistic portrayal of the art and science associated with that very Florentine Renaissance. Brown would have us believe that none other than Leonardo da Vinci himself was a member of an occult, secret society.

Public criticism of *The Da Vinci Code* has so far merely lashed out at the obvious insanity of the roots of the story in the cult classic *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*; i.e., the absurd “legend” of the Knights

Templar/Freemasonic guardianship of the secret knowledge that Jesus Christ married Mary Magdalene, and produced offspring who included the rulers of the French Merovingian dynasty of the early Middle Ages. In fact, even sillier, the heroes of Dan Brown's novel have a "sacred" mission to protect the modern day carriers of that bloodline, that "sacred" DNA, in order to ensure its perpetuation into the future.

Howard and the rest of Hollywood would never have considered turning the original *Holy Blood, Holy Grail* into a screenplay, unless the intention were to put the audience immediately to sleep. The attraction of the *Code* is, explicitly, its splashy slander of Leonard da Vinci, a figure who is given only a bare mention in *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*. It is the shocking idea that the Florentine Renaissance of da Vinci might have been an exercise in esoteric, spooky-wooky mumbo-jumbo, that is catching to the public eye.

Similarly, Sylvia Nasar's *A Beautiful Mind*, and its movie spin-off, would have been a matter of fluff, without the pretense that the hero was a mathematician of the rank of Gauss and Riemann. It is the idea that creativity must be inherently connected with kookiness, the occult, or, in the case of John Nash, mental illness, that provides a poisonous titillation of interest for the masses; or, at least, for today's Baby Boomers.

### Nash vs. LaRouche-Riemann Model

In her biography, Nasar presents the following description of Nash as a student at Princeton:

"He seized opportunities to boast about his accomplishments. He would mention, out of the blue, that he'd discovered, as an undergraduate, an original proof of Gauss's proof of the Fundamental Theorem of Algebra, one of the great achievements of Eighteenth-century mathematics, nowadays taught

in advanced courses on the theory of complex variables."

Then, in the very next paragraph, she describes some of Nash's personal, fascistic beliefs:

"He implied that his lineage was superior to that of fellow students, especially Jewish students. Martin Davis, a fellow student who grew up in a poor family in the Bronx, recalled catching up with Nash when he was ruminating about blood lines and natural aristocracies one day as they were walking from the Graduate College to Fine Hall. 'He definitely had a set of beliefs about the aristocracy,' said Davis. 'He was opposed to racial mixing. He said that miscegenation would result in the deterioration of the racial line. Nash implied that his own blood lines were pretty good.'"

And this is a beautiful mind?

A victim of schizophrenia, Nash was to spend 25 years of his adult life in and out of mental institutions. Soon after his remission in the 1990's, he received a Nobel Prize in Economics for the work he had done in the 1950's.

The actual heroes of Nasar's book are the old nemeses of Lyndon LaRouche, von Neumann and Wiener, with whom Nash had a sometimes competitive, sometimes collaborative relationship during that early period. Nash knew von Neumann during his early years at Princeton; Wiener, when he

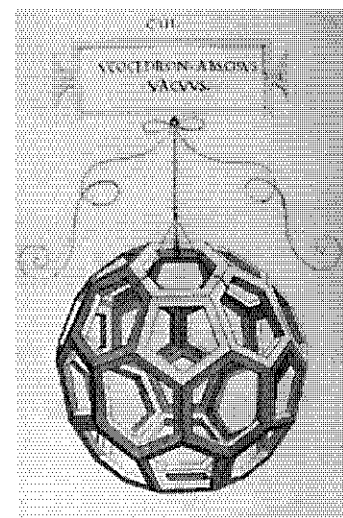
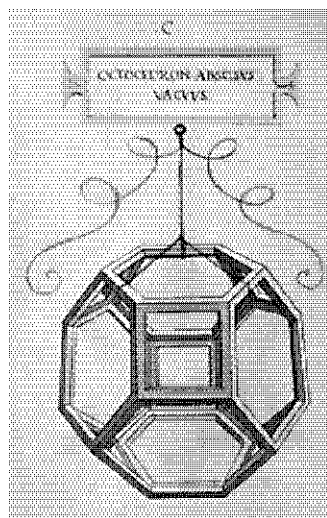
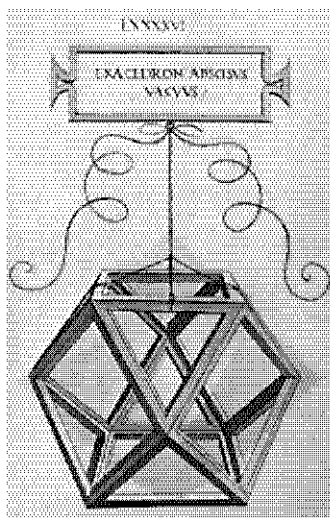
became a professor of mathematics at MIT. He learned from von Neumann's "Game Theories" and from Wiener's "Cybernetics," that man was merely a clever animal, or, at best, a walking superfast computer.

Nash's "discovery" was how to apply Game Theory to economics, by "embedding a Riemannian manifold in a Euclidean space," thereby achieving "an equilibrium result for  $n$ -person games, a nice discovery relating to manifolds and real algebraic varieties," as he described it.

In other words, at approximately the same time as Lyndon LaRouche was developing his "LaRouche-Riemann" hypothesis in physical economics, Nash was presenting a perverted version of Riemann's theories, on behalf of the economic policies of the financier oligarchy who had sponsored the likes of von Neumann and Wiener in the first place. By 1994, Nash would receive a Nobel Prize for his services to those financiers.

### Target Leonardo

Leaving aside for the moment the laughable idea that Leonardo had any bizarre beliefs about Mary Magdalene's sex life, the more difficult assertion in the *Code* to refute, concerns the possibility that Leonardo was embedding codes into his artwork, in order to bypass the Church's Inquisition against science. What is left out of the story, is the fact that the Flo-



Illustrations by Leonardo da Vinci to Luca Pacioli's "De divina proportione" ("The Divine Proportion"), 1497.

rentine Renaissance, in the generation preceding Leonardo, was itself initiated by the towering figure of Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa, the second most influential figure in the Church after the Pope himself. Leonardo was a very active public figure in the politics of his day, in association with the likes of Cesare Borgia, Niccolò Machiavelli, and others. Yes, towards the end of his long life, Leonardo came under suspicion as the Inquisition came into power in Italy, and he abandoned Italy for France, where he spent his last three years; but even there, he was an honored guest at the court of King Francis I, and lobbied incessantly for his proposed canal projects, armament improvements, and other inventions and projects conceived in his fertile mind—exactly as he had in his previous career in Milan and Florence.

In fact, if there is any “secret” embedded in Leonardo, take the famous *Mona Lisa*, where the wild natural landscape behind her is not so “wild”: it is, in fact, in process of being man-formed, and repre-

sents the layout of one of Leonardo’s favorite water projects, the dam and canal constructions aimed at the diversion of the River Arno, which was to have given Florence access to the sea. The project had been started and stopped in fits, over more than two decades.

When it comes to the central role played in Brown’s novel by what he calls Leonardo’s “sacred geometry,” which, supposedly, Leonardo was forced to furtively embed into his notebook studies using mirror writing and codes, and hide in his works of art—guess what? In 1509, Leonardo published a *book* on the topic, together with his collaborator, Luca Pacioli, called *The Divine Proportion*. It’s all there: everything that appears in Brown’s fervid mind as “revelations” about the “secrets” of Leonardo’s geometric construction of the *Vitruvian Man* (the figure inscribed, spread-eagle, in a circle); the not-so-“magical” Fibonacci Number Series; and the design of Golden Mean proportions, so integrally related to the con-

struction of the pentagram (the figure coveted by lovers of esoteric “secrets”).

In a March 2003 interview, Brown promised that his character Robert Langdon would, in future books (a *Da Vinci Code* sequel is expected soon), be looking at “numerology cults,” among which he includes the Pythagoreans:

“Aha, the Kabbalists! Yes, they are fascinating—as are the Pythagoreans. Without a doubt, Langdon will be exploring these more closely in the future. . . . [*The Da Vinci Code*] also drops a hint as to the identity of another ultrasecret numerology sect that fascinates me, but I can’t reveal their name here without ruining much of the surprise of the next book.”

So much for the pits of Hollywood and the *New York Times* Bestseller List. Luckily, the LaRouche Youth Movement is demonstrating daily the possibility of re-experiencing, from the inside, the actual cultural tradition that created modern civilization.

—Judy Hodgkiss

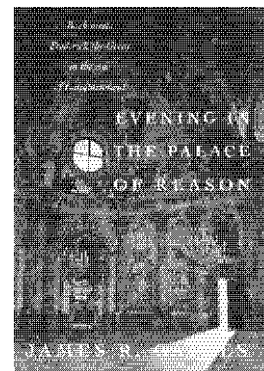
## A Not-So-Mysterious Train Wreck

In 1747, the 62-year old Johann Sebastian Bach visited Prussia’s 35-year old King Frederick II (the Great), and extemporized in three voices upon a fascinating thematic subject proffered by the King. Upon returning to Leipzig, Bach developed the same thematic subject into a full six-voice canon. Within two months, he sent to Frederick his *Musical Offering*, which included the original three-voice extemporization; the full six-voice realization; ten intervening puzzle canons; and a dessert for the King, a flute sonata based upon the preceding work. Bach had not only plumbed the depths of the musical idea, but he had taken the trouble to display in the ten canons how his mind reworked the material. He offered this musical gift as an appropriate pedagogy for one who was to rule.

This suggestive historical event offers the too rare opportunity of examining the power of a master of ideas, displayed in his intervention upon a young, pow-

erful ruler. This reviewer, several years ago, was drawn to this same subject, when I examined Bach’s explicitly pedagogical canons as marvelously crafted epistemological weapons to organize and recruit the mind and heart of a talented but emotionally backward ruler (“Thinking Through Singing: The Strategic Significance of J.S. Bach’s ‘A Musical Offering,’” *Fidelio*, Winter 2000). So, by way of disclosure: I do not claim to be, nor would wish to be, a neutral commentator here.

Mr. Gaines chose a rather different path. In his book, Bach and Frederick II were strangers in the night, exchanging glances, but nothing more. Bach inserted angry, moralizing messages into his *Musical Offering*, with no regard as to whether the King heard them; meanwhile, Frederick simply could not listen to someone of his father’s generation. To this end, Gaines spares no sophistical trick, nor forswears outright invention. If he needs Frederick to rebuke Bach for



### Evening in the Palace of Reason: Bach Meets Frederick the Great in the Age of Enlightenment

by James R. Gaines  
New York, Harper Collins, 2005  
353 pages, hardbound, \$23.95

not producing on the spot a six-voice realization of the musical subject, and needs Bach to fume over the insult, then he simply invents it out of whole cloth. *Let the reader beware.*

In short, this work is a tortured travelogue ending in a train wreck. Bach and Frederick are doomed to crash, and the