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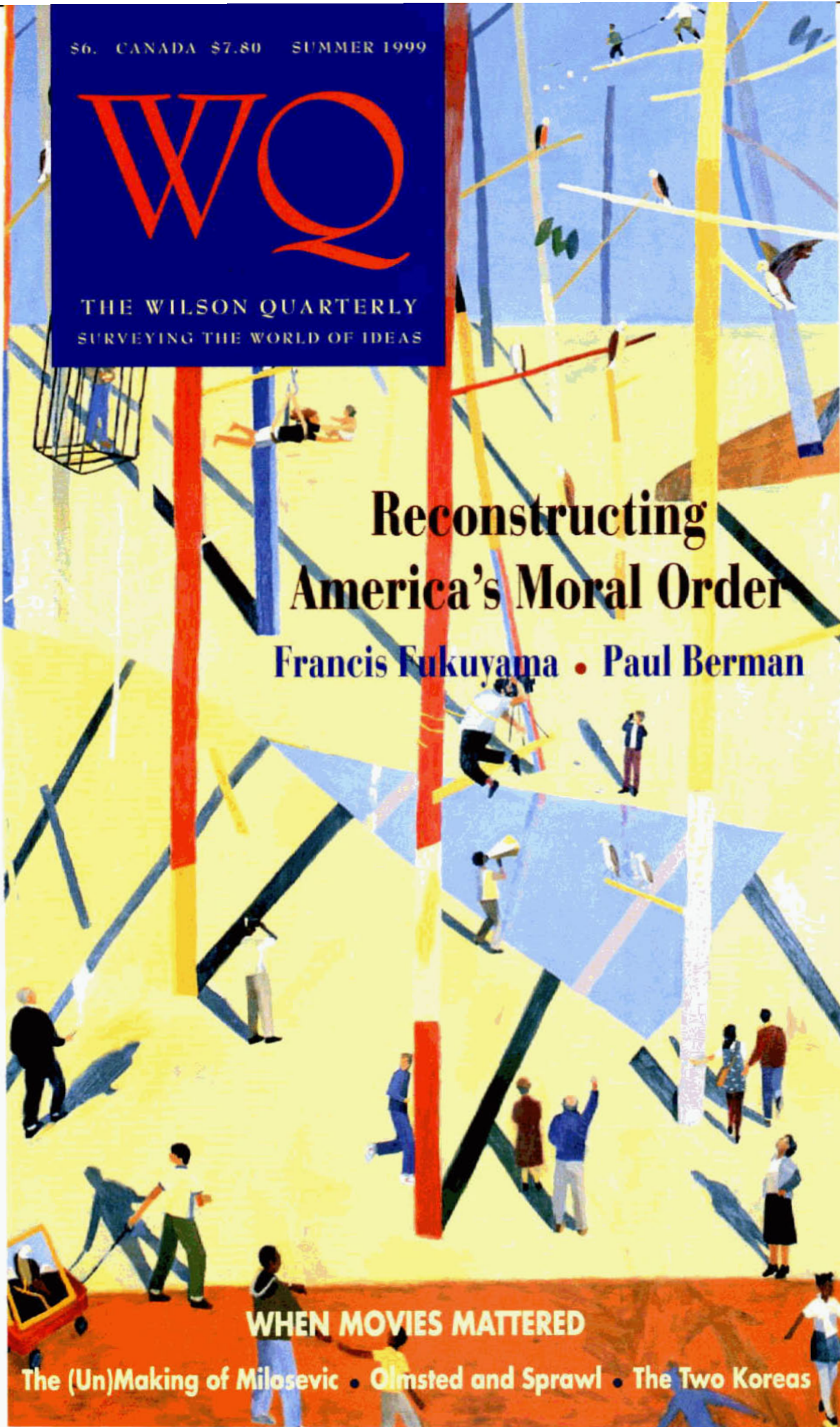
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Francis Fukuyama • Paul Berman

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EDITOR'S COMMENT

In the 10 years since he published "The End of History," his startling essay on the future of the post-Cold War world, Francis Fukuyama has become both a frequent target of ill-informed scoffers and a pioneer of some of the leading ideas of our time. In *Trust* (1995), he explored the world's many varieties of "social capital," that invaluable but intangible commodity essential to the success of any human society. His latest book, *The Great Disruption*, is an attempt to understand the causes of the social and moral upheaval that began in the 1960s. In his essay in this issue, he takes up the question of what comes after the Great Disruption. He looks for answers in a surprising place: biology—not just what is usually called sociobiology, he reminded me recently, but cognitive neurophysiology, behavioral genetics, and other fields. Moral order, he concludes, is in some sense a biological imperative, and it cannot long be denied.

Fukuyama says that his interest in biology grew out of his experience chairing a RAND Corporation-George Mason University study group on the information revolution. "I became conscious of the fact that there are two parallel revolutions going on now," he says, "one in information technology and the other in biology, and that of the two, the latter is likely to be far more consequential."

The biological revolution promises a new understanding of human behavior. But it may also supply us the means, through genetic manipulation and other technologies, to alter behavior, perhaps eliminating traits such as aggression while emphasizing other, seemingly more desirable ones. Fukuyama believes these developments could bring on a new culture war over "what we want to do with biotechnology, and how [it] can be used not just for therapeutic purposes but for social engineering." That would be a debate over nothing less than the meaning of human nature—a debate that would make the conflict over values since the Great Disruption seem, by comparison, almost insignificant.

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Mandela's South Africa

Allister Sparks's clear-eyed and level-headed article ["Mandela's South Africa and After," WQ, Spring '99] affirms his status as the most perceptive journalist writing about modern South Africa. Sparks's piece achieves a difficult feat: he evaluates harsh day-to-day realities, identifying the locus points of conflict in this young and troubled society, yet does not lose track of the significant progress that is taking place. He is correct in focusing on the structural economic deficiencies that make it so difficult for South Africa to provide the most basic needs for a new generation of citizens. He carefully outlines the country's political divisions and reflects upon the possible consequences of President Nelson Mandela's departure. At the same time, Sparks never underestimates the importance of the change that has already occurred, especially in removing the bonds of police-state oppression that were a hallmark of the apartheid era. Congratulations on publishing what is without doubt the best piece of journalism on South Africa in this pivotal year.

Glenn Frankel
Former Southern Africa Bureau Chief,
Washington Post
Washington, D.C.

Having just returned from two weeks in Cape Town, I was struck by the absence from Allister Sparks's piece of any discussion of a very important ANC-led area of reform: South Africa's squatting laws. California has the most lenient squatting laws in the United States, but there one still must establish "conspicuous residency" in an unoccupied pre-existing structure, improve or maintain the building and its grounds, pay for all services and utilities, and make every effort to find and contact the owner. All records of the squatter's occupancy must be presented to a judge, and if the owner as much as shows up at

the court date, the property is not to be transferred to the squatter.

By contrast, the post-apartheid squatting laws in South Africa are simple: If you squat on anyone's property in any sort of shelter—a cardboard box or cloth lean-to will do—and are not forcibly removed by the owner or an agent of the owner, you may stay there indefinitely. This helps explain why the armed security guard business is the fastest growing one in South Africa.

To American sensibilities, or at least my own, such a trampling of property rights is outrageous and counterproductive.

Joseph F. Favino,
Visalia, Calif.

Apology for Consumerism

James Twitchell has presented a very selective narrative on capitalist modernity to validate his apologia for consumerism ["Two Cheers for Materialism," WQ, Spring '99]. Borrowing liberally from Marx's materialist conception of world history, he essentially argues that consumerism played the decisive role in shaping the institutions of civil society that undergird modern democracy. This both overreads a fairly recent historical phenomenon and ignores the other crucial aspect of modern civil society: communication, or what the German social philosopher Jurgen Habermas called the "bourgeois public sphere." Habermas argues that the rise of capitalism provided the space for a free arena of discourse not controlled by either the church or the state. But Habermas also contends that mass consumerism has robbed the public sphere of its once-transformative liberal power. There is an emerging consensus among cultural historians (among whom I include myself) that recognizes the profound role of modern capitalist processes (including consumerism) in a developing, if distorted, modernity.

Twitchell attempts to debunk academic cultural theory and its comprehensive critique of modern society by vulgarizing its complexities and turning its conclusions into an empty parody in his final argument. He asserts that consumerism must ultimately be modernity's one great normative achievement, writing, "For many of us, especially when young, consumerism is our better judgment. We have not just asked to go this way, we have demanded." Like many less careful observers of our modern democratic project, he has confused what the Marxist cultural theorists he likes to parody call reification, or the manipulation of human consciousness by the forces of capitalism, with consent.

Yes, American culture is becoming world culture, but the moral content of that global transformation is still to be defined by our more ambitious moral philosophers and social scientists. Indeed, Charles Taylor and Anthony Giddens have already begun that work. It is this kind of heroic engagement with the possibilities of Western modernity that we, the "educated public," should be attempting to understand, rather than embracing the morally limited and politically minimalist universal consumerism that Twitchell advocates.

*Alex Benchimol
University of Glasgow
Glasgow, Scotland*

Early Capitalism

Sean Wilentz ["Striving for Democracy," *WQ*, Spring '99] is surely correct in pointing out that the early American republic was characterized by a high level of conflict about economic issues. It is less clear, however, that in these conflicts Americans "articulated clashing ideals" about "how economic power should be organized." Are we really to believe, for instance, that the controversy over the 1816 Compensation Act was ideological? What sort of ideals drove the congressmen who doubled their own salaries? What sort of ideals did voters need to perceive that they were being cheated? Capitalist notions of self-interest seem the best explanation, not ideology. Similar questions can be raised about the far more complicated bank controversies. The "honest and indus-

trious farmers" who criticized the moneyed aristocracy created by banks nonetheless clamored for the plentiful paper money and easy access to credit that banks offered. It seems that our honest farmers could turn off their pre-capitalist ideal of moral economy whenever it was in their interest to do so. Far from indicating a fundamental conflict about economic ideals, the policy debates of the early republic reflect precisely that broad consensus that Alexis de Tocqueville identified: Americans sought to "secure for themselves a government" that would "allow them to acquire the things they covet."

*James German
Department of History
University of Nebraska at Kearney
Kearney, Neb.*

Rather than describe a market economy as one in which "the market separates from the political, social, and cultural systems constraining it and becomes itself an agent of change," or as one in which "most people in the society are involved in buying and selling and think in terms of bettering themselves economically," as Gordon Wood does, I believe that one should draw a distinction between market trade and market competition. People have almost always tried to better themselves by trading, no matter what type of economy they were operating in. Such trade, absent market competition, can be separated from systems constraining it. I would date the emergence of a market economy to the period when competition for most goods and services began.

*Tom Patterson
Hinsdale, Ill.*

Freud's Nature

In his review ["Freudian Mystique," *WQ*, Spring '99], Howard Kaye follows Jonathan Lear, one of the authors under review, in failing to grasp the nature of the scholarship that challenges Freud's account of the seduction theory episode. Kaye writes of the patients' "stories," and of their "imagined memories," of childhood sexual abuse as if this is unproblematic. It is not generally known that Freud's

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claims in 1896 were based on analytic reconstructions of somatic symptoms buttressed by corroborations he claimed were obtained (for every single one of his patients) using his coercive "pressure technique"; they were not based on direct reports given to him by his patients. It is true that the traditional story (following Freud's later retrospective accounts) has it that most of the female patients in the period of the seduction theory reported that they had been "seduced" by their father, but this is contradicted (in several respects) by the 1896 seduction theory papers. Freud wrote at the time that "before they come for analysis the patients know nothing about these [infantile sexual] scenes" which he claimed he had induced them to "reproduce." He also wrote that "they have no feeling of remembering the scenes," and that they "assure me . . . emphatically of their unbelief." Patients who do not believe they have been sexually molested in infancy can scarcely be said to have told Freud "stories" of childhood abuse, or to have reported "imagined memories."

By conflating the issue of memories (real or imagined) of childhood sexual abuse with that of the truth about the seduction theory episode, Lear evades the central issue. Freud claimed that his seduction theory "error" led him to discover the importance of (unconscious) infantile fantasies, and used his misleading retrospective accounts to buttress this claim. But if, as the original documents indicate, Freud foisted his own preconceived reconstructions onto his patients, the "infantile fantasies" were not a 'discovery' but a product of Freud's own imagination. It is for this reason that the truth about the seduction theory episode is important. This should not be conflated with the general issue of the authenticity of memories of childhood sexual abuse; Freud's seduction theory patients had no such memories.

Allen Esterson
London, England

Misdirected Youths

Seymour Martin Lipset ["Out of the Alcoves," *WQ*, Winter '99] doesn't have the faintest idea how the United States won the Cold War. His article is an amusing

account of pre-World War II intellectuals. His belief that, as a Trotskyist and an "unaffiliated anti-Stalinist socialist," he somehow had something to do with the Cold War, lacks intellectual legs.

His characterization of Ronald Reagan as the most important convert to anti-Stalinism begs a reply. I have never heard President Reagan separate Stalinism from communism. The way Mr. Lipset weaves Reagan into this article is an unfortunate attempt to justify the ramblings of young intellectuals who were all wrong about most things, including foreign affairs. Senator Joseph McCarthy did more to end the Cold War than all the intellectuals mentioned in Mr. Lipset's article put together. Stalinism, communism, and Trotskyism, like Hitlerism and Nazism, all finally succumbed to force, not stiff arguments or well-written articles.

If Mr. Lipset was with us in the primaries of 1976 and 1980, then I owe him an apology. If he was not, then his story is one of misdirected youths, important only in advancing our understanding of how so many Americans from that period could have been so wrong about so many things.

David L. Zachem
St. Petersburg, Fla.

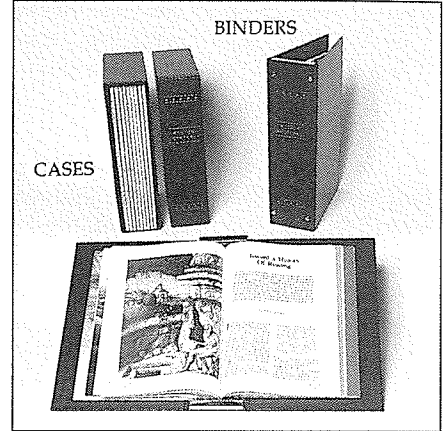
Hyperdemocracy

In his article "Hyperdemocracy" [WQ, Winter '99], Hugh Heelo asserts that "Americans today are informed . . . about more subjects than ever before." On the contrary, the media inform us about only the one to three big issues of the week. Americans are "rapidly informed" about these few hot topics of the week, but the media provide less information about other topics than they did about "secondary" topics 30 years ago. To find more details about such topics, one must be willing to seek out obscure specialized publications.

In addition, "policymaking behind the scenes, with relatively little publicity being given to the people or the processes involved," is done as much today as it was earlier in this century. The biggest corporations decide how political and social issues are settled; they have de facto veto power over any government action. Activists might influence elections, but



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those elected are increasingly irrelevant in decision making. Today, many lawmakers serve as hypocritical buffers between the real decision makers and the people. They vote for certain bills, appearing to cater to their constituents, even as they ensure that the corporations finally get what they want.

However, I agree with Mr. Hecló's observation that "many activist organizations . . . target their resources on those already inclined in their favor . . . instead of trying to . . . mobilize the general public." I thought it was only the "lost-cause" activist groups I support that failed to reach out to the general public. But Mr. Hecló may be correct in implying that many other organizations behave the same way.

Jeanette Wolfberg
Mt. Kisco, N.Y.

More 'Evil' Thoughts

In "A Note on the Banality of Evil," [WQ, Autumn '98], Stephen Miller writes of Hannah Arendt, "*Banal* was a curious word choice. . . . Evil acts, it seems clear, are neither banal nor not banal. The term *banality* does not apply to evil, just as it does not apply to goodness." It is, indeed, clear that evil acts are not banal acts—that evil is not a banal thing. Surely a writer of Arendt's perceptiveness could not seriously be accused of arguing that evil is banal. No, the point of the phrase is that under the Third Reich, evil was ubiquitous, pervasive, saturating. If one sought to paraphrase Arendt's expression, "the prevalence of evil" would be a more faithful rendition than "the dullness of evil." But the deeper—and more terrible—truth is that evil came to be *perceived* as banal, precisely because it was so pervasive. Just as a veteran policeman, after years of seeing grisly murders, may grow so jaded as barely to notice horrors that would sicken an average citizen, so the officers (and civilians) of the Reich, numbed to indifference by the endless barrage of atrocities, came to dismiss the evils around them as trivialities. Or, in the obvious phrase, as banalities.

But the truly bizarre thing about Adolf Eichmann is that he did not come to view these evils as banalities. In chapter six of *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, we discover that on the few occasions when he actually visited

the concentration camps, he was sickened and horrified by what he saw, and he finally requested that he be assigned duties that would not require him to enter the camps. This seems to suggest that, by not being directly exposed to the Nazi horrors, he was able to put them out of his mind and cease to be bothered by them, which clearly supports Arendt's thesis that Eichmann was, in the exact sense, a "thoughtless" man. Rather curiously, Miller makes the observation that "given the roll call of 'thoughtful' people who have supported evil regimes, it seems odd to blame 'thoughtlessness.'" But this argument concedes the point. Of course it makes perfect sense to blame Eichmann's thoughtlessness: he was able to be thoughtless precisely because better minds than his were doing his thinking for him.

Miller quotes Arendt's friend Mary McCarthy, who says of Eichmann, "If you allow him a wicked heart, then you leave him some freedom, which permits our condemnation." This appears to be the crux of the objection to Arendt's "banality" axiom. For the truth is, it is very difficult to condemn Eichmann (at least, if one goes by the picture that is painted of him in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*); he seems vastly more buffoonish than bellicose. And it is deeply troubling to the human heart to be faced with such evil and to find oneself unable to condemn—it is akin to trying to pass judgment on a natural disaster or trying to reason with cancer. It leaves one with a sense of justice undone, of divine precepts flouted. But then, everything about Nazi Germany leaves one with that sense—and perhaps the banality of evil is a key to understanding why. Miller remarks that Hannah Arendt "got two very big things wrong: the nature of Eichmann and the nature of evil." It seems nearer the truth to say that Miller got two very big things wrong: the nature of evil and the nature of Hannah Arendt.

James B. Toner
Steubenville, Ohio

Correction

Due to an editing error, Antonio Gramsci was incorrectly identified on page 23 of the Spring '99 issue as being a member of the Frankfurt School.

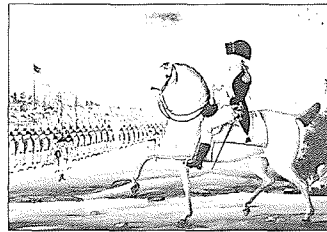
FINDINGS

Isn't It Ironic?

Cool and *ironic* are two of the most well-worn cultural buzzwords of the 1990s. But when a hapless professor applied them to the work of art critic Dave Hickey ("original" and "startling" are the words we would have used), Hickey blew his cool. The results are on display in *Art Issues* (Jan.–Feb. 1999), where Hickey writes a regular column:

"Irony and cool are incompatible means to the same end. They are both modes of deniable disclosure. Each enables us to speak our minds while maintaining a small margin for disclaimer. When we use irony, we suppress the sense of what we mean. When we resort to cool, we suppress the urgency we attach to that meaning. Those who fear 'death from above,' who dwell in bureaucratic, clerical, or academic cultures where speech is regulated, relationships are permanent, and there is no free expression must resort to irony. Cool, on the other hand, is a modality of expression for those who live in a world where there are no hierarchies, no permanent enfranchisements, and, perhaps, a surfeit of free expression. Irony is a way of eluding the wrath of your superiors; cool is a way of not imposing on your peers.

"So let me propose this rule of thumb: Generally speaking, Europeans (who no longer have any concept of cool) do irony best, while Americans (who are only now learning how to dissemble with aplomb) are best at cool. Sigmund Freud, Karl Marx, Bertolt Brecht, Marcel Duchamp, and Francis Picabia are ironists—counterintuitive creatures of the spirit, seekers after covert truths, masters of the opaque agenda. George Washington, Charles S. Peirce, Henry James, Gertrude Stein, Andy Warhol, and Alex Katz are cool. Presuming to embody



their beliefs, they decline to plead them—yet wish to be *seen* embodying them, declining to plead. . . .

"[Washington] didn't really stand *for* anything. He simply stood, the embodiment of everything the republic might be. . . . My favorite Washington story concerns his department at the Second Continental Congress, which could never have been assembled without his guaranteed presence. Throughout the

deliberations, the shouting and wrangling, the nitpicking and backbiting, Washington sat there, hands in his lap with his legs crossed, saying little or nothing. Occasionally, however, when the debate became especially heated

or seemed to divagate from its purposes, Washington would shift his weight in his chair and cross his legs the other way and, at that moment, as if he had turned the tiller of the Ship of State, the debate would take a new direction. That, my friends, is cool."

The Thrift Myth

Hardly a month goes by without some new statistics on saving or consumer debt provoking outcries over the spendthrift ways of Americans. Scholars portray the invention of consumer credit during the 1920s as practically the downfall of the American way. Sociologist Daniel Bell called the installment plan "the greatest single engine in the destruction of the Protestant ethic." But a new book by historian Lendol Carter, *Financing the American Dream* (1999), suggests some rethinking may be in order. "A river of red ink runs through American history," he writes. "Debt, in fact, was a 'heavy burden' for the Pilgrims . . . and a common hardship for 19th-century farmers and workers." Americans borrowed from friends, family members, pawnbrokers, shopkeepers, and others. It's true that they

didn't borrow as much as today's Americans do, and often they borrowed just to put food on the table, but they were no strangers to debt's promise of instant gratification. By the 1890s, household indebtedness was growing as rapidly as 15 percent annually. Artemus Ward, speaking in 1867, may have had the last word: "Let us all be happy, and live within our means, even if we have to borrow money to do it with."

The Babel of the Beasts

The cause of globalization suffered a setback recently when it was discovered that even pets and barnyard creatures are mired in national identity. In the *Moscow Times* (May 11, 1999), Genine Babakian reports that what sounds like bow-wow or arf arf to American ears sounds like gav gav to Russians. Russian pigs do not oink, they go khryu khryu. It's a small consolation that at least moo and meow do cross national frontiers. All of this reminded us of Belgium's famed comic-book canine Snowy, of the *Tintin* series, who gives the bark a distinctively Belgian inflection. A



challenge for diplomats: while a Russian duck may look like a duck and walk like a duck, it does not quack like a duck. (It goes krya krya.)

No Trespassing

Woe to the independent scholar or mere journalist who dares venture an opinion on a subject that academics have staked out as their own. Thomas Powers, the author of *The Man Who Kept the*

Secrets: Richard Helms and the CIA (1979), suffered the consequences recently when he wrote a lengthy essay in the *New York Review of Books* (Mar. 18, 1999) dealing with Crazy Horse, Red Cloud, and other 19th-century Plains Indians. *How dare he!* harrumphed Patricia Hilden of the University of California, Berkeley, and Arnold Krupat of Sarah Lawrence College. They rounded up 30 fellow academics from as far away as Norway to add their names to a petulant letter to the editor. "We find it unfortunate and insulting that he has been asked to review books in our fields," they whine in unison in the May 20 issue of the *New York Review of Books*.

In reply, Powers took the turf-conscious herd to task for trying "to intimidate" him and the magazine's editors. "I dislike to think that no scholar contacted in what must have been days of frantic faxing and e-mailing had thought for anything but barring the door," he said. The *Review's* editors had the last word: "It is hard to take seriously academics who condemn an independent scholar without making a single substantive criticism of his work."

The Gaul of the Intellectuals

Surveying the wider intellectual world in the *Hudson Review* (April 1999), Michael Lind, the Washington editor of *Harper's*, takes an even harsher view of academe, which he likens to "a sclerotic European welfare state, in which excessive regulation protects lazy bureaucrats and pampered union members while freezing out an ever-growing pool of the resentful unemployed." There's more:

"American intellectual life at the end of the 20th century is divided, like Caesar's Gaul, into three parts: the academy, the media, and the realm of the partisan think tank. . . .

"The greatest contrast is that found between inhabitants of the academic country, on the one hand, and the citizens of the media and think tank realms, on the other. Journalists and think-tank ideologues still write in English, whereas

all successful academics, except for a few noble relics like Samuel P. Huntington and Richard Rorty, write in the post-English patois of their fields. Where possible, campus guilds have abandoned language altogether for numbers. Almost all of the significant concepts of economics can be expressed verbally, or with the use of diagrams. The triumph of mathematical economics, with its cargo-cult imitation of physics, can be explained only by the bureaucratic imperatives of the American economics professoriate. For some time, political science has been mimicking economics, by attempting to 'model' the messy gang warfare that is international and domestic politics with the aid of 'game theory' and 'rational choice theory' (known fondly among its detractors as Rat Choice). Obscurantist methodologies have the great advantage of concealing from outsiders the banality of thinking in any discipline by which they are adopted. If you have nothing intelligent to say, you would be a fool to say it plainly. . . .

"Although the takeover of the universities by dozens of self-protective guilds has forced many first-rate thinkers across the borders into the media's Third World sweatshops or this or that ideological Republic of Virtue, the émigrés find life in their new countries uncertain and insecure. You might expect that the think tanks would provide better homes for American intellectuals than our pedantic universities and our oligarchic media. Unfortunately, the economic incentive structure of the partisan think tank discourages freedom of thought. Because the typical think-tank ideologue must get his grant renewed annually, it would be suicidal for him to challenge the party line that is set by the corporate and foundation program officers and their middlemen, the think-tank executives. . . .

"Does the Balkanization of the American mind matter? The country can function and perhaps even flourish in spite of absurd professors, superficial prepie journalists and monomaniacal ideologues muttering in their sleep about the

flat tax or the progressive tax. However, in the absence of generalist thinkers writing for a general audience, there is a danger that public policy will be monopolized by specialists who serve particular lobbies. Defense policy will be made and discussed only by members of the military-industrial Mafia; interest rate policy by bankers and their representatives; labor policy by business and union lobbyists; religious policy by religious fanatics (and anti-religious fanatics). As we have seen, even the humanities can suffer, if the artistic and scholarly communities are captured by the equivalent of producer lobbies."

Don't Go in the Water

Barbecues. Tennis games. Camping trips. Long days at the beach. *Infections of Leisure*. Yes, *Infections of Leisure*. This handy medical book is the perfect summer read for all of us who are filled with guilt at the thought of idle summer days—the folks who bring along a cell phone and a pile of memos so all that time at the beach won't be "wasted."

The contributors to *Infections of Leisure* (1994), all of them researchers at medical institutions, have a knack for turning even the slightest pleasure into a potential brush with doom. No need to feel guilty about having fun, you're risking your life. "One can easily appreciate the great array of infectious diseases that confront the person simply slipping out of the house and walking across the yard to do a bit of gardening!" declares an apparently enthusiastic Burke A. Cunha, a specialist in infectious disease at Winthrop and Women's Hospital. "Contact with rose bush thorns or sphagnum moss should immediately suggest the possibility of sporotrichosis," he helpfully suggests at another point. From now on, it probably will.

In chapter after chapter, 13 in all, the authors methodically lay waste to the joys of summer. In addition to chapters on the dangers of the garden, the farm, the beach, and the lake, there are lengthy entries on dogs, cats, and traveling abroad. An entire 86-page chapter is

devoted to extinguishing any hope of enjoying the seashore. Its section on marine traumas, for example, helpfully lists a number of threats that people ought to reckon with before taking a dip: barracudas, sharks, needlefish, stingrays, sea snakes, and so on. Not mentioned, unaccountably, are those tiny fish that swim in schools at the edge of the beach—and which we all know will someday turn on some hapless beachgoer and tear him to shreds with tiny, hitherto unnoticed, razorlike teeth.

Never fear. If one thing unites the contributors to *Infections of Leisure*, it is the cheerful conviction that many more forms of punishment for good clean fun remain to be discovered. Eating out? Beware of *Pseudoterranova decipiens*, *Anisakis simplex*, and *Gnathostoma spinigerum* in your sushi. “One may expect that, with time, other parasites will be added to the list of sushi-related diseases,” the authors add.

One can only hope.

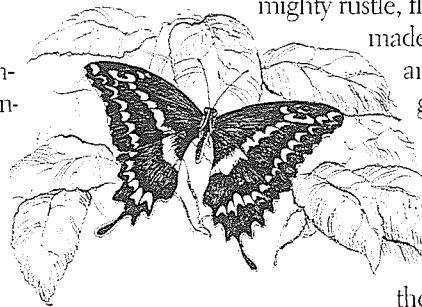
Nabokov in Flight

History already seems to be reshaping the reputations of the three literary heavyweights whose centennials occur this year: Ernest Hemingway, Vladimir Nabokov, and Jorge Luis Borges. While Hemingway is still the leading literary name brand, only Nabokov has books on both the Modern Library’s list of the top 10 English-language novels of the 20th century (*Lolita*) and its list of top 10 nonfiction works (*Speak, Memory*). (Borges, who wrote in Spanish, did not qualify for inclusion.) Web postings suggest that Nabokov’s centennial will be the more widely commemorated of the three.

The versatile Russian émigré was also a renowned lepidopterist, serving as a research fellow of Harvard’s Museum of Comparative Zoology between 1941 and 1948. In *Speak, Memory*, he recalls the

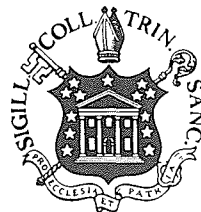
initial allure of butterfly hunting with typical Nabokovian exuberance:

“From the age of seven, everything I felt in connection with a rectangle of framed sunlight was dominated by a single passion. If my first glance of the morning was for the sun, my first thought was for the butterflies it would engender. The original event had been banal enough. On the honeysuckle, overhanging the carved back of a bench just opposite the main entrance, my guiding angel (whose wings, except for the absence of a Florentine limb, resemble those of Fra Angelico’s Gabriel) pointed out to me a rare visitor, a splendid, pale-yellow creature with black blotches, blue crenels, and a cinnabar eyespot above each chrome-rimmed black tail. As it probed the inclined flower from which it hung, its powdery body slightly bent, it kept restlessly jerking its great wings, and my desire for it was one of the most intense I have ever experienced. Agile Ustin, our town-house janitor, who for a comic reason happened to be that summer in the country with us, somehow managed to catch it in my cap, after which it was transferred, cap and all, to a wardrobe, where domestic naphthalene was fondly expected by Mademoiselle to kill it overnight. On the following morning, however, when she unlocked the wardrobe to take something out, my Swallowtail, with a mighty rustle, flew into her face, then made for the open window, and presently was but a golden fleck dipping and dodging and soaring eastward, over timber and tundra, to Vologda, Viatka and Perm, and beyond the gaunt Ural range to Yakutsk and Verkhne Kolymsk, and from Verkhne Kolymsk, where it lost a tail, to the fair Island of St. Lawrence, and across Alaska to Dawson, and southward along the Rocky Mountains—to be finally overtaken and captured, after a forty-year race, on an immigrant dandelion under an endemic aspen near Boulder.”



TRINITY COLLEGE
Hartford, CT

Senior Urban Professorship



Trinity College invites nominations and applications for a senior professorship in the comparative study of cities. We will give consideration to urbanists whose work has focused on the arts, humanities, natural sciences, or social science, in academic, governmental or other pertinent settings. Funded as part of a \$5.1-million grant from a major foundation, the position will be filled by a scholar of exceptional stature and accomplishment who, whatever his or her disciplinary specialty, has extensive knowledge of cities and can play a leadership role in the development of Trinity's urban curricular agenda, including the College's growing, multi-faceted educational involvement with Hartford.

A highly selective liberal arts college with approximately 1,850 full-time undergraduates, Trinity is giving increased curricular attention to the study of cities, strengthening its urban-centered instructional and co-curricular programs, forging creative educational linkages with its host city, and implementing a variety of pilot projects that extend the traditional boundaries of liberal arts education. Hartford is an ethnically diverse city with exceptional cultural resources and large Puerto Rican, African-American, and West Indian communities as well as newer immigrant populations. It provides a rich and stimulating setting for urban-oriented research.

Applications are especially invited from persons who have combined an academic career with work as urban practitioners. A record of striking professional achievement and evidence of teaching effectiveness are essential.

The candidate of choice will receive an initial five-year contract appointment, with the possibility of renewal, at the extra-departmental rank of College Professor, reporting directly to the Dean of the Faculty. Collateral appointment in one or more academic departments or programs will be made as appropriate. The nominee will be responsible for carrying on his or her own research program, and teaching courses on urban themes, as well as other special areas. In addition, the nominee will help faculty, community associates, and students to develop and test new strategies of urban engagement. Salary and benefits are commensurate with a distinguished senior appointment. The position includes an annual fund to support research.

The goal is to fill the position no later than academic year 2000-01, with the possibility of an appointment beginning as early as January, 2000. Review of applications is ongoing and will continue until an appointment has been made. Candidates should submit: 1) a detailed letter of interest; 2) a complete curriculum vitae; 3) three current letters of reference addressing teaching, scholarship, and any related experience; and 4) a sample of his/her research or creative work to:

Senior Professorship Committee
c/o Elaine Garrahy, Assistant to the Dean of the Faculty
Trinity College
300 Summit Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Trinity College is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer. Women and members of minority groups are especially encouraged to submit applications. Applicants with disabilities should request any needed accommodation in order to participate in the application process.

AT ISSUE

Two Continents

Let me tell you a tale of two continents. A short time ago, I helped to negotiate a cease-fire in the worst civil conflict of a harsh decade. I was honored to receive President Clinton's appreciation for working with three international leaders to help bring about this vital step toward peace, while brokering the release of more than 2,000 prisoners. The conflict, which has continued for nearly eight years, has claimed more than 500,000 lives and displaced more than a million refugees. Peace, if it follows, will stop more needless suffering and end the potential destabilizing of a vital region.

Yet, even well-informed Americans have heard little about either the conflict or the cease-fire. That's because the war was in Sierra Leone in Western Africa, and was waged outside the glare of cameras and beyond the eyes of Western journalists. The horrors of the war in Sierra Leone have been worse than those in Kosovo, but the cameras were not there to bring it into our living rooms.

This is the story of two continents—Europe and Africa. In Europe, the graphic coverage of the horrors in Kosovo helped galvanize public concern and move the government to act. The crimes inflicted on the Kosovars are terrible in scope. So the Kosovars have the commitment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the attention of the global community, and the promise of the United States and its allies for aid and reconstruction. Congress just appropriated over \$13 billion for the war on Yugoslavia and the support of the Kosovar

refugees. The president has pledged a Marshall Plan for the region to reconstruct what has been destroyed in the fighting. Sierra Leone shares the horrors but not the hope. There is no public outcry against the violence, no commitment for aid to reconstruct the country. The only peacekeeping forces offered were supplied by Africans themselves, with the United States providing only \$15 million to help support their activities in Sierra Leone.

The discrepancy in treatment is noted across the world. The United States undermines the credibility of its humanitarian purpose in Kosovo when it ignores worse crises in Africa. Sierra Leone provided the ancient homelands for many slaves that

were brought primarily to South Carolina, North Carolina, and parts of Georgia. We have as many, if not more, cultural and ethnic ties to Western Africa as we do to the Balkans. And the

conflict there is far more destabilizing than that in Yugoslavia.

Two continents, two tragedies, two treatments. And yet a much smaller investment in attention, resources, and concern in Africa would have a far greater effect in saving lives and providing hope. Let's give peace a chance in Sierra Leone, even as we search for it in the Balkans.

This discrepancy is just one more unintended consequence. We did not intend to reveal, by intervening in Kosovo, while abdicating in other parts of the world, that there are fissures in our own society that have yet to be worked out. But we have revealed them nonetheless.

—Jesse Jackson

This essay is excerpted from the Reverend Jesse Jackson's speech before the Wilson Center's Board of Trustees and the Wilson Council on June 7, 1999. The full text is available online at <http://wwics.si.edu>.



Why We Need Olmsted Again

Frederick Law Olmsted, the designer of Central Park (above) and many other public spaces, left an unmistakable imprint on the American landscape. Far less familiar are his distinctive ideas about how to shape the American city—ideas that are more pertinent than ever amid today's rising outcry over urban sprawl.

by Witold Rybczynski

Sprawl is shaping up to be an issue in the forthcoming presidential election. It is easy to see why. The public is concerned about gridlock and the relentless urbanization of the countryside. Existing communities erect barriers to growth, pushing development yet far-

ther out; rural towns feel threatened. There is a general feeling that things are out of control. Yet there is no consensus on how growth should be accommodated. The public is alarmed at the consequences of sprawl but suspicious of the chief means of reining it in—centralized planning.

The public's confidence was soured by the planning debacles of the 1960s. High-minded urban renewal left thousands homeless; cross-town freeways fractured neighborhoods; and public housing superblocks, conceived by the best minds in the field, created high-crime zones. Faced with another round of planning "solutions," the public is right to be skeptical. Yet the suspicion of planning runs further back in time than these relatively recent events. Americans have always been uncomfortable with centralized planning. We admire European cities, but we have resisted vesting as much power in an individual as, say, Rome did in Pope Sixtus V, or Paris in Napoleon III. Instead of the grand gesture we have preferred the generic grid, plain Main Street, and its modern counterpart, the ubiquitous highway strip. This is not simply laziness. These modest planning solutions have generally provided a level playing field for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." In the grid, or on the strip, everyone is treated equally. The house stands beside the church which is next to the drive-in restaurant. Each has equal prominence, none assumes precedence over the other.

The history of the planning of the American city has been chiefly a story of private accomplishments and private monuments: palatial department stores, railroad terminals, skyscrapers, baseball stadiums. There is one exception, and it is a big one. During the second half of the 19th century, almost every large city—New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago, San Francisco—planned and built a public park. European cities had parks, but London's Hyde Park or Paris's Tuileries Gardens were relatively small. The American parks were huge: 840 acres in the case of New York's Central Park, more than 1,000 acres in San Francisco, more than 3,000 in Philadelphia. This was planning on a heroic scale.

The majority of those great public works were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted (1822–1903), the remarkable planner and landscape architect who, with Calvert Vaux, built Central Park and Brooklyn's Prospect Park, and designed parks in Buffalo and Chicago. Later, working alone, he planned parks in Boston, Detroit, Louisville, Rochester, and Montreal. What was it that made Olmsted's brand of city planning so successful?

Olmsted, too, lived in a time of spectacular urban expansion. "We have reason to believe, then, that towns which of late have been increasing rapidly on account of their commercial advantages, are likely to be still more attractive to population in the future," he wrote in a paper delivered in 1870 to the American Social Science Association, of which he was a founder. "That there will in consequence soon be larger towns than any the world has yet known, and that the further progress of civilization is to depend mainly upon the influences by which men's minds and characters will be affected while living in large towns."

Although Olmsted loved the countryside, like most of his contemporaries he never suggested that urbanization could—or should—be curtailed. Nor was he nostalgic about the country's agrarian past. He understood the attractions of city life, cultural as well as commercial, social as well as economic. As a young man, enthusiastic about the promise of "scientific" agriculture, he had farmed for a living and learned something about rural isolation and hardship. He had traveled across the South and the Texas frontier writing regular reports for the *New-York Daily Times* before the Civil War, and had no romantic illusions about life in small, backward rural settlements. Although he had grown up in a small New England town—Hartford, Connecticut—he had been

> WITOLD RYBCZYNSKI is the Martin and Margy Meyerson Professor of Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania and the author of *City Life* (1995). His new book, published this summer, is *A Clearing in the Distance, a biography of Frederick Law Olmsted*. Copyright © 1999 Witold Rybczynski.



A 19th-century view of Central Park's Ramble recalls a Bierstadt painting of the West, but Olmsted's "wilderness" was entirely man-made.

apprenticed to a trading company in New York and understood that the future lay with the burgeoning metropolis.

Olmsted had spent many years writing—never finishing—an ambitious book on American civilization. He was always concerned with the big picture. Huge cities were inevitable, of that he was sure. The question was how to make them livable, and how to influence “men’s minds and characters” so that civilization would prosper. He was far from sanguine about its prospects. After spending two years during his early for-

ties managing a large gold mining operation in California’s untamed Sierra Nevada, he had firsthand experience of the crudeness and roughness of frontier life. He was afraid that the booming industrial city would likewise brutalize its inhabitants.

His solution was the public park. It provided city dwellers with easy access to nature. That is something that distinguishes the American city park of that period: it is not an urban garden, nor a manicured parterre, nor a fantasy landscape. It is pastoral countryside, sometimes even wilderness. This rural quality is already present in Central Park’s Ramble with its rocky outcroppings, but it becomes more evident in later works such as Prospect Park’s ravines and waterfalls, and the twisting mountain road of Montreal’s Mount Royal park.

Olmsted was influenced by two experiences: the picturesque man-made landscapes surrounding English estates, particularly those laid out by Lancelot “Capability” Brown, whose work Olmsted first saw as a young man; and Yosemite Valley. He visited the valley during his California sojourn, and, as head of a commission to chart its future as a national park, he studied it closely. Yosemite was an eye opener. Not only because of its grand scale—its American scale—but because of the poignant contrast between the rugged cliffs and moun-

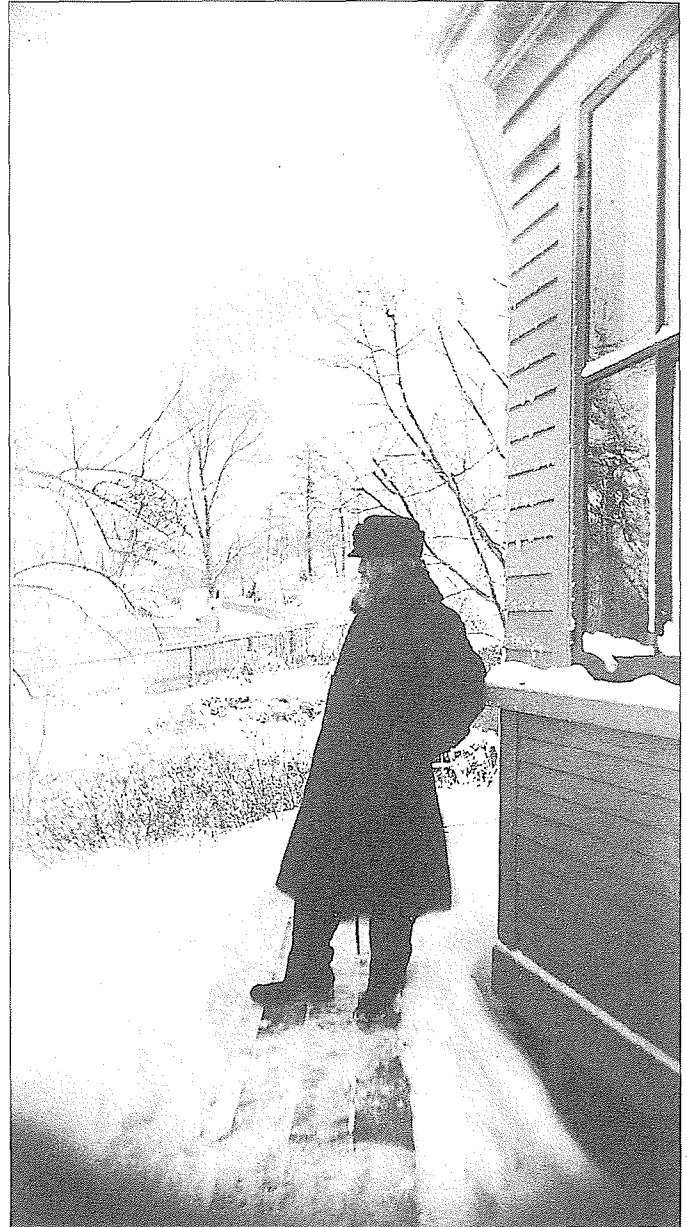
tains and the tame, domestic atmosphere of the gentle valley floor. This contrast became a theme of many Olmsted landscapes.

Olmsted was not an aesthete, and the public park was not only a place to commune with nature. "Men must come together, and *must be seen coming together* [emphasis added], in carriages, on horseback and on foot, and the concourse of animated life which will thus be formed, must in itself be made, if possible, an attractive and diverting spectacle." The public park was to be the great outdoor living room of the city, where citizens would mingle and meet. In a sense, it was a large version of the New England town green that Olmsted knew so well. However, in a vast city, even a thousand-acre park had a limited impact. In response, Olmsted and Vaux devised the parkway—an American version of the Parisian boulevard (and no relative of the later automobile rural highway). The original

parkway was an urban pleasure drive, with traffic lanes in the center for carriages, two broad green treed strips for pedestrians and bridle paths, and additional lanes for local traffic. The 260-foot-wide green swaths were linear parks that gave breathing room to the congested industrial city, brought green spaces into neighborhoods, and created fashionable settings for large residences. The latter point was important, for parkway construction was financed by the

income from new property taxes.

The first parkways were in Brooklyn, stretching miles from Prospect Park to the edges of the city. In Buffalo, Olmsted went further and created an entire park system, three separate parks joined to each other and to the downtown by avenues and parkways (long since converted into expressways). It turned Buffalo, which became known as the City of Elms, into the best-planned city in the country. In Boston,



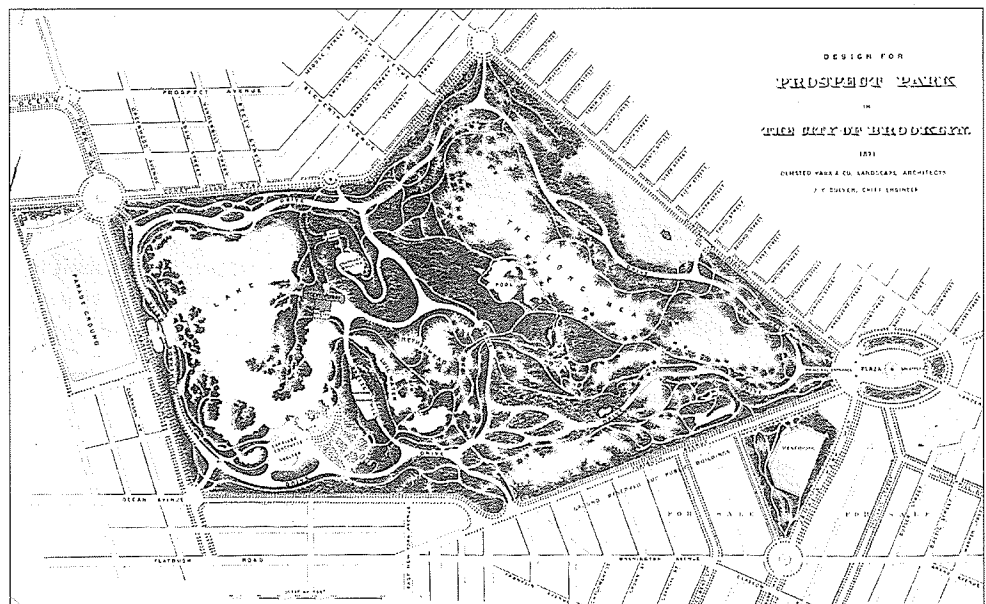
Olmsted on the porch of Fairsted, his Brookline, Mass., home

where Olmsted moved in 1881 after he became frustrated by political bickering over Central Park, he laid out his masterwork of urban design, the so-called Emerald Necklace. Nine continuous parks formed a seven-mile-long system from the Common to Franklin Park.

Of course, it was a different time. Decisions were taken by a relatively small, educated urban elite of city fathers and patricians, without public hearings and the oversight of countless private interest groups. There were no environmental impact studies, no experts, no consultants. When Olmsted was invited to Buffalo in 1868 to give advice on the park system, for example, he spent two days visiting sites, personally digging test holes to evaluate the soil conditions. The following day, he addressed a public meeting for an hour, and presented the rough outline of a plan. It was immediately accepted, and he was hired to prepare a preliminary report to be submitted six weeks hence. In the meantime, the park backers petitioned Albany to form a park commission that would issue public bonds. The legislature approved


the project the following year, and work began. With enthusiastic civic leaders, supportive state politicians (the federal government played no role in financing large urban parks), and a public that expected results, these large public works were undertaken with astonishing rapidity. In the case of Central Park, the competition for the design was held in 1858, and by the following summer work was sufficiently advanced that a program of free concerts was inaugurated and daily attendance in the park reached as high as 100,000. That winter, the frozen lake was ready to receive skaters.

New Yorkers still skate on the lake in Central Park in the winter and boat on it in the summer. What is striking about Olmsted's parks is their endurance. Generally, American cities have proved impervious to planning. The City Beautiful movement lasted not much more than a decade after its birth in the 1890s, and, except in Washington, D.C., its grand plans were left incomplete. Today, 40 years after urban renewal, we are



Olmsted's plan for Prospect Park, in the heart of Brooklyn, N.Y., demonstrates his flair for carving out vast green spaces while preserving the necessary gridwork of city thoroughfares.

demolishing public housing projects, and some cities have even dismantled urban freeways. The fad for pedestrian malls closed to traffic was likewise fleeting. Yet in the 140 years since Central Park was built, no one has ever suggested that it was a mistake. True, the park experienced periods of neglect, especially during the post-war decades. There have been unforeseen encroachments such as the zoo and the skating rink. There is probably too much automobile traffic for what were originally conceived as pleasure drives for horse-drawn carriages. Rollerbladers and joggers have replaced promenading ladies and gentlemen. Yet while the activities that take place in the park have changed, its fundamental role as a place of retreat and renewal remains. Today, Central Park is as much used—and cherished—as ever.

 Olmsted was not merely a park builder, he was a visionary city planner. He planned a new town for the western railhead of the Northern Pacific, devised a street layout for the Bronx when it was annexed by the city of New York, and oversaw a comprehensive regional plan for all of Staten Island. Yet there is no record that he ever designed an “ideal city.” He was not a utopian. That, too, explains his success. Unlike later planners, Olmsted did not try to impose a template on the city. When Leland Stanford approached him to plan a new college in California, he wanted a New England-style campus; Olmsted reasonably pointed out that the arid climate demanded a different solution. Likewise, when San Francisco commissioned a park, expecting a version of Central Park, Olmsted proposed a different solution tailored to that city’s particular climate and geography.

Olmsted could be dictatorial. Once, when he was working on South Park in Chicago, one of the commissioners said: “I don’t see, Mr. Olmsted, that the plans indicate any flower beds in the park. Now where would you recommend that these be placed?” Olmsted’s curt answer: “Anywhere outside the park.” He immersed himself in details, not only cre-

ating a Central Park police but designing their uniforms. Yet as a planner he purposely avoided trying to control everything. He understood that the city was too volatile, too changeable, to be easily tamed. The parks and parkways were big enough to hold their own; in between, he left the ebb and flow of city life largely to its own devices. Similarly, in his suburban plans, while he laid down certain broad rules governing public areas, he left individual homeowners room for individual expression and liberty. His was a peculiarly American approach to planning, open-ended, pragmatic, tolerant.

He regarded cities with the long view of a gardener. “I have all my life been considering distant effects and always sacrificing immediate success and applause to that of the future,” he once observed to his son Rick. “In laying out Central Park we determined to think of no result to be realized in less than forty years.” This proved to be a good principle for city planning. His ability to see into the future was uncanny. In the Bronx, he proposed acquiring railroad rights of way well in advance of development, assuring cheaper land costs and more efficient routes. In Staten Island, he advised that residential subdivisions be laid out long before the demand for suburban homes that he felt sure would come. When he was advising on Yosemite, he correctly foretold that the annual number of visitors, which then numbered two or three thousand, would in a century surpass a million.

Olmsted’s contracts always included a clause requiring follow-up visits for several years. The plan was not an end in itself but the beginning of a process. He assumed that, over time, adjustments and improvements would be required. Mistakes would be made. Some trees would take, others would have to be replaced. Unpredictable natural effects would have to be taken into account. This pragmatic quality served him well as a city planner and is another reason, I think, for his marked success in a field where so many have failed. He not only took the long view, he was always prepared to adjust his plans as circumstances demanded.



More than a century after Central Park's creation, New Yorkers appreciate the prescience of Olmsted's vision. Will residents of tomorrow's sprawling cities have an equal cause for gratitude?

Olmsted's thinking about cities was not confined to the center. Although he and his family lived for a number of years in a Manhattan brownstone on West 46th Street, he spent the bulk of his adult years in suburban towns: Clifton on Staten Island, and Brookline outside Boston. He liked suburban life and wrote that suburbs should combine the "ruralistic beauty of a loosely built New England village with a certain degree of the material and social advantages of a town." This was the way that cities would expand. "The construction of good roads and walks, the laying of sewer, water, and gas pipes, and the supplying of sufficiently cheap, rapid, and comfortable conveyances to town centers, is all that is necessary to give any farming land in a healthy and attractive situation the value of town lots," he wrote.

Olmsted, the Godfather of Sprawl? He did build the country's first large planned suburban residential community outside Chicago, and he was responsible for several planned subdivisions, not the least, beautiful Druid Hills in Atlanta. He assumed—

correctly, it turned out—that future urban growth in the United States would take place at a relatively low density. Yet in his suburban plans he always emphasized the railroad or trolley link to downtown, for he considered suburb and city inseparable. Moreover, his commitment to improving life in the industrial city was absolute—that is why he was devoted to creating urban parks. He may have lived in the suburbs, but he was also a man of the city.

Olmsted would be disappointed at the decline of our cities and the increasing isolation of our suburbs. As a 19th-century gentleman, he would probably be appalled at our consumer society. "More barbarism and less civilization," he would say. But the practical planner was never one to despair. "So, you have Wal-Marts and strip malls and cineplexes. Very well, there is a place for everything. But that is not sufficient. You are obliged to create public places among all this private expansion. Places for all people to mix. You must think big, you know. And you must think far ahead. What is it that you want the metropolis to become in 40 years? Because you'll have to start working on it now."

The (Un)Making of Milosevic

Some call him the Beast of the Balkans. Slobodan Milosevic's biographer explains how the Serbian dictator suddenly rose to power—and how he might fall.

by Louis Sell

On the evening of April 24, 1987, in the shabby hamlet of Kosovo Polje, an obscure Balkan politician stepped between a line of policemen and a crowd of Serbs protesting their mistreatment by Kosovo's majority Albanian population. The words he spoke now ring with irony, but in 1987 they electrified all of Serbia. "No one will beat you again," Slobodan Milosevic declared.

Counting on a newsworthy confrontation, local activists had gathered several thousand Serbs outside the hall where Milosevic was scheduled to speak. They chanted slogans, pushed against a police cordon, and threw rocks that had been stockpiled for the occasion. Milosevic waded into the crowd—at a moment when journalists on the scene said they heard the unmistakable sound of AK-47s being pulled back to their firing positions—and began an extraordinary all-night performance. He called upon the Serbs to resist what they claimed was Albanian pressure to leave Kosovo. "This is your country, your homes and fields and memories are here," he cried. As he warmed to his subject, Milosevic raised the stakes. "Yugoslavia cannot exist with-

out Kosovo. Yugoslavia and Serbia will not give up Kosovo."

Before the spectacle of Kosovo Polje, Milosevic had shown few signs of being anything more than a typical Communist apparatchik. As the party boss of Belgrade during the mid-1980s, he was known among his subordinates as "Little Lenin" for his habit of barking out commands while striding about his office. But Milosevic made two fateful discoveries that night in Kosovo: the raw force of Serb nationalism and the power of his own straightforward style of public speaking. Over the next several years he exploited these lessons to tragic effect, first seizing complete power in Serbia, and then, when he failed to dominate all of Yugoslavia, seeking to unite all of the Serbs throughout Yugoslavia under his own rule in a Greater Serbia, in the full knowledge that such a course would lead to war.

Twelve years after that day in Kosovo Polje, Milosevic chose to defy the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) rather than agree to the 1999 Rambouillet accord because its provision for a referendum on Kosovo's status in three years would have been tantamount to giving up Kosovo. Milosevic cares little for Kosovo, which he



After pledging four years of peace, progress, and prosperity in his inaugural speech as president of the Yugoslavian rump state in July 1997, Slobodan Milosevic leaves parliament with his wife Mirjana Markovic.

has seldom visited during the past decade, but he was well aware that surrendering it would remove the last justification for his own rule in Serbia. NATO's 78-day bombing campaign this spring helped persuade Milosevic finally to come to terms, but he had another compelling reason for accepting the June 9th agreement: it offered him a better deal than Rambouillet. It requires no referendum. It provides that Kosovo will formally remain within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (the post-Yugoslavian rump state formed from Serbia and Montenegro). And it puts the United Nations in charge of the civil administration of Kosovo, which means that Milosevic, through his Russian and Chinese allies on

the Security Council, still will be able to influence events there.

For 12 years, Milosevic has stretched ruthlessness, guile, and luck as far as they will go. His quick and brutal reshaping of Kosovo's ethnic balance is something Serb leaders had contemplated for much of this century, but only Milosevic had the daring and cold-blooded indifference to human suffering to actually carry it out. A man of high intelligence who has impressed foreign leaders with his skill and dexterity as a negotiator, he is also a deeply troubled person, inclined when faced with obstacles that appear insurmountable to respond

with a gambler's "double or nothing" logic or to withdraw into sullen isolation, sometimes for months at a time. In the early 1990s, during a late-night drinking session after the failure of his plans to create a Greater Serbia, Milosevic handed a political opponent a pistol and offered him the chance to shoot.

It is often said that Milosevic is a tactical genius who lacks strategic vision. But in fact he has pursued several clear strategies over the course of his 12 years in power. The problem is that the strategies—flawed both politically and morally—have led Serbia and the Balkans into repeated disaster.

After Kosovo Polje, Milosevic quickly consolidated his power in Serbia. He ousted President Ivan Stambolic, his friend and chief political benefactor, in what amounted to a public show trial in 1987. But Milosevic wanted more than Serbia. By March 1989, when he rammed through amendments to the Serbian constitution that eliminated Kosovo's former status as an autonomous province within Serbia, he had gained control of four of the eight units in the Yugoslavian federal system. One more, and he would control enough votes to dominate the collective federal presidency, created after the death of long-time Yugoslavian leader Josip Broz Tito in 1980. That would have given him the de facto power to call out the army and to declare a state of emergency. But his efforts to strong-arm Slovenia were foiled. He would not become the "new Tito."

Then Milosevic turned his attention to the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), already crumbling but still Yugoslavia's reigning party. At the LCY congress in January 1990—its last, it would turn out—he tried to use the numerical strength of the Serbs to seize control of the party. Milosevic is usually firmly in command of his public emotions but, when the Slovene delegation walked out, the look of raw anger on his face betrayed his recognition that his

hopes of dominating all of Yugoslavia had come to an end. His aggressive nationalism had only served to provoke counternationalisms throughout Yugoslavia.

Milosevic is nothing if not resilient, however, and before long he came up with yet another strategy: he would break up Yugoslavia in order to create a Greater Serbia, bringing all the ethnic Serbs living in Bosnia and Croatia under his rule. Only two months after the disastrous party congress, Milosevic chaired a secret meeting of the Serbian leadership at which it was decided to begin immediately writing a new Serbian constitution that could serve for an independent Serbian state. Other plans were put in motion. In June 1990, well before Yugoslavia broke up, Milosevic unsuccessfully encouraged the Yugoslavian army to selectively "amputate" Croatia from Yugoslavia, leaving Serb-inhabited regions under Belgrade's control.

The army's reluctance to do his bidding illustrates Milosevic's always ambiguous relationship with the military. The leaders of Yugoslavia's communist-era military initially welcomed his rise to power, hoping that his vigorous approach to Kosovo would prevent them from being drawn into the ethnic conflict between Serbs and Albanians in the province. Milosevic's aggressive brand of Serb nationalism, however, worried Yugoslavia's last defense minister, Veljko Kadijevic, who remained committed to a united Yugoslavia—albeit a communist one—long after Milosevic began working toward its destruction.

Despite such reservations at the top, Milosevic initially enjoyed support among some younger Serbian officers who called themselves the "military line" (*vojna linija*). By the spring of 1990, U.S. intelligence was aware that groups in the military had secretly begun planning military operations in Croatia, smuggling arms into Serb-inhabit-

> LOUIS SELL, a Wilson Center Public Policy Scholar, was director of the U.S. State Department's Office of Russian and Eurasian Analysis. He spent much of his career as a U.S. foreign service officer in Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union. Copyright © 1999 by Louis Sell.

ed areas and drawing up maps of territory to be seized that roughly approximated the borders of the so-called Serbian *Krajina*, or parastate, that the Serbs would carve out of Croatia the following year.

In July 1991, after Slovenia announced its secession from Yugoslavia, Milosevic opposed the Yugoslavian military's ill-fated decision to intervene. He had already agreed with the Slovenian leaders that their republic could leave, believing that this would give him a freer hand to deal with Croatia. Once war broke out in Croatia, during the summer of 1991, Milosevic repeatedly urged the Yugoslavian military to crush the Croats. At the same time, however, he refused the generals' desperate pleas to declare a full mobilization in Serbia and privately disparaged them for incompetence.

After an internationally supervised cease-fire brought an uneasy peace to Croatia in January 1992, Milosevic built up a large, well-paid, and heavily armed special police force to maintain domestic order in Serbia and to act as a potential counterbalance to the military. Over the years he has also conducted purges of the army hierarchy, eliminating in succession non-Serbs, believers in a united Yugoslavia, radical Serb nationalists, and, finally, pragmatic "military technicians," leaving, so Milosevic hoped, only those prepared to blindly carry out his orders.

The Serbian dictator is nevertheless aware that he still cannot fully count on the military's loyalty. In February 1999, reports appeared in Belgrade that he was disbanding an elite special forces unit, allegedly because its officers had planned to act against his effort to crack down on anti-Milosevic street protests in Belgrade in 1996 and '97. Many midlevel officers have grown to dislike this man who has deliberately starved the army of funds and led it into repeated military disasters. The military's prominence in defending Serbia against NATO bombing gave it a center-stage role in politics that it had not enjoyed since the Tito era. Despite Milosevic's efforts to "declare victory," the

June withdrawal from Kosovo is bound to be seen by many Serbian officers as a personal and a national humiliation—a potential danger for Milosevic.

If the military retains a degree of independence, other institutions in Serbia have been more thoroughly suppressed. From the beginning of his rule, Milosevic has relied on control of the news media to eliminate other points of view and stifle the voices of opposition politicians and independent intellectuals. For the most part, he has managed the media not by outright censorship but by ensuring that state-run broadcast and print organs are led by journalists who are prepared to slavishly follow his line and do not shrink from appealing to the lowest instincts of the mob.

Milosevic and his cronies have used Serbia's media isolation to dumb down an entire society. Cultural programs from the United States and Europe have vanished, and violent action films dominate the video and cinema screens. The urbane and well-traveled Yugoslavian intellectuals who led Belgrade's public and cultural life before the war have disappeared from the screen, replaced by fanatics, mystics, and charlatans.

The intellectuals have been reduced to hoping—sometimes joking—that Milosevic's unstable personality will eventually do him in. His family history is certainly steeped in tragedy. His father, a professor of Russian at the Orthodox Theological Academy in Belgrade before World War II, later returned to Montenegro, where he is said to have lived as something of a recluse. In 1962, possibly despondent over the suicide of a student to whom he had given a low grade, he shot himself to death. Milosevic, then on a student trip to Russia, did not attend the funeral. Ten years later, his mother also took her own life; the death of her brother, also a suicide, may have been a cause.

Slobodan Milosevic was born on August 20, 1941, in the central Serbian town of Pozarevac. He comes from Montenegrin stock that traces its roots back to the storied 1389 Battle of Kosovo, in which the Ottoman Turks crushed the medieval Serbian Empire. In



At the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, Christian Serbs lost to invading Turks, leaving Serbia to endure centuries of Ottoman rule—and later to create an idea of national identity rooted in this “heartland” province.

school, Milosevic won the esteem of his teachers but had few friends among his peers. He attended the Law Faculty of the University of Belgrade, where he graduated in 1964 with a mediocre 8.9 (out of 10) average—in part the result of consistently low marks in the school’s required military training courses. His fellow university students remember him primarily for his buttoned-down seriousness and his enthusiasm for politics. He joined the Communist Party as soon as he turned 18 and quickly rose to become the head of the university’s student party organization. Milosevic had “a genius for party politics,” recollected Nebojsa Popov, his predecessor as student party head and now a prominent anti-Milosevic intellectual.

In the heady days of his rise to power, Milosevic promised the Serbs an “antibureaucratic revolution” that would, in some fashion he never quite explained, sweep

away the poverty, corruption, and pettiness that had steadily narrowed the horizons of life in post-Tito Yugoslavia. He also appealed to traditional Serb themes, glorifying heroic leaders of the past and evoking the spirit of unity against perceived outside enemies.

Yet there was an element of Milosevic’s appeal that defied rational analysis. Somehow, he made himself over into the symbol and voice of the Serb people. On October 4, 1988, for example, thousands of striking workers from the Belgrade industrial suburb of Rakovica marched to the square in front of the Yugoslavian assembly building, loudly booing a series of hapless Yugoslavian officials sent out to calm them. They wanted Milosevic. When he appeared, he led them, like a small-town revivalist, through a ritual of call and response, invoking a vision of prosperity, political reform, and an end to counterrevolution in Kosovo. At the end of his speech he paused dramatically. “And

now,” he said, “everyone to his task.” The crowd replied as one, “We believe.” Then they dispersed.

Milosevic’s role as a charismatic leader did not come easily to him. He is by nature a loner, and after things started to go wrong for him and Serbia he seldom spoke directly to the Serbian people. In the 12 years of his rule, Milosevic has never held a press conference. He prefers to surround himself with yes men, and he does not deal easily with criticism. During the late 1980s, as a U.S. embassy official, I accompanied a delegation of American religious leaders to a meeting with Milosevic, who waxed long and eloquent about how wrong the United States was to prop up Albania, which he said Washington intended to use as a kind of unsinkable aircraft carrier against Serbia. At the end of the meeting, I told Milosevic politely that his understanding of American policy was wrong. Clearly not used to hearing that kind of remark—at least in Serbo-Croatian—he stepped back almost as if he had been struck, a look of horror on his face. An aide quickly guided him away.

Milosevic’s only constant collaborator and colleague is his wife, Mirjana Markovic, whom he met in high school. (“Unlike most men in the Balkans, he has only slept with one woman in his life,” one analyst said.) She has played an important behind-the-scenes role from the beginning of her husband’s rise to power, and some Belgrade commentators believe that their relationship is a key to understanding both his past career and events in Serbia today.

Born in 1942 in a wartime guerrilla hideout, Markovic comes from one of Serbia’s leading Communist families. Her father, Moma Markovic, was a national hero, and her aunt, Davorjanka Paunovic, was Tito’s secretary and mistress. But Markovic has in common with her husband a background of family tragedy. During World War II, her mother, Vera Miletic, was arrested by the Germans and under torture

apparently betrayed a number of Partisan leaders. She was released, but disappeared in 1944, probably the victim of a Partisan firing squad. Many in Belgrade believe that Markovic’s orthodox Marxist views—she insists on being called “comrade” and has been the driving force behind two parties claiming to be successors to the League of Communists—stem from her mother’s unhappy history. Perhaps by demonstrating her own fierce devotion to the cause, this reasoning goes, she hopes at some level to establish her mother’s as well. Even in her youth, Markovic claimed an attachment to the ideal of pure communism. She refused to join her powerful father in Belgrade, and later recalled with disdain vacations on Tito’s luxurious island retreat of Brioni.

Like her husband, Markovic sometimes exhibits signs of instability. During the 1997 anti-Milosevic demonstrations in Belgrade she was reportedly hospitalized for deep depression. According to one account, she sometimes attacked her nurses, convinced they were plotting against her.

Markovic’s role in Serbian politics has been growing since the 1995 Dayton Agreement. The agreement left Milosevic, who had expected that the United States would reward him for gaining Bosnian Serb acceptance of the accord by lifting all sanctions against Serbia, feeling betrayed. Markovic heads a strange combination of retro-Marxists and war profiteers. Deeply anti-Western, they believe that Serbia’s future lies in a close alliance with a Russia that they are convinced will be reborn someday as a communist superpower. Last March, in a speech to several thousand Belgrade University students, Markovic expressly equated the United States with Hitler’s Third Reich. She said that the “small Serb nation”—which she reminded the students had long served as a beacon of tolerance—should prepare itself to stand up to the “biggest bully at the end of the 20th century.”

Warren Zimmermann, the last U.S. ambassador to Yugoslavia, once suggested, only partly in jest, that there are two Milosevics. Milosevic One is hard-line and belliger-

ent, while Milosevic Two is affable and always looking for reasonable solutions. Foreign negotiators have generally seen Milosevic Two, at least until recent events in Kosovo. He usually works without the aid of prepared notes, seldom turns to assistants for advice, and exhibits a sure memory for the details of complex negotiations. He can also display a real sense of humor. At Dayton, he once treated European negotiators to a wickedly clever series of impersonations of the various foreign mediators who had passed his way over the years.

On some occasions, however, the mask slips. In September 1995, while NATO was bombing the Bosnian Serbs, Carl Bildt, the United Nations' first high representative for Bosnia, found Milosevic so distracted that he seemed to be

on the verge of losing control. On the climactic day of the Dayton negotiations, when it appeared that the talks might collapse, Milosevic pleaded with the U.S. representatives for help; when the agreement was reached, some noticed tears in his eyes.

On May 27, the international tribunal at the Hague indicted Milosevic for war crimes committed by Serbian forces in Kosovo. No one who understands the way Serbia operates could question Milosevic's responsibility for major decisions in all the Yugoslavian wars. On August 8, 1991, for example, he demanded that the army begin a "definitive showdown" with the Croats. Shortly thereafter, the infamous siege of Vukovar began.

Milosevic was also closely connected with military operations in Bosnia. In December 1991, several months before war broke out in that former Yugoslavian republic, he ordered that army units there be staffed only with Bosnian Serbs, making it more difficult for outsiders to demand that former Yugoslavian forces be withdrawn from Bosnia once it achieved international recognition. Just three months later, Serbian paramilitary forces, with the backing of Bosnian Serb military forces, began a brutal campaign of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. These paramilitary forces were organized with the consent of Milosevic's



Leaving Kosovo, April 1999

secret police and armed, commanded, and controlled by its officers. Serbian deputy prime minister Vojislav Seslj has said publicly that his notorious paramilitary group received instructions from Milosevic during its ethnic cleansing operations in Bosnia. In Croatia, the record is just as clear. Milosevic was asked in a 1993 meeting with Croatian political figure Hrvoje Sarinic whether he controlled indicted war criminal Zeljko Raznjatovic (a.k.a. Arkan), whose notorious "Tigers" committed wholesale murder, rape, and theft in the ethnic cleansing of Croatia and Bosnia during the early 1990s (and were also active in Kosovo). Milosevic replied with a laugh, "Someone has to carry out part of the business for me too."

Under Milosevic, Serbia has become an international pariah state, joining the likes of Saddam Hussein's Iraq and Kim Jong Il's North Korea. Like Saddam, Milosevic faces a hostile international coalition that he cannot hope to defeat. His response, like Saddam's, was to hunker down, eliminating potential internal challengers and hoping that divisions within the ranks of his international opponents would eventually offer him the opportunity to cut a deal.

Like Mr. Micawber, Milosevic is always hoping that something will turn up. And now that it has—in the form of the June international accord that leaves him in power and with a seat at the negotiating table—he is reverting to form. Throughout his career, whenever Milosevic has appeared to be losing in one game, he has folded and immediately reopened play in another. Trying to divert attention from yet another tragic failure, Milosevic immediately began seeking to persuade the Serbian people that he is the man to lead the country's postwar reconstruction.

Milosevic's war crimes indictment, however, fundamentally alters the equation. Unable to seek sanctuary outside the country and condemning Serbia to

poverty and isolation as long as he remains in power, Milosevic is running out of room to maneuver. The June 9 agreement's requirement that almost all Serbian forces leave Kosovo will eventually make it clear that Belgrade has lost control over what Milosevic once called "the heart of Serbia." Resentment will continue to simmer in the Serbian military. It is convinced that it was not militarily defeated in Kosovo. Montenegro, Serbia's partner, remains a defiant center of independence. And the fractured Serb opposition is likely to take advantage of the end of the war to make another effort at achieving the unity necessary for a credible electoral challenge to Milosevic. The Serb Orthodox church has called for his removal from office. But Milosevic has been on the ropes before and always managed to slip away. With his almost endless capacity for mischief he could react by provoking a new crisis in the region—perhaps in Vojvodina or Montenegro—or by launching a new crackdown on the opposition. Or he could schedule a snap election, which he would hope to win through his well tested tactics of manipulating the news media and exploiting Serb patriotism.

As long as Milosevic remains in power there can be no stability in Serbia or in the Balkans. During the 12 years of his rule, however, he has chipped away at all the underpinnings of a peaceful transition. It is far from certain, moreover, that any successor installed by a military coup or a violent popular upheaval would be a committed democrat. For the West—which in Serbia, as in Iraq, chose not to pursue its military campaign to the point of removing the offending dictator—the prospect is for more vigilance, more patience. The Serbian people must understand that as long as Milosevic remains in power, they will be denied all but humanitarian assistance. They must also be assured that once he has left the scene, any progress toward democracy and peace will be promptly and fully rewarded.

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RECONSTRUCTING AMERICA'S MORAL ORDER

On the eve of the millennium, many Americans have arrived at an unexpected conclusion: the culture wars are over, and a country that was convulsed in the 1960s is consolidating around the core values of personal responsibility, individual dignity, freedom, and greater family stability. Across the political spectrum, commentators herald signs of basic social and moral rejuvenation. Globally, the triumph of liberal democracy and market economies has inspired optimistic assessments of humankind's fate. Are universal forces of inevitable progress at work? That seemingly old-fashioned question has returned, and prompted some provocative answers.



Over 2000 Bald Eagles (1996), by Andras J. Balint

32 *Francis Fukuyama charts the course of cultural renewal*

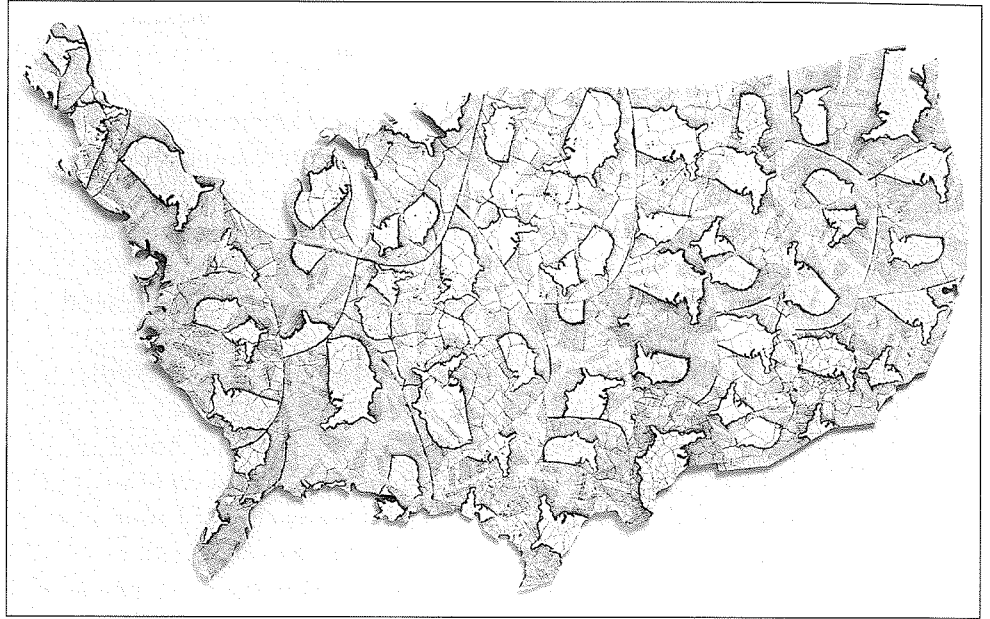
45 *Paul Berman critiques the new philosophers of universal progress*

How to Re-Moralize America

by Francis Fukuyama

In 1994, William J. Bennett published a book called *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*, which brought together a variety of statistics about American social trends. Between the mid-1960s and the early 1990s, Bennett showed, there was a shocking deterioration of America's social health. By the 1990s, one American child out of three was being born to an unmarried mother, nearly a third of African American men between the ages of 20 and 29 were involved in some way with the criminal justice system, and scores on standardized tests of educational achievement had dropped America to the bottom of the pack among industrialized countries. While we were materially richer than at any time in history, Bennett argued, we were becoming morally poorer at an alarming rate.

In the brief period since Bennett's *Index* appeared, we have experienced what seems to be a remarkable turnaround. Crime, including violent crimes and those against property, has decreased by more than 15 percent nationally; the murder rate in New York City has declined to levels not seen since the mid-1960s. Divorce rates, which had already begun a downward trend in the 1980s, continue on that path. Starting in 1995, the illegitimacy rate ceased its upward climb and began to decline slightly. The teenage pregnancy rate dropped eight percent between 1991 and 1996; among black teenagers, it fell 21 percent. Welfare caseloads have dropped by as much as a quarter nationally, and states at the forefront of welfare reform, such as Wisconsin, have seen astonishing reductions of up to 75 percent. Americans' general level of trust in their institutions and in one another, though difficult to gauge, has risen. In 1991, for example, only 15 to 20 percent of Americans said they trusted the federal government to do the right thing most of the time; by the



Cracktal Composition II (1993), by Herlinde Spahr

end of the decade that percentage had rebounded to between 25 and 30 percent.

What are we to make of these improvements? Are Americans at century's end being blessed not only with a booming stock market and a near full-employment economy but a restoration of cultural health as well? Many conservatives, notably social scientist Charles Murray and historian Gertrude Himmelfarb, don't think so. The changes, they argue, are too shallow and recent; they may be the product of more jails and stiffer sentencing rather than any true improvement in moral behavior. One conservative activist, Paul Weyrich of the Free Congress Foundation, was thrown into such despair last summer by the public's refusal to repudiate President Bill Clinton despite a sex scandal and impeachment proceedings that he publicly declared that Americans have never been more degenerate than they are today.

But conservatives are wrong to dismiss the good news contained in the social statistics. In fact, there has been a shift back to more traditional social values, and they should take credit for helping to bring it about. It would be a mistake to become complacent, or to think that our social and cultural problems are now behind us. But there is good reason to think that American society is undergoing a degree of moral regeneration. There is still a great deal of confusion over the sources of moral decline, however, and over the nature of moral renewal. Liberals need to confront the reality of moral decline and the importance of socially beneficial, less self-centered values. Conservatives have to be realistic and recognize that many of the developments they dislike in contemporary society are driven by eco-

conomic and technological change—change brought about by the same dynamic capitalist economy they so often celebrate.

Moral decline is not a myth or a figment of the nostalgic imagination. Perhaps the most important conservative achievement over the past couple of decades was to convince the rest of American society that these changes had occurred, that they reflected a disturbing shift in values, and that consequently not every social problem could be addressed by creating a new federal program and throwing money at it.

This reconception of social problems began with two large government-funded studies published in the mid-1960s: Daniel Patrick Moynihan's report, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (1965), and James Coleman's *Equality of Educational Opportunity* (1966). Moynihan, then working for the U.S. Department of Labor, argued that family structure, and in particular the absence of fathers in many African American homes, was directly related to the incidence of crime, teenage pregnancy, low educational achievement, and other social pathologies. Coleman's study showed that student educational achievement was most strongly affected not by the tools of public policy, such as teacher salaries and classroom size, but by the environment a child's family and peers create. In the absence of a culture that emphasizes self-discipline, work, education, and other middle-class values, Coleman showed, public policy can achieve relatively little.

Once published, the Moynihan report was violently attacked. Moynihan was accused of "blaming the victim" and seeking to impose white values on a community that had different but not necessarily inferior cultural norms. Liberals at first denied the reality of massive changes in family structure, and then fell back on the argument that single-parent households are no worse from the standpoint of child welfare than traditional ones—the kind of argument Moynihan was later to label "defining deviancy down." By the early 1990s, however, conservatives had largely won the argument. In 1994, the publication of Sara McLanahan and Gary Sandefur's book *Growing Up with a Single Parent* (1994) made the social science community's shift more or less official. The two well-respected sociologists found that a generation's worth of empirical research supported Moynihan's basic conclusion: growing up in a single-parent family is correlated with a life of poverty and a host of other social ills.

Few Americans understand that they were not alone in experiencing these changes. All of the industrialized countries outside Asia experienced a massive increase in social disorder between the 1960s and '90s—a phenom-

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enon that I have called the Great Disruption of Western social values. Indeed, by the 1990s Sweden, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand all had higher rates of property crime than the United States. More than half of all Scandinavian children are born to unmarried mothers, compared with one-third of American children. In Sweden, so few people bother to get married that the institution itself probably is in long-term decline.

While conservatives won their case that values had changed for the worse, they were on shakier ground in their interpretation of why this shift had occurred. There were two broad lines of argument. The first, advanced by Charles Murray in his landmark book *Losing Ground* (1984), argued that family breakdown, crime, and other social pathologies were ultimately the result of mistaken government policies. Chief among them was Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), which in effect subsidized illegitimacy by paying welfare benefits only to single mothers. But there were other causes, such as new court-imposed constraints on police departments won by civil libertarians. In this interpretation, any improvement in social indicators today must be the result of the unwinding of earlier social policies through measures such as the 1996 welfare reform bill.

The second conservative line of argument held that moral decline was the result of a broad cultural shift. Former federal judge Robert Bork, for example, blamed the 1960s counterculture for undermining traditional values and setting the young at war with authority. Others, such as philosopher John Gray, reached further back in time. They revived the arguments of Edmund Burke and Joseph de Maistre, tracing moral decay to an Enlightenment commitment to replacing tradition and religion with reason and secular humanism.

While there is more than a germ of truth in each of these interpretations, neither is adequate to explain the shift in values that occurred during the Great Disruption. Detailed econometric studies seeking to link AFDC to illegitimacy have shown that although there is some causal connection, the relationship is not terribly strong. More important, illegitimacy is only part of a much broader story of family breakdown that includes divorce, cohabitation in place of marriage, declining fertility, and the separation of cohabiting couples. These ills cut across the socioeconomic spectrum and can hardly be blamed on a federal poverty program.

The second line of argument, which sees moral breakdown as a consequence of a broad cultural shift, is not so much wrong as inadequate. No one who has lived through the last several decades can deny that there has been a huge shift in social values, a shift whose major theme has been the rise of individualism at the expense of communal sources of authority, from the family and neighborhood to churches, labor unions, companies, and the government. The problem with this kind of broad cultural explanation is that it cannot explain timing. Secular humanism, for example, has been in the works for the past four or five hundred years. Why all of a sudden in the last quarter of the 20th century has it produced social chaos?

The key to the timing of the Great Disruption, I believe, is to be found

elsewhere, in changes that occurred in the economy and in technology. The most important social values that were shaken by the Great Disruption are those having to do with sex, reproduction, and the family. The reason the disruption happened when and where it did can be traced to two broad technological changes that began in the 1960s. One is the advent of birth control. The other is the shift from industrial to information-based economies and from physical to mental labor.

The nuclear family of the 1950s was based on a bargain that traded the husband's income for the wife's fertility: he worked, she stayed home to raise the family. With the economy's shift from manufacturing to services (or from brawn to brains), new opportunities arose for women. Women began entering the paid labor force in greater numbers throughout the West in the 1960s, which undid the old arrangement. Even as it liberated women from complete dependence on their husbands, it freed many men from responsibility for their families. Not surprisingly, women's participation in the labor force correlates strongly with divorce and family breakdown throughout the industrialized world.

The Pill reinforced this trend by shifting the burden of responsibility for the consequences of sex to women. No longer did men need to worry greatly if their adventures led to pregnancy. One sign of this change was found by economists Janet Yellen, George Akerlof, and Michael Katz. Between the 1960s and '90s, the number of brides who were pregnant at the altar declined significantly. The shotgun wedding, that ultimate symbol of male accountability, is increasingly a thing of the past.

Humans share a fundamental trait with other animal species: males are less selective in their choice of sexual partners than females, and less attached to their children. In humans, the role that fathers play in the care and nurture of their children tends to be socially constructed to a significant degree, shaped by a host of formal and informal controls that link men to their families. Human fatherhood is therefore more readily subject to disruption. The sexual revolution and the new economic and cultural independence of women provided that disruption. The perfectly reasonable desire of women to increase their autonomy became, for men, an excuse to indulge themselves. The vastly increased willingness of men to leave behind partners and children constitutes perhaps the single greatest change in moral values during the Great Disruption. It lies at the core of many of the period's social pathologies.

What are the chances of a moral renewal? What are its potential sources? Renewal must be possible. While conservatives may be right that moral decline occurred over the past generation, they cannot be right that it occurs in every generation. Unless we posit that all of human history has been a degeneration from some primordial golden age, periods of moral decline must be punctuated by periods of moral improvement.

Such cycles have occurred before. In both Britain and the United States, the period from the end of the 18th century until approximately the



Edith and Rudy (1957), by Alex Katz

middle of the 19th century saw sharply increasing levels of social disorder. Crime rates in virtually all major cities increased. Illegitimacy rates rose, families dissolved, and social isolation increased. The rate of alcohol consumption, particularly in the United States, exploded. But then, from the middle of the century until its end, virtually all of these social indicators reversed direction. Crime rates fell. Families stabilized, and drunkards went on the wagon. New voluntary associations—from temperance and abolitionist societies to Sunday schools—gave people a fresh sense of communal belonging.

The possibility of re-moralization poses some large questions: Where do moral values come from, and what, in particular, are the sources of moral values in a postindustrial society? This is a subject that, strangely, has not received much attention. People have strong opinions about what moral values ought to be and where they ought to come from. If you are on the left, you are likely to believe in social equality guaranteed by a welfare state. If you are a cultural conservative, you may favor the authority of tradition and religion. But how values actually are formed in contemporary societies receives little empirical study. Most people would say that values are either passed along from previous generations through socialization (which fails to explain how change occurs) or are imposed by a church or other hierarchical authority. With the exception of a few discredited theories, sociologists and cultural anthropologists haven't had much to contribute. They have had much more success in describing value systems than in explaining their genesis.

Into this breach in the social sciences have stepped the economists, who have hardly been shy in recent years about applying their formidable methodological tools to matters beyond their usual realm.

Economists tend to be opponents of hierarchy and proponents of bargaining—individuals, they say, act rationally on their own to achieve socially productive ends. This describes the market. But Friedrich A. Hayek (among others) suggested that moral rules—part of what he called the “extended order of human cooperation”—might also be the product of a similar decentralized evolutionary bargaining process.

Take the virtues of honesty and reliability, which are key to social cooperation and that intangible compound of mutual trust and engagement called “social capital.” Many people have argued that such virtues have religious sources, and that contemporary capitalist societies are living off the cultural capital of previous ages—in America, chiefly its Puritan traditions. Modern capitalism, in this view, with its amoral emphasis on profits and efficiency, is steadily undermining its own moral basis.

Such an interpretation, while superficially plausible, is completely wrong. A decentralized group of individuals who have to deal with one another repeatedly will tend as a matter of self-interest to evolve norms of honesty and reliability. That is, reputation, whether for honesty or fair dealing or product quality, is an asset that self-interested individuals will seek to acquire. While religion may encourage them, a hierarchical source of rules is not necessary. Given the right background conditions—especially the need for repeated dealings with a particular group of people—order and rules will tend to emerge spontaneously from the ground up.

The study of how order emerges spontaneously from the interaction of individual agents is one of the most interesting and important intellectual developments of the late 20th century. One reason it is interesting is that the study is not limited to economists and other social scientists. Scientists since Charles Darwin have concluded that the high degree of order in the biological world was not the creation of God or some other creator but rather emerged out of the interaction of simpler units. The elaborate mounds of some species of African termites, taller than a human being and equipped with their own heating and air conditioning systems, were not designed by anyone, much less by the neurologically simple creatures that built them. And so on, throughout the natural world, order is created by the blind, irrational process of evolution and natural selection. (In the 1980s, the now famous Santa Fe Institute was created to support studies of just this type of phenomenon, so-called complex adaptive systems, in a wide variety of fields.)

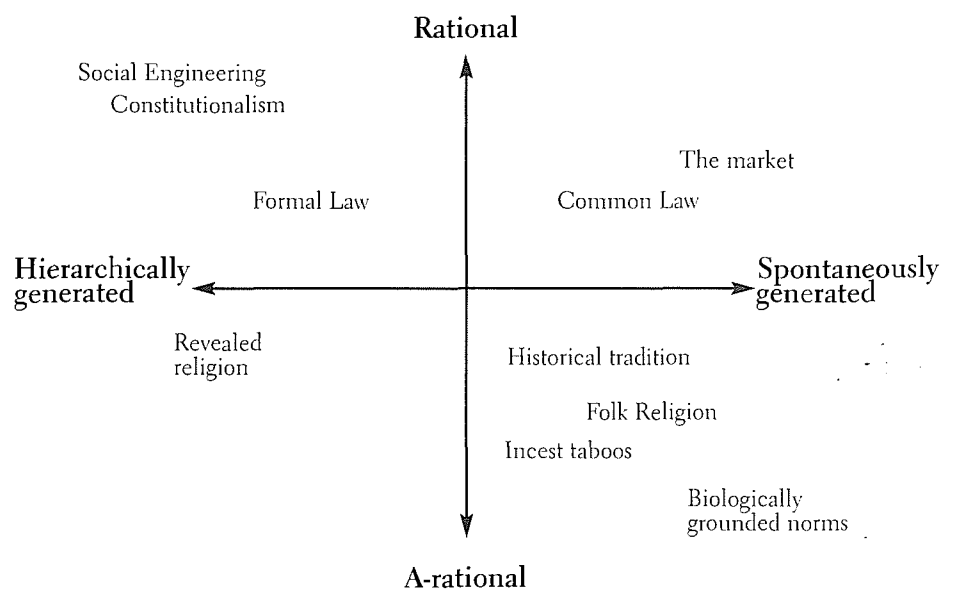
Indeed, there is a good deal more social order in the world than even the economists’ theories would suggest. Economists frequently express surprise at the extent to which supposedly self-interested, rational individuals do seemingly selfless things: vote, contribute to charities, give their loyalty to employers. People do these things because the ability to solve repeated dilemmas of social cooperation is genetically coded into the human brain, put there by an evolutionary process that rewarded those individuals best able to generate social rules for themselves.

Human beings have innate capabilities that make them gravitate toward and reward cooperators who play by the community's rules, and to ostracize and isolate opportunists who violate them. When we say that human beings are social creatures by nature, we mean not that they are cooperative angels with unlimited resources for altruism but that they have built-in capabilities for perceiving the moral qualities of their fellow humans. What James Q. Wilson calls the "moral sense" is put there by nature, and will operate in the absence of either a lawgiver or a prophet.

If we accept the fact that norms have spontaneous as well as hierarchical sources, we can place them along a continuum that extends from hierarchical and centralized types of authority at one end to the completely decentralized and spontaneous interactions of individuals at the other. But there is a second dimension. Norms and moral rules can be the product of rational bargaining and negotiation, or they can be socially inherited or otherwise a-rational in origin.

In order to clarify the origins of re-moralization, I have constructed a matrix (below) that organizes these alternatives along two axes. Different types of moral rules fall into different quadrants. Formal laws handed down by governments belong in the rational/hierarchical quadrant; common law and spontaneously generated rules concerning, say, honesty in market relations, fall in the rational/spontaneous quadrant. Because, according to most recent research, incest taboos have biological origins, they are a spontaneous, a-rational norm. Revealed

The Universe of Norms



religion—Moses bringing the Ten Commandments down from Mount Sinai, for example—occupies the a-rational hierarchical quadrant. But folk religions—a cult of rock worshipers, for example—may be a species of spontaneous, a-rational order.

This taxonomy gives us a basis for at least beginning a discussion of where norms in a postindustrial society come from. Economists, following their rational, nonhierarchical bent, have been busy populating the upper-right quadrant with examples of spontaneously generated rules. A case in point is the database of more than 5,000 cases of so-called common pool resource problems compiled by Elinor Ostrom. Such problems confront communities with the need to determine rules for sharing common resources such as fisheries or pastureland. Contrary to the expectation that the self-interest of each individual will lead to the depletion of the resources—the famous “tragedy of the commons”—Ostrom finds many cases in which communities were able to spontaneously generate fair rules for sharing that avoided that result.

Max Weber, the founder of modern sociology, argued that as societies modernize, the two rational quadrants, and particularly the hierarchical quadrant, tend to play a strong role in the creation of norms. Rational bureaucracy was, for him, the essence of modernity. In postindustrial societies, however, all four quadrants continue to serve as important sources of norms. Modern corporations, for example, have discovered that they cannot organize complex activities and highly skilled workers in a centralized, formal, top-down system of bureaucratic rules. The trend in management is to reduce formal bureaucracy in favor of informal norms that link a variety of firms and individuals in networks.

We now have a framework in which to discuss how the socially corrosive effects of the Great Disruption are being overcome, and what continuing possibilities for change there might be. In the quest for the source of authoritative new rules, one starting point is the rational-hierarchical quadrant, which is the sphere of public policy. Crime rates are down across the United States today in no small measure because government is embracing better policies, such as community policing, and spending more on law enforcement, prisons, and punishment.* But the fact that tougher policies have brought crime rates down would not be regarded by most people as evidence of moral renewal. We want people to behave better not

*A highly salient issue often is not what the government does, but what it refrains from doing, since an overly large and centralized state can rob individuals and communities of initiative and keep them from setting norms for themselves. During the 1960s and '70s, the American court system decriminalized many forms of petty deviance such as panhandling and public drunkenness. By limiting the ability of urban middle-class neighborhoods to set norms for social behavior, the state indirectly encouraged suburban flight and the retreat of the middle class into gated communities. To the extent that these kinds of policies can be limited or reversed, social order will increase.

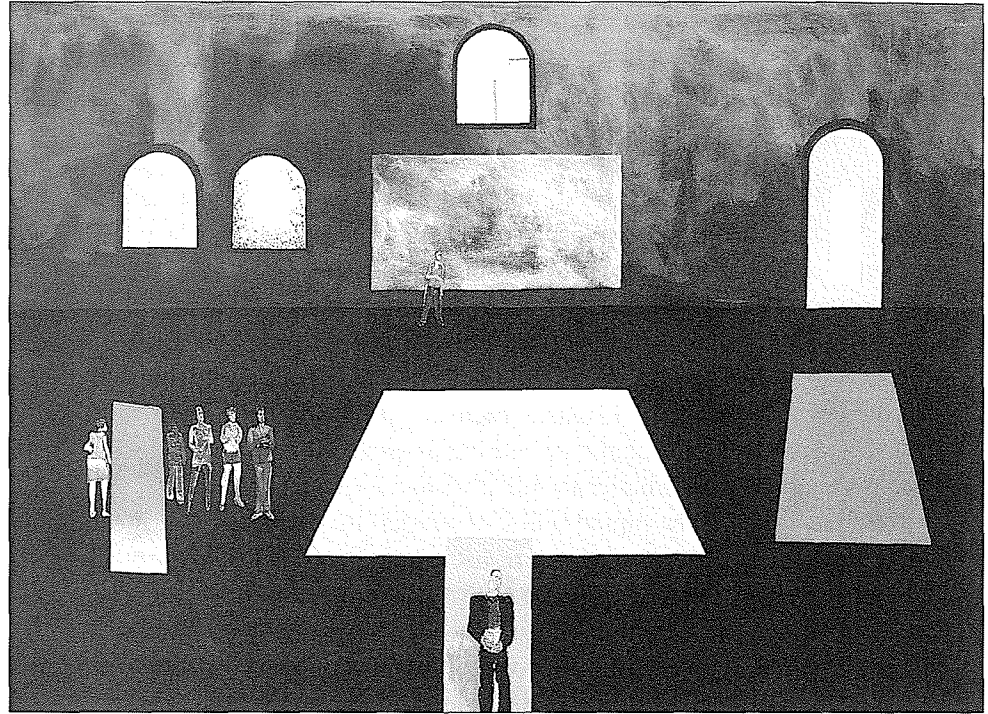
because of a crackdown but because they have internalized certain standards. The question then becomes, Which of the three remaining quadrants can be the source of moral behavior?

Many cultural conservatives believe that religion is the *sine qua non* of moral values, and they blame the Great Disruption on a loss of religious values. Religion played a powerful role in the Victorian upsurge during the second half of the 19th century, they note, and, therefore, any reversal of the Great Disruption must likewise depend on a religious revival. In this view, the cultural conservatives are supported (in a way) by Friedrich Nietzsche, who once denounced the English “flathead” John Stuart Mill for believing that one could have something approximating Christian values in the absence of a belief in the Christian God.

Nietzsche famously argued that God was on his deathbed and incapable, in Europe at least, of being resuscitated. There could be new religions, but they would be pagan ones that would provoke “immense wars” in the future. Religious conservatives can reply that, as an empirical matter, God is not dead anywhere but in Europe itself. A generation or two ago, social scientists generally believed that secularization was the inevitable byproduct of modernization, but in the United States and many other advanced societies, religion does not seem to be in danger of dying out.

Some religious conservatives hope, and many liberals fear, that the problem of moral decline will be resolved by a large-scale return to religious orthodoxy—a transformation as sudden as the one Ayatollah Khomeini wrought 20 years ago by returning to Iran on a jetliner. For a variety of reasons, this seems unlikely. Modern societies are so culturally diverse that it is not clear whose version of orthodoxy would prevail. Any true form of orthodoxy is likely to be seen as a threat to important groups and hence would neither get very far nor serve as a basis for widening the radius of trust. Instead of integrating society, a conservative religious revival might only increase social discord and fragmentation.

It is not clear, moreover, that the re-moralization of society need rely on the hierarchical authority of revealed religion. Against Nietzsche’s view that moral behavior inevitably rests on dogmatic belief, we might counterpose Adam Smith, the Enlightenment philosopher with perhaps the most realistic and highly developed theory of moral action. Harking back to a kind of Aristotelian naturalism, Smith argued that human beings are social and moral creatures by nature, capable of being led to moral behavior both by their natural passions and by their reason. The Enlightenment has been justly criticized for its overemphasis on human reason. But reason does not have to take the form of a bureaucratic state seeking to engineer social outcomes through the wholesale rearrangement of society. It can also take the form of rational individuals interacting with one another to create workable moral rules, or, in Smith’s language, being led from a narrowly selfish view of their interests to the view



From the Upper Room (1998), by James Brantley

of an “impartial spectator” exercising reasoned moral judgment.

Religious conservatives, in other words, underestimate the innate ability of human beings to evolve reasonable moral rules for themselves. Western societies underwent an enormous shock during the mid-20th century, and it is not surprising that it has taken a long time to adjust. The process of reaching a rational set of norms is not easy or automatic. During the Great Disruption, for example, large numbers of men and women began to behave in ways that ended up hurting the interests of children. Men abandoned families, women conceived children out of wedlock, and couples divorced for what were often superficial and self-indulgent reasons. But parents also have a strong interest in the well-being of their children. If it can be demonstrated to them that their behavior is seriously injuring the life chances of their offspring, they are likely to react rationally and want to alter that behavior in ways that help their children.

During the Great Disruption, there were many intellectual and cultural currents at work obscuring from people the consequences of their personal behavior for people close to them. They were told by social scientists that growing up in a single-parent family was no worse than growing up in an intact one, reassured by family therapists that children were better off if the parents divorced, and bombarded by images from the popular culture that glamorized sex. Changing these perceptions requires discussion, argument, even “culture wars.” And we have had them. Today Barbara Dafoe Whitehead’s controversial 1993 assertion

that “Dan Quayle was right” about the importance of families no longer seems radical.

What would the re-moralization of society look like? In some of its manifestations, it would represent a continuation of trends that have already occurred in the 1990s, such as the return of middle-class people from their gated suburban communities to downtown areas, where a renewed sense of order and civility once again makes them feel secure enough to live and work. It would show up in increasing levels of participation in civil associations and political engagement. And it would be manifest in more civil behavior on college campuses, where a greater emphasis on academics and more carefully codified rules of behavior are already apparent.

The kinds of changes we can expect in norms concerning sex, reproduction, and family life are likely to be more modest. Conservatives need to be realistic in understanding how thoroughly the moral and social landscapes have been altered by powerful technological and economic forces. Strict Victorian rules concerning sex are very unlikely to return. Unless someone can figure out a way to un-invent birth control, or move women out of the labor force, the nuclear family of the 1950s is not likely to be reconstituted in anything like its original form.

Yet the social role of fathers has proved very plastic from society to society and over time, and it is not unreasonable to think that the commitment of men to their families can be substantially strengthened. This was the message of two of the largest demonstrations in Washington during the 1990s, the Nation of Islam’s Million Man March and the Promise Keepers’ rally. People were rightly suspicious of the two sponsors, but the same message about male responsibility can and should be preached by more mainstream groups.

There is also evidence that we are moving into a “postfeminist” age that will be friendlier to families and children. Feminism denigrated the work of raising children in favor of women’s paid labor—an attitude epitomized by Hillary Clinton’s dismissive response to questions about her Arkansas legal career that she could have just “stayed home and baked cookies.” Many women are indeed now working—not as lawyers or policymakers but as waitresses and checkers at Wal-Mart, away from the children they are struggling to raise on their own after being abandoned by husbands or boyfriends. Many women like these might choose to stay at home with their children during their early years if the culture told them it was okay, and if they had the financial means to do so. I see anecdotal evidence all around me that the well-to-do are already making this choice. This does not represent a return of the housewife ideal of the 1950s, just a more sensible balancing of work and family.

Women might find it more palatable to make work and career sacrifices for the sake of children if men made similar sacrifices. The postin-

dustrial economy, by undermining the notion of lifetime employment and steady movement up a career ladder for men, may be abetting just such a social change. In the industrial era, technology encouraged the separation of a male-dominated workplace from a female-dominated home; the information age may reintegrate the two.

Religion may serve a purpose in reestablishing norms, even without a sudden return to religious orthodoxy. Religion is frequently not so much the product of dogmatic belief as it is the provider of a convenient language that allows communities to express moral beliefs that they would hold on entirely secular grounds. A young woman I know does not want to have sex until she is married. She tells her suitors that she follows this rule out of religious conviction, not so much because she is a believer but because this is more convincing to them than a utilitarian explanation. In countless ways, modern, educated, skeptical people are drawn to religion because it offers them community, ritual, and support for values they otherwise hold. Religion in this sense is a form of a-rational, spontaneous order rather than a hierarchical alternative to it.

Re-moralizing a complex, diverse society such as the United States is not without pitfalls. If a return to broad orthodoxy is unlikely, re-moralization for many will mean dropping out of mainstream society—for example, by home-schooling one's children, withdrawing into an ethnic neighborhood or enclave, or creating one's own limited patch of social order. In his science fiction novel *The Diamond Age*, Neal Stephenson envisions a future world in which a group of computer programmers, realizing the importance of moral values for economic success, create a small community called New Atlantis. There they resurrect Victorian social values, complete with top hats and sexual prudery. The "Vickies" of New Atlantis do well for themselves but have nothing to say to the poor, disorganized communities that surround them. Re-moralization may thus go hand in hand with a sort of miniaturization of community, as it has in American civil society over the past generation. Conversely, if these small communities remain reasonably tolerant and open, they may light the way to a broader moral revival, just as Granges, Boy Scout troops, immigrant ethnic associations, and the other myriad small communities of the late 19th century did.

The reconstruction of values that has started in the 1990s, and any renorming of society that may happen in the future, has and will be the product of political, religious, self-organized, and natural norm building. The state is neither the source of all our troubles nor the instrument by which we can solve them. But its actions can both deplete and restore social capital in ways large and small. We have not become so modern and secularized that we can do without religion. But we are also not so bereft of innate moral resources that we need to wait for a messiah to save us. And nature, which we are constantly trying to evict with a pitchfork, always keeps running back.

Reimagining Destiny

by Paul Berman

Is mankind governed by a vast, hidden system of natural imperatives? Are the natural imperatives gradually leading the world out of the darkness of ignorance and oppression and into the golden light of freedom, individual dignity, and prosperity? Is there a single destiny for mankind, and is progress its inner meaning? And is there something to be said on behalf of the many extravagant 19th-century thinkers who responded to those questions with a series of grandly elaborated answers that added up to “yes”?

It goes without saying that, in our present chastened era, most people are bound to think back on some main experiences of recent generations, and to roll their eyes in disbelief at those questions. Perhaps the most influential and thorough of the English-language arguments against the 19th-century notion of mankind having any kind of single destiny has been Karl Popper's *Open Society and Its Enemies*—a withering attack, in two volumes, no less, on the philosophers of destiny and universal progress from Plato to Georg Friedrich Hegel. And the single most dramatic and convincing word anywhere in those two volumes, the bleakest word of all, was surely the simple date “1943,” posted at the end of Popper's preface, marking the moment when he finished his manuscript and put down his pen. For in 1943 the world was at war, and on one side were Fascists and Nazis who drew on racist and nationalist versions of the Hegelian argument for a universal destiny of mankind; and on the other side, allied with the liberal democracies, were the Soviet Union and communists around the world, who drew on a left-wing version of the same Hegelian argument. It was obvious that nothing threatens freedom more surely than people who believe that freedom is destiny.

But that was then. In the last 20 years or so, and especially in the last 10, the world has undergone a set of very different experiences, good and bad, which are bound to cast a newer light on the old questions about universal destiny. It has become obvious that, all over the world in our present age, only one kind of economic system is capable of pro-

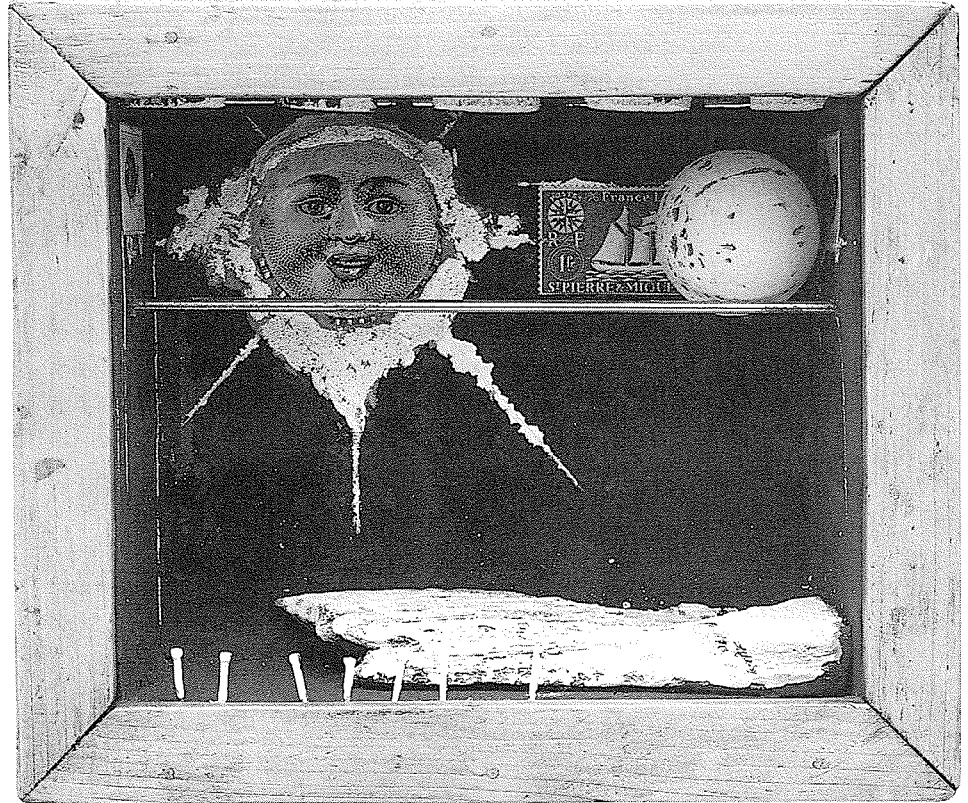
ducing significant wealth—the system of regulated markets. It has become obvious that regulated markets can prosper not just in northern Europe and North America, as many a thoughtful person had once imagined, but as far afield as East Asia—which is to say, everywhere (even if, right now, East Asia's market regulations turn out to have been less than regulatory).

It has become obvious that only one kind of political system, the system of liberal democracy, is capable in our present age of producing governments of great power and stability, and of inspiring imitation all over the world, as every continent can attest. The nonliberal rulers around the world—the stern Confucian authoritarians, the raving Caribbean communists, the mad nationalist demagogues, the flat-out dictators, the bearded theocrats, and the smooth-talking pseudodemocratic kleptocrats—may well be capable of lingering on forever in their sundry unprosperous homes. Somewhere on earth it will always be 1943. But none of those other systems appear capable of generating anything stable or reliable, and none appear capable of becoming anything more than a local misfortune—not any longer, anyway.

In the last decade or so, it has begun to seem obvious that all modern liberal societies tend to produce some of the same results, naturally in different degrees in every country. For all over the liberal democratic world today, at least in the older democracies, there are signs of a greater individual freedom than in the past, of an expansion of women's rights, of more flexible concepts of family life, and of an increased tolerance (on balance) of ethnic and religious differences. These are traits that point in the direction of greater freedom and individual dignity, though you could certainly worry about the side effects, too. And in the context of these several large developments around the world, doesn't it seem likely that, in one form or another, the grandiose, old, discredited philosophical questions from the 19th century are going to press themselves upon us anew, and we are once again going to find ourselves talking about the universal quality of mankind and the forces of inevitable progress? It seems more than likely, actually. It has already happened.

In the 19th century, the proponents of notions of universal progress came in several varieties. To mention three: There were the philosophical system builders such as Hegel and Auguste Comte, who worked up enormous theories of history and politics. There were the journalistic non-system builders, the describers, such as Alexis de Tocqueville, who recorded the rise of a new democratic civilization, and left the argument for universal inevitability to be quietly inferred (though Tocqueville, in the preface to his book about America, was careful to invoke "providence," meaning a destiny beyond human control, as ulti-

> PAUL BERMAN is the author of *A Tale of Two Utopias: The Political Journey of the Generation of 1968* (1996). Beginning in the fall, he will be a Fellow of the New York Public Library's Center for Scholars & Writers. Copyright © 1999 by Paul Berman.



L'Humeur Vagabonde (c. late 1950s), by Joseph Cornell

mately responsible for democracy's growth). There were the scientific-minded observers who, agog at Charles Darwin's insights, invoked evolutionary theory to explain and predict the upward spiral of human history. And today we have begun to see each of those three 19th-century arguments making its way back into general discussion.

We have had theorists of world history such as David Fromkin, the author of *The Way of the World* (1999), with his notion of crucial stages in world history leading to the coming era of even greater American dominance. We have had theorists of democracy and its dialectical progress around the world (*dialectical* meaning, in this case, two steps forward, one step back), such as Samuel P. Huntington in his book from 1991, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*—though it's true that Huntington, in his book from 1996, *The Clash of Civilizations*, argued in the opposite direction, *against* any notion of a true universality of humankind (just to show that these resurrected 19th-century doctrines remain a little shaky). We have had Tocquevillian students of modern culture, such as Marcel Gauchet and Gilles Lipovetsy in France, who have analyzed the relentless advance of individualism in a democratic society. We have

had journalists such as Thomas L. Friedman, whose new book, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, celebrates the global economy as not just progressive but inevitably so. (He compares it to the dawn.) And we have had a series of neo-social Darwinists or sociobiologists, notably



Hegel

Edward O. Wilson, the author of *Consilience* (1998), who stress the biological imperatives underlying social and cultural evolution.

But among the several writers who have gone about reviving the old theories, no one has done it with greater flair or with more of the grand old tone than Francis Fukuyama. And no one else has managed to invoke all three grand 19th-century impulses that I have just cited—the Hegelian, the Tocquevillian, and the Darwinian.

Fukuyama's accomplishment, as I judge it, has been to lay out a large and appealingly ambiguous idea in his first book, *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), and then to offer, in his next two books, a number of useful and sometimes fascinating (and frustrating) clarifications of that large and ambiguous idea. The argument in *The End of History* took the Hegelian idea of universal progress through history, gave that idea more of a democratic twist than Hegel would have liked, and specified that history's final end, the ultimate stage of universal progress, is the triumph of liberal democracy around the world—the triumph that has now become visible, with the collapse of liberal democracy's last remaining worldwide competitor, communism, and the failure of the remaining right-wing dictatorships to find any sort of philosophical basis for uniting among themselves or for offering any competition to the liberal democratic idea. The ambiguity was Fukuyama's worry that life at the End of History, after liberal democracy's triumph, was going to be mediocre and undignified. The argument, especially its cheerful half about liberal triumphs around the world, inspired all kinds of misinterpretations and confusions among Fukuyama's readers, and one of those misinterpretations, a main one, was to regard the entire argument as a gussied-up cry of victory for American nationalism—a swaggering boast that America was henceforth going to rule the world, and the End of History and American victory were the same.

Some people have, in fact, offered variations on that claim. Fromkin's *Way of the World* proposes a relatively mild-mannered version. Friedman's *Lexus and the Olive Tree* is written in a gloating tone. But that has not been Fuku-



Tocqueville

yama's approach. His second book, *Trust* (1995), was an economic treatise, or rather, a treatise on the cultural traditions that make for a healthy economy. This time his approach was Tocquevillian. He showed that, in America, the cultural legacy left by the old Protestant sects has generated a spirit of trust among people who don't know one another, and that the spirit of trust has encouraged the growth of the giant American corporations. But then again, in Germany a variety of strictly German cultural traditions have allowed for a similar growth, and in Japan still other traditions have done the same, which means that Germany's giant corporations are truly German, and Japan's are truly Japanese, just as America's are truly American.



Darwin

In still other societies, where the spirit of anonymous trust is much weaker, people have constructed entirely different institutions for generating wealth, better suited to their own customs and ideas. The French have demonstrated a remarkable talent for building efficient state bureaucracies, and the northern Italians have demonstrated a very different talent for running family businesses devoted to craft production. Then there are the South Koreans, who seem to resemble the French, and certain kinds of Confucian Chinese, who seem to resemble the northern Italians. In short, the economic systems of the future are likely to draw on many cultural traditions, not just on the example of the American corporations. It won't be McWorld, after all; the global economy will be multicultural. That was interesting to learn, and heartening for anyone who has feared that, in the future, we will not be able to pick among economic alternatives.

In his latest book, *The Great Disruption* (1999), and in his essay in this journal, Fukuyama has turned to another question that was raised by his notion of inevitable liberal democratic triumph—the possibility that culture and social life under liberal democracy, in its downward plunge into mediocrity and loss of dignity, might undermine the liberal democratic system itself. That is an old worry among the commentators on democracy. Tocqueville touched on it, and so did Daniel Bell in *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism* (1976). But Fukuyama, having worried in *The End of History*, has come up with a cheering message in *The Great Disruption*—this time by making a deft little leap from Hegel and Tocqueville to Darwin and the social Darwinists of today. In Fukuyama's view, the regulated market economy, in its forward rush into greater efficiency and progress, did lead to some bad results in the liberal democracies, beginning around 1963. Because of the new, postindustrial technology, women left home to go

out and work. Birth control pills allowed sex and the feeling of family responsibility to go separate ways. Families weakened. Morals declined. Crime rose.

To cite his new book's title, it was *The Great Disruption*, morally speaking. But—this is his new argument—people are endowed with propensities that lead them to correct their own errors. Human rationality is one of those propensities. Another one is genetically inbuilt, a sub-rational propensity, the product of evolutionary adaptation, that leads people to re-create sociable behavior whenever the practical old customs of the past become disrupted. These factors have begun to function in the last few years, and the Great Disruption that seemed to be tearing apart liberal democratic life has begun to heal itself, and the moral basis of society is growing stronger, not because more women are returning to housework but because people are inventing new moral concepts and institutions for the present. We have Darwin to thank, or rather, the realities that Darwin discovered. For, in Fukuyama's latest estimation, human nature, as shaped by thousands of years of evolution, pushes us to correct the unfortunate side effects that result from the general history of progress.

Hegel, Tocqueville, Darwin—the trinity is complete. And so the 19th-century doctrines have climbed back into life from their ancient tombs. You may be surprised at the spectacle, but you cannot say these ideas are dead.

II.

What should we think of those revived doctrines? One response cannot be avoided. It is the product of those many decades of ferocious criticisms directed against anything smacking of social determinism or universal destiny. The ferocious criticisms lead us to ask, as the liberal and pragmatist and post-modern philosophers instruct us to do: Why speak of human nature at all? What sense is there in regarding history as having a forward direction, or any direction? Why should we suppose that we can predict the future, when we have never been able to predict anything very reliably in the past? A bit of sober mulling over those several questions is bound to put us into a skeptical mood, and the mood is bound to make us look a little closer at the new arguments and their evidence. We are bound to ask: How could we possibly know whether the new arguments are true or false? Reality has a zillion factors, and we have to wonder if there is room for a zillion factors in those simple doctrines.

We might ask, for instance, How can we tell if there is any truth to Fukuyama's account of rises and falls in the moral life of modern society? He informs us that moral conditions—judging by statistics on such matters as criminality and alcoholism and family decay—worsened in the early 19th century; improved in the late 19th century, due to the

preachings of the Victorian moralists; and worsened once again in the Great Disruption that began in the mid-1960s. But on what evidence can we judge these things? In his book, Fukuyama himself scrupulously offers a simple example of how difficult it can be to arrive at reliable grand-scale estimations. He observes that, judging by some of the conventional statistics, the moral culture of the United States appears to be much weaker than that of Europe.

But if we factor out the American underclass, which has different historical origins and is much larger than its equivalent class in Europe, the comparative figures for the United States and Europe turn out to be similar—which is to say, the raw statistics offer a misleading impression of the actual differences between America and Europe. Doesn't it seem likely that complications of that sort might lurk beneath any number of comparative figures, especially when something as vague as social morality is being compared across the centuries? The late-19th-century period in which Fukuyama says that Victorian preachings raised the moral level was, by gloomy happenstance, the very period in which the extent of slums and industrial violence likewise rose to its highest, most dangerous level in America and Britain. When Fukuyama says that moral values improved in the late 19th century, isn't he merely saying that certain values he admires were on an upswing, and never mind about certain other values?

The period of Fukuyama's "Great Disruption," with its declining morality, was also a period of spectacular progress against all sorts of racist and sexist prejudices. Why say, then, that personal morality declined during those years? Why not say "The Great Disruption" was actually "The Great Reform"? Or was both—a lamentable "Disruption" together with an admirable "Reform"? Perhaps a "Reform" for some people and a "Disruption" for others? Why say (as some people do) that "Dan Quayle was right"? Quayle made a famous speech in the aftermath of the Los Angeles riot of 1992, denouncing a sympathetic television sit-com portrait of an unmarried professional woman with a child—as if the street violence in Los Angeles was owed to media sympathy for single motherhood. It is argued, doubtless correctly, that black riots in the 1960s stemmed in part from the failures of family life (though it is hard to see how the media could have been responsible for those failures). But the Los Angeles rioters of 1992 were mostly Central American immigrants, and the television or radio broadcasts that appealed to them must surely have expressed the squarest of old-fashioned family values, in the Hispanic style, just as Dan Quayle would advocate; yet people rioted even so.

These may seem like quibbles on my part. They *are* quibbles. But when I wade into arguments such as Fukuyama's, quibbles surge around me in white foamy torrents, and there is no escape from them. I can't help wondering: Isn't the argument about moral decline during the Great Disruption hopelessly distorted by a mythology of a happier

American past, which had been ruined by the cultural movements of the 1960s and the evil media? Jon Margolis, a veteran reporter who spent many years at the *Chicago Tribune*, has published a book just now called *The Last Innocent Year: America in 1964*, whose very title makes the assumption, astonishing to me, that America once possessed a moral innocence which disappeared in the mid-'60s. How could anyone think such a thing? The American university system, to mention nothing else, was overwhelmingly segregated in 1964. You would think the partiality in ascribing innocence to those times would be self-evident. Evidently it is not evident. Which is bad enough. But what are we to think when the partial claims come wrapped in scientific thought and social theory and are presented as something more than one person's impressions?

Maybe we should conclude, as the modern and post-modern philosophers instruct us, that grand-scale arguments about universal human nature and historical progress have no positive value at all. The ratty 19th-century doctrines can be wrapped all too easily around any argument you choose. They are simply too threadbare to take seriously anymore. I certainly understand why a disciplined social scientist might insist on that conclusion. And yet, in spite of every quibble, I go on thinking that something in those ancient theories has got to be true. It is because the human race does seem to have evolved from cave dwellings to non-cave dwellings, and from no democracies 225 years ago to a multitude of democracies today. Large vectors of world history do seem to exist. It ought to be possible to wonder about those vectors by proposing a few theories. But since nothing in those theories can be tested, and nothing in them will allow us to make reliable predictions about next year's events, and truth in these matters is undefinable (I concede everything), it's best (say I) to regard the theories as a kind of poetry or expressive literature.

What does the poetry express? The little wave of late-20th-century neo-19th-century theorists—what are they trying to tell us, with their outlandish antique theories? I think they are expressing a mood, possibly more of an up-to-date mood than is expressed by some of their more sophisticated critics. They are expressing a sentiment that is half about feeling powerless, and half about feeling powerful, the powerlessness we feel in the face of enormous changes that have swept the earth in recent years, and that seem beyond human control; and the power we feel when we realize that, because of our ability to identify those changes, we might actually be able to influence their outcomes in some degree. The neo-19th-century theorists are expressing an ambition, which is to shape the whole of society. And an optimism, which is that, in spite of every terrible event that has taken place over this last century, society can be usefully and rationally shaped. In Fukuyama's case, the possibility of our shaping society along rational lines is the largest single conclusion that you can draw from his books, ever more firmly asserted as the author has gone treading his way from the tragic-minded Hegel to the hopeful-and-resigned Tocqueville

to the cheerfully scientific Darwin. Of course, that leaves the question: In what direction should the rational lines point?

III.

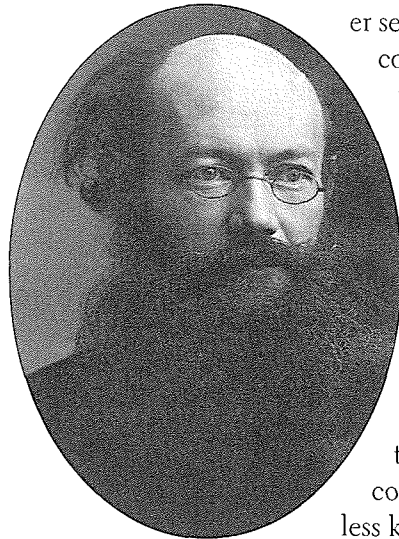
One way to see the new mood and the new writings more clearly is to glance back at the original theories from the 19th century, and at the practical projects that emerged from those theories, and make a few hasty comparisons with the present. In the 19th century, two of those practical projects turned out to be especially important: European imperialism and revolutionary socialism. Each of those projects followed more or less logically from the original premises about history and universality. For if mankind has a universal destiny of ever greater progress toward freedom, the people who are currently most advanced owe it to themselves and to everyone else to share the benefits of progress with all the world. And how to share the benefits? It might be through direct conquest of backward nations by the paternally minded advanced Europeans, in the case of European imperialism—direct conquest in order to establish the new, more advanced customs and institutions that are necessary for progress. Or progress might be shared through the conquest of industry and the establishment of a new society by the radical-minded proletarians, in the case of revolutionary socialism—by the proletarians who, alone in modern life, due to their place at the heart of heavy industry, have the necessary insight into the workings of economics and history to lead society into the future.

Naturally, we wouldn't expect to see either of those projects come back to life in anything like their 19th-century forms, and if they did come back, revenants from the past, we would have reason to shrink in fear. Those two ancient projects, imperialism and socialism, were exactly what brought about the calamities that Karl Popper observed all around him in 1943—European imperialism, because it not only committed innumerable crimes around the world but because it finally boomeranged back to Europe itself, in the form of fascist conquests and exterminations; and revolutionary socialism, because it gave birth to the communist heresy, which turned socialism's goals upside down.

Still, the 19th-century impulses that led in the past to imperialism and revolutionary socialism do seem to be showing a few new signs of life today, in a very different fashion. For how else, except as a sprouted seed from the 19th century, should we understand the current movement for human rights around the world? The logic of the human rights movement says that we, the privileged people who live in the prosperous liberal democracies, have a right and an obligation to extend our own advantages to everyone else. We have the right and the obligation precisely because freedom is mankind's future, which ought to be brought about sooner rather than later for the happiness of all, and because mankind is universal (so that, e.g., there is no special Asian

soul that prefers to languish under authoritarian despotism). It shouldn't surprise us that some people do see in that argument a sinister shadow of the imperialism of old. I think that people who look on human rights campaigns as a clever disguise for a modernized imperialism have gotten carried away with their own insight, or have gotten stuck in arguments from the past. (There are a lot of people like that, whole nations of them in the Third World.) Still, the filiation from the 19th century does seem clear enough. It's just that, unlike the imperialism of the past, the human rights campaigns of the present tend to be modest and even self-conscious about the dangers of intervening in other societies, which prevents those movements, or ought to prevent them, from turning their good intentions into a major new source of oppression.

The prospect of any sort of new version of socialism arising from the revived interest in the old philosophical themes seems more remote—unless by socialism you mean the kind of global banking regulation that has been bruited about in the wake of the recent economic crises in East Asia, Russia, and Latin America. Socialism in any larger sense, socialism as a vision of a new kind of



Kropotkin

cooperative society, does seem out of the question today. You might suppose that, in Fukuyama's case, the prospect of any revival of socialist instincts would be remoter still. Nineteenth-century socialism mostly bloomed in fields that had been plowed by Hegel or Comte. But Fukuyama, in his new book, has made his leap to Darwin, whose social followers have tended to be vehemently antisocialist.

Still, it should be remembered that, in the late 19th century, social Darwinism did come in a left-wing version—much smaller and less known than the antisocialist version, yet real enough. What is being revived today, it seems to me, is largely the left-wing version,

without the left-wing language. The great classic of left-wing social Darwinism was Peter Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution* (1902), which he wrote in the 1880s and '90s, and the arguments that Kropotkin laid out so carefully in that book are recognizably the arguments of sociobiology today. You find the same citing back to insects and animals; the discovery that "sociability" (in Kropotkin's word) aids the survival of the species and its individual members; the scientific deduction that sociability must figure as an element within the evolutionary make-up of different species; and the recognition that humans are in this respect no different from insects and animals. The only difference is that Kropotkin, unlike the sociobiologists of today, invoked his Darwinian themes to show that imaginative programs for communal production, workers' control, grass-roots self-management, and the several other pro-

jects of the old libertarian-socialist workers' movement were scientifically justified. Not very much of that turns up among the sociobiologists of today.

Fukuyama argues that, in our present age, we need to rally ourselves to oppose the Great Disruption and the moral decline of modern times. We need to fashion for ourselves new moral values and community structures, and not just look to the state. Kropotkin would have applauded those views heartily. But the structures that Fukuyama sees fit to praise are such things as today's fad for religious participation among people who don't really believe in the religion but go to a church or synagogue anyway, for the sake of belonging to a community. That is a pretty thin and pale response to the modern situation—doubly pale if you compare it with Kropotkin's extravagant plans for abolishing property and wages and trusting to neighborhood committees.

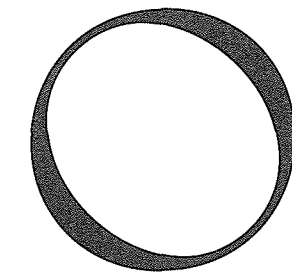
To be sure, you could remark that just as the world campaign for human rights today is properly modest and self-conscious, compared with the imperialism of old, so are the new proposals for revived church membership and suchlike—modest communitarian reforms in place of the wild-eyed socialism of the past, and all the better for being humble. Yes, certainly—there's truth in that. It's good to remember, too, that Kropotkin's doctrines had their violent side. The anarchist *pistoleros* running around Spain in the 1930s carried his *Conquest of Bread* (1906) in their coat pockets. And yet, the gap between arguments such as Kropotkin's and arguments such as Fukuyama's (in his sociobiologist mode) shows, I think, a large and not very attractive aspect of our current predicament.

It shows us the enormous difference between the original 19th-century mood and the neo-19th-century mood of today. The theories from the past expressed a nearly ecstatic sense of possibility and hope. But the revived versions are merely nervous, timid, and two-minded. A nervous and two-minded timidity may be unavoidable, given everything that has happened and the many philosophical criticisms that have been offered. Timidity may be wise. But it is sad. It speaks of fatalism, and of complacency, and of still more fatalism. Nobody has defined the ambiguous quality of the neo-19th-century mood more eloquently than Fukuyama himself, in the title and the argument of his first book, *The End of History and the Last Man*. The End of History, as he described it, is a triumphal idea—a grand celebration of the solidity and greatness of liberal democratic society. And the Last Man, in Fukuyama's account, is an antitriumphal reflection on what we citizens of the liberal democracies appear to be like, in our moment of success. For we have made our way to the End of History, only to find that, in our mediocrity, we lack imagination and passion. The victory of our own liberal principles means we are free to act as we choose, and what we choose is not to act. We have no big plans for making society any better than it already is. No small plans, either, only minuscule ones. Even our dreams lack bravery.

Cinema Paradiso

American blockbusters have conquered the world, yet in a strange way the culture of film has become less international than ever before. A noted film critic recounts the story of the movies' rise after the turn of the century, their transformation into an exhilarating international art form, and their recent decline into high-grossing irrelevance.

by Richard Schickel



f the several deeply depressing moments during this year's Academy Awards broadcast, none was more so than the one in which Roberto Benigni almost kicked Steven Spielberg in the head as he clambered over a row of seats to claim his best actor's prize. It wasn't just that Benigni had won for a genuinely bad performance—a wretched imitation of the inimitable Chaplin. Or that the film in which he had given it, *Life Is Beautiful*, had already won the best foreign language film award for its heedless travesty of the century's central tragedy, the Holocaust. Or even that his well-calculated representation of childish glee at his good fortune ill became a man who has not only survived but prospered in the notoriously cutthroat Italian film industry.

No, it was something else. This climax to the worldwide triumph of *Life Is Beautiful* says something deeply disturbing about the state of international cinema, about how it has changed, in little more than a few decades, from a realm dominated by the likes of Bergman and Fellini, Kurosawa and Truffaut—try to imagine one of them behaving like a ninny upon winning an Oscar—to one dominated by purveyors of feel-good entertainments that don't merely parody the values of their historical betters but, in cases like Benigni's, mercilessly crush them.



A detail from Robert Cottingham's Art (1992)

In seeking to place blame for the ascendancy of such lightweights, it is tempting to look for some failure of nerve or sensibility, not only in the United States but everywhere else. But the paradoxical, even perverse, truth is that we have only ourselves to blame, for it is the resounding (and unprecedented) success of American films in the international marketplace that has created the conditions in which Benigni (and a few others like him) have flourished.

Some simple statistics illustrate the point: In the 1990s, the American share of European box-office returns has grown from about 50 percent to more than 70 percent. Even in France, which currently has the continent's most competitive movie industry, close to 60 percent of the films released are American in origin. These figures are duplicated everywhere around the world.

When an industry representing a single nation, most especially a cultural industry, achieves market penetration of that sort, it causes alarm. Most obviously, in this case, it frightens people who make movies outside the United States as they face what appears to them, and is in fact, nearly insurmountable competition. It also concerns the self-appointed, but highly vocal, guardians of national cultural purity everywhere, especially in those countries, such as France, that take particular pride in the importance and singularity of their contributions to world civilization. You needed only to

glance at the French press during the final round of the talks surrounding the creation of the World Trade Organization during the early 1990s—the outrage that arose over the way American movies (and television and popular music) were dominating the local market, the passionate pleas for some enhanced defenses against this invasion—to gauge the fear and loathing stirred by our “cultural imperialism.”

Those critics are objecting to something that most American critics are also damning—the rise of what the *Economist* recently called “the generic blockbuster,” the kind of film that was originally made for brain-damaged American teenagers, but which, it was soon discovered, was going down very well overseas. Some trace the blockbuster’s genesis to *Jaws* in 1975, others to *Star Wars* in 1977, but that’s unimportant. What is important is that these films, as the magazine also observed, “are driven by special effects that can be appreciated by people with minimal grasp of English rather than by dialogue and plot. They eschew fine-grained cultural observation for generic subjects that anybody can identify with, regardless of national origin.” All through the postwar period, American producers had contented themselves with making about 30 percent of their grosses abroad. Now, pushed by all those *Terminators* and *Lethal Weapons*—not to mention subverbal grossout comedies such as *There’s Something about Mary*, which translate with equal immediacy overseas—that figure began to creep up to 50 percent. In many cases it was more than that; there are plenty of films that have doubled, tripled, even quadrupled their domestic grosses overseas.

In the United States today, some 66 percent of all movie tickets are sold to just 18 percent of the potential audience, to young people aged 15 to 24. Somewhat less than 30 million admissions are sold every week, mostly to that crowd, but that is just one-third of the tickets that were sold in this country in the late 1940s, when the general population was some 120 million less than it is now.

What this means is that, were it not for their use as a place for young people to go on dates, the movies today would not be mass entertainment at all. They would be a minority pleasure—something like the opera or symphony or ballet—possibly requiring some sort of subsidy to survive, but surely existing on the money they make from what are still rather quaintly called the ancillary markets, such as television licensing and home video sales. Indeed, for the last several years this has been the source of most of their domestic profits. In this adolescent-dominated climate, it is unsurprising that when a studio makes a serious but by no means esoteric movie—something like *L.A. Confidential* or

>RICHARD SCHICKEL is the movie reviewer for *Time* magazine. A collection of his essays, *Matinee Idylls: Reflections on the Movies*, will be published by Ivan R. Dee in the fall. A version of this essay was presented at a 1998 Wilson Center conference, “Popular Culture: America and the World.” Copyright © 1999 by Richard Schickel.

Without Limits—it does not understand how to market the film, and it almost inevitably fails. There is, of course, “indieprod,” a realm where filmmakers such as Stanley Tucci (*Big Night*), Bryan Singer (*The Usual Suspects*), and Kevin Smith (*Clerks*) can begin their careers on low budgets but with considerable freedom. But they often have trouble moving up to big-studio production, where the rough edges of their work are almost invariably worn down to conform to the mass-market template.

As for foreign filmmakers, what’s left to them, if they hope for substantial profits, is occasional access to a market now largely neglected by U.S. producers, what might be called the market for mature geniality, sweet-spirited, rose-hued movies that aren’t about anything very much, but which can, about once a year, get the older folks out of the house to attend a movie in a theater, just like they did in the good old days. Prior to *Life Is Beautiful*, the breakout hits in this category were *Like Water for Chocolate*, *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, and *The Full Monty*, each in its way an agreeable enough film, but none of them in danger of being confused with *The 400 Blows* or *Breathless* or *8½*.

I’m naturally suspicious of nostalgia. It’s the emotion that makes us old before our time and, often enough, stupid beyond belief. But I do think that there was a brief historical moment, beginning sometime in the 1950s and ending sometime in the 1970s, the passing of which all of us who value the unique expressive capacity of film must mourn. It was a period when the balance of trade with America tipped a little bit more favorably to foreign filmmakers. More important, it was a period when the intellectual balance in this country swung decisively toward the foreign film, which was good for its producers’ bank accounts but even better for our souls.

In this time, films coming into the United States from France and Italy and Sweden and Japan and Spain and India and Britain utterly dominated the conversation among critics and the knowing audience, including young filmmakers looking for new ways of expressing themselves. Everyone could see that the most basic grammar of film was being expanded in these offerings, and with it the range of subjects and ideas (which included the idea of film itself) that movies could address.

“Cinephilia,” Susan Sontag calls this spirit in a recent article lamenting the decline of the movies, both as popular and high art. The term, she says, reflects “a conviction that cinema was an art unlike any other: quintessentially modern, distinctively accessible; poetic and mysterious and erotic and moral—all at the same time.” It was, as she says, a religion, a crusade, and a worldview. It was also a way that culturally serious members of my generation, and those who immediately followed (including such important, and diverse, filmmakers as Martin Scorsese, Woody Allen, and Steven Spielberg) defined themselves, set themselves apart from the somewhat cinephobic intellectual and artistic communities that preceded them.

Since some of our enthusiasm for the medium was based on our first encounters with the great works of the past, our passion partook, too, of a

renaissance spirit, with this difference: most people living through renaissances are not aware of their good fortune, while this one was clearly visible to those of us reveling in its excitements. It seemed especially glorious, perhaps, because American movies up to that time were in such a cautious phase, with the romantic elegance of the high silent era, the heedless verve of the talkies' first decade, and the dark mordancy of the early postwar years' *film noir* lost to Cinemascope and 1950s blandness and banality.

This renaissance was hard won. And it is, I think, useful to understand something of the historical conditions that created it. We must begin by acknowledging that in the industry's infancy the international playing field was quite level. Indeed, I was surprised to learn from Victoria de Grazia's very thorough 1989 essay on the American challenge to European cinema in the *Journal of Modern History* that in some of the years prior to World War I, the French actually produced and exported more films than Americans did, with the Italians not too far behind. It is not hard to imagine why this free cinematic trade worked so well.

In those days, films circulated more or less anonymously. They didn't carry credits, so audiences could not recognize their country of origin by the director's name or even by the names of their leading players. And, remember, these were silent films, so language was not a giveaway either. Translate the intertitles into the local idiom, and unless some famous landmark appeared in a shot, it was nearly impossible to tell where a picture was made.

It seems that for a while no one cared. It was the miracle of moving images that people cared about—especially when they were deployed in the service of gripping stories and spectacle. Early in this century's second decade, Europeans pioneered the feature film while Americans hesitated. Adolph Zukor, by importing a three-reel hand-colored *Passion Play*, a 1910 French adaptation of a German work, and by snapping up two years later the American rights to Sarah Bernhardt's somewhat longer *Queen Elizabeth*, proved that Americans could and would sit still for movies of substantial duration. We know, too, that D. W. Griffith was inspired to make *The Birth of a Nation* in 1915 by the example of *Quo Vadis?* and other Italian spectacles. It is certainly possible to imagine that if great and terrible events had not intervened, the film industries of the United States and the major European nations might have retained rough economic parity for a long time, though the sheer size of its domestic market would eventually have given America a clear economic advantage.

But World War I virtually shut down production in the European nations, and by the time it was over the American industry had, in effect, reinvented itself, creating a model that Europe could not hope to duplicate. Americans had developed the star system, built on the celebrity of Mary Pickford, Charlie Chaplin, Douglas Fairbanks, and their like, their huge salaries more than justified by the stability their reliable drawing power brought to a notoriously unstable business. It turned out, of course, that

their iconic qualities were completely translatable in every corner of the globe—indeed, required no translation.

Almost everything I'm saying about the formative years of the motion picture industry can be encapsulated by the incident that serves as the prologue to *Movies and Money* (1998), an excellent economic history of the medium by producer David Puttnam and Neil Watson. The place is Moscow. The time is Christmas Eve 1925. Two films open that night. One is Sergei Eisenstein's national epic, *The Battleship Potemkin*. The other is an epic of quite a different sort—maybe we should call it an international epic—Douglas Fairbanks's *Robin Hood*. Both receive excellent reviews. But only one of them has what we have since learned to call “legs.” Eisenstein's film plays for a few weeks to sparse crowds in a dozen theaters, then is withdrawn. Fairbanks's movie plays for months to packed houses.

Both films have been mounted on a no-expense-spared basis. It might even be argued that the Russian movie has certain advantages over its competitor, in that it is by a native son and takes up a recent event of shaping significance in the lives of his compatriots in a manner so electrifying that it would influence directors around the world for decades to come. The Fairbanks film, by contrast, treats of a time, a place, and a myth remote from the Russian audience, and though it does so with great élan, no one argued then, and no one argues now, that it is a milestone in world cinematic history—though I must say, faced today with the choice confronting Muscovites 74 years ago, I think I'd opt for *Robin Hood*, too. Much more fun.

But *Robin Hood* had a great star at its center, a man of indefatigable charm and tireless energy. Moreover, even though he had cast himself up in Merrie Olde England, there was something distinctly, attractively American about Fairbanks. Here, as always, his character was populist, cheekily antielitist, genially subversive of authority, smart without being ideological or intellectual; and this movie, like all his movies, was romantic, dashing, humorous, optimistic, luxurious—and full of thrilling stunts that, like today's special effects, a lot of people wanted to see more than once to try to figure out how they were done.

Did Fairbanks and the makers of *Robin Hood* and other American filmmakers of the day understand, before their international receipts told them so, how universal the attitudes and aspirations projected in their films were? Of course not. When Fairbanks and his new bride, Mary Pickford, took a wedding trip to Europe in 1920, they were astonished at the riotous crowds that greeted them, even in staid London and Oslo.

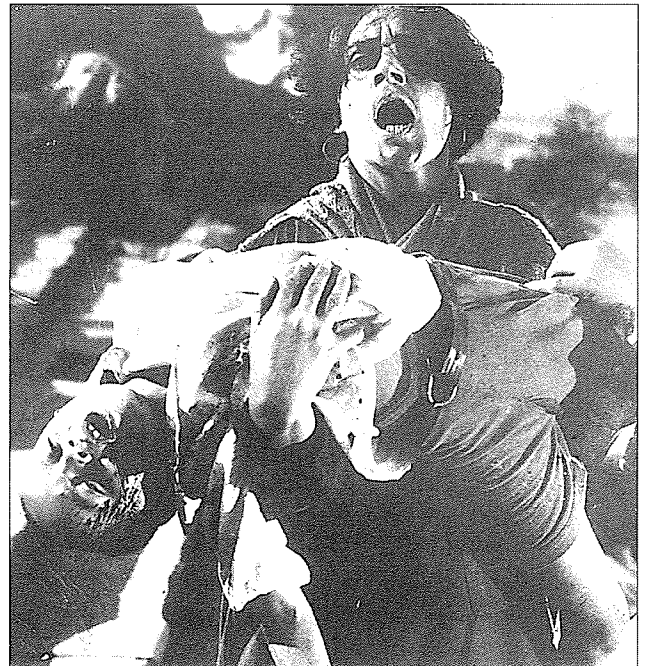
Did their successors who presided over the classic and economically all-powerful Hollywood of the interwar years fully comprehend the breadth of their films' reach? Yes, absolutely. They were proud of the way their movies represented American values overseas. Did they understand the depth of their influence on foreign audiences and calculate ways of enhancing that influence? The answer to that has to be no. Their foreign takings were eco-

nomically significant to the American moguls, about 20 percent of their grosses, but not overwhelmingly so. On the whole, however, the moguls were fiercely ethnocentric and, in any case, had trouble enough keeping abreast of the domestic audience's mood swings. It is probably fair to say that they had no idea of how their movies were working on anyone, anywhere, anytime, that they had no sense of how that curious blend of reality and fantasy which is the American movie was, over time, reordering everyone's way of apprehending the world.

Finally, did the Americans have any intention of driving their European competitors out of business? I think not. Driving them to the wall was good enough for the moguls. By this I mean—and again I rely on de Grazia—they sought every advantage they could in their foreign trade.

I don't think we can entirely blame Hollywood for acting as it did in these years. It was, in effect, fighting fire with fire. From the 1920s onward, almost every European country with a substantial film industry tried to protect it with government subsidies, tariffs, and quotas. Critics pitched in by disparaging imported images. These defenses were feeble, and have often been deplored by economists and others. For selfish reasons, I disagree—not with their general principle, but with its application in this case. These subsidies and protections have, over many decades, proved vital to the survival of film industries that were essentially unable to defend themselves solely with their own resources. They were therefore vital to the production of many of world cinema's most influential and enduring masterpieces.

These policies had several downsides, notably the hundreds, perhaps thousands, of really bad movies made to satisfy protectionist laws ("quota quickies") or to sop up subsidies. We in America never saw these films, and most people in their countries of origin avoided them as well. The alternative strategy of trying to compete in the world mass market by imitating American movies produced films that were as a rule greeted with contempt everywhere. (A few



The Battleship Potemkin (1925)

notable exceptions included some of the French *films noirs* of the 1950s and, from Italy, the best spaghetti westerns of the 1960s, which revitalized the form.)

The largest successes of the European industries—the films that exerted an influence on filmmakers and cineastes the world over—came when they did what was most natural to them, which was to behave like an opera company or some other traditional producing arts organization, encouraging individual film artists to work in the old-fashioned way, expressing personal visions as they had been shaped by the national cultures in which these artists had been born and raised. These films, many of them landmarks of world film history, could not and would not have been made without some sort of official subvention.

German expressionism, the epic cinema of the Soviet Union, the romantic humanism of the French—all of these movements attracted a profitable minority audience internationally. More important, they exerted an influence on American filmmakers. Serious directors studied them and occasionally borrowed techniques from them. King Vidor, the greatest of American silent filmmakers, openly acknowledged the example set for him by Eisenstein and the other great Russians, and the influence of German expressionism on his sensibility is highly visible in his 1928 effort, *The Crowd*. In the long run, though, the largest effect European films had on American directors was the example of authorship they offered. Well before the auteur theory was promulgated, many American moviemakers learned to envy the relative autonomy of their leading foreign counterparts, their ability to assert openly their particular ways of seeing on the screen. The



Robin Hood (1922)

European directors were able to win this freedom because the houses in which they worked were so rickety that there were no domineering house styles they had to overcome. In time, when the power of the American studios declined, American directors would assert their own claim to the right of authorship the Europeans had established.

Mainly, however, in the years between the wars, the European industry functioned as a sort of farm system for Hollywood. The way it worked was caught rather nicely by Ralph Richardson. In 1938, as he and Laurence Olivier toiled in *Q Planes*, one of those hopeless, though not entirely unamusing, English attempts to compete with the Yanks, Olivier happened to mention on the set one day that he was entertaining an offer from Samuel Goldwyn to appear in *Wuthering Heights*. What should he do, he asked his best acting friend. To which Richardson replied: "Hollywood? Yes. Bit of fame. Good."

In other words, one did things like *Q Planes* in part because they helped keep your presence alive on screen, fostering the hope that the Americans would eventually take notice, or perhaps take pity, and project it onto more and larger screens. *Wuthering Heights*, of course, did exactly that for Olivier, bringing him more than just a bit of fame. It brought him the worldwide recognition, the commercial clout, that made his Shakespeare films possible, gave him the power to undertake whatever stage roles he desired, and, finally, the prestige that was vital to the founding of England's national theater.

As with Olivier, so with dozens of other great stars and directors of the two decades between the wars. Having established themselves in their native lands, they were either swept up by offers from Hollywood that they couldn't refuse or, once Hitler came to power, fled there with at least some hope that their reputations had preceded them. Not all of them succeeded as Olivier did. But protectionism did at least permit the likes of Fritz Lang, Alfred Hitchcock, and Jean Renoir to develop their talents and their international renown more or less coherently in familiar, emotionally and artistically sustaining surroundings.

World War II did not have quite the same effect on worldwide film production that the first great war did. Fragile though they were, the European industries were too large simply to be shut down for the duration. In any case, the Nazis were eager to create what amounted to a European cinematic union, relying in particular on their Italian allies and the conquered French to help them supply theaters everywhere they ruled. Joseph Goebbels, the German propaganda minister, particularly loved the Hollywood manner and encouraged the production of slick escapist fare. It's eerie to see how closely many of the films made under Goebbels's aegis match the peppy, romantically patriotic mood of so many American movies of that time. To the mass media, all wars are alike—no matter which side they enlist with.

With the end of the war, a flood of pent-up creative energy was sudden-

ly released in film communities everywhere. One could see it most immediately in Italy, where filmmakers released from bondage to the fascist state and its frothy “white telephone” movies startled us with a neorealism (*Open City*, *The Bicycle Thief*) that sometimes shaded over into something like magical realism (*Miracle in Milan*). Not since the very earliest days of cinema had directors used the streets for their settings, the lives of ordinary people for their subjects, with this intensity. It struck people with revelatory force, and opened us up to other kinds of exoticism. Within the first post-war decade of film we would confront the violence of Kurosawa’s medieval Japan, the dour lusts of Bergman’s Sweden, the social confusions of Ray’s India. Meanwhile, in Paris, around the office of the film magazine *Cahiers du Cinéma*, the New Wave was beginning to form.

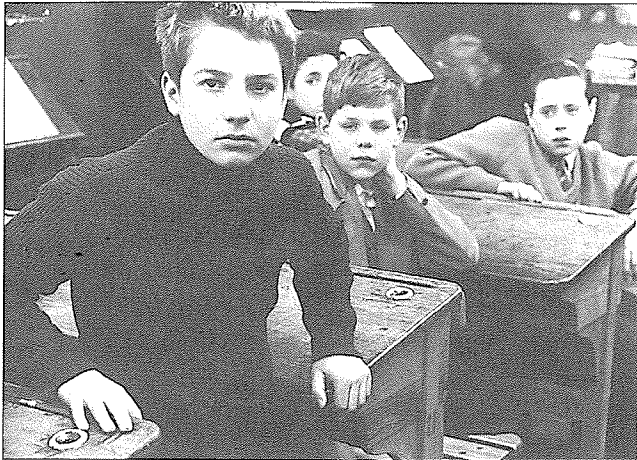
We need to pause over that for a moment, for this is where “cinophilia” found its voice and its theoretical foundation. Curiously, the first thing to animate the young cinephiles (most of whom would soon be cineastes) at *Cahiers* was the release in



French director Jean-Luc Godard

France of all the American movies that they had been denied by the war. This obviously represented something like unfair competition. But what did that matter to François Truffaut, Jean-Luc Godard, Jacques Rivette, and Eric Rohmer? This flood of film struck them with an energizing force that these pictures could not have achieved had they appeared over several years in a routine release pattern. They drank in the work of directors such as Hitchcock, Howard Hawks, and Raoul Walsh, and many others who had been dismissed as mere entertainers in the United States, and their enthusiastic commentaries would eventually prove instrumental in rescuing the reputations of these artists. Moreover, the French cinephiles’ openness to all kinds of cinematic experience set a critical example for much of the world.

More important, the French directors began contemplating nothing less than a revolutionary reform of French cinema. They didn’t necessarily want it to imitate American styles and subject matter (though the cross-references in films they eventually made are countless), but rather to embrace



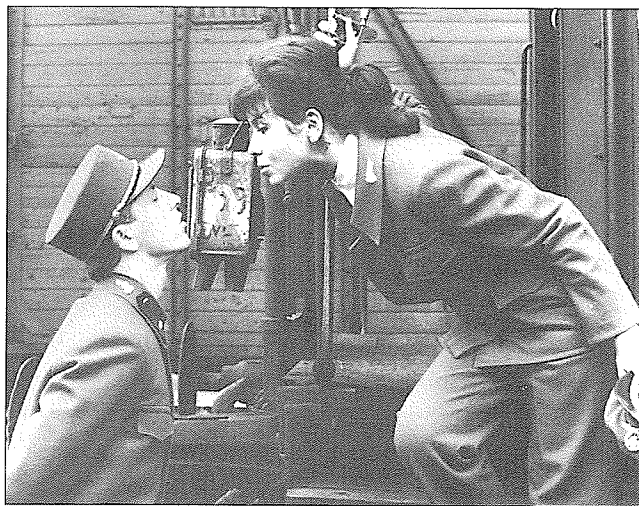
The 400 Blows (1958)

its populist spirit. French movies, in their view, were too devoted to literary subject matter, stiffened with bourgeois cultural aspirations. *Le cin ma de papa*, they called it. They found a model to inform their work in their cinema's prewar history, in the work of Jean Renoir. More significantly, their atti-

tudes—and by the mid-1950s, their films—both shaped and reflected the way all of us began to approach movies. I don't know if I had heard of *Cahiers du Cin ma* in those days, but what it stood for was somehow seeping into American movie culture, and rising up out of it as well. Local issues aside, the Parisian cinephiles were beginning to articulate ideas and attitudes that were less coherently held by the first postwar generation the world over.

When I left college in 1956 and moved to New York, some of my cinematic provincialism had already been rubbed off me. I had endured the long lines that typically surrounded the one theater in Madison, Wisconsin, that played the new foreign films. I had faithfully attended the film series at the student union that grounded us in the classics of world cinema, everything from *Intolerance* to *Rules of the Game*. I had helped found the university's first film society, which funded itself largely through slightly scandalous means, such as receipts from screenings of Leni Reifenstahl's *Olympiad* and, of course, *Ecstasy*, since the sight of a famous woman naked was not yet the routine guilty pleasure it has become.

Despite all my sophistication, I was not entirely prepared for the riches I found in New York. There were three theaters within walking distance of my



Closely Watched Trains (1966)

Greenwich Village apartment playing both new and old foreign films almost exclusively, with plenty more doing the same thing just a subway ride away. I'm not going to claim that we were a generation of aesthetes. Going to these movies in those days was, in some sense, morally bracing, a complex pleasure rather than a simple one like seeing an American film. But struggling to comprehend exotic cultures, trying to catch the beat of new filmic rhythms, soberly talking all this through, earnestly weighing, judging, opining, was also a wonderfully heady experience. If you will forgive the oxymoron, we felt part of a democratically self-selected elite that was in some way reshaping the culture.

And, you know what? We were. In the period between 1950 and the early 1970s, the number of theaters playing "art" films in the United States rose from 100 to more than 700. By 1958, the number of films imported to the United States actually exceeded the number produced domestically, a situation that would persist for another decade. By



Throne of Blood (1957)

1964, Hollywood, which had troubles that far exceeded those posed by foreign competition (the loss of its theater chains to antitrust action, the loss of its mass audience to television, the loss of corporate autonomy to independent, star-driven production), was asking Congress to do what governments abroad had done for their movie producers: grant subsidies. By 1974, Hollywood's hometown paper, the *Los Angeles Times*, was calling for a tariff to protect American producers against imported films.

I didn't know or care about any of this at the time. Neither did anyone else I knew. We continued to go to American movies, of course, despite the fact that a hugely creative period—the era of *film noir*, of socially conscious realism, of often mordant social criticism—was largely cut off by the introduction of CinemaScope in 1953 and its demand for elephantine spectacle. But we continued to hope for the best from American movies, and were sometimes rewarded by something like *The Sweet Smell of Success*, which appeared in 1957. I want to stress that we were not, most of us, self-consciously elitist. I thought then, and I think now, that a truly healthy movie culture is one in which some kind of balance is maintained between populism, which is where the roots of the medium are, and elitism, which is where its artistic future is usually predict-

ed. It's when people like Godard start saying things like "films are made for one or maybe two people" that we are in the deepest imaginable trouble.

The films we cinephiles talked about most earnestly, most excitedly, through the late 1950s and well into the 1970s admittedly were not great crowd pleasers: *The 400 Blows* and *Breathless* and *Jules and Jim* and *Hiroshima, Mon Amour*. Also *The Seventh Seal* and *Wild Strawberries*. Also *Rashomon* and *Throne of Blood*. Also *La Dolce Vita* and *8½* and *L'Avventura*. Also *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner* and *Billy Liar* and *Room at the Top*. And, eventually, *Loves of a Blonde* and *Closely Watched Trains*.

But what a miraculous list that is! What a range of styles and subject matter it encompasses! How easily it could be extended into the hundreds. And, I cannot resist adding, how many of these films—notably those created by the New Wave, otherwise so rebellious against tradition—owed their existence to state subsidies and protections. Especially in the later years of this period, it's also appropriate to observe that many of our most acclaimed imports owed their existence to investments by major American studios, which now judged that those 700 art houses constituted a real market.

Not that the health of this market was solely dependent on the studios. There was in those days a small army of knowledgeable independent distributors, many of whom had been in the import trade for years, many of whom established relationships with foreign film artists that extended faithfully over many years, much as book publishers once maintained long-term relationships with their authors. These relationships were imitated by audiences. I mean, we went to "the new Fellini" or "the new Bergman," whatever our friends or the critics might have said about them. It was one of the obligations we owed to the art.

Journalism, too, began to feel that obligation. As Hollywood films approached the nadir of their popularity in the late 1960s, magazines and newspapers began, ironically, to expand and upgrade their coverage of movies. There was a feeling that old-line critics such as Bosley Crowther, for several decades the *New York Times's* lead reviewer, were just not coping with the Godardian jump cut, that younger, more flexible sensibilities were required.

I was one of those sensibilities, hired by *Life*, which then had the largest weekly circulation in America, to review pretty much whatever I cared to in its pages. I believed, based on my own formative moviegoing experiences, that such a creature as "the common viewer," kin to Virginia Woolf's "common reader," existed, and that it was my job to write for that by-no-means mythical creature. He or she was, I imagined, someone very much like me, possessed of a good general knowledge of the movies, conversant with their history and with what was going on with them now, not merely in Hollywood, but everywhere. I assumed that this knowledge was not specialized, that it coexisted with a similar knowledge of literature and

(according to taste) some of the other arts. I also assumed that we shared a certain enlightened, liberal-ish turn of mind in matters political, psychological, and sociological. Oh, all right, call us middlebrows.

But call us also a community—a community capable of sustaining, through our interest, coherent artistic careers for the great filmmakers of the world. That community began to break up sometime in the 1970s. The reasons for this are many, but perhaps the most important is that Hollywood recovered from its long swoon. It was, in part, reclaiming our interest with movies such as *Bonnie and Clyde* (which owed much to the New Wave), *The Godfather* pictures, and *Chinatown*. But several other, bigger things changed the commercial equation for Hollywood. The most important was that it had by this time learned to stop worrying and love television. Producing for it and licensing films to it for extraordinary fees, the studios found the economic stability they had been seeking since the loss of their theater chains. The opening of the home video market in the 1980s iced that cake. And the steady rise in the American studios' foreign grosses placed the candles on it.

The number of screens playing imports here is now perhaps two percent of the total. “We are kept on reservations, like the Cherokee or the Navajo,” the French director Bertrand Tavernier said not long ago. Occasionally, foreign films of the non-feel-good sort escape the reservation, but only if they can be publicized as shocking (like *Trainspotting*) or if they raise political issues that stir journalistic interest (like films from mainland China, which



The Seventh Seal (1957)

must overcome totalitarian restraints to reach the West).

But, on the whole, foreign “product” fails here and does less well than it once did at home. We are witnessing everywhere the ultimate triumph of Neal Gabler’s Republic of Entertainment. Or should we call it, finally, by its rightful name: The Tyranny of Entertainment?

It was inevitable, of course, that the revered figures of the worldwide cinematic renaissance that began in the 1950s should age, fall ill, retire, and die. It was inevitable that some of them, before their time, should succumb to distractions, as Godard did. That’s not the problem. The problem is that sometime about a quarter of a century ago it became impossible for their would-be successors to build the kind of coherent careers these artists once enjoyed. Susan Sontag justifiably wonders if the likes of Krzysztof Zanussi, Theo Angelopoulos, Béla Tarr, and Aleksandr Sokurov—all contemporary directors working at a level that once would have made them names to be reckoned with in the international film world—can persist, let alone prosper, in today’s film world. No one anywhere can conveniently see their work, save by haunting the film festivals. Only a very few viewers can develop an intelligent sense of these directors’ themes, their development as artists. And who is left for them to talk to?

They are caught up, as we all are, in a machine that is best described as a viciously reciprocating engine. Without major artistic figures around which its interests may coalesce, the old cinephile community becomes distracted, wanders off. Without such a community to address, without the faithful audience it once promised, serious filmmakers cannot build steadily functioning careers, steadily developing bodies of work. Certainly the most important of all artists’ rights—the right to fail—is denied them. Meanwhile, the independent film distributors who are vital to the health of the cinephile community falter and fail. Journalism loses interest—just try to get substantial space for an essay on a serious, subtitled movie today—and devotes itself more and more to industry economic gossip about last week’s grosses, next week’s executive shuffle. In the film schools, in the college community in general, there is no interest in the movie past, which for most students today seems to begin and end with *Star Wars*. In short, there is nothing resembling the film culture as we once knew it.

And if, by chance, *Star Wars* did not exist and someone set out to make it today, that person would not know, as George Lucas did, to look to Kurosawa’s *Hidden Fortress* for ideas and inspiration. Nor would that person help subsidize one of the Japanese master’s late works, *Kagemusha*, as Lucas and Martin Scorsese did out of gratitude and lifelong admiration.

Perhaps, out of generational loyalty, I sentimentalize the lost cinematic community of my formative years. Possibly, in offering these generalizations, I exaggerate the consequences of its demise. Yet, it seems to me that the dismal figures don’t profoundly lie. And that the evidence of decline, of irrecoverable loss, is placed before us every week on the screen. In what we see. In what we no longer see.

KOREAN QUESTIONS

Two more unlikely twins would be hard to imagine. A half-century after their separation, one is a militantly xenophobic bastion of communism, staggering toward collapse yet bristling with weapons and threats. The other grew into an East Asian economic powerhouse, its advance toward democracy unbroken even by a severe economic shock. Today, the drama of the two Koreas is returning to center stage as the world anxiously watches North Korea, armed with ballistic missiles and possibly with nuclear weapons, struggle against mass starvation and self-destruction.



Detail from Wrestling (late 18th century), by Kim Hong-do

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The Enigma of The North

by Robert A. Manning

It is early March 2000. Tensions have steadily escalated since mid-November, when stories leaked to the American news media hinted at the existence of yet another North Korean secret nuclear weapons facility and suggested that Pyongyang was deploying Taepo-dong missiles capable of reaching Hawaii and Alaska. President Bill Clinton sends retired general Colin Powell and former senator Sam Nunn as special emissaries to Pyongyang, but the talks stall. Food aid from the United States, Japan, and South Korea is halted. Reports of still-mounting famine filter out as many private aid groups withdraw from North Korea, fearing that food is being misdirected to the military and the Communist Party. The rhetoric intensifies. North Korean leaders charge that food is being used as a weapon. The United States demands that Pyongyang abandon its covert nuclear weapons program. North Korea delivers a bombastic reply.

Finally, a desperate North Korea unleashes a round of artillery and Scud missile fire onto the outskirts of Seoul and sends special operations brigades through tunnels under the demilitarized zone (DMZ) separating North and South. As the 37,000 U.S. troops in South Korea brace for war, the Pentagon places all U.S. forces around the world on alert. Then Pyongyang issues an ultimatum: "We have nuclear missiles, ready to launch on warning, targeting Tokyo and U.S. bases in Okinawa. We seek to discuss the terms of unification with Seoul. If the United States or Japan intervenes in this internal Korean matter, we will level Tokyo and the U.S. installations in Okinawa."

It may sound like a Tom Clancy thriller, but such a crisis is, unfortunately, not just the stuff of paperback fantasies. Five summers after a political crisis over Pyongyang's nuclear weapons program brought the United States and North Korea to the brink of war, the nightmare Korean "implosion-explosion" scenario—a North Korean internal collapse leading to a desperate act of war—against which U.S. military forces have spent endless hours planning remains entirely in the realm of the possible.

Indeed, an August 1998 *New York Times* report about the existence of a suspected secret nuclear bomb-making facility under a North Korean mountain and Pyongyang's unexpected firing of a three-stage missile over Japan at the end of that month underscore a troubling possibility: North Korea may have managed to build not only one or two nuclear devices but also new means to deliver them against distant targets. This, despite an October 1994 nuclear deal dubbed the Agreed Framework, in which



Larger than life: North Korea's "Great Leader" Kim Il Sung addresses a Communist Party congress in 1975.

North Korea agreed to freeze its known nuclear weapons program in exchange for a variety of blandishments from the United States, Japan, and South Korea. The payoff included two light-water nuclear power reactors for generating electricity (engineered to prevent the creation of materials useful in making weapons), 500,000 tons of heavy fuel oil annually, security assurances, and the promise of improved relations with the United States.

Today's Korea question is part Cold War legacy, part 21st-century nuclear proliferation challenge. Together, these two problems make Korea arguably the world's most dangerous flashpoint, and inarguably one of the most vexing and consequential foreign policy issues confronting American diplomacy. The Korea question has been made still more perplexing by the powerful humanitarian concerns about the famine and food shortages that have left a million or more

North Koreans dead and an entire generation of children malnourished. To understand the special combustibility of the situation, one need look no further than geography: the outskirts of greater metropolitan Seoul and its 14 million people (not to mention some 90,000 Americans) are barely 25 miles from the DMZ. Even without nuclear weapons, North Korea's Scud missiles, 11,000 long-range artillery tubes, and some 600,000 forward-deployed troops could enable Pyongyang to realize its 1994 threat to turn Seoul into a "sea of fire."

It was precisely to avoid such apocalyptic outcomes and to move North Korea to a trajectory of peace and reconciliation that the 1994 accord—touted by the Clinton administration as one of its great diplomatic successes—was reached. In 1995, then-secretary of state Warren Christopher boasted that "this administration has ended [the nuclear threat]." The

agreement, made possible after former president Jimmy Carter's freelance diplomacy persuaded "Great Leader" Kim Il Sung to freeze his nuclear weapons program, was certainly a watershed event. After a four-decade standoff, it was the first American deal ever with the strangest, most closed, anachronistically Orwellian society on earth.

The deal went beyond nuclear nonproliferation. It was in essence a quid pro quo: Pyongyang would trade its ultimate insurance policy, its nuclear weapons program, for a new economic and political engagement with the United States, South Korea, and Japan. At a minimum, the aid would provide a kind of life support system for the North. Like Nixon when he went to China, Kim Il Sung—who had skillfully played his Chinese and Soviet allies against each other for several decades—launched a strategic gambit aimed at turning an adversary into an asset. Kim saw the agreement as a route to more economic aid, trade, and investment that would eventually revive North Korea's moribund economy.

The United States and its allies were relieved to avert a showdown, and also saw the possibility of an eventual North Korean "soft landing," which would ease the economic crisis and promote the North's economic and diplomatic opening to the world. Over the long term, the process could lead to gradual reunification of the two Koreas. At a minimum, the accord would buy time, which, "from a Machiavellian perspective," as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Stanley Roth explained, "is in our national interest." It was also possible that the regime might collapse as its counterparts had in Eastern Europe, due to a severely weakened military. In the administration, this "collapse theory"—the notion that the North Korean problem

would go away relatively quietly—was for a time very much in vogue.

The reality has proven infinitely more complex than most people imagined. Compared with those from five or 10 years ago, satellite photos taken today literally show the lights going out in North Korea. The economy has nearly ground to a halt. The country has suffered a catastrophic annual grain shortage of about 1.5 million tons—roughly a third of consumption—since 1995. Yet the regime of Kim Jong Il, son of the "Great Leader," who died in 1994, has not collapsed, or even exhibited any telltale signs of major instability. Five years after the agreement, North Korea has not opened up significantly to the world, apart from extending its tin cup; has not substantially reformed its economy; and has used what dwindling resources it has to develop two new generations of ballistic missiles. Meanwhile, it has become the largest recipient of U.S. aid in Asia (mostly food aid), even as an economic embargo against it dating from the end of the Korean War remains in effect. While the Agreed Framework halted the overt nuclear weapons program, peace on the Korean peninsula has grown no less precarious. The administration failed to build a cohesive policy framework on the foundation of the nuclear deal. Instead, the nuclear deal became the centerpiece of a fragmented policy.

During an April 1997 press conference, President Clinton offered a rare view of the underlying logic of U.S. policy:

[The North Koreans] are better off having agreed to freeze their nuclear program. . . . And I think they ought to go the next step now and resolve all their differences with South Korea in a way that will permit the rest of us not only to give food aid, because people are terribly hungry, but to work with them

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South Korean troops patrol the DMZ in April 1996. South Korea was in its highest state of alert in 15 years after armed North Korean troops moved into Panmunjom, the DMZ village where the two sides hold talks.

in restructuring their entire economy and helping to make it more functional again . . . they need to lift the burden of a system that is failing.

This statement illuminates virtually all of the questionable assumptions of U.S. policy toward North Korea. It remains unclear, for example, whether Pyongyang has actually taken that first step of

completely abandoning its nuclear weapons program. Former defense secretary William Perry, whom Clinton chose to conduct a congressionally mandated review of Korea policy, has said he suspects North Korea may be continuing its nuclear efforts covertly. (The nuclear crisis of 1994 occurred after International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors found suspicious irregularities in spent fuel from North Korea's nuclear

reactors; under the Agreed Framework, North Korea is not required to reveal more about its nuclear past for another three or four years.)

Perhaps the most disturbing possibility of the past five years is that it is North Korea that has actually been buying time. The death of North Korean founder Kim Il Sung only weeks after Carter's 1994 visit left his son and successor, Kim Jong Il, in need of time to consolidate the Leninist family dynasty. Time has also allowed Pyongyang to develop new longer-range ballistic missiles, and thus the capacity for nuclear blackmail. And time allowed the international community to mobilize significant amounts of humanitarian aid—which North Korea's communist leaders have claimed credit at home for procuring (even going so far, for example, as to remove country-of-origin markings from bags of rice).

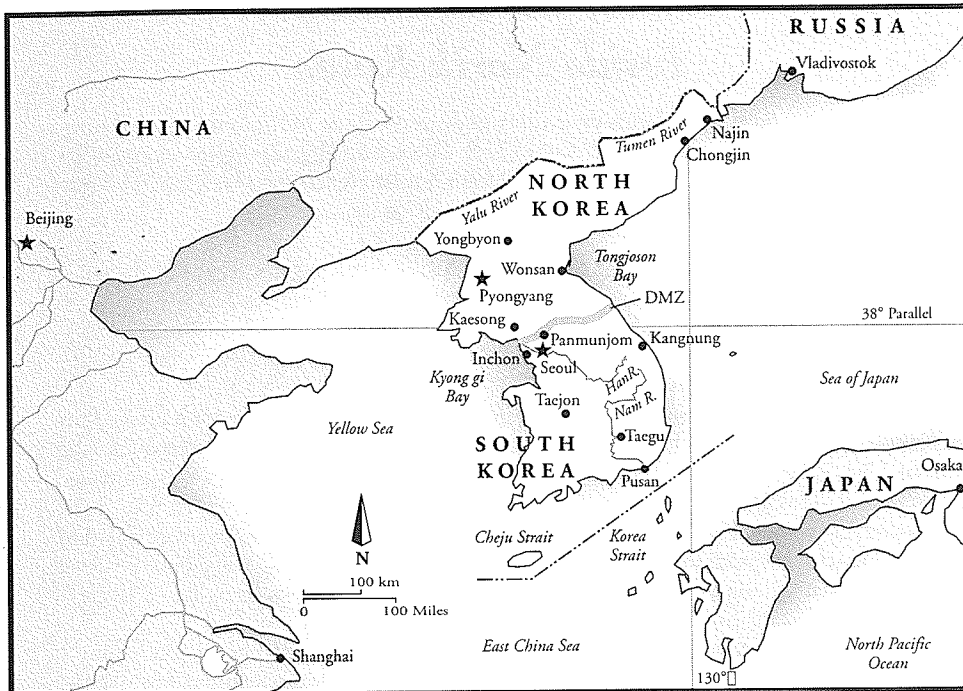
At the same time, Pyongyang has consistently rebuffed generous overtures by South Korean president Kim Dae Jung for high-level political reconciliation talks, apparently for fear of undermining its own legitimacy. The Pyongyang regime is communist, but much of its claim to legitimacy rests on its self-proclaimed role as Korea's heroic bastion of resistance against colonial powers—first Japan, then, since 1945, the United States. Like East Germany without communism, the North Korean state without its nationalist mythology would have precious little *raison d'être*.

Herein lies the fundamental dilemma facing North Korea: every path to salvation is fraught with extreme risk. The same fear of undermining itself prevents the government from pursuing market-oriented economic reforms, even though China and Vietnam have done so. After nine straight years of economic contraction, an economy that former senior White House economist Marcus Noland describes as "the most distorted in the

world" has all but ceased to function. It has survived through the kindness of strangers, particularly China (a provider of food and fuel) and the United States, and by profiting from a variety of dubious or plainly illicit schemes. Pyongyang has acquired hard currency by counterfeiting U.S. hundred dollar bills, selling its people's labor in the Russian Far East, smuggling methamphetamines, selling overflight rights to its airspace, and, not least, by selling Scuds and other ballistic missiles to Pakistan, Iran, and other Middle East countries. The North Korean economy is widely misunderstood. The problem is not that it is failing and will collapse. As a functioning national economy, it has already collapsed. What factories have not been dismantled and sold for scrap iron at the Chinese border now operate at roughly 20 percent of capacity—except for those devoted to military production, which operate at 50 percent of capacity, according to the South Korean Defense Ministry.

Lately there have been hints that North Korea may be moving haltingly toward some very modest reforms. Faced with the breakdown of its national food distribution system, the regime has accepted the existence of the farmers' markets that have sprung up spontaneously during the current crisis, and it is encouraging North Koreans to raise goats and rabbits. It is also working with South Korean corporations to secure investments in North Korean factories. Recent reports suggest the North Korean economy may have bottomed out and begun to improve modestly. Food production is up 11 percent over last year, according to South Korean estimates. But Pyongyang has not gone very far. Even the kinds of limited market-oriented reforms that Vietnam and China long ago implemented as first steps are still far beyond anything Pyongyang has pursued. A recent commentary by the official North Korean news agency declared that notions like "reform" and "opening" are a "Trojan Horse" of capitalism.

Even without reform, North Korea may



Roughly equal in area to England, the Korean peninsula occupies a strategic location in Asia. About 70 percent of the land is mountainous, protecting Korea from outsiders but also isolating regions from one another. Historically, population has concentrated near the scarce arable lands in the west and south.

continue to muddle through indefinitely. But it is on a trajectory toward oblivion. This creates the ultimate policy dilemma for the United States and its South Korean and Japanese allies. If North Korea is unwilling or unable to open up and reform its economy, it will be severely limited in its ability to usefully absorb the kind of investment and aid required to restart its economy. And if Pyongyang cannot digest such “carrots,” how can one put in place an incentive structure likely to persuade North Korea that its least bad choice is to reduce tensions and pursue a future of reform and reconciliation?

This puzzle may help explain why, amid all the discussion of “soft” and “hard” North Korean landings in recent years, the pattern of diplomacy has been one of no landing, of muddling through. In pursuing their ends, the North Koreans have made skillful use not only of military threats but of their own famine. They have rejected many overtures, such as the initial U.S. call in 1996 for talks on a peace treaty to supersede the armistice that ended the Korean War, only

to consent when food was put on the table. The American desire to have a process, however empty of substance, has led to a diplomacy of “food for meetings.”

The Clinton administration has responded to each United Nations appeal for help over the past three years, officially for humanitarian reasons, but in reality using food as a bribe to get North Korea to attend meetings in order to create the impression that diplomacy is working. Assistant Secretary Roth told reporters in 1997 that there is a “security dimension” to putting Pyongyang on “life support”: “If there is no international relief effort North Korea could approach a situation of desperation. If you have 22 percent of your population either starving or on the verge of starvation. . . . [w]ho knows what actions [you] might take. . . ?”

But such “feed me or I’ll kill you” logic is flawed in several respects. Apart from underestimating the power of the U.S. military threat to deter even a “desperate” North, it naively assumes a connection between human misery and the regime’s

Inside North Korea

Few societies have resisted outside scrutiny as successfully as North Korea. Kim Il-song's North Korea (1999), a recently declassified U.S. Central Intelligence Agency study, offers a rare portrait of North Korean life. Author Helen-Louise Hunter based her report on interviews with North Korean defectors during the late 1970s.

One has only to talk to a North Korean for a few minutes to get a sense of what is important in his life. Two phrases are likely to dominate any conversation, regardless of the subject under discussion, just as they dominate every aspect of life in North Korea. They are *songbun*, or "socio-economic" or "class background," and *Kim-Il-song sangsa*, or "the thought of Kim Il-song." . . .

In North Korea, one's *songbun* is either good or bad, and detailed records are kept by party cadre and security officials of the degree of goodness or badness of everyone's *songbun*. The records are continually updated. It is easy for one's *songbun* to be downgraded for lack of ideological fervor, laziness, incompetence, or for more serious reasons, such as marrying someone with bad *songbun*, committing a crime, or simply being related to someone who commits an offense. It is very difficult to improve one's *songbun*, however, particularly if the stigma derives from the prerevolutionary class status or the behavior of one's parents or relatives.

The regime has tried to convey a different impression—that any person can easily overcome his or her social origins. At various times, it has launched campaigns to erase bad social origin, promising to remove unfavorable designations for people who perform extraordinary service over a protracted period of time. The people concerned are not told that their names are still kept on a separate blacklist of secret surveillance. Whether they realize it or not, there is really no way to escape one's *songbun*.

In the early days, *songbun* records were spotty, and some people were able to survive by concealing the fact that a father, uncle, or grandfather had owned land or was a doctor, Christian minister, merchant, or lawyer. However, in the late 1960s, a major effort was made to conduct exhaustive secret investigations of the background of all North Koreans. Periodically after that, additional investigations were carried out by the public security apparatus whenever Kim Il-song had reason to believe that there was any substantial opposition to his rule. Because of suspected corruption of earlier investigations, the regime felt the need to conduct repeated investigations to the point where everyone has now been investigated and reinvestigated, and investigated yet again.

Since the only "good" people, in the Communist view, in Korea in 1950 were factory workers, laborers, and poor farmers, they and their descendants are the privileged class of today. The highest distinction goes first to the anti-Japanese guerrillas who fought with Kim Il-song and second to the veterans of the Korean War; next come the descendants of the prerevolutionary working people and the poor, small farmers. Together, these favored groups constitute from 25 to 30 percent of the population. Ranked below them in descending order are 47 distinct groups in what must be the most class-differentiated society in the world today.

Perhaps the only touch of humor in this otherwise deadly business of ranking people according to *songbun* is the party's terminology for the chosen versus the unchosen: the "tomatoes" versus the "grapes." Tomatoes, which are completely red to the core, are considered worthy Communists; apples, which are red only on the surface, are considered to need ideological improvement; and grapes are considered hopeless. . . .

People with bad *songbun* are plagued throughout life, not just in being denied a higher education or a better job but also a spouse of superior *songbun*. They are subjected to a host of other inconveniences and difficulties as well. In a society that allows very little freedom of movement, those with bad *songbun* are afforded virtually none. Having been assigned to a factory or cooperative farm immediately after middle school, they are likely to spend the rest of their lives in the same place, in the same job.

political stability. But Stalin's starving millions in the Ukraine during the 1930s and Mao Zedong's during China's Great Leap Forward in the 1950s serve as a reminder that under totalitarian regimes there is no necessary relation between the two. Indeed, if one assumes that scarce food is unlikely to go to those least favored by the regime, it might be argued that the food crisis may bolster Pyongyang by starving its potential domestic enemies.

In any case, the United States has fallen into the trap of rewarding bad behavior. Frustrated by Washington's unwillingness to lift sanctions and take other steps outlined in the Agreed Framework, the North Koreans have resorted to provocative actions. The process has all the qualities of a vicious circle: Pyongyang does something outrageous (such as sending troops into the DMZ or saboteur-laden submarines into South Korean waters) to command attention and a payoff, but each act triggers a reaction in Congress, making it that much more difficult for the Clinton administration to deliver what North Korea wants. Contrary to conventional wisdom, North Korea is neither crazy nor unpredictable. Once its logic of bluster and brinkmanship is understood, its behavior appears quite predictable.

This diplomacy of negative reinforcement has reached a new apogee in the past year. Last summer, even as U.S. diplomats were at the United Nations speaking about Pyongyang's suspected nuclear site, North Korea, as part of its 50th anniversary celebrations on August 31, sent a three-stage missile soaring over Japan. (The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency later determined that it was a failed



Pyongyang street scene, 1994

satellite launch.) Pyongyang then consented to further negotiations about the suspected site, and the Clinton administration announced it would send the North 300,000 tons of food aid. After several rounds of talks, North Korea agreed to an inspection. Soon thereafter, Washington announced it would ship another 600,000 tons of food. Only in late May did a U.S. team visit the construction site, with ambiguous results.

The suspected site and the missile launch—and the administration's response—combined to push an already deeply skeptical Congress over the edge. Last October, Congress passed legislation that attached conditions for future funding of the 1994 Agreed Framework, and required a review of the policy led by a prominent figure outside the administration. The White House drafted

former defense secretary Perry for the task.

The results so far are mildly encouraging. After meeting with members of Congress and with others in Washington, South Korea, Japan, and China, Perry has concluded that some adjustments are in order and has begun a new phase of diplomacy. He was warmly received in late May when he went to North Korea, speaking directly with top leaders (though not the reclusive Kim Jong Il), instead of dealing with midlevel bureaucrats, as has been the pattern in past U.S.-North Korean dealings. Moreover, the Clinton administration seems to be taking to heart its critics' concerns and is seeking some firm commitments from Pyongyang about its missile program if cooperation is to continue. The revised policy that Perry explored in North Korea seeks a comprehensive approach, more fully coordinated with South Korea and Japan. If it means a willingness to link expanded benefits to reciprocal behavior—to results rather than mere process—it is an important step in the right direction.

But have we fully learned the lessons of nine years of active diplomacy with North Korea? Pyongyang's goal clearly is to survive while taking the least possible risk of undermining itself at home. It is capable of making and implementing deals, though willing to push others to the brink to test limits. Nobody should need to be reminded that rewarding bad behavior begets more bad behavior. There is something odd about a decrepit, failing state managing to place the world's sole superpower in the role of *demandeur*. It is possible because Pyongyang has been strategically clear about its objectives, while the United States and its allies have been fuzzy and inconsistent. If our goal is to bring the North Koreans into the international community, for example, why do we still have Cold War trade sanctions against them? The Perry review also suggests that it would make for a more cohesive and disciplined policy to have a senior figure as a North Korea "point person" in Washington. That policy must be based on the principle of reciprocity, with a series of benefits tied to a series of actions.

A larger framework, structured as a "roadmap" with which to resolve all security issues—ballistic missiles, chemical and biological weapons (which the North Koreans may possess), conventional forces, forward deployments—would offer the best prospect of success. But that would require putting a larger package of economic inducements on the table. At the same time, the United States must be willing to break off if minimum goals are not met. That might mean living with one or two North Korean nuclear weapons—but we have been living with the distinct possibility that such weapons already exist for several years. As long as Kim Jong Il is bent on survival rather than suicide, the weapons will be of secondary value. The United States will still have diplomatic leverage.

It is easy—and understandable—to call for pre-emptive strikes against North Korea's suspected nuclear sites and for attempts to get rid of Kim's horrific regime. But such strikes would put the lives of tens of thousands of Americans and South Koreans at immediate risk. Moreover, obtaining precise intelligence about targets and ensuring that deep penetrating warheads actually destroy them are both difficult exercises, with no guarantees of success. Even for an administration with a clear sense of strategy, the divided Korean peninsula would pose a most un-American predicament: a problem with no good solution, only least bad choices. The most that can be asked of public policy is that it test North Korean intentions. Pyongyang must be given a clear choice: a future of cooperation or one of disengagement and confrontation.

If Pyongyang chooses to seek survival with nothing more than changes at the margins, it will set a course toward suicide, either by implosion and collapse or by explosion. In the end, a failing state cannot be saved from itself. Under such circumstances, even the best-conceived and best-executed policy may not produce a peaceful outcome. The unthinkable may be unavoidable. That is why it is necessary to exhaust all reasonable diplomatic options before drawing that horrendous conclusion.

Seeking Truth In Action

by Don Oberdorfer

T

he limousine from the Blue House, South Korea's equivalent of the White House, passed through the heavily guarded, high steel gates and proceeded onto the grounds that I

had visited many times before on my way to see South Korean heads of state and other officials. This time, to my surprise, the car kept going past the presidential offices and up a winding hillside road lined with old, gnarled pines. At the top of the hill was the presidential residence, which is rarely used for greeting foreign visitors. I took off my shoes at the entryway and donned slippers, as is the custom in most Korean homes. Inside the spacious living room, sitting stoically in a chair beside a small sofa, was a man I had met many times in the past quarter-century under dramatically different circumstances. This time Kim Dae Jung, who at various times during his long political life had been denounced, kidnapped, imprisoned, sentenced to death, and exiled by South Korea's leaders, was the duly elected president of his country.

Kim came to his feet unsteadily—he suffers from hip joint arthritis as a result of a devastating traffic “accident” after his first presidential campaign, in 1971. Kim believes it was a disguised assassination attempt; if so, it was only the first of several such attempts by his political opponents. As president, he is protected from threats to his life and his privacy by all the panoply of government. In earlier days, he faced

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persistent harassment and worse. His house in Seoul was surrounded by platoons of government agents on nearby streets and rooftops who monitored and intimidated his visitors. On this day in March 1998, a little more than a month after his inauguration, South Korea was at the nadir of its most serious economic crisis since the Korean War; "a dark IMF tunnel," as he had told his people in a televised town meeting. Four months earlier, South Korea's amazingly rapid economic rise, the exemplar of "the East Asian miracle," had been suddenly interrupted by the loss of investor confidence and the abrupt flight of international capital. As the crisis leaped northward from Thailand, South Korea's currency lost 40 percent of its value and its stock market dropped 42 percent. The Seoul government was forced to go hat in hand to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a \$57 billion bailout, accepting in return a stringent austerity program and an overhaul of its economic policies.

Amid this turmoil, to nearly everyone's surprise except his own, Kim Dae Jung was elected president by a narrow margin. Although Kim criticized the IMF at one point in his campaign, after the election he told South Koreans bluntly and boldly that there was no alternative to making the changes the IMF was advocating, and that such foreign intervention was designed to help, not hurt, the South Korean people. "I am hopeful because our people are highly educated," Kim told me, speaking effectively if hesitantly in the English he had learned while in exile in the United States during the early 1980s. While South Koreans had long rejected any significant role for foreigners in their economy, he continued, "it is very necessary for us to open the doors to outsiders. We must receive foreign investments—otherwise there is no good hope for us." From the

first days after his election in December 1997, even before taking office, Kim strenuously campaigned for this dramatic change in the mindset of his highly nationalistic countrymen, and for long-term investments in Korea by foreign firms and individuals. Previously, according to the World Bank, South Korea had been eighth out of 103 countries surveyed in gross domestic investment as a share of its economy, but only 91st out of 103 in terms of foreign direct investment.

Before he became president, Kim was a defender of the downtrodden and a critic of the workings of big business in South Korea. But he devoted most of his career to domestic politics, relations with North Korea, and international affairs. It was thus an irony of history that he came to power at a time when economic affairs were the central imperative for South Korea. His first year saw a whirlwind of legislative and administrative initiatives designed to put the economy back on a sustainable upward course and to create the beginnings of a social safety net. In South Korea, this program is called "DJnomics." Whether or not Kim's policies are the cause, most observers agree that the country is at the forefront of nations recovering from the Asian economic crisis.

Kim Dae Jung also came to power at a time when the half-century-old struggle with North Korea was in an especially complex and difficult stage. Since the collapse of its Soviet sponsor and ally, and with the growing dominance of markets over Marxism in China, North Korea has been in a steep decline of almost unprecedented scale for a reasonably industrialized state. U.S. officials estimate that economic output has plummeted by more than two-thirds in the past five years. North Korea is unable

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Enthusiastic crowds greeted candidate Kim Dae Jung on the campaign trail in 1987 but he fell short of victory.

to feed its people. As many as two million of its 24 million inhabitants may have succumbed to starvation or starvation-related illnesses in the past several years. Yet despite some early hints to the contrary (and a surprising history of intermittent official dealings with Seoul dating back to 1972), the unbending North Korean regime has not responded to Kim's strenuous efforts to begin a high-level dialogue.

In our initial conversation shortly after his inauguration, Kim was optimistic that the antagonistic North would respond to his attempts to defuse tensions and promote North-South engagement. "I think there are discussions among the North Korean leadership about how to change their policies toward the South," he told me hopefully. When we met again more

than a year later, the North appeared to most observers to be as intractable as ever despite its growing domestic woes. Kim, however, professed not to be discouraged. "I didn't expect them to respond by expressing support" for his engagement policies, he said. Kim could also point to progress along other avenues. Since he had been president, some 3,300 South Koreans had traveled to the North on unofficial economic, cultural, religious, or other missions—more than in the previous nine years combined. Another 35,000 South Koreans had gone north as tourists. While all this falls short of an official relationship, Kim termed it "quite remarkable" and expressed hope that it would go further.

Because of his near martyrdom at the hands of earlier leaders and his long bouts of imprisonment or house arrest,

Kim has often been compared to Nelson Mandela of South Africa. There are notable parallels, especially in their willingness to forgive their former tormentors, but there are also important differences. Unlike Mandela, Kim is the representative of a disadvantaged region rather than a racial majority. Able to travel and study abroad during intermittent periods of exile or freedom, Kim is today the most internationally sophisticated president South Korea has ever known, and probably more sophisticated in the ways of the world than any other Asian leader.

Kim Dae Jung is the quintessential outsider in South Korean politics. "His life would make a great movie," says You Jong Kuen, a provincial governor and longtime Kim adviser. He was born on January 6, 1924, to a sharecropper on a small island in the Cholla region of southwest Korea, the poorest and most neglected area of the country. His parents were so poor that his birth was not registered for more than a year (which has created a minor controversy about his birth date). During the 1950–53 Korean War, he did not serve in the military but worked as a shipping executive in his native Cholla region. He also began an active career in the Democratic Party, which, under a variety of successive names and leaderships,

has been the main opposition party in South Korea. After two unsuccessful tries, he was elected to the National Assembly in 1961, and rose quickly within the opposition ranks.

Kim's big break came when he narrowly won the 1971 nomination of the New Democratic Party to oppose President Park Chung Hee, who had come to power in a military coup a decade earlier but was forced by U.S. pressure to submit his rule periodically to the voters. It was Kim's great triumph—and also his great misfortune—to run a dazzling populist campaign that came much closer (with 46 percent of the vote) to ousting Park than anyone had expected. From then on, Park and the various military-led regimes that followed considered Kim political enemy number one.

Kim's consistent advocacy of peaceful coexistence with the North during even the darkest days of the Cold War gave an opening to his opponents to tar him as procommunist or even, as in a July 1980 government indictment, "a dedicated communist" and "an extremely dangerous anti-state and anti-national insurrectionist." They also exploited his early association with leftists—which he had quickly abandoned—although it was minimal compared with the experience of President Park himself, who had led a communist cell at the Korean Military Academy before the Korean War and was saved from a death sentence only by the intervention of U.S. military officers who knew him. In 1980, a confidential U.S. embassy review of Kim's speeches and statements described his views as "less than radical." A cable to Washington, subsequently declassified under the Freedom of Information Act, summarized positions that have been remarkably consis-



On trial for his life in 1980, Kim attracted worldwide attention.

tent throughout Kim's political career—and, many would now say, ahead of their time. In foreign policy, Kim favored “an easing of North-South Korean tension,” a “de-emphasis of ideology, in favor of national concerns,” and “internal democratic reforms to strengthen the ROK's [Republic of Korea] foreign policy.” On the economy, the embassy reported, Kim's position was that “the ROK's economic development is not all that it is cracked up to be, and gives the greatest benefits to big businessmen and corrupt government officials. The ROK economy should have a firm agricultural base and be oriented toward light and medium industry.”

As the cable noted, restrictions on Kim had kept him out of circulation—and his views and activities out of the newspapers, except when he was being attacked—for most of the time since his 1971 presidential race. Thus, Roh Tae Woo, at the time an influential general and later an elected president, told me in 1980 that Kim was surely a communist. When I challenged his assertion, I learned that Roh, like most senior military officers of the time, had never even met Kim.

In October 1972, 18 months after the presidential race he nearly lost to Kim, President Park declared martial law, arrested his political competitors and opponents, jettisoned the existing constitution, and took the precaution of arranging for indirect election of the president in the future. Kim Dae Jung, who was out of the country at the time and (it was thought) outside the reach of the regime, began speaking out strongly against Park.

Ten months later, in the most spectacular assault against Kim—and the one that made him an international figure—he was kidnapped by the Korean Central Intelligence Agency (KCIA) from a Tokyo hotel and taken blindfolded and gagged aboard a secret police vessel. At one point, Kim's kidnappers put heavy weights on his arms and legs, and he was

convinced he was about to be thrown overboard. But suddenly the weights were removed. Kim was taken back to Seoul, where he was released blindfolded near his home. Some details of the kidnapping are still unclear, including whether Park was personally responsible, but there is circumstantial evidence that Kim lived because of strong representations by U.S. ambassador Philip Habib. Back home, Kim was permitted to speak to followers and journalists briefly and then placed under house arrest. His kidnappers were never formally identified or charged.

He was imprisoned for a year in 1975 for continuing to speak out and again in 1977 until late 1978, when he was placed under house arrest. Following Park's assassination by his own KCIA chief in 1979, the government granted Kim amnesty and briefly restored his civil rights. He was arrested again in mid-1980 during the rule of Chun Doo Hwan, another general, on trumped-up charges that he had staged an insurrection in Kwangju, the main city of his home Cholla region. This time he spent 60 days in a secret police interrogation basement, “never seeing sunlight,” he later wrote, “listening to the . . . sounds of torture, asked the same questions 20 to 30 times a day from morning to night.” Kim did not give in. This time, a court-martial sentenced him to death.

By now, Kim had become a prominent symbol of resistance to dictatorship in South Korea, with many admirers abroad. In their only known cooperative enterprise, the outgoing Carter administration and the incoming Reagan administration worked together to make sure that the death sentence was not carried out. As the result of a deal worked out by Richard Allen, President Ronald Reagan's first national security adviser, the sentence was commuted and, in return, President Chun became one of Reagan's first official guests at the White House, in early 1981. Kim remained in prison

nearly two more years before being sent into exile at the end of 1982. He returned to Korea in 1985.

The U.S. role in Kim's career and, more important, the larger drive for democracy in South Korea, is as complex as this series of events suggests. American leaders and diplomats always favored democracy in principle, but they permitted a series of military coups—and repressive domestic practices such as Kim's imprisonment—without much protest or interference. Seoul's authoritarian leaders also skillfully exploited the reasonable fear that a U.S. showdown with the South Korean regime could open the way for North Korean gains or even a North Korean invasion. The continuing presence of American troops (now numbering 37,000) to keep the peace on the peninsula did not strengthen U.S. political leverage but, at times, seemed to diminish it as security con-

cerns took precedence over democracy. However, at some key moments—such as when Kim faced death, or later, when President Reagan personally pressed the regime to permit popular election of the president in 1987—the United States did help advance the cause of democracy.

Kim returned to South Korea in 1985 strengthened by his years of adversity. His spells in prison or under house arrest had allowed him to read widely, and in exile he met many leaders in the United States, Japan, and Europe. The regime's kidnapping and death sentence had made him more widely known outside his country than any other citizen of South Korea, including its presidents.

He returned in the mid-1980s to a country with an enlarged and vocal middle class eager for political progress to match the country's dramatic economic achieve-

ments. The formula for success was export-led growth following the Japanese model, implemented by family-dominated economic conglomerates known as *chaebol*. (It is no coincidence that the term represents the Korean pronunciation of the characters for *zai-batsu*, the famous pre-World War II Japanese industrial combines.) While U.S. aid was essential in the first years after the Korean War, the subsequent combination of heavily subsidized domestic credit and government-directed objectives eventual-



Domestic reform meets resistance not only from closely linked business and political leaders but from many ordinary folk like these Daewoo Electronics Co. employees, who protested the firm's merger in 1998.

The Calculus of Reunification

(The two Koreas in 1995–96, the two Germanys in 1989)

	<u>South Korea</u>	<u>North Korea</u>	<u>West Germany</u>	<u>East Germany</u>
Population (millions)	44.9	23.9	62.1	16.6
GNP (billions of dollars)	451.7	22.3	1,207	96
Per-capita income (dollars)	10,067	957	19,283	5,840
Government outlays (billions of dollars)	97.1	19	547.7	61.8
(as % of GNP)	21.5	85	45.5	64.4
Defense spending (billions of dollars)	14.4	5.2	28.5	11.2
(as % of GNP)	3.2	23	2.4	11.6
Foreign trade (billions of dollars)	260.2	2.05	611.1	47
(as % of GNP)	57.6	9.2	50.6	49
Infant mortality (per 1,000 births)	10	26	7.4	7.5
Rural population (as % of total)	19	39	3.7	10.8
Bilateral trade (millions of dollars)	— 287 —		— 7,797 —	

The dream of reunification, though pushed further into the distance by economic crisis, is never far from the South Korean imagination. Some 10 million Koreans remain separated from family members as a result of the country's division; Seoul even maintains a Ministry for National Reunification. Last year, German diplomat Heinrich Kreft compared some measures of the divide separating the two Koreas with similar gauges of East and West German differences around the time the Berlin Wall fell. The results are not encouraging, Kreft reported in *Aussenpolitik* (No. 1, 1998). The material gaps between the two Koreas in 1995–96 were much wider (and are surely even wider today) than those that separated the two Germanys in 1989. The political differences are even greater. The two Germanys never fought each other in a war, to cite one obvious example, while the two Koreas did. The two Asian states have never gone a year since the end of that conflict without an armed clash of some kind. Germany's reunification, though presumably much easier to manage, remains even today a costly, painful process. The chief lesson Kreft thinks the South should learn from the German experience: if the North collapses, Seoul's first priorities should be to set up a separate administration above the 38th parallel and to seal the borders against an exodus from the North.

ly made South Korea an increasingly independent economic power of impressive size and diversity with an economic growth rate averaging nine percent annually over several decades. Confucian tradition and the various regimes' continuing strong emphasis on schooling produced a highly educated labor force, which shared in the economic gains to an important degree. Labor unions were suppressed, however, and antigovernment political activities sharply curtailed. As the political leader of the Cholla region, which benefited least from the general prosperity, Kim spoke out as openly and often as he could against inequities in the growing economy.

In 1987, South Korea took a decisive turn toward democracy when powerful public protests, and a nudge from Washington, forced President Chun to agree to a direct, popular election of the next president. Kim Dae Jung was ready and eager to run again—but so too were two competing political leaders also named Kim, a common clan name in Korea. South Koreans distinguished the “three Kims” by using their English language initials. “DJ” was Kim Dae Jung. His sometime colleague, sometime rival within the opposition party, Kim Young Sam, was known as “YS.” Conservative Kim Jong Pil, the founder of the KCIA and a prime mover in South Korea's military governments, was called “JP.” The fourth candidate, backed by Chun and all the money and power of the ruling government, was Roh Tae Woo, the former general.

It was clear from the first that if DJ and YS both ran, they would split the opposition vote and elect Roh. Both leaders told me in separate conversations in the summer of 1987 that they were determined not to do that, but in the end, each found the race irresistible. On election day, Roh was victorious, with 38 percent of the vote. Kim Young Sam garnered 28 percent, Kim Dae Jung 27 percent. Kim Jong Pil was a distant fourth. Many South Koreans held the two opposition leaders responsible for not getting together. By

the time of the next presidential election in 1992, President Roh had recruited former oppositionist Kim Young Sam to join his ruling party and become its standard-bearer. With government backing and strong support from his regional base in the southeast, YS was elected. Kim Dae Jung, defeated for the third time, announced his retirement from politics.

YS came in as a reformist, and one of his early measures dealing with the disclosure of financial holdings led to the revelation that former president Chun had collected \$1.8 billion in political slush funds from industrialists, and that he left office with \$265 million in hidden private accounts. Former president Roh had accumulated a \$625 million slush fund, and took \$227 million with him when he left office. These stupefying revelations led to the conviction and imprisonment of the two former presidents on corruption charges, an earthquake in the notoriously corrupt world of South Korean politics. Several prominent business leaders, including the heads of the Daewoo and Samsung conglomerates, were also convicted, but the tycoons were given suspended sentences or acquitted on appeal and did not serve time. Kim Dae Jung was caught up as well, announcing shortly after the scandal broke that he had received a political “gift” of about \$2.5 million from Roh during the 1992 presidential race. He claimed that Kim Young Sam had received much more. Neither Kim was charged.

Halfway through the term of his old colleague and rival, Kim Dae Jung's long-unsatisfied ambition to be president reasserted itself. The old war-horse announced “with a deep sense of agony and shame” that he was abandoning his pledge to retire from politics. This time this bold and canny politician determined that if he could not win the presidency alone, he would do so in a coalition. He forged an unlikely partnership with Kim Jong Pil, founder of the KCIA that had once tormented him,

promising to make JP his prime minister and to shift to a parliamentary-based system of government midway through his presidential term. On election day in December 1997, DJ narrowly triumphed, with just over 40 percent of the vote, thanks to strong support in his home region, crucial help from JP's regional following, and the presence of a splinter candidate who split the ruling party vote. Another factor aiding DJ was the sudden collapse of the South Korean economy a month before the election, which turned many voters against the established order and increased the public's appetite for dramatic change.

Partly because the economic crisis makes rapid unification with North Korea less practical and less attractive than before, Kim's more moderate ideas about engaging the North have won wide (if not deep) public support. He declared in his inaugural address that "we do not have any intention to undermine or absorb North Korea," which is a path-breaking statement for a South Korean head of state. Moreover, he pledged to "actively pursue reconciliation and cooperation between the South and the North," an engagement drive that he has consistently pursued and which has

been given the name of "sunshine policy." Kim also assured his countrymen that "we will never tolerate armed provocation of any kind." In fact, however, he did minimize, if not tolerate, an attempted submarine incursion by North Korean agents.

As a key part of his engagement policy, Kim has sought to separate politics from business, permitting South Korean businessmen to pursue deals with the North with a minimum of interference or official oversight. A state visit to Washington in June 1998 gave Kim the occasion to ask President Bill Clinton to back this policy by reducing some of the myriad U.S. economic sanctions against the Pyongyang regime. Clinton was preparing to do so when the *New York Times* broke the explosive story that U.S. intelligence believed that North Korea was seeking to create a clandestine underground nuclear weapons facility, in violation of the 1994 agreement that had ended a crisis over the discovery of a North Korean nuclear effort only a few years earlier. After some initial reluctance, Kim's administration backed the U.S. demand for inspection of the suspected underground site. An accord last March, essentially trading U.S. food aid for access, appears to have averted a new crisis.



More open to negotiation with the North than any other South Korean leader, Kim Dae Jung has so far been rewarded with little but belligerence.

The biggest achievement of Kim's engagement policy so far is North Korea's October 1998 agreement to permit Hyundai, Seoul's largest *chaebol*, to bring South Korean tourists aboard cruise ships to Mount Kumgang, a peak famed for its rugged beauty just north of the demilitarized zone. To arrange these visits, Hyundai agreed to pay North Korea \$150 million over the first six months, and more later. The deal is not purely a business proposition but reflects the strong emotional ties that Hyundai founder Chung Ju-yung, like many other South Koreans, still feels to the "other half" of his country. The deal was personally endorsed in a rare public appearance by Kim Jong Il, the reclusive North Korean leader. If Hyundai has its way, this will be just the beginning of a much more impressive set of economic ties, including the creation of a light industrial zone on North Korea's west coast where 200,000 North Korean workers would labor under South Korean supervision to produce textiles, footwear, and other export goods that the South, because of its high labor costs, now finds difficult to produce at competitive prices.

After being the most prominent and most persecuted dissident in South Korean public life for a generation, Kim Dae Jung is finally in a position to put his ideas into practice. But he has won power amid economic troubles that neither he nor most other South Koreans ever expected. Although the core elements of the economy are recovering, unemployment, which climbed to about two million before leveling off recently, remains very high by South Korean standards. Kim has appealed to labor and the disadvantaged to be patient, an admonition that probably would not have been accepted as well if it came from any other South Korean political leader. At the same time, he has been sometimes urging, sometimes demanding, that the *chaebol* reform and reorganize to make themselves more competitive and less dependent on massive and often dubious borrowings. He

has tried, for example, to force them to adopt internationally accepted "transparent" accounting procedures and to reshape themselves into focused enterprises, shedding some of their far-flung and often competing businesses.

Even as he grapples with the economic crisis, Kim is also trying to pursue his "sunshine" policy, which requires winning support of the United States, Japan, China, and Russia, all of which have major security interests in the Korean peninsula. Seeking to do all these things at once makes his the most difficult job, I think, of any South Korean president since Syngman Rhee, the founding president who saw the country through the Korean War.

Approaching the end of the first 18 months of his single five-year term this summer, Kim is a man in a hurry. Opposition elements of the former ruling party have become increasingly vocal critics of his every move. Labor and the unemployed are increasingly unhappy. Kim faces national parliamentary elections early next year that will set the course for his dealings with the National Assembly. He must also find a way to accommodate or repudiate the bargain he made with his coalition partners to change from a presidential system to a parliamentary system by midway through his term, the summer of 2001. Today, after a long and difficult life in politics and amid the trials of the current economic crisis, Kim Dae Jung often appears in private to be a very tired man.

In 1987, on one of my many visits to his home, he presented me with a work of calligraphy he himself had created with brush and ink on rice paper. The Chinese characters he chose mean "Seek truth in action." This was a credo of the advocates of modernization in turn-of-the-century China and Korea, and Kim has made it his own. It is an appropriate motto for a man of persistent, if often frustrated, action as he guides his country into the next millennium.



The Korean War Revisited

by Kathryn Weathersby

The end of the Cold War has not done much to reduce the long-simmering hostility between North and South Korea, but it has indirectly shed a great deal of light on the brutal war they fought nearly 50 years ago—and on the behavior of North Korea's leaders during the conflict-ridden years since.

As long as the Soviet Union existed, Moscow and its allies in the war effort, North Korea and China, maintained a

united front of secrecy about the conflict, closely adhering to their early declarations about its causes and origins. Over the years, historians learned much about the South Korean-United Nations side of the war, but some of the most basic questions about the conflict remained unanswerable. Now, with the post-Cold War opening of important archives in the former Soviet Union

Above: U.S. Marines in South Korea, 1951

and China, scholars are dramatically rewriting the history of the war.

When Soviet-made tanks led tens of thousands of North Korean soldiers across the 38th parallel early on the morning of Sunday, June 25, 1950, most Western observers swiftly concluded that this was not a border skirmish like those of the previous year but a full-scale offensive. North Korean president Kim Il Sung and his Soviet patrons, however, insisted that the attack was a defensive response to a military provocation by the South—the position North Korea and China maintain to this day. In Washington and elsewhere in the non-communist world, it also seemed clear that the attack had been planned in Moscow and that it signified a new Soviet aggressiveness. If the West did not resist, there would be similar attacks elsewhere along the Soviet Union's vast periphery, in Europe and perhaps the Near East. Within days of the attack, the United States and 15 other members of the United Nations committed their armed forces to a defense of South Korea, thus escalating the fraternal conflict on the peninsula into a major international war.

The Truman administration, assuming that Mao Zedong's new communist regime in Beijing had helped plan the attack, worried that it might also launch an invasion of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist stronghold on Taiwan. The U.S. Seventh Fleet was quickly dispatched to the Taiwan Straits, not only committing the United States indefinitely to the defense of Taiwan but helping to goad Beijing four months later into sending its ill-equipped army to rescue North Korea from certain defeat.

Historians began the first substantial revision of the war's history two decades after the 1953 armistice that ended it. Prompted

by the Vietnam War to reassess the U.S. role in the world, they began to question many of the assumptions the Truman administration made about the conflict in Korea. The most influential revisionist, Bruce Cumings, argued in his two-volume *Origins of the Korean War* (1981, 1990) that this war, like the one in Vietnam, had begun primarily as a civil conflict, with only marginal involvement by the Soviets. To the extent any great power had influence in Pyongyang, Cumings concluded, the Chinese played a more important role. He also suggested that the South Koreans themselves might have provoked the North Korean attack, possibly in collusion with the Chinese Nationalists on Taiwan, in order to ensure U.S. support for their tottering regime. The revisionists viewed America's intervention in Korea, like its involvement in Vietnam, as unjustified and counterproductive.

By the 1980s, most scholars writing on the war also agreed that by pursuing the retreating North Korean army across the 38th parallel after General Douglas MacArthur's stunning landing at Inchon on September 15, 1950, the Americans had needlessly provoked the Chinese into intervening. And in her careful examination of the armistice negotiations, *A Substitute for Victory* (1990), British historian Rosemary Foot also held the United States responsible for prolonging the war by dragging out the Panmunjom talks for two years—an argument many historians found persuasive.

The end of the Cold War has inaugurated a new round of historical inquiry and rethinking. The first major rupture in the wall of secrecy maintained by the communist side came in 1993. Two staff members of the post-Stalin era archive of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union presented a paper at a Wilson Center

> KATHRYN WEATHERSBY, a former Research Scholar at the Wilson Center's Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, has written widely on the Soviet role in the Korean War, most recently in "Stalin, Mao and the End of the Korean War," in *Brothers in Arms, The Rise and Fall of the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1945–1963* (1998), edited by Odd Arne Westad. Copyright © 1999 by Kathryn Weathersby.

conference in Moscow that cited a 1966 survey of Soviet and Chinese involvement in the Korean War prepared by the Soviet Foreign Ministry. Intended as background information for a small group of Soviet officials engaged in negotiations with Beijing and Hanoi during the Vietnam War, this highly classified report baldly contradicted the Soviet position on the Korean War. It explained in straightforward language that Kim Il Sung had repeatedly pressed Joseph Stalin for permission to reunify Korea by military means long before the invasion was launched. Only in early 1950, after nearly a year of entreaties, did the Soviet leader finally approve the plan and send the necessary arms, equipment, and military advisers to North Korea. That May, Kim traveled to Beijing to secure the support of Mao Zedong.

Historians began getting a clearer picture of these high-level dealings in 1992 and '93 with Russia's gradual release of other files. They reveal North Korea's profound dependence on Soviet assistance in the prewar years and the extraordinary degree of control Moscow maintained over its Korean client state. But key questions remained unanswered. Then, in July 1994, Russian president Boris Yeltsin, hoping to improve relations with South Korea, presented President Kim Young Sam with a collection of documents from the Presidential Archive, the still-closed Kremlin repository that holds the Soviet records of greatest sensitivity. Early in 1995, the Wilson Center's Cold War International History Project obtained a larger set of documents from the same archive, many of which I translated and analyzed in the *Bulletin of the Cold War International History Project* (Spring 1995 and Winter 1995).

The new evidence shows that contemporary observers of the war were much closer to the mark about what was going on than the revisionists were—but that their understanding was still flawed in several important respects. There is now no doubt that

the original North Korean attack was a conventional military offensive planned and prepared by the Soviet Union. While Kim Il Sung had pressed Stalin for permission to reunify Korea by force, North Korea was not at that time capable of mounting such a campaign on its own.

Stalin did not, however, initiate the invasion of South Korea as a test of Western resolve. Indeed, he gave Kim the green light only because he believed the United States would not intervene—something the British spy Donald MacLean had surely communicated to Stalin well before Secretary of State Dean Acheson's infamous speech of January 12, 1950, indicating that the United States would not guarantee South Korea's security. Stalin was so determined to avoid a military confrontation with the United States, fearing that the Soviet Union was not yet strong enough to win, that he would not have approved the invasion if Washington had made it clear that it would respond with force. In May 1950, the Soviet dictator explained to Mao Zedong that it was now possible to agree to the North Koreans' proposal "in light of the changed international situation."

The archival record does not explicitly reveal what changes Stalin was referring to, but it appears that his decision was part of a new approach to security in the Far East adopted at the end of 1949. Moscow decided to abandon cooperation with the Americans and pursue its interests through more aggressive means. Stalin assumed that Japan would eventually rearm and threaten the Soviet Far East. He wanted to gain control over southern Korea in order to ensure that Japan could not again use the peninsula as a staging ground, as it had for invasions of the Soviet Union after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and of China in the 1930s. The fateful decision to attack South Korea was thus part of a regional rather than global strategy, designed to take advantage of the new American policy of avoiding military engagements on the Asian mainland.

While the archives show that Stalin did not conceive of the Korea campaign as a means of gauging the West's will to fight, as many in the West assumed at



This was the scene when invading U.N. troops marched into the North Korean capital of Pyongyang on October 23, 1950. China soon intervened, sending the invaders into retreat.

the time, it was a test nevertheless. Since the Soviet leader based his foreign policy everywhere on calculations of American strength and commitment, he could not have failed to take into account a U.S. failure to come to South Korea's defense.

The various archives also show that the Truman administration was wrong to assume Chinese complicity in Stalin's decision to attack. The Russian papers, combined with documents from Beijing analyzed by the Chinese historian Chen Jian in *China's Road to the Korean War* (1994), reveal that while Stalin ordered Kim Il Sung to travel to Beijing in May 1950 to secure Mao Zedong's consent to the invasion, the visit was largely a formality. Having just concluded an alliance with the Soviet Union to secure essential aid for his new state, Mao was in no position to contest Stalin's decision. He would have preferred to defeat his Nationalist foes on Taiwan before risking

action on the Korean peninsula. Later, in October 1950, when Stalin pressured the Chinese to enter the war to save North Korea from imminent defeat, Mao complained bitterly about having been excluded from the initial planning for the operation.

Washington's mistaken assumption about China's role in the attack promoted the very action the United States wished to avoid. By challenging Chinese sovereignty over Taiwan, Washington led the leadership in Beijing eventually to conclude that despite the immense hardships an intervention in Korea would entail, Chinese pride and national security required standing up to American "arrogance." The sudden injection of more than two million Chinese "volunteers" in the autumn of 1950 saved the day for Kim Il Sung's communist state. The UN forces were quickly driven south before they

were able to regroup and counterattack. By the summer of 1951, the two sides had reached a stalemate that left them arrayed roughly along the 38th parallel.

One more important twist has emerged from the archives. Until the Russian documents were released, it was not known just how far Stalin was willing to go to avoid a direct military confrontation with the United States. The documents reveal that at the end of two weeks of hard bargaining in early October 1950, when it appeared that Beijing would not send its troops to North Korea to stop MacArthur's rapid advance, the Soviet leader ordered the North Korean army to evacuate the country and withdraw to Chinese and Soviet territory. He was not going to pit Soviet forces against the Americans.

Stalin rescinded his order as soon as he received word of Mao's final decision to intervene, but its impact on Kim Il Sung could not be so easily erased. Nor could the effects of Stalin's insistence that North Korea continue to meet its export quotas for minerals and other items to the Soviet Union during the war. The subsequent evolution of Kim Il Sung's aggressively xenophobic worldview was also shaped by Stalin's approach to the armistice negotiations. Once the war became a stalemate, in 1951, the Soviet leader instructed the Chinese and North Koreans to take a hard line in the negotiations, explaining that the United States had a greater need to reach a negotiated settlement. As long as the danger of an American advance toward the Soviet border could be avoided, Stalin apparently reasoned, the advantages the war brought the Soviet Union—keeping the American military bogged down in Asia while yielding valuable intelligence about its capabilities—outweighed the disadvantages. Even though the North Koreans, enduring heavy bombing by the U.S. Air Force, were willing in early 1952 to conclude an armistice, and the Chinese were likewise inclined by that fall, Stalin continued

until his death in March 1953 to insist on a hard line. As he explained to Chinese foreign minister Zhou Enlai, “the North Koreans have lost nothing, except for casualties that they suffered during the war.”

The Russian archives show that President Dwight D. Eisenhower's May 1953 threats to use nuclear weapons in Korea cannot be credited with bringing the communists to a negotiated settlement. Immediately after Stalin's death, his uncertain successors, concerned about the precariousness of their own rule (before Nikita Khrushchev's emergence), decided to bring the war to an end. When the armistice was signed, on July 27, 1953, more than 33,000 Americans and millions of North and South Korean soldiers and civilians lay dead.

Since the end of the Korean War, North Korea's leaders have made much of the devastation their country suffered at the hands of the South Korean and American “aggressors.” But North Korea also suffered at the hands of its closest allies. Indeed, the malign effects of Stalin's policies toward Pyongyang must be rated an important legacy of the war. The new information from the former Soviet archives suggests that Moscow's cynical, high-handed treatment taught Kim Il Sung and his associates that they could not count on their fraternal allies to ensure their survival. Even as Pyongyang grew heavily dependent on Soviet economic subsidies over the next several decades, it developed a progressively more extreme philosophy of self-reliance, or *juche*. When the Soviet Union finally collapsed, North Korea was left not only without an important source of support but without an understanding of normal relations with other states—or even an understanding that such relations can exist. That impossible legacy is an important reason why North Korea, nearly 50 years after the end of the Korean War, retains a prominent place near the top of American security concerns.

BACKGROUND BOOKS

Korea occupies a mountainous 600-mile-long peninsula at one of the crossroads of Asia. To the north and west looms China, a frequent antagonist. Only 120 miles to the east, across the Korea Strait, lies Japan, which more than once has seized upon Korea as a convenient bridge to the Asian mainland.

Although frequent invasions by foreign armies and ideas, from Taoism to capitalism, have been the fate of Korea, it early developed a distinctive character. According to legend, the first Korean was Tan-gun, born in 2333 B.C. out of the union of a bear and the son of a Korean god. For centuries, the early Koreans lived in relative isolation, shielded by mountain barriers.

The first (A.D. 662–935) of Korea's three dynasties was born when the kingdom of Silla enlisted Chinese aid in conquering two neighboring kingdoms, unifying much of what is now North and South Korea—then repulsing a takeover attempt by its erstwhile allies. When Silla fell victim to intrigue and rebellion, the Koryo dynasty (A.D. 935–1392) arose, gaining renown for its splendid court, its papermaking, and its mastery—long before Gutenberg—of moveable type. But internal decay and constant clashes with Japanese pirates and Mongol and Chinese invaders finally brought the Koryo down too, historian Andrew C. Nahm writes in his survey **Korea: Tradition & Transformation** (Hollym Int'l., 1988).

Yi Song-gye, founder of the Yi, or Choson, dynasty (1392–1910), moved the capital to what is now Seoul and inaugurated a series of ambitious reforms that still echo through the two Koreas. Yi and his successors curbed both the powerful local lords who had challenged the Koryo kings and the Buddhist monasteries that had come to pose their own challenge after the kings encouraged their development as a counterweight to the town-based aristocrats. The Japanese pirates were vanquished.

Yi established normal relations with China, paying handsome tributes to the Ming emperors. He also looked to China for inspiration; science, scholarship, and the arts flourished. But the greatest change

was wrought by Yi's embrace of Chinese neo-Confucianism, which he gave a strong local flavor. Martina Deuchler's **Confucian Transformation of Korea: A Study of Society and Ideology** (Harvard Univ. Press, 1992) takes the era as its subject. Society was divided into five classes, dominated by the *yangban*, a small, hereditary scholar-gentry class. The *yangban* enjoyed a virtual monopoly on positions in the civil service, an important point of contrast with China, where an examination system allowed the less wellborn to move up. "The Yi monarchy shared with China the concept and rhetoric of the sage king," JaHyun Kim Haboush writes in **Heritage of Kings: One Man's Monarchy in the Confucian World** (Columbia Univ. Press, 1988), but not the notion of the leader's divinity. By claiming superior virtue and wisdom, the aristocrats of the bureaucracy could—and often did—vie with Korea's kings for power.

Yi Song-gye's reign was followed by nearly 200 years of peace. But during the 1590s, Korea was twice devastated by Japanese armies using the peninsula as an invasion route to China. Reacting to these shocks, and to the disquieting appearance of Western "barbarians," Korea withdrew from contact with the outside world, becoming the "Hermit Kingdom." One treatment of the period is **Confucian Statecraft and Korean Institutions: Yu Hyonguon and the Late Choson Dynasty** (Univ. of Washington Press, 1998), by James B. Palais.

Korea became a pawn in the great regional struggles among the Western powers, Meiji Japan, Russia, and China, Korea's traditional but fading patron. In 1905, centuries of proud independence came to an end when Korea became a protectorate of Japan following the 1904–05 Russo-Japanese War. In 1910, it was formally annexed.

Tokyo's rule was brutal. In 1919, nearly 8,000 Koreans died when the Japanese ruthlessly suppressed an independence movement (which had been partly inspired by President Woodrow Wilson's call for "self-determination of peoples"). The Japanese oversaw the forced modernization of Korea,

strengthening industry and agriculture (and largely depriving the *yangban* of their landholdings) but claiming virtually all of the benefits for themselves.

Among the notable studies of this period are **The Fall of the Hermit Kingdom** (Oceana Pubs., 1967), by Woonsang Choi; **The Abacus and the Sword: The Japanese Penetration of Korea, 1895–1910** (Univ. of Calif. Press, 1995), by Peter Duus; and **Trade and Transformation in Korea, 1876–1945** (Westview, 1996), by Dennis L. McNamara.

Liberation from Japan after World War II did not end Korea's woes. Occupied by the United States and the Soviet Union, the peninsula was divided at the 38th parallel. By 1950, the two Koreas were at war, recounted in **The Korean War: An International History** (Princeton Univ. Press, 1996), by William Stueck.

The armistice of 1953 left the two Koreas devastated and still divided. Since the war, however, South Korea has transformed itself into an Asian Tiger, a story told in Bruce Cumings's **Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History** (Norton, 1997). The North's shroud of secrecy is seldom penetrated. For a glimpse, consult **The Tears of My Soul** (Morrow, 1993), a memoir by Kim Hun Hee, a North Korean agent who was captured after participating in the November 1987 bombing of Korean Air Lines flight 858, which killed 115 people. **The Two Koreas: A Contemporary History** (Addison-Wesley, 1997), by journalist Don Oberdorfer, dramatically recounts the relatively frequent high-level contacts (and savage conflicts) between the two. North-South dialogue began in 1971; a joint statement on July 4, 1972, declared that eventual reunification would be "achieved through independent efforts without being subject to external imposition or interference."

South Korea's evolution toward democracy is the subject of Frank B. Gibney's **Korea's Quiet Revolution: From Garrison State to Democracy** (Walker, 1993). From the beginning, the country's authoritarian leaders poured money into education—outlays reached 10 percent of gross national product—in order to produce the skilled workers needed to fulfill their strategy of

export-led growth. With education came democratic yearnings. Gibney says South Korea saw its first truly democratic presidential election in 1987.

But elections alone do not make a democracy. Jongryn Mo and Chung-in Moon, the editors of **Democracy and the Korean Economy** (Hoover Inst. Press, 1999), argue that South Korea's current economic crisis is a product of "the immaturity of Korean democracy." Efforts to reform the *chaebol*, the ingrown financial sector, and labor practices were caught in "10 years of policy gridlock." They say that South Korea is still far from mastering the arts of democracy—negotiation, compromise, and consensus.

Mark Clifford's **Troubled Tiger: Businessmen, Bureaucrats, and Generals in South Korea** (M.E. Sharpe, 1994) paints a more vivid picture: "Corruption, coercion and favoritism are the dark side of Korea, Inc. . . . Unlike Japan, the rise of Korea is a story not of consensus or harmony, but of bitter battles in the boardrooms and on the shop floor, in the heavily fortified presidential palace and the grimly utilitarian ministry offices."

Authoritarianism layered over Korean-style Confucianism—even a younger twin usually addresses the elder with an honorific—powered the South Korean economic miracle, Clifford says. But the formula won't work much longer. The government-dominated economy is too full of distortions and corruption, too closed against outsiders. The sudden jump from village-based Asian backwater to urbanized world economic power has left South Korea without the cultural resources to resolve conflicts that inevitably occur in a rapidly changing society.

"The tendency to hang on to what it knows best rather than to embrace change is more pronounced in Korea than in most other countries," Clifford writes. "Korea responds to shocks: It has reshaped itself largely under the pressure of Japanese colonization, the Korean War, and the single-minded military men who ran the country for three decades." That tendency to respond to shock stretches far back in Korean history. Whether it will assert itself again during today's economic crisis is a question still to be answered.

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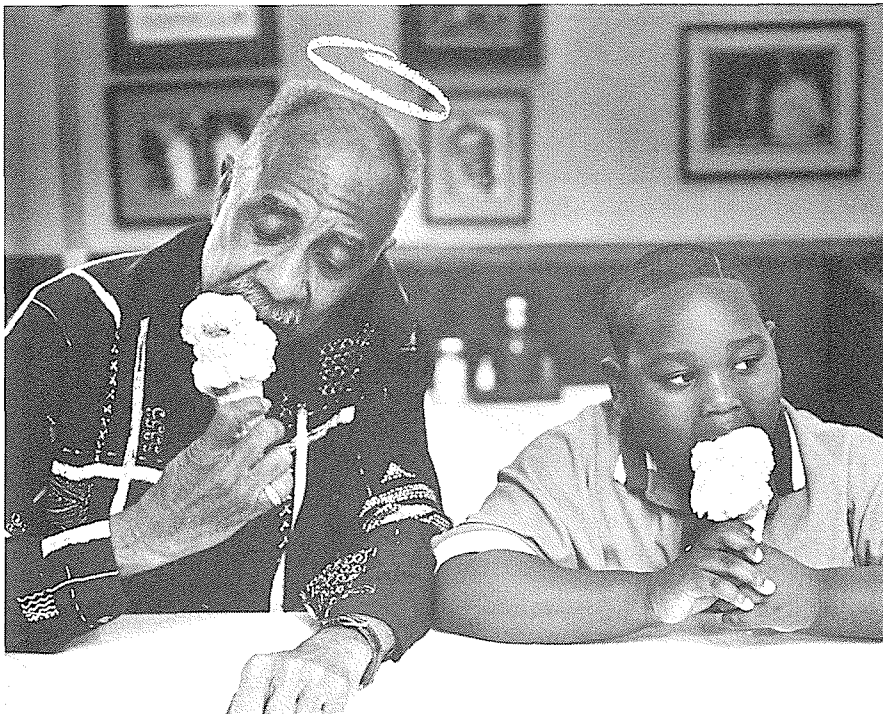
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Why Did Reform in Russia Fail?

A Survey of Recent Articles

Though Russia's economy has not completely disintegrated since the financial crash last summer, the failure of market reform is no longer in dispute. Even before the U.S.-led intervention in Kosovo antagonized Russian public opinion further, "democracy" and "reform" had become dirty words. What went wrong? ask the editors of *Journal of Democracy* (Apr. 1999). The answer, it seems, is simple: too much reform—or not enough.

Several of the 10 contributors blame the reformers' ideological zealotry. The disaster in Russia, says Alexander Lukin, a political scientist at the Moscow State Institute for Foreign Affairs, resulted from a "ruthless" effort by "fanatical 'democratic' ideologues to impose their abstract ideal" on a country lacking "the necessary cultural preconditions." Instead of first changing the culture, President Boris Yeltsin (and before him, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev), egged on by "their shortsighted Western advisors, pushed the country toward democratization 'here and now.'"

"In retrospect," writes Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., a professor of international relations at Johns Hopkins University's Nitze School, "the most questionable aspect of Yeltsin's economic reform was the quick privatization of banking and of the vast extractive industries—oil, gas, aluminum smelting, and the like." Privatization, which rewarded "favored courtiers" with the equivalent of medieval fiefs and took place in "the atmosphere of a going-out-of-business sale," encouraged corruption and weakened the state—and, more than any other single factor, was "probably responsible" for democracy's fall from popular favor.

Since the demise of the Soviet Union, Fairbanks says, the West has viewed Russia

through "the lens of ideology," repeatedly recommending a failed strategy of economic reform. "Where 'shock therapy' was tried," he says, "it has had disastrous effects on the lives of most people in all the former Soviet republics except the Baltic states." The "clear superiority of the free market to socialism" is not in doubt, he writes, but more attention needs to be paid to "the relationship of the market economy to civil society and politics."

Don't blame Russia's democrats for the disaster, argue Dmitri Glinski, a Russian scholar and a research associate at George Washington University, and Peter Reddaway, a professor of political science there. "In fact," they say, "the program of economic reforms designed and implemented by Boris Yeltsin, Yegor Gaidar, Anatoly Chubais, and their Western advisers ran counter to the most basic aspirations and tenets of the democratic movement that had ensured Yeltsin's success in the 1989, 1990, and 1991 elections." Though that movement, which had emerged from the underground during the Soviet regime's final years, had "few clearly defined programmatic goals," and its members subscribed to various "creeds . . . from communitarian traditionalism to liberal Marxism," they shared "broadly conceived democratic values" and a "quintessentially Russian 'populist' vision." But they lost—and the "radical marketeers," backed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and others in the West, won.

Yeltsin and his associates, assert Glinski and Reddaway, have been like the Bolsheviks of 1917, with the "self-confident, almost messianic vanguard mentality of a self-anointed elite" imposing its own views on "the 'backward' majority." Instead of promoting inde-

pendent democratic institutions, they established an authoritarian regime and implemented “market Bolshevism.” The result: “the destruction of Russia’s industrial base . . . a decline in its population, and the danger of an irreversible criminalization and privatization of the Russian state.”

Martin Malia, a historian at the University of California, Berkeley, traces the current woes to the radical deformation of society caused by seven decades of communism. “Shock therapy” worked very well in Poland, which “had a far lighter communist structural heritage to overcome,” he notes, while Ukraine, which “did virtually no reforming at all . . . is now in worse shape than Russia.”

In Soviet Russia, Malia points out, there was “a party-state military-industrial complex, based on a now antiquated plant of heavy industry constituting some 70–80 percent of the ‘economy’ and employing a comparable proportion of the labor force. Most of this plant is still there, though now in private hands, often those of the *nomenklatura*, and operating nominally through the market. Briefly put, the problem this heritage creates is that such a plant produces [few] goods that anyone will buy on the free market. Yet closing down this mastodon and dismissing its workers would be tantamount to closing down the country.” Alongside this “virtual economy,” observes Malia, is a much smaller “real” one, producing goods of genuine value, mostly raw materials such as oil, gas, and timber. The “ferocious” struggle over these resources has produced “much of the corruption with which Russian government is riddled.”

In the *Brookings Review* (Winter 1999), Clifford G. Gaddy, a Fellow at the Brookings Institution, and Barry W. Ickes, an economist at Pennsylvania State University, argue that today’s “virtual economy” arose not from economic reform but from the avoidance of it. “Enterprises make pretty much the same products they made under the Soviet system and in pretty much the same way,” they report. “The enterprises can continue to produce these goods because they have a guaranteed set of ‘buyers’ . . . and because they avoid the use of money. Avoiding money, through barter and other forms of nonmonetary exchange, allows the goods to be overpriced, giving the appearance of more value being produced

than is the case. These overpriced goods are then delivered to the government in lieu of taxes, or to value-adders, mainly energy suppliers such as the natural gas monopoly *Gazprom*, in lieu of payment. . . . As much as 70 percent of transactions among industrial enterprises involve no money.” Only when this virtual economy is eliminated, Gaddy and Ickes maintain, “can real reform begin.”

The Russian privatization program, they say, was “essentially a giveaway to insiders—that is, the directors and workers.” The manufacturing enterprises most in need of change thus were turned over to those who had the most to lose if they were changed. “Meanwhile, government shares in valuable enterprises went to the large banks and other political insiders.”

Such transfers “benefited the government budget only temporarily and inadequately,” James R. Millar, a professor of economics and international affairs at George Washington University, notes in *Journal of Democracy*. The immediate cause of last August’s financial crisis was the government’s inability to staunch the continuing, massive flow of red ink. “Financing the deficit eventually ran the government into the ground.” A 1996 IMF loan, which apparently was made under U.S. pressure and “helped ensure Yeltsin’s reelection,” had only put off the reckoning.

Though some specialists, such as Anders Åslund, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and a former adviser to the Russian government, insist that Russia needs to cut government spending and urge the West to “resist the temptation to throw any more money at the problem,” their advice is going unheeded. The IMF in April announced it will provide \$4.5 billion in new loans to Russia. This, notes the *Economist* (May 1, 1999), may “unlock \$3 billion in loans from Japan and the World Bank. . . . So Russia should not fall further into bankruptcy before its forthcoming elections (parliamentary in December, presidential next year).”

It is too soon to compose an obituary for Russian democracy, declares Michael McFaul, a political scientist at Stanford University, in *Journal of Democracy*. Despite the “economic meltdown,” Russia’s nascent electoral democracy survives. And in that there is hope, he says. But an economic turnaround clearly is needed.

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

The Ignorant Voter

"Voter Ignorance and the Democratic Ideal" by Ilya Somin, in *Critical Review* (Fall 1998), P.O. Box 380015, Cambridge, Mass. 02238.

American voters' abysmal ignorance about politics and government is a well-established, albeit frequently overlooked, fact. Most voters do not know which branch of government has the power to declare war, or who controls monetary policy; some 70 percent cannot name either of their state's senators; almost a third have virtually no relevant political knowledge at all.

Despite widespread increases in formal education and an explosion of available information, the general level of political knowledge has not changed much, if at all, since the late 1930s, when mass survey research began. "This striking failure" throws cold water on the expectation of John Stuart Mill and later political analysts that the spread of formal education would "create the informed electorate that the democratic ideal requires," observes Somin, a graduate student in political science at Harvard University.

Some theorists have argued that despite their ignorance, voters can pick up cues from political parties, opinion leaders, or even their own daily lives, that enable them to cast informed votes. Not so, says Somin. "The theories show, at best, that voters can discern the existence of issues and the opposing stances of candidates; but they do not demonstrate that voters can meaningfully relate this knowledge to the achievement of their preferred policy objectives." A candidate's party affiliation, for instance, may offer a clue to his policy

positions, but it tells little about the effects of the policies.

Other theorists have claimed that the "erroneous" votes randomly cast by ignorant voters cancel one another out, so that the outcome is decided by the relatively informed voters. However, ignorant voters do not cast their votes randomly, Somin points out, but instead often act on the basis of mistaken inferences. Misperceptions about the economy, for example, badly hurt President George Bush's 1992 reelection effort.

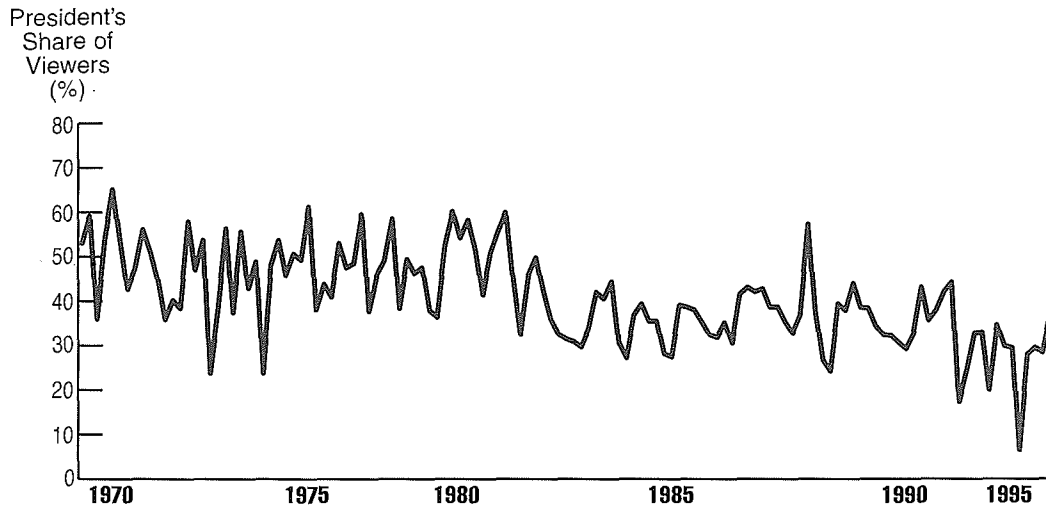
"Perhaps the most fundamental cause of ignorance" in the electorate, Somin writes, results from the insignificance of any individual vote in determining the outcome of an election. "Since one vote is almost certain not to be decisive, even a voter who cares greatly about the outcome has almost no incentive to invest heavily in acquiring sufficient knowledge to make an informed choice." Today, Somin says, the vast size and scope of government increases the likelihood of voter ignorance, and even calls into question the electoral competence of relatively well-informed voters. (This holds true even for professional social scientists, he says, noting that he himself "had never heard of 25 of the 61 non-Cabinet level agencies listed in the *Government Manual*" before looking them up for his article.) More limited government, Somin concludes, might mean a less ignorant electorate—and a more truly democratic government.

Surfing Past the President

"Has Cable Ended the Golden Age of Presidential Television?" by Matthew A. Baum and Samuel Kemell, in *American Political Science Review* (Mar. 1999), 1527 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Ever since JFK, presidents have used prime-time TV to appeal directly to the public. For decades, the airwaves of the broadcast networks were the president's to

command, and the American public watched and listened en masse. Today, the White House has to compete with sitcoms and cop shows. It doesn't fare well, report



U.S. presidents addressed the nation on TV more frequently, and generally drew a larger share of the viewing audience, in the years before multitudes of American households were wired for cable television.

political scientist Kernell and doctoral student Baum, both of the University of California, San Diego.

When President Richard Nixon held a routine press conference in March 1969, 59 percent of America's TV-owning households tuned in. But when President Bill Clinton told a prime-time news conference in April 1995 that "The president is not irrelevant here," less than seven percent of TV households heard him.

The general decline in the audience for presidential TV began, ironically, during the years of the "Great Communicator," Ronald Reagan. But it wasn't voter alienation that sent the presidential Nielsen's plunging, Kernell and Baum say. It was cable television.

When three broadcast networks dominated the airwaves, they could jointly suspend commercial programming, broadcast the president's address, and then resume regular programming without serious loss of audience. (One study found that even the uncharismatic President Gerald Ford matched the audience share of the programming he preempted in all but three of his 19 TV appearances.)

But in the early 1980s, as cable television spread throughout the country, the

president and the networks began to lose this "captive" audience. During the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton years, their audience share plummeted from 54.6 percent to 29.3 percent. Now, when the networks put the president on in prime time, many viewers channel surfed off to watch professional wrestling, HBO, or whatever else tickled their fancy.

In October 1987, the big three networks refused to broadcast a Reagan speech on aid to the Nicaraguan Contras, claiming it contained nothing new. The networks refused Reagan again in 1988, denied airtime to President George Bush in 1992, and during the Clinton administration, began rotating coverage among themselves of some presidential appearances. Six out of 20 Clinton prime-time addresses and press conferences were not carried by all three major networks. When that happens, even households without cable have a viewing alternative.

All of this worries Baum and Kernell: "How will presidents promote themselves and their policies to a citizenry that depends almost entirely on television for its news and information yet is increasingly unwilling to allow them into their home?"

Expert Adjustments

"Theory-Driven Reasoning about Plausible Pasts and Probable Futures in World Politics: Are We Prisoners of Our Preconceptions?" by Philip E. Tetlock, in *American Journal of Political Science* (Apr. 1999), Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 2537 Daniels St., Madison, Wis. 53718.

"When the facts change, I change my mind," British economist John Maynard Keynes once said. "What do you do, Sir?"

The honest answer that many specialists in political, economic, and military affairs would have to give would be: "I change the facts." At least that's what Tetlock's studies of "experts" in a variety of fields seem to suggest.

In one study, the Ohio State University psychologist asked 75 specialists on the former Soviet Union to suppose that researchers unearthed new evidence in the Kremlin archives. The fresh evidence showed that history could have been different at three junctures: that Stalinism could have been averted in the 1920s, that the Cold War could have been ended in the mid-1950s, and that President Ronald Reagan's hardline anti-communist policies in the early 1980s almost provoked a dangerous confrontation with the Soviets. Besides that "liberal" scenario, Tetlock also presented a "conservative" one, asking the specialists to suppose that new evidence showed that history could *not* have taken a different turn at those three junctures: that Stalinism could not have been averted in the 1920s, etc.

Tetlock found that the liberal specialists rated the imagined "liberal" evidence highly credible and the imagined "conservative" evidence relatively incredible. The conservative specialists took precisely the opposite view. In one version of Tetlock's test, some specialists did change their minds. But in general, he says, the experts "switched on

the high-intensity search light of skepticism" only for the results that ran counter to their ideological inclination.

If experts seem less than open-minded when considering the past, they also do not come off too well when dealing with the future. In the late 1980s and early '90s, Tetlock asked 199 professors, policy wonks, intelligence analysts, journalists, and other experts for predictions on various subjects, from the 1992 presidential race to the fate of South Africa. The experts, he says, "were only slightly more accurate" than the toss of a coin would have been. For instance, "almost as many experts as not thought [in 1988] that the Soviet Communist Party would remain firmly in the saddle of power in 1993." Most of the experts "thought they knew more than they did." Those with 80 percent or higher confidence in their predictions proved correct only 45 percent of the time.

The experts were not eager to admit their errors. The predicted outcome "almost occurred," many said. Or it still would occur eventually. Or "other things" (as in "other things being equal") were not equal.

Are even experts, being human, naturally inclined to resist learning from events that run counter to their expectations? Perhaps, says Tetlock. But it is also possible that they have simply adapted to "a professional culture in which one's reputation hinges on appearing approximately right most of the time and on never appearing clearly wrong."

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

Two Utopias

"A World Imagined" by Charles Krauthammer, in *The New Republic* (Mar. 15, 1999), 1220 19th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036; "History Repeating Itself: Liberalism and Foreign Policy" by Robert Kagan, in *The New Criterion* (Apr. 1999), 850 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019.

The foreign policy favored by liberalism and pursued by the Clinton administration, columnist Krauthammer argues, reflects a

coherent vision of the world—"coherent, consistent, and dangerously at odds with the realities of the international system."

This misguided foreign policy, he asserts, rests on three shaky pillars: (1) internationalism (i.e. "the belief in the moral, legal, and strategic primacy of international institutions over mere national interests"); (2) legalism (i.e. "the belief that safety and security are achieved through treaties"—international agreements on such matters as chemical weapons, nuclear nonproliferation, and anti-ballistic missiles); and (3) humanitarianism (i.e. "the belief that the primary world role of the United States is, to quote [Secretary of State] Madeleine Albright . . . 'to terminate the abominable injustices and conditions that still plague civilization.'")

In reality, Krauthammer maintains, the "international community" is nothing more than a fiction. "The international arena is a state of nature with no enforcer and no universally recognized norms. Anarchy is kept in check, today as always, not by some hollow bureaucracy on the East River, but by the will and power of the Great Powers, and today, in particular, of the one great superpower."

The administration's "p penchant for treaties," Krauthammer says, is driven by the desire to transcend power politics and recreate domestic society on the world stage—a "hopelessly utopian" project. The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty no more kept Iraq from clandestinely trying to develop nuclear weapons than the 1928 Kellogg-Briand Pact held its signatories (including Germany and Japan) to their renunciation of war.

As for the third pillar, humanitarianism, it

stems from "an abiding liberal antipathy to any notion of national interest," says Krauthammer. "Indeed, in the new liberal orthodoxy, it is only disinterested intervention . . . that is pristine enough to justify the use of force. Violence undertaken for the purpose of securing interests is not." Hence, "the amazing transmutation of Cold War and Gulf war doves into Haiti and Bosnia and Kosovo hawks."

Concludes Krauthammer: "The greatest power in the world—the most dominant power relative to its rivals that the world has seen since the Roman empire—is led by people who seek to diminish that dominance and level the international arena. It is a vision, all right, an amazing vision of self-denial in the service of self-delusion."

Yet foreign policy "realism" like Krauthammer's does not hold the answer to the Clinton administration's "new Wilsonianism," contends Kagan, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. The realists, he says, "are in their own way both as utopian and as anti-nationalistic as the Wilsonians they abhor." They fail to grasp "that the American national interest, its *raison d'état*, [cannot] be divorced from American liberalism," an outlook that is "as much a fact of life as the enduring reality of power and the immutable character of human nature," Kagan says. "It is the messy and inevitably imperfect attempt to reconcile these conflicting realities that provides the great challenge for American statesmanship, now as in the past."

Casualties of Peacekeeping

"Public Support for Peacekeeping in Lebanon and Somalia: Assessing the Casualties Hypothesis"
by James Burk, in *Political Science Quarterly* (Spring 1999), 475 Riverside Dr.,
Ste. 1274, New York, N.Y. 10115-1274.

The notion that the public will not support U.S. peacekeeping operations abroad if they entail loss of American lives has become widespread in recent years. But it is ill-founded, contends Burk, a sociologist at Texas A&M University.

He examines two oft-cited cases, a decade apart, in which the United States withdrew its forces after incurring casualties: Somalia, where 18 soldiers were killed in a battle in

the streets of Mogadishu in October 1993, and Lebanon, where 241 marines died when a terrorist truck bomb destroyed their barracks at the Beirut airport in October 1983.

"While public opinion was not insensitive to the deaths of American soldiers," Burk says, "public approval or disapproval of both missions was, in fact, largely determined before casualties occurred."

Public opinion about the U.S. role in



Marines pull the body of a fallen comrade from the rubble after a terrorist truck bomb destroyed a barracks in Beirut, killing 241, in 1983; public support for the mission increased after the incident.

Lebanon was divided before the bombing, with most Americans disapproving. Support for the mission *increased* after the October barracks bombing, rising from 40 percent in September to 61 percent in November. By early 1984, however, the public apparently had cooled off or come to see the operation as futile, for its approval retreated to pre-attack levels. In February, President Ronald Reagan pulled the marines out of Beirut, and the next month, formally ended the U.S. peacekeeping role.

In the case of Somalia, public support for the mission did fall (to less than 40 percent approval, by one survey) in reaction to the firefight in Mogadishu that left 18 Rangers dead, Burk says. But support had already declined sharply before the incident—from more than 80 percent approval in January 1993 to less than 50 percent in September.

The mission, Burk notes, had changed: what began as a Bush administration humanitarian famine-relief effort became after that January, a Clinton administration attempt to end the civil war in Somalia and build a new nation. The American public did not go along with the change of mission.

Most Americans do consider the risk of casualties “a crucial, perhaps the most important, factor affecting their support of a decision to use armed force,” Burk writes. And in past ventures overseas, as political scientist John Mueller showed in *War, Presidents and Public Opinion* (1973), the accumulation of casualties over time did lead to an erosion of public support in the Korean and Vietnam wars. But that is not the same, Burk notes, as saying “that the public will only support what are virtually casualty-free military deployments.”

Invite the Bear?

“Rethinking Europe” by Charles A. Kupchan, in *The National Interest* (Summer 1999), 1112 16th St., N.W., Ste. 540, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Enlarging the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) may have been a bad idea, but now that Poland, Hungary, and

the Czech Republic have been admitted, argues Kupchan, a Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, enlargement

Why Wright Was Wrong

In *The Power Elite* (1956), one of the classic books of the 1950s, sociologist C. Wright Mills maintained that behind the democratic facade, power in America rested with a small circle of leaders in the military, big business, and government. The military would become ever more dominant, he predicted. Alan Wolfe, a sociologist at Boston University, observes in *The American Prospect* (May–June 1999) that Mills was wrong for an interesting reason.

*At the time Mills wrote, defense expenditures constituted roughly 60 percent of all federal outlays and consumed nearly 10 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product. By the late 1990s, those proportions had fallen to 17 percent of federal outlays and 3.5 percent of GDP. Nearly three million Americans served in the armed forces when *The Power Elite* appeared, but that number had dropped by half at century's end. By almost any account, Mills's prediction . . . is not borne out by historical developments since his time.*

And how could he have been right? Business firms, still the most powerful force in American life, are increasingly global in nature, more interested in protecting their profits wherever they are made than in the defense of the country in which perhaps only a minority of their employees live and work. Give most of the leaders of America's largest companies a choice between invading another country and investing in its industries and they will nearly always choose the latter over the former. Mills believed that in the 1950s, for the first time in American history, the military elite had formed a strong alliance with the economic elite. Now it would be more correct to say that America's economic elite finds more in common with economic elites in other countries than it does with the military elite of its own. The Power Elite failed to foresee a situation in which at least one of the key elements of the power elite would no longer identify its fate with the fate of the country which spawned it.

must be continued in order to embrace an unlikely new recruit: Russia.

“Committing to enlargement is to commit to establishing NATO as *the* central vehicle for building a stable Europe,” he writes. “To halt its expansion at Poland’s eastern border therefore makes no strategic sense.” European stability in the coming decades will depend crucially on “whether Russia exercises its power in a benign or malign manner,” Kupchan maintains, and with Russia inside NATO, the West can better support democratic reform there and encourage responsible behavior.

“To buy time for Russian democracy to deepen and for its economy to recover and mature, a small second wave of enlargement, one not likely to provoke Russia (Slovenia, Austria, and Romania are prime candidates), should begin immediately,” Kupchan urges. “But the third wave should

include Russia—so long as its economic and political circumstances improve.” He suggests 2010 as “a reasonable target date for Russia’s entry into NATO.”

Were NATO enlargement halted now, Kupchan argues, the “security predicament” of those states that lie between NATO nations and Russia (the Baltics, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova, Belarus, and Ukraine) would be worsened; or if those states were gradually admitted to the organization, Russia would be dangerously isolated—and unlikely to “stand by idly as every country on its western flank joins an opposing military bloc.”

With Russia inside NATO, Kupchan contends, “the Atlantic community [would have] more influence over developments in Europe’s east. . . . At stake are the security of Russia’s nuclear weapons and technology, Russia’s relationship with China, the

stability of Ukraine, and access to Caspian oil—interests that warrant deep Western engagement.”

Russian membership, of course, would alter the character of the alliance, which was formed a half-century ago to counter the Soviet threat to Western Europe. But that danger no longer exists, notes Kupchan. He formerly opposed enlargement because it would needlessly irk Russia, would resurrect the dividing line between Europe’s west and east, and ignored the need to fundamentally redefine the organization. “NATO must transform

itself if it is to remain relevant,” he writes. “Its focus on defending the territory of members needs to give way to an emphasis on peacekeeping and on deepening cooperation among former adversaries.”

As NATO is thus transformed, Europe must take up more of its own security burden, Kupchan says. In the long run, he believes, “a more balanced relationship between the United States and Europe, and a European security order that is more European and less Atlantic, hold out the best hope for preserving a cohesive transatlantic community.”

ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

A New Age of Productivity?

A Survey of Recent Articles

U.S. labor productivity has been growing at an average annual rate of nearly two percent since early 1995—and even faster in recent quarters. For some prophets of the Information Age, that rather dry sentence is like the sun at long last breaking through the clouds of economic statistics. Finally, proof that the oft-heralded “new era” has arrived!

Most economists, however, remain skeptical. Daniel E. Sichel, a senior economist with the Federal Reserve System, concedes that the recent productivity performance raises “the tantalizing possibility” that businesses are finally reaping the long-awaited benefits of information technology. But maybe not.

Sichel—one of seven authors who address the subject of productivity in *Business Economics* (Apr. 1999)—detects a “sharp increase in the contribution of computer hardware to output growth” in recent years, but believes that this may well be only “a transitory response” to a good economy and tumbling computer prices, which encourage corporations to buy more computers.

The recent acceleration in the growth of productivity, maintain Congressional Budget Office economists Robert Arnold and Robert Dennis, is partly the result of recent revisions in the Consumer Price Index to prevent overestimates of inflation. Indirectly, say Arnold and Dennis, those revisions probably boosted measured productivity growth by between .3

and .4 percentage points. They, too, point to the transitory effect of a flush economy.

Despite all the “new era” talk, Arnold and Dennis observe, “the vaunted upturn is far from bringing us back to the high productivity growth of the 1950s and 1960s.” Between 1947 and 1973, that growth averaged 2.7 percent a year; between 1973 and 1998, 1.1 percent. The “slowdown,” note Arnold and Dennis, may actually represent a return to more normal conditions.

New (Economic) Age types often point to the healthy corporate profits of recent years despite only modest price increases, observe economic consultants Susan C. Lakatos and Jason Benderly. “Corporate restructuring and technological advancement (in particular, the nearly universal adoption of personal computers)” are said to be the source of productivity gains. If that were so, the authors say, then large corporations, which have been “on the leading edge of the restructuring and technology revolutions,” should collectively outperform the economy. The large corporations in the Standard & Poor’s 500 Stock Index have indeed enjoyed dramatic growth in profits in recent years—but no better than that of other companies. The big increase in profits, Lakatos and Benderly believe, has come from falling interest rates and the abandon-

ment of traditional health insurance benefits in favor of health maintenance organizations and other less costly alternatives. Alas, "both of these shifts appear to have largely run their course."

To some extent, those who talk of a "new era" or "new economy" may just be dazzled by all the "new" products now available, suggests Jack E. Triplett, a Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Institution. Many of these new products and services—from medical goods to financial services—enhance productivity in ways that aren't captured in statistics.

But what is important is not the number of such improvements but their *rate* of increase, Triplett points out. The American grocery store seemed a spectacle of abundance in 1994. It was stocked with 19,000 items, compared with 9,000 in 1972. But a

1948 store stocked 2,200 items, Triplett notes; the 1948–72 rate of increase was nearly twice the 1972–94 rate. The real "golden age" of abundance (at least in grocery stores) is behind us.

Even so, Triplett believes that the computer is having a significant impact on productivity *in certain industries*—including financial services, wholesale trade, business services, equipment rental and leasing, insurance, and communications. But the "output" of these industries is generally hard to measure, and because they sell mostly to other businesses, the impact of their productivity is diffused. "Even if productivity growth in these computer-using industries were tremendous," he notes, it would not greatly increase overall national productivity. The New Age may be here, it seems—but not for everyone.

When Crime Pays

"Market Wages and Youth Crime" by Jeff Grogger, in *Journal of Labor Economics* (Oct. 1998), 1101 E. 58th St., Chicago, Ill. 60637.

During the 1970s and '80s, the wages paid to young men fell, while their arrest rates rose. There's a little-noticed connection, contends Grogger, an economist at the University of California, Los Angeles.

It's no secret that young men are far more prone to crime than other groups. In a 1980 national survey, nearly one-fourth of the men aged 17 to 23 who were neither in school nor in the military admitted earning money from crimes committed the previous year. Ninety-five percent of the criminals also worked, but less than their upright peers, and their legitimate earnings for the year were about 11 percent less.

From his analysis of the survey data, Grogger calculates that a drop (or rise) in wages results in a roughly similar increase (or decline) in youthful participation in property crime. Thus, if wages, adjusted for inflation, fall by 20 percent, youth crime should go up 20 percent. And indeed, he points out, for men aged 16 to 24, real wages fell 23 percent after the mid-1970s, while arrest rates between the early 1970s and late 1980s went up 18 percent. (However, the decline in wages was not the only factor, he notes, "as

evidenced by increases in arrests among adults, who generally experienced smaller declines in real wages.")

Interestingly, Grogger finds that education and marital status seem to have no significant effect on youthful participation in crime. But past experience on the wrong side of the law, perhaps enhancing criminal "productivity," appears to make such participation more likely. So does having a brother who is a criminal (and who therefore can show one the ropes).

Wages not only affect the crime rate among young men but also help to explain two well-known crime phenomena, Grogger finds. "Blacks typically earn less than whites, and this wage gap explains about one-fourth of the racial difference in criminal participation rates," he says. In addition, "wages largely explain the tendency for crime to decrease with age." Since wages generally rise as the worker grows older and gains more experience, turning to crime becomes correspondingly less attractive. Though Grogger does not say so, the solution to America's crime problem now seems obvious: pay raises all around!

Marine Management

"Firing Up the Front Line" by Jon R. Katzenbach and Jason A. Santamaria, in *Harvard Business Review* (May-June 1999), 60 Harvard Way, Boston, Mass. 02163.

Listen up, you CEOs! For many organizations, competitive advantage depends upon the performance of the unskilled, low-wage workers on the frontlines—all those people who flip burgers, clean hotel rooms, and unload baggage from cargo holds. How can managers keep these folks in vital but often monotonous jobs motivated? Here's how: take a page from the U.S. Marines!

A team of analysts from McKinsey & Company and the Conference Board—including Katzenbach, author of *Teams at the Top* (1997), and Santamaria, a business analyst (and former marine)—looked at 30 companies with a reputation for engaging the "emotional energy" of the rank and file, and at the marines. Although some of the firms, such as Southwest Airlines and Home Depot, excelled in this area, the analysts found that the Marine Corps outperformed them all.

While recognizing the obvious differences between the Corps and the corporation, the authors identify five marine managerial practices that many corporations would do well to emulate:

- Instead of the brief, rather perfunctory introduction to company values that most firms give to new employees, the marines make a huge investment in inculcating their "core values of honor, courage, and commitment," assigning some of their best people to be recruiters and drill instructors, and intensely focusing on the values throughout recruitment and training.

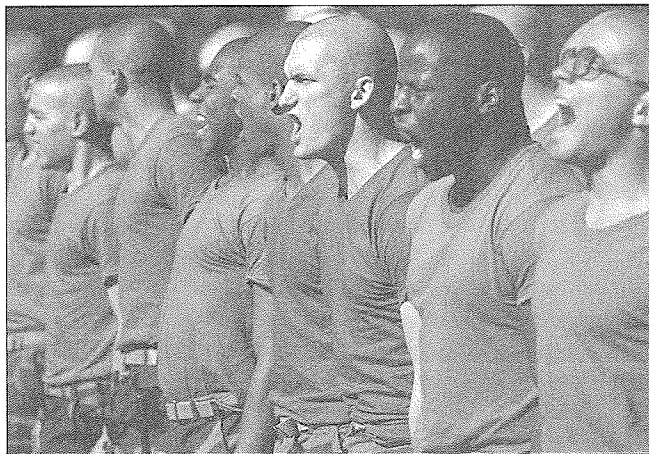
- Most businesses identify potential leaders among their frontline employees and write off the rest as followers, the authors say. The marines don't make that distinction, instead training every frontline person to lead. This "has a powerful impact on morale."

- Genuine teams are rare in the business world, where most work is done by groups led by one individual,

Katzenbach and Santamaria assert. "A real team, by contrast, draws its motivation more from its mission and goals than from its leader. Members work together as peers and hold one another accountable for the group's performance and results." The marines recognize the difference. They use both teams and "single-leader work groups"—and make clear what is expected of members. In the long run, "clarity creates trust."

- "Most business managers resist devoting time and talent" to the people in the "bottom half" of their organization, assuming that they will either function adequately or leave. The marines "find the time to attend to poor and mediocre performers, even if it means personal sacrifice." This approach makes sense, say the authors, especially in a booming economy, with labor in short supply.

- The marines encourage self-discipline as a way of building pride, "demanding that everyone on the front line act with honor, courage, and commitment." Some businesses do the same, with remarkable results, say the authors. "Southwest Airlines turns its planes around in less than half the time needed by many of its competitors." Wanting their airline to be the best, employees scramble to beat the clock. "Sometimes crew members actually help baggage handlers, and vice versa—something unheard of at other airlines." *Semper fi!*



The Marines train every one of these recruits to be a leader.

SOCIETY

A Nation of Joiners?

"The Growth of Voluntary Associations in America, 1840-1940" by Gerald Gamm and Robert D. Putnam, in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (Spring 1999), 147 North St., Norfolk, Mass. 02056.

If Americans in recent decades have exhibited a worrisome decline in civic engagement—as Harvard University scholar Putnam argued in his famous “bowling alone” article of 1995—is that unprecedented? Have Americans until now always been “a nation of joiners,” their civic life growing steadily ever stronger? Poring over city directories from 1840 to 1940 for 26 cities and towns, Putnam and Gamm, a political scientist at the University of Rochester, find a more complicated picture of the past.

There was “steady growth in associational life throughout the second half of the 19th century, accelerating between 1880 and 1900,” they write. That was when the “foundation stone of 20th-century civil society was set in place.” But then the growth slowed to a halt, followed by decline and stagnation. From slightly more than two voluntary associations per 1,000 people in 1840, according to the average city directory, the number increased to more than five by 1910, then dropped to a little above four in 1920, remaining at that level for the next two decades.

Many studies of particular types of associations have likewise found that the late 19th century was a time of vigorous growth. “In Peoria and St. Louis, in Boston and Boise and Bath and Bowling Green, Americans organized clubs and churches and lodges and veterans’ groups,” the authors note. But this usually is attributed to urbanization, industrialization, and immigration. Experiencing turmoil in their lives, runs the conventional argument, men and women in the nation’s great cities formed the associations to make human connections again.

Putnam and Gamm, however, find that “associational life [then] was most vibrant . . . in the small cities and towns of the hinterland, rather than the great cities of the Northeast or Midwest.” The authors are not sure why, though they mention several possible causes, including the greater availability of professional entertainment in the big cities. If a good explanation of what happened can be found, they believe, it might shed some useful light on “the condition and prospects of American civil society” today.

The Tremendous Tuber

“How the Potato Changed the World’s History” by William H. McNeill, in *Social Research* (Spring 1999), New School Univ., 66 W. 12th St., New York, N.Y. 10011.

Neither GIs peeling them nor well-dressed diners eating them au gratin would be likely to imagine it, but potatoes have altered the course of world history. So contends McNeill, the noted historian and author of *The Rise of the West* (1963).

The tuber’s first big role came on the high plateaus of the Andes, McNeill says. There, potatoes served as the main energy source for the Inca Empire, of the 12th through the 15th centuries, as well as for its predecessors and its Spanish successor. “In the altiplano . . . grain did not flourish nearly as well as potatoes,” which grew abundantly on artificially raised fields around Lake Titicaca (between what are now Peru and Bolivia). The Incas converted the moist tubers into

frozen *chuño* by exposing them to the cold night air, then stored them in natural underground deep freezes, where they could be kept for several years.

This method of food preservation allowed Andean civilization to emerge, beginning about A.D. 100, McNeill says. “By collecting *chuño* as taxes from the peasants who worked the raised fields, and disbursing it from imperial storehouses to labor gangs, working at official command, it became possible to wage war, build roads, construct the monumental stone structures that still amaze visitors, and sustain all the other aspects of imperial civilized society in the altiplano, both before and after the Spanish conquest,” McNeill writes.

After Spanish ships returning from South

America (presumably) brought the tuber with them, *Solanum tuberosum* spread to European gardens and fields. Its dissemination was encouraged, McNeill says, by the fact that, left in the ground, it was relatively inaccessible to troops foraging for food. Soldiers might make off with a peasant family's grain stores, but the family members could still avert starvation. The Thirty Years' War (1618–48), McNeill says, was "the last war fought in northern Europe before potatoes became widespread enough to cushion the human cost of military requisitioning."

During the 18th century, potatoes gained new significance, as they became a field crop in northern Europe. In Ireland, the potato gained such importance—it was cultivated by landless laborers—that the blight of 1845–47 killed more than a million people, and drove another million to the United States.

Even more world shaking, McNeill writes, "was the extraordinary ascendancy that a few states in northern Europe exercised over all the earth [between the mid-18th century and the mid-20th] on the strength of industrial, political and military transformations which could not have come about without an enormously expanded food supply from fields of potatoes."

Traditional grain cultivation required leaving as much as half the ground fallow each year so that it could be plowed in summer, eliminating weeds before they went to seed



In pre-Columbian Andean civilizations, potatoes were a source of wealth. This planting scene is from about 1615.

and ensuring a nearly weed-free harvest the next year. Farmers in Germany and elsewhere discovered that by planting potatoes in the fallow ground, and using hoes to eliminate the weeds, they could have their grain and potatoes, too. "Many times more people could count on having enough to eat, even when population growth exceeded any need for extra labor in the fields," McNeill writes. "Consequently, the industrial transformation of northern Europe could and did proceed at a very rapid rate." All thanks to the potato.

White America's Stigma

"The Culture of Deference" by Shelby Steele, in *Academic Questions* (Winter 1998–99), National Assn. of Scholars, 575 Ewing St., Princeton, N.J. 08540–2741.

In the mid-20th century, white America finally gave up the notion of black inferiority and committed itself to equality. But in thus accepting the shame of centuries of racial inequality, argues Steele, the noted black author of *The Content of Our Character* (1990) and *A Dream Deferred* (1998), white America—which previously had seen itself as a "universal" people—acquired the disabling stigma of racism. "The stigma of whites as racists mandates that they redeem the nation from its racist history but then weakens their

authority to enforce the very democratic principles that true redemption would require."

"Here were whites exclaiming the sacredness of individual rights while they used the atavism of race to deny those rights to blacks," he points out. "They celebrated merit as the most egalitarian form of advancement, yet made sure that no amount of merit would enable blacks to advance. Therefore these principles themselves came to be seen as part of the

machinery of white supremacy.”

To win back their moral authority, white Americans and American institutions “have had to betray the nation’s best principles” in dealing with race-related matters, Steele contends. In the case of inner-city poverty, for instance, they are unable to say “that government assistance will only follow a show of such timeless American principles as self-reliance, hard work, moral responsibility, sacrifice, and initiative—all now stigmatized as demonic principles that ‘blame the victims’ and cruelly deny the helplessness imposed on them by a heritage of oppression.” Instead, white American authority must exhibit remorse and “compassion.”

In this show of “deference,” Steele says, white American authority is not abdicating in favor of black Americans, but merely seeking “to fend off the stigma that weakens [its] moral authority.”

Since the 1960s, Steele says, race-related reform in everything from welfare to affirmative action “always asks less of blacks and exempts them from the expectations, standards, principles, and challenges that are considered demanding but necessary for the development of competence and character in others.” And by doing this, he concludes, such reform has opened the door to “the same atavistic powers—race, ethnicity, and gender—that caused oppression in the first place.”

Fostering Dysfunction

“Foster Care’s Underworld” by Heather Mac Donald, in *City Journal* (Winter 1999), Manhattan Institute, 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

The nation’s foster care system, intended to aid abused and neglected children, has become part of the problem, allowing extended families “to accommodate, and even profit from their dysfunctions,” contends Mac Donald, a contributing editor of *City Journal*.

More than a half-million children are in foster care nationwide, with 50 percent living with an unrelated family, 29 percent living with relatives, and the rest in institutions, group homes, or other settings. “For every child put into foster care,” Mac Donald says, “the foster family . . . gets a subsidy two to three times larger than what ordinary welfare pays. Whole communities of grandmothers are living on the money they receive for their abused or neglected grandchildren.”

The per child payment typically is about \$500 a month (and can reach \$800, if the child is disabled or emotionally disturbed). “For people on public assistance, [that] is a lot of money,” a caseworker at a large foster agency in New York City told Mac Donald. “They’re not using it totally on the kids.”

Kinship foster care—which child welfare authorities must try to arrange before putting a child with unrelated foster parents—is “a humane idea,” Mac Donald says, and undoubtedly often works. “But it has also become a major financial support system, perversely turning the production of neglect-

ed children into a family business,” in more than a few cases.

In the name of “family preservation,” the system seeks to have children remain with their abusive or neglectful parents whenever possible, Mac Donald notes. But the traditional two-parent home has exploded “into a dizzying array of intersecting family fragments. . . . [To] speak of ‘family preservation’ in this context is fanciful; which combination of fathers and mothers and half-siblings should we demarcate as the family unit?”

Further aggravating the situation is the pervasive problem of drug abuse. A recent study of foster care in New York City found that three out of four of the birth mothers abused drugs, and one in four of the children in foster care was born with drugs in his system.

Intended to rescue children, foster care “often merely moves [them] from one troubled home and community to another,” Mac Donald writes. Adoption, of course, is preferable, but not all children can be successfully placed in new families. For many disturbed youngsters, boarding schools may be the best solution, she believes. Minnesota “has begun to create stable, academically rigorous boarding academies for children from dysfunctional families,” she says. Though attacked by critics as “orphanages,” boarding schools could give the most unfortunate children “a fighting chance.”

The Politics of Respectability

"The Double Standard Revisited: Plebeian Women and Male Sexual Reputation in Early Modern England" by Bernard Capp, in *Past & Present* (Feb. 1999).

The notorious double standard for sexual morality was alive and well in 16th- and 17th-century England. But the difference between male and female standards of honor has been exaggerated, argues Capp, a historian at the University of Warwick, England. Among the respectable middling classes and the "honest poor," a man's moral reputation was important—and the proof lies in the moral and legal leverage women exercised in various situations.

By the end of the 16th century, the view "that adultery was a weighty sin in either sex" seems to have been widely accepted, Capp says. "The good husband . . . was betraying his moral responsibilities twice over if he fathered a child on one of his own servants, and could expect considerable opprobrium from neighbors."

Capp, drawing on evidence from British court and workhouse records, says that the consequences of bad behavior went beyond mere finger wagging.

Courtship and marriage was one principal arena where the drama was played out, Capp notes. Among courting couples, honorable men were usually expected to marry a woman who found herself with child. "The London Bridewell [workhouse] records," says Capp, "contain many cases where a single mother claimed she had been seduced by a firm promise of marriage, whereupon the alleged father would be summoned and examined and, if he confirmed her account, the couple would be ordered to marry with speed." A man who

admitted paternity but denied making any promise of marriage would often be ordered to make support payments.

Sometimes, knowing the real father could not marry or provide support, a woman would seek "to trap some other man into marriage," Capp points out. For example, when Elizabeth Lawrence, a Portsmouth servant, found herself pregnant in 1653, she promptly slept with two other men, then claimed that each one was the father and had promised to marry her.

When a maidservant became pregnant by her employer, she often was too frightened to realize the bargaining power she possessed, so the employer would simply indicate what he was prepared to offer. But in some cases, the woman did recognize the leverage she had, Capp says. "When Agnes Strange, a carpenter's maidservant, became pregnant in 1599, her employer gave her 15s. to go away to her friends in Salisbury. Instead, she remained in London and, when he summoned her again to ask why, she took her brother along to help press her case; together they secured a large sum and a pledge that she would be well cared for."

Though males and females "were never equally matched in the politics of sexual relations and reputations," Capp concludes, women were more than "passive and helpless victims. They were also agents: sometimes heroic, sometimes highly resourceful, at times cynical and shameless."

PRESS & MEDIA

The Mysterious Readers

"What Do Readers Really Want?" by Charles Layton, in *American Journalism Review* (Mar. 1999), Univ. of Maryland, 1117 Journalism Bldg., College Park, Md. 20742-7111.

"First, go out and ask your readers what they want in their daily newspaper. Then give it to them," declared the executive editor of a paper in the Gannett Company chain a few years ago. "It's that simple." But it isn't, says Layton, a former *Philadelphia Inquirer* editor. Newspaper people are supposed to be hard-nosed skeptics, but he contends that

many haven't been skeptical enough about market research purporting to reveal what readers want.

Consider some 1990 research into preferences among readers of California's *Orange County Register*. In the survey, 63 percent said they would read the paper more often if fewer stories "jumped" inside from page one

or section front pages. The *Register's* managers then forced the newsroom to cut down on the number of "jumping" stories. But in 1997, folks were asked again whether they'd be more likely to read the paper if fewer stories jumped—and 59 percent said yes, as if nothing had happened. Thirty-nine percent said they wanted shorter stories. But 44 percent desired "more in-depth stories," and 59 percent craved "more explanation of complex issues"!

"For years now," Layton observes, "editors and reporters have been told that their journalistic instincts were out of sync with readers, and that the cure for this occupational malady was research." It turns out, however, he says, "that newspaper research yields as much uncertainty as clarity. Much of it is subjective, unscientific and amenable to manipulation." And for all the reader surveys

and focus groups, newspaper readership has continued to decline.

Partly as a result of pressure from Wall Street, many publishers are unwilling "to invest much in better journalism," Layton says, and some have used "talk about 'reader-driven journalism'" as a cover, while taking measures "that readers could not possibly endorse," such as slashing news staffs and trivializing news content.

"We can say with confidence that people want the paper delivered on time and that they want the ink not to rub off," Layton writes. "We can say they want accurate, fair reporting and that good writing and compelling headlines are a plus. And we can make some other broad generalizations, most of them rather obvious. Beyond that, the results of market research, as applied to news, are disappointing."

Radio Wal-Mart

"The Death of Local Radio" by Lydia Polgreen, in *The Washington Monthly* (Apr. 1999), 1611
Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Is local radio's signal fast fading out? Polgreen, business manager of the *Washington Monthly*, contends that reception of truly local sounds has indeed become a lot more intermittent since the 1996 Telecommunications Act became law.

Before then, she explains, a company could own no more than 40 radio stations nationwide, and no more than two AM and two FM stations in a single market. The Telecommunications Act removed all restrictions on national ownership, and greatly relaxed the rules on how many stations a company could own in a particular market (up to eight now in a big market, between five and seven in smaller ones).

Since 1996, one-third of all radio stations in the country have changed hands. Today, almost half of the 4,992 stations in the 268 ranked markets are owned by a company that has three or more stations in the same market. A major advantage of owning many stations, Polgreen points out, is the ability to attract national, in addition to local, advertising. The four biggest companies—Chancellor Media, Infinity Broadcasting, Clear Channel Communications, and Jacor Communications (which Clear Channel is in the process of

acquiring)—control nearly three times as many stations as the top 10 companies were allowed to own before the Telecommunications Act went into effect.

Though much of radio has long been in thrall to "the top 40" and other standardized programming formulas, the trend toward consolidation has made it less likely that listeners will hear anything "even slightly out of the ordinary" on commercial radio, Polgreen believes. Some dedicated local station owners, such as Andrew Langston and his family—whose WDKX-FM, in Rochester, New York, with 14 broadcasters and music in "an eclectic, quasi-urban contemporary format," has offered live local programming all day, every day, for the last 25 years—intend to keep operating. But they are the exception.

The Wal-Marting of radio still could be stopped, Polgreen believes. William Kennard, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, has proposed creating three new classes of licenses for low-power FM stations. This would open up the airwaves to hundreds, if not thousands, of new broadcasters. The broadcasting industry, not surprisingly, hates the idea. But Polgreen views it as "a practical way to recapture some of radio's lost diversity."

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

Christianity versus Nature?

"Subduing the Earth: Genesis 1, Early Modern Science, and the Exploitation of Nature"

by Peter Harrison, in *The Journal of Religion* (Jan. 1999), Univ. of Chicago,
1025 E. 58th St., Chicago, Ill. 60637.

And God said to them "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." Genesis 1:28

For more than 30 years, "the orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature" (in historian Lynn White, Jr.'s phrase) has been fingered as the ideological source of contemporary environmental ills. Even some ecologically sensitive Christian theologians have joined in this indictment. But after examining ways in which Genesis was employed in the medieval and early modern periods, Harrison, a professor of philosophy at Bond University, Australia, paints a very different picture.

In the Middle Ages, White claimed in a 1967 *Science* article, the Judeo-Christian conception of creation had already resulted in attempts to use technology to master nature, as well as in incipient exploitative tendencies that matured in later, scientific eras. Not so, says Harrison, who contends that interpretations of Genesis during the first 1,500 years of the Christian era "are not primarily concerned with the exploitation of the natural world."

Early church fathers often interpreted the "dominion" injunction allegorically, to mean bringing the rebellious "beasts" within the human soul under the control of reason. "This allegorical approach to texts, which became universal practice during the Middle Ages," Harrison says, "also informed the structures of knowledge of the natural world. Knowledge of things was not pursued in order to bring nature under human control but, rather, to shed light on the meanings of nature and the sacred page."

To be sure, Harrison concedes, "the modifi-

cation of nature, oftentimes on a large scale, undoubtedly took place during the Middle Ages." Monastic communities, for example, engaged in farming and husbandry. The heavy plow was introduced, as were various other devices, such as water wheels and windmills. But all this can be explained by the human need for food and shelter, Harrison observes.

Genesis and the exploitation of nature were explicitly linked only in the early modern period, Harrison says. "In the 17th century . . . practitioners of the new sciences, preachers of the virtues of agriculture and husbandry, advocates of colonization, and even gardeners explicitly legitimat[ed] their engagement with nature by appeals to the text of Genesis. The rise of modern science, the mastery of the world that it enabled, and the catastrophic consequences for the natural environment that ensued, were intimately related to new readings of the seminal Genesis text, 'Have dominion.'"

However, "dominion" in the 17th century "is almost invariably associated with the Fall," as a consequence of which, "the natural world, too, it was thought, fell from its original perfection." In that context, dominion was "not an assertion of a human tyranny over a hapless earth," or an example of "arrogant indifference to the natural world," but rather "the means by which the earth

can be restored to its prelapsarian order and perfection."

In a sense, Harrison concludes, "early modern advocates of dominion and contemporary environmentalists share a common concern—to preserve or restore the natural condition of the earth, with the crucial difference between them residing in their respective views of what that 'natural condition' is believed to be."



When Adam and Eve fell, according to 17th-century readings of Genesis, so did the natural world.

Philosophers' Détente

"Words and Things" by Hans-Johann Glock, in *Prospect* (Apr. 1999), 4 Bedford Sq., London, England WC1B 3RA.

For nearly a century, Western philosophy has been deeply divided between two antagonistic traditions: the analytic, which prevails in the English-speaking world, and the continental, which prevails in Europe and Latin America. Now Glock, a lecturer at the University of Reading, England, sees signs of "a limited thaw in philosophy's cold war."

Continental philosophy—which purports to be carrying on the great tradition of the past, taking on such profound questions as the meaning of life—has been enthusiastically embraced in the literature and language departments of both British and American universities. Meanwhile, analytic philosophy, which emphasizes logic and the aims and methods of natural science, "has become increasingly popular on the continent, even in France"—a development that may be due in part, Glock notes, to "the demise of Marxism and the general disillusionment with big systems of thought."

The lines between the two philosophical armies have blurred, Glock writes. "These days, hardly any analytic philosophers maintain that metaphysical theories are literally senseless simply because they can neither be verified nor falsified. Analytic philosophy's dismissal of moral questions has also waned, mainly because of the rise of 'applied ethics' . . . which tries to address concrete moral issues such as war, abortion, euthanasia, and eugenics."

The philosophical gulf between the two camps still exists, however. Continental philosophy "is basically Germanophone philosophy," Glock notes. "The dialectical, existentialist, phenomenological and hermeneutical

traditions were inaugurated almost exclusively by German speakers (Hegel and Marx, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, Brentano and Husserl, Dilthey and Heidegger). . . . Although analytic philosophers have saved most of their bile for 20th century French philosophy, the latter is largely derived from Germanophone thinkers: Sartre from Husserl, Althusser from Marx, Foucault from Nietzsche, Lacan from Freud, Derrida from Heidegger."

While analytic philosophy also owes much to Ludwig Wittgenstein and other German-speakers (as well as to English thinkers Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore, and American pragmatists), its conflict with continental philosophy has historical roots. "In 1873, long before the rise of analytic philosophy, John Stuart Mill complained in his *Autobiography* about the baleful influence of German philosophy. . . . At roughly the same time, Marx and Nietzsche lampooned the ahistorical and superficial nature of Anglo-Saxon empiricism, utilitarianism and pragmatism."

Today, Glock writes, analytic philosophers are still inclined to think there is no knowledge outside natural science, while continental philosophers "draw on historical, social and cultural resources" outside it. Polymathic scholar Ernest Gellner (1925–95), notes Glock, once suggested that while most intellectuals, including continental philosophers, "pretend to understand things they don't really understand, analytic philosophers pretend not to understand things they understand perfectly well." Despite the apparent thaw, the difference persists.

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

How PCs Replicate Inequality

"Home Computers and School Performance" by Paul Attewell and Juan Battle, in *The Information Society* (Jan.–Mar. 1999), Center for Social Informatics, School of Library and Information Science, 10th & Jordan, Indiana Univ., Bloomington, Ind. 47405–1801.

Does having a computer at home boost the academic performance of children? Analyzing data on some 18,000 eighth

graders in 1988 (the latest year for which comparable data are available), Attewell and Battle, sociologists at the City

University of New York's Graduate School and University Center, find that a home computer does help—but it doesn't aid all children equally.

More than 5,000 of the eighth graders had computers at home, and, on average, their test scores were 10 to 12 percent higher in reading and math than those of their computerless peers. However, the kids with home computers, not surprisingly, tended to come from wealthier, better-educated families. Taking such factors into account, the average computer "edge" shrinks to about three to five percent—roughly the same advantage conferred by, say, making extracurricular visits to museums.

To the disappointment of the authors and others hoping that this peculiar home appliance would promote social equality, computers also seem to confer unequal advantages on those who use them. Children whose parents ranked high in socioeconomic status got a bigger academic boost from having a PC at home than did other computer-equipped kids whose parents lived in more humble circumstances. Boys derived more benefit than girls, and white children gained more than black and Hispanic ones. "Technology does not educate by itself," Attewell and Battle conclude. "Only if there is a conducive social environment does learning occur."

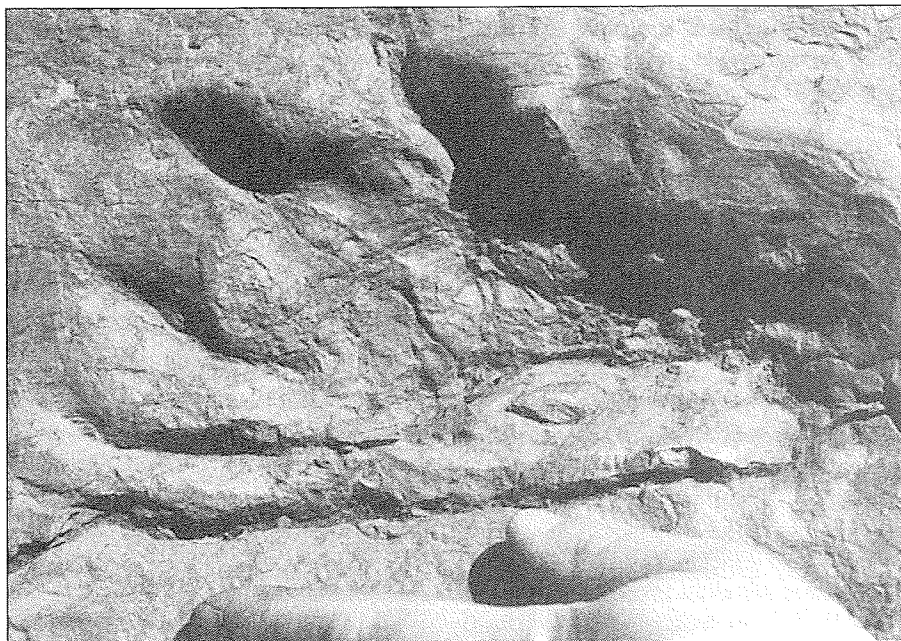
Small Science

"Amateur Science—Strong Tradition, Bright Future" by Forrest M. Mims III, in *Science* (Apr. 2, 1999), American Assn. for the Advancement of Science, 1200 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

"Modern science," an editorial in *Science* proclaimed a few years ago, "can no longer be done by gifted amateurs with a magnifying glass, copper wires, and jars filled with alcohol." On the contrary, it *can* be and *is* being done, retorts Mims, a writer, teacher, and amateur scientist.

"Without remuneration or reward," he

points out, "enthusiastic amateurs survey birds, tag butterflies, measure sunlight, and study transient solar eclipse phenomena. Others count sunspots, discover comets, monitor variable stars, and invent instruments." Most amateurs pursue their passion for science in their spare time, without getting much recognition. "Although some are



Paleontologists in New Mexico quickly (and unwisely) dismissed amateur Jerry MacDonald's claim to have discovered hundreds of well-preserved tracks of prehistoric animals like the one above.

retired, others are taxi drivers, photographers, civil servants, pilots, or missionaries.” Pierre Morvan, a French taxi driver, is also a self-taught entomologist who for more than two decades has spent his vacations collecting, drawing, and studying Asian ground beetles, especially those of the Himalayas.

Some amateurs are accepted as colleagues by professional scientists, Mims says, presenting their findings at conferences and publishing papers in peer-reviewed journals. A paper on massive storms on Saturn that appeared in *Science* in 1996, for instance, was coauthored by the storms’ discoverer, Donald Parker, who earns a living as an anesthesiologist for Mercy Hospital in Miami.

Though modern scientists do use sophisticated methods and instruments, so do amateurs these days, Mims points out. “Amateurs built some of the first home computers, and

today some of our own systems that far outclass what was available to our professional colleagues only a few years ago.”

Nevertheless, he acknowledges, “a few” professional scientists refuse to take the work of amateurs seriously—and they sometimes come to regret it. In 1990 Jerry MacDonald, a doctoral student in sociology, found hundreds of well-preserved tracks of reptiles, amphibians, and insects in Permian sandstone in southern New Mexico. Professional paleontologists in New Mexico scoffed at his claims, because Permian trackways had never been found in that region before. MacDonald got a much warmer reception, however, at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of Natural History and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, where impressed paleontologists put samples of his finds on display.

The Limits of Science

The postmodernists have a point about scientific knowledge, writes Margaret Wertheim in *The Sciences* (Mar.–Apr. 1999). She is the author of *Pythagoras’ Trousers* (1995), a history of the relation between physics and religion.

The current bitterness engendered by the so-called science wars has obscured the fact that postmodernism expresses an essentially reasonable insight: all knowledge is derived within a particular cultural framework and will therefore reflect aspects of that culture. Medieval Europeans, for instance, lived within a Christian-Aristotelian framework, and their cosmology, with its central earth surrounded by ten celestial spheres of increasing metaphysical purity, reflected both Christian and Aristotelian perspectives. . . .

One of the claims of postmodernists is that modern Western scientific knowledge is also culturally influenced, that it is not purely objective. That does not mean that postmodernists believe scientific knowledge is simply made up; no postmodernist scholar of my acquaintance holds such a view. The claim is not that the laws of physics are mere cultural constructs—that, for instance, the inverse square law of gravity [which states that the force between two objects decreases in proportion to the square of the distance between them] could change from one culture to the next. The thesis is rather that the entire world picture described by contemporary physics—such as the view that time is linear or the belief that reality is purely physical—is a culturally specific way of seeing.

Unfortunately, many scientists, as well as many science-and-religion students, have viewed postmodern interpretations of science as inherently threatening. . . . In a pluralistic world, [theologian J. Wentzel van Huyssteen] argues, everyone must take a more open stance toward all forms of knowledge, including science. Although that path is necessarily a difficult one—and far more intellectually demanding than foundationalist approaches—it seems to me the only way forward that can avoid a new form of dogmatism. Without such an open-minded perspective, science is in danger of replacing Christianity as the new engine of Western cultural imperialism.

Scientific Panic Attacks

"Scientists Attack the Federal Budget with the Politics of Calculated Panic" by Daniel S. Greenberg, in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Mar. 26, 1999), 1255 23rd St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

Again and again in recent years, leaders of American science have warned of impending catastrophe due to inadequate federal support for research. Nonsense, argues science journalist Greenberg, a visiting scholar at Johns Hopkins University. He offers samples of the alarmist rhetoric, and some deflating facts.

- Leon E. Rosenberg, then dean of Yale University's School of Medicine, asserted in 1990 that "our nation's health research program is burning, and the conflagration is spreading." *Fact*: Between 1980 and 1990, appropriations for the National Institutes of Health increased from \$2 billion to \$4.7 billion—an inflation-adjusted gain of \$1.7 billion.

- Leon M. Lederman, in his inaugural address as president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, ominously declared in 1991 that "our current capability for research is only about one-third what it was in the late 1960s—a golden age

whose achievements the nation is still profiting from." *Fact*: Between 1968 and 1991, federal support for science at colleges and universities increased from \$1.5 billion to \$10.2 billion.

Many scientists "have argued that the end of the Cold War removed a major stimulus for government spending on science," Greenberg notes. But federal support for basic research climbed from \$11.2 billion in 1990 to \$15.2 billion in 1998.

Somehow, the good news is never good enough, as scientists gloomily fixate on whether federal support is growing as fast as before. The important fact is that it's *growing*, contends Greenberg. From 1996 to 1997, "despite the usual dire warnings," the federal budget for research and development (including basic research) grew from \$71.2 billion to \$73.9 billion. That may not be sufficiently fast growth for some scientists, Greenberg says, but it *is* growth.

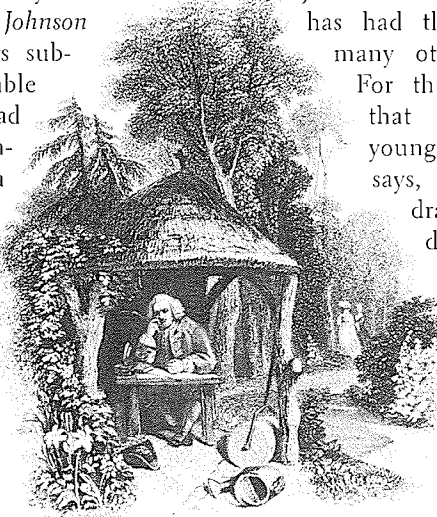
ARTS & LETTERS

Beyond Boswell

"Why Read Samuel Johnson?" by Stephen Miller, in *The Sewanee Review* (Winter 1999), 735 University Ave., Sewanee, Tenn. 37383-1000.

Many more people today read James Boswell's *Life of Johnson* (1791), studded with its subject's witty and forceful table talk, than trouble to read the estimable Dr. Johnson himself. That is a pity, contends Miller, a widely published essayist, because Samuel Johnson (1709-84) "was a great prose stylist with a profound understanding of the heart of man."

Although Boswell's classic may whet some readers' appetite for



A quiet moment in the life of Johnson

Johnson's own works, it probably has had the opposite effect on many others, Miller believes. For the portrait of Johnson that emerges from his young friend's book, Miller says, resembles the one drawn by Johnson's detractors, such as the 19th-century Whig historian Thomas Macaulay. "The characteristic peculiarity of [Johnson's] intellect was the union of great powers with low prejudices," claimed Macaulay, who also

insisted that Johnson “spoke far better than he wrote.”

But while Johnson in conversation “often played the part of the blustering arch-Tory” and does seem, in Boswell’s pages, to be driven at times by strong prejudices, Johnson the writer, Miller points out, was quite different. Even philosopher David Hume, who disliked Johnson, acknowledged that though “abusive in Company,” he never was so in his writings.

“The writer he most closely resembles,” argues Miller, “is George Orwell. Just as Orwell attacked the cant of international socialism, so Johnson poured cold water on all forms of cant—especially the cant of the sentimental revolution.” Johnson’s conviction that man is driven by many dark passions was at odds with the upbeat school of 18th-century thought that regarded man as innately benevolent. Feelings of benevolence come too cheaply, Johnson believed.

The best place to begin a tour of Johnson’s works, according to Miller, is probably with “his two extended narratives.” *Rasselas* (1759), “which touches on all the

main themes of Johnson’s work—the dangers of solitude as well as man’s restlessness, envy, and self-deception—is sometimes moving and often amusing.” *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* (1775) “mixes accurate description with acute reflections about the stages of political and economical development in various parts of Scotland—reflections that anticipate many of the points Adam Smith would make in *The Wealth of Nations*, which appeared a year later.”

Perhaps Johnson’s finest work, says Miller, is his four-volume *Lives of the Poets* (1779–81), which uses “telling incidents in a writer’s life to deliver an aphorism about human conduct.” Thus, Johnson writes of Alexander Pope that “his scorn of the great is repeated too often to be real: no man thinks much of that which he despises; and as falsehood is always in danger of inconsistency, he makes it his boast at another time that he lives among them.”

“No doubt there are many pleasures to be gained from Johnson’s conversation,” concludes Miller, “but there are far more to be gained from his writing.”

The Return of the Author

“The Primacy of the Literary Imagination, or Which Came First: The Critic or the Author?” by Paul A. Cantor, in *Literary Imagination* (Spring 1999), Assn. of Literary Scholars and Critics, 105 Franklin Dr., Ste. 220, Mount Pleasant, Mich. 48858.

With the Author famously proclaimed dead, academic critics in recent decades have stepped self-confidently to the fore, all of literature theirs to conquer, to deconstruct, to expose for its nefarious biases. At times, the critics have even seemed to suggest that *they* are the truly creative force. But they ought to be a little more humble about their calling, suggests Cantor, a professor of English at the University of Virginia.

The history of literature and criticism in this century, he says, shows that, in general, “critics have been more indebted to authors than authors have been to critics. Critics may have appeared to be working independently of authors, but in fact they have usually derived their ideas of what literature is and their standards for judging literary works from the new exemplars authors continually provide.”

The mid-century New Criticism movement is a premier example, Cantor argues. “The values the New Critics searched out and praised in literature—ambiguity, irony, paradox, metaphoric complexity, precision and concision of statement—are precisely the literary qualities that characterize the modernist revolution in poetry” brought about by T. S. Eliot and others. Cleanth Brooks and the other New Critics, Cantor says, “forever changed the way we read literature,” and their approach brought out previously neglected aspects of earlier works. But the New Critics and their disciples sometimes went too far. “[To] read the confessional poetry of the Romantics as if it were the anti-confessional poetry of the modernists,” for instance, is “at least in some sense to misread it,” he contends. Moreover, the New Critics eventually began applying their tech-

niques to “all forms of literature,” often losing sight of pertinent differences among genres.

Deconstruction, a more recent, much more theoretical and abstract literary movement, has been similarly inspired—by “the postmodern novel and drama, specifically the works of Samuel Beckett,” Cantor says: The illogical babbling of Beckett’s character Lucky in *Waiting for Godot* shows what all literature is like, in the eyes of the deconstructionists: a text devoid of a single meaning, referring to nothing outside itself, and breaking down on analysis into parts that work against one another, undermining any comprehensive authorial intent. Philosopher Jacques Derrida, the father of deconstruction, notes Cantor, spent his formative intellectual years in Paris in the 1950s, “just when and where Beckett’s revolutionary works of literature were appearing.”

Today’s Marxist-oriented race/class/gen-

der criticism is likewise “following in the footsteps of creative writers,” Cantor says. Anticipating the current critical view of the English classics in postcolonial studies, Jean Rhys, in her 1966 novel *Wide Sargasso Sea*, “tries to correct the British colonialist bias” of Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*. Similarly, “Salman Rushdie’s *Midnight’s Children* rewrites Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*, and Chinua Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* rewrites a series of European works about Africa.”

While it would be “very difficult to assert the pure primacy of literature over theory” in postcolonial studies, since “the literature is so ‘contaminated’ by theory to begin with,” Cantor says, it is clear that the creative authors not only “have made a major contribution” to the field’s theoretical foundations, but also “have generally proven to be more subtle in their criticism than the academic critics.”

Dissolving Gender

Does it matter if the author is a woman? asks novelist Joyce Carol Oates in *The Gettysburg Review* (Spring 1999).

For the feminist critic, it makes a considerable difference to know that the text has been authored by a woman, for a woman’s discourse will presumably differ from a man’s, even were the texts identical. . . . As a writer and a woman, or a woman and a writer, I have never found that I was in possession of a special female language springing somehow from the female body—though I can sympathize with the poetic-mystic yearning that may underlie such a theory. Having been marginalized throughout history—told that we lack souls, are not fully human, are unclean, and that we therefore cannot write, cannot paint, cannot compose music, cannot do philosophy, math, science, politics, or power in its myriad guises—the least of our compensations should be that we are in possession of some special gift brewed in the womb and in mother’s milk. For the practicing woman writer, feminist/gender criticism can be wonderfully nurturing. . . .

Yet this criticism, for all its good intentions, can be restrictive as well, at least for the writer who is primarily a formalist and for whom gender is not a pressing issue in every work. As a writer who happens to be a woman, I choose to write about women, and I choose to write from the perspective of women—but I also choose to write about men, and I choose to write from the perspective of men. I do both with the confidence that, dissolving myself into the self of a fictitious other, I have entered a dimension of consciousness that is not my own in either case, and yet legitimate. Surely it is an error to reduce to a genitally defined essence any individual, whether a woman or a man. For the woman writer especially it is frustrating to be designated as a woman writer, when there is no corresponding category, man writer.

OTHER NATIONS

Turkey's Secular Fundamentalists

A Survey of Recent Articles

When an Islamic woman elected to the Turkish parliament refused to remove her head scarf last spring in the Grand National Assembly chamber, the staunchly secular Turkish government was appalled. Fellow legislators hurled insults at her, and the country's chief prosecutor opened a criminal investigation. But the woman, Merve Kavakci, a 30-year-old, U.S.-educated computer scientist and a member of the Virtue Party, was unmoved. "I cover my head in accordance with my religious beliefs. It is a personal choice." The government soon chose to strip her of her citizenship.

The conflict between secularism and religious belief in Turkey is often portrayed as a struggle between Westernizing modernity and the primitive past. But secularism—one of the pillars of the Kemalist legacy left by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881–1938), the founder of modern Turkey—is not always synonymous with cultural pluralism and religious tolerance. And in recent years, with the Cold War over, the differences between Turkey's authoritarian regime and Western liberal democracies have assumed more importance. Thus, in December 1997 the European Union (EU) slammed the membership door shut on Turkey, after it had waited in line for decades.

"In decades past," note Barry Buzan, a professor of international studies at the University of Westminster, England, and Thomas Diez, a Fellow at the Copenhagen Peace Research Institute, writing in *Survival* (Spring 1999), "the promoters of Kemalism justified their program partly on the grounds that it was a path leading to eventual membership" in the EU. At the same time, advocates of Turkey's candidacy, both in Turkey and in Europe, insisted "that membership is a necessary anchor for Westernization." However, EU members decided that they could not overlook the military's frequent interventions in the Turkish government (most recently in 1997), or the government's repressive treatment of critics and the country's 15 million Kurds.

When the Turkish Republic was born in 1923, Kemal "imposed a single identity on the multicultural population of Turkmans, Armenians, Assyrians, Kurds, and others," notes journalist Kevin McKiernan in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* (Mar.–Apr. 1999). "Most minorities were forcibly assimilated; everyone became a Turk." Over the next quarter-century, however, "there were dozens of Kurdish uprisings. All were crushed, but discontent continued. In 1984, a Marxist-led group called the PKK, the Kurdistan Workers Party, began an armed struggle against the government." Nearly 40,000 lives have been lost in the fighting, McKiernan points out "more than in the conflicts on the West Bank and in Northern Ireland combined."

"Ankara's treatment of the Kurds blends into a wider problem of bad government in Turkey, and slow progress towards building a democratic political culture—which is not a central pillar of Kemalism," Buzan and Diez point out.

Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit's government is seeking to ban the religious-oriented Virtue Party, as it did its predecessor, the Welfare Party, last year. The Islamic party lost 33 seats in last April's elections, slipping into third place behind Ecevit's Democratic Left Party and the far-right Nationalist Movement Party.

Confronted by the challenges of Islamic political activism and Kurdish nationalism, "the Kemalist establishment is fighting a desperate rearguard action to suppress civil society and preserve its own historic privileges and unchallenged right to command the nation," argues University of Utah political scientist M. Hakan Yavuz, writing in *SAIS Review* (Winter–Spring 1999).

The Kemalist notion of secularism, Yavuz says, is an anachronism, rooted in "the vehemently antireligious tradition of the radical, Jacobin-styled left that first emerged during the French Revolution. Such an ideology has little in common with the Western political

tradition of religious tolerance advocated by Locke, Montesquieu, and Jefferson,” or with the formal separation of church and state found in the United States and other Western liberal democracies.

What is needed, he contends, is “a new and more inclusive ‘social contract’ that addresses the cultural diversity of Turkish society.”

But that may be easier said than done. “Neither the country’s élites, with their generally corrupt, inefficient, personalized and ineffective system of political

parties, nor the masses have moved far from the authoritarian traditions of the Ottoman Empire and its weak civil society,” write Buzan and Diez. The elected government has only limited influence on Turkey’s security forces, they note and “the military still functions as a quasi-autonomous entity.”

And the military has widespread support, notes the *Economist* (Apr. 10, 1999). The army is largely a conscript force, and opinion polls “consistently show the armed forces to be the country’s most popular institution.”

Where China’s Water Goes

“Is China Living on the Water Margin?” by James E. Nickum, in *The China Quarterly* (Dec. 1998), School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh St., Russell Sq., London WC1H 0XG.

From the Worldwatch Institute came a warning last year that China’s farmers are running short of water, as the demands of the nation’s cities grow. Ultimately, institute analysts said, China could be forced to boost grain imports, pushing world market prices higher and thus threatening the lives of impoverished people around the globe. Nickum, an institutional economist at the University of Tokyo, says the situation is not as dire as all that.

Droughts, floods, polluted flows, and urban water shortages are nothing new in China, he notes. But conditions vary greatly from one region to another. China’s “monsoonal climate concentrates precipitation in the summer months,” Nickum says, an effect especially pronounced in the north and northeast, where average precipitation is less than in the south and southeast. “Some places, especially in the north and along the coast, have been under high levels of stress for some time; others, in the central and southern areas, remain more liable to damage from too much water than from too little.”

More than two-thirds of all the water consumed in China is used for irrigation. Virtually all of China’s rice—whether grown in paddy fields (where irrigation is supplemental) or on irrigated dry land—is officially considered irrigated. Even in Beijing, half the water used in 1993 was for irrigation and other farm production purposes. Industry

used only one-fourth of the total.

Economic development and all that it entails—industrialization, urbanization, chemical agriculture, and livestock production—has indeed increased the demand for water and threatened its quality. But “the primary pressure on irrigated [farmland] now, and probably for some time into the future,” Nickum says, comes from the obsolescence of short-lived tubewells and other structures employed in irrigation, not from competing users.

Moreover, Chinese farms use water very inefficiently. The fees charged for irrigation are almost always less than the costs of delivering the water. But if “water becomes sufficiently valuable to make the additional costs worth bearing,” Nickum says, more efficient use of it could easily be made. “‘Green revolution’ high-yielding varieties of rice, with their short stalks and brief growing seasons, actually tend to use less water per crop than traditional varieties,” although the water has to be applied at the right times.

Industrialization need not strain agriculture. In Japan and the United States, Nickum points out, government regulation of wastewater discharges has cut industrial water use since the 1970s, despite continued industrial growth. Even in China, the total reported industrial water use dropped during the 1980s, Nickum says, and it could be reduced further by reforming or closing state-owned enterprises that use water heavily.

Nickum's conclusion: "further economic growth and accompanying institutional

change" are more likely to relieve China's water woes than to aggravate them.

Afghanistan's Agony

"Afghanistan under the Taliban" by Barnett R. Rubin, in *Current History* (Feb. 1999), 4225 Main St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19127.

Once a bloody battlefield in the Cold War, Afghanistan under the murderous Taliban is now an arena for regional rivalries—and still ravaged by warfare, writes Rubin, author of *The Fragmentation of Afghanistan* (1995).

Pakistani-Iranian competition is the main outside force fanning the flames of civil war in Afghanistan. Pakistan has the closest and strongest ties to its northern neighbor. Historically, Islamabad worried about the Pashtun tribes that occupy both southeast Afghanistan and northwest Pakistan. But dur-

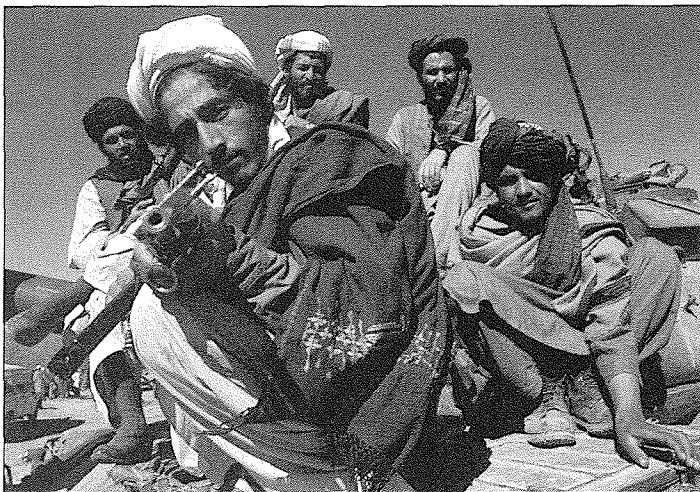
"Upon capturing Mazar," Rubin says, "the Taliban killed thousands of civilians, mainly Shia Muslims from the Hazara ethnic group." Eight Iranian diplomats and an Iranian journalist also were slain, prompting Tehran to post troops on the Afghan border and threaten military action. Tehran is the main supplier of fuel and weapons to the half-dozen or so groups fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan, Rubin says. It's not just solidarity with their coreligionists that motivates the Iranians. They also worry

about, among other things, rival Saudi Arabia's influence in Afghanistan.

Until last summer, the Saudis supplied fuel and money to the Taliban through Pakistan. But Saudi-Iranian relations have warmed since the election of Iranian moderate Muhammad Khatami as president. The fact that the Taliban has been harboring wealthy Saudi dissident Osama bin Laden, who has funded militant Islamic groups in Afghanistan,

Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere, also gave Riyadh second thoughts. The Saudis, Rubin says, have terminated, or at least scaled back, their aid.

Ever since pro-Soviet communists came to power in a bloody coup in 1978, Afghanistan "has moved from one stage to another of civil war and political disintegration," Rubin observes. The Afghan groups arrayed against the Taliban in the National Islamic United Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan appear united in name only. But thanks in part to its neighbors, Afghanistan's agony appears far from over.



Welcome to Afghanistan

ing the jihad against Soviet forces in the late 1970s and '80s, many Pashtuns rose to leadership positions in Pakistan, Rubin says, and Islamabad came to welcome Pashtun rule "of the right kind" in Afghanistan. It was largely military aid from Pakistan that enabled the radical Islamic Taliban movement—led by Mullah Muhammad Umar and other Pashtuns from Qandahar—to seize control of that city in southeast Afghanistan in 1994, then expand its authority until, with the capture of the northern city of Mazar-i Sharif in August 1998, it controlled virtually the entire country.

RESEARCH REPORTS

Reviews of new research at public agencies and private institutions

"Philanthropy and the Nonprofit Sector in a Changing America."

Indiana Univ. Press, 601 N. Morton St., Bloomington, Ind. 47404, 544 pp. \$35.

Editors: *Charles T. Clotfelter and Thomas Ehrlich*

There's been an explosion of philanthropy in America in recent decades. From less than \$25 billion in 1972, charitable giving grew to more than \$150 billion in 1995—an increase of more than 50 percent in inflation-adjusted dollars. With a huge intergenerational transfer of wealth due to take place as baby boomers come into their inheritances—and as new fortunes are amassed in today's technology boom—the future of philanthropic giving looks bright. And the number of nonprofit groups eager to use all the charitable dollars has mushroomed, too—up to 1.5 million in 1996.

Despite that seemingly rosy picture, many leaders in the philanthropic and nonprofit world are worried, according to the 30 contributors to this volume, the product of a conference sponsored by the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy and the American Assembly of Columbia University.

One thing that worries the philanthropy-minded is a perceived loss of public trust in nonprofit institutions, according to editors Clotfelter, director of the Center for the Study of Philanthropy and Voluntarism at Duke University, and Ehrlich, president emeritus of Indiana University. Americans have lost confidence in institutions generally, they note, but scandals at the United Way and other organizations have also hurt. United Way campaigns in many places have faltered in recent years; revenues in the Chicago region, for instance, fell 13 percent between 1992 and 1996. Joel L. Fleishman, a law professor at Duke, urges creation of a federal regulatory agency to police nonprofits—a suggestion that, while endorsed by the editors, was not welcomed by most conference participants.

Another reason for the decline in public confidence is the increased "commercialization" of museums, universities, and other nonprofit organizations. "It is hard to find a college or university these days

that . . . does not have at least a few exclusive licenses with companies that make everything from software to soft drinks," Clotfelter and Ehrlich note. The importance of private donations to nonprofits has shrunk correspondingly, accounting for less than one-fourth of nonprofit revenues in 1993, compared with more than one-half in 1965. "In the eyes of many," the editors believe, "trust in the nonprofit sector was sustained in part by its separation from the commercial sector."

Some nonprofits have offered new services, such as fitness centers, that prove so popular they spawn for-profit rivals, notes Elizabeth T. Boris, director of the Urban Institute's Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy. These businesses then often complain about the "unfair" advantage enjoyed by the tax-exempt nonprofit, as some health club owners did a dozen years ago in bringing suit against the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA).

Other nonprofits, Boris observes, have "pioneered public programs"—such as primary education, kindergarten, and disease control—"that became government responsibilities when the demand grew beyond nonprofits' capacity to respond."

The trend toward devolution of federal functions to state and local governments, as in the 1996 welfare reform, is yet another cause of philanthropic worry. Clotfelter and Ehrlich advocate greater efforts by nonprofits and government to aid the poor—and a campaign by nonprofits to reverse the 1996 legislation. Leslie Lenkowsky, a professor at the Indiana University Center on Philanthropy, however, urges a different course: "After nearly a century of pursuing national purposes through national means, the philanthropic world, like public policy, faces the challenge of reinventing itself to be more relevant to the values and problems of local communities."

"The New Dollars and Dreams: American Incomes and Economic Change."

Russell Sage Foundation, 112 E. 64th St., New York, N.Y. 10021, 248 pp. \$39.95; paper, \$16.95

Author: *Frank Levy*

Arising tide lifts all the boats," President John F. Kennedy famously said about economic growth. But it ain't necessarily so, warns Levy, an economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

"When economic growth is skill biased, large portions of the population can lose ground even as the economy grows," he observes.

The remarkably good news about the U.S. economy today—low unemployment, low inflation, low interest rates, the stock market at record highs—is not the whole story, Levy reports. Income inequality is high: the richest five percent of families received 15.6 percent of all family income in 1969—and 20.3 percent in 1996. And average wage growth remains slow. In 1976, the average 30-year-old worker earned \$31,100, almost twice as much (in constant dollars) as a comparable worker in 1949. But the worker of 1949 could look

forward to rapidly rising wages: by age 50, he was earning \$40,000. His younger counterpart, in contrast, saw his wages reach only \$37,800 at his half-century mark. Workers who only went to high school fared much worse, reaching only \$28,400 at age 50.

Levy attributes this weak wage growth to the post-1973 slowdown in productivity growth; the post-1979 surge in skill bias, favoring the better educated; and the average worker's loss of bargaining power, thanks to deregulation, globalization, and technology. These trends could change, he notes. Productivity growth could accelerate as computers are better integrated into the workplace; technology could begin to replace higher-skilled workers, as well as lower-skilled ones. But if current trends are not reversed, he predicts, "as much as a fifth of the population will increasingly fall behind . . . [and] a majority of the population will reject pro-growth policies."

"Space and International Relations: Challenges for the 21st Century."

A conference, March 25, 1999, at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C. The conference was co-sponsored by the Space Policy Institute and the Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University.

For most of the Space Age, the United States and the Soviet Union were the only nations active in space, and the Cold War set their agendas. Today, there are four more "spacefaring" countries (plus Europe), and space satellites are vital to commerce as well as national defense.

How should the United States protect its security interests in space? Some, such as former acting air force secretary Tidal McCoy, urge development of a military capability to defend U.S. satellites and use anti-satellite weapons. Others, such as U.S. Representative George Brown, D.-California, oppose the "militarization" of space.

Since the end of the Cold War, the U.S. and other governments have put some 80 satellites a year into orbit, according to U.S. Air Force Colonel Frank G. Klotz. "Even as military use of space grows, its share of the

'action'—and ultimately its ability to dominate the space policy process—is being overtaken by the commercial sector." In 1997, for the first time, more American commercial payloads were launched into space than government ones.

The Clinton administration, observes John Logsdon, director of George Washington University's Space Policy Institute, has given preference to gaining economic advantage, even if that involves some security risks. In 1994, over the protests of the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency, it authorized American aerospace firms to market satellite high-resolution photos.

Klotz favors prudent restrictions on the sale of American space technology. "Draconian restrictions," he says, would only invite more competition from other countries, ultimately reducing America's ability "to write the rules for space."

CURRENT BOOKS

Declaration of Interdependence

THE LEXUS AND THE OLIVE TREE:

Understanding Globalization.

By Thomas L. Friedman.

Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 394 pp. \$27.50

by Robert Wright

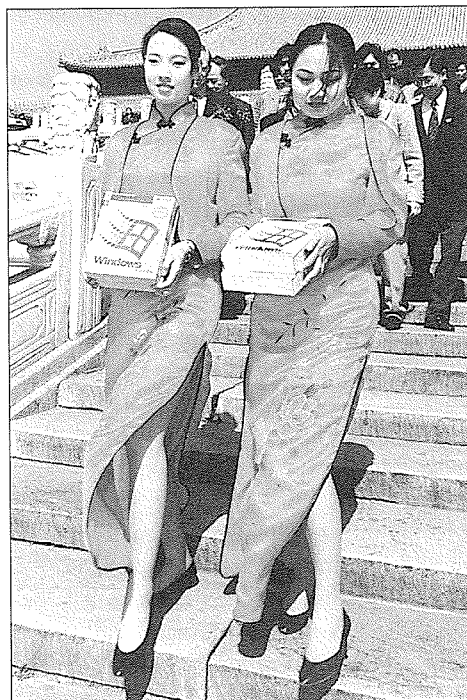
As foreign affairs columnist for the *New York Times*, Thomas Friedman has gotten a reputation as something of a cheerleader for globalization. He knows that. Early in *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, his treatise on the global economy, he recounts the reaction his editor received after telling friends that the book was in the works: "Oh, Friedman, he loves globalization."

Friedman begs to differ. He doesn't love globalization; he just thinks it's largely a good thing and, in any event, a fact of life. "I didn't start globalization, I can't stop it—except at a huge cost to human development—and I'm not going to waste time trying." He comes not to praise globalization but to appraise it, to weigh its pros and cons, and to find ways of elevating the ratio of the former to the latter.

Some critics have complained that this book merely restates conventional wisdom, the view of globalization's upside and downside held by mainstream American internationalists. Upside: the restless flow of capital and technology forces governments that want prosperity to abandon archaic statist structures in favor of markets; to abandon backroom cronyism and corruption in favor of transparency and the rule of law; to grant economic liberty that will sooner or later entail political liberty. Downside: the same flow of capital and technology brings destabilizing currency swings, environmental degradation, cultural homogenization, and tribalistic backlash from religious, nationalist, and ethnic groups that see their interests threatened.

True, this is conventional wisdom, and it's more or less Friedman's view. But one reason it's conventional wisdom is that Friedman has been articulating it over the last few years from his prominent podium on the *Times* op-ed page. Another reason is that it makes sense. And there's nothing wrong with devoting a book to conventional wisdom that makes sense, especially when you can flesh out the wisdom with on-the-ground facts.

Friedman has lots of facts—countless colorful anecdotes from his globetrotting—and, more important, some encouraging analytical observations. In general, he notes, the Asian nations that were least



hurt by the 1997 financial crisis—Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore—had accountable governments and little corruption. And those that were corrupt but democratic (Thailand, South Korea) did better than those that were corrupt and undemocratic, notably Indonesia. (China survived the turmoil by other means altogether. Its non-convertible currency and closed capital markets—both of which it plans to reform in pursuit of long-run prosperity—had the short-run payoff of insulating it from global shocks.)

Also encouraging is Friedman's "Golden Arches Theory of Conflict Prevention": No two countries that both have a McDonald's have fought each other since each got its McDonald's. This, of course, is a pop version of something scholars have noted in blander terms—that prosperous nations tend not to fight each other these days, especially when they're democracies, which prosperous nations tend to be.

Friedman's pop version of this theory suffered a setback after his book went to press. Yugoslavia has golden arches, and so do the nations that chose to bomb it. Still, the non-pop version stands essentially vindicated. McDonald's notwithstanding, one could argue, the Balkans are undermodernized and underglobalized. Their checkered past—from Ottoman dominance to communism—has slowed the evolution of economic and political liberty, and has kept their various nations and ethnic groups from being woven into fine-grained economic interdependence.

If this one upside is genuine—if globalization does tend to promote peace—that would compensate for a lot of downside. Friedman frets about a Japanese girl who, while visiting California, tugged her mother's sleeve and said, "Look, Mom, they have McDonald's in this country, too." When this girl wrongly thinks of McDonald's as Japanese, "something that should be treated as different—the Big Mac—and even enjoyed because it is different, is not." Friedman calls this "unhealthy glocalization," which he defines as "when you absorb something that isn't

part of your culture, doesn't connect with anything latent in your culture, but you have so lost touch with your culture, you think it does." That may indeed be unhealthy, but not as unhealthy as having atom bombs dropped on a couple of your cities. Faux-indigenous McDonald's restaurants strike me as a small price to pay for avoiding global apocalypse. Occasionally Friedman seems to be straining to balance his cheerleading with hand wringing.

Of course, where globalization's side effects are grave and can realistically be remedied—as with headlong environmental destruction—remedies there should be. But if history is any guide, keeping modernization and traditional cultures in lasting equipoise—keeping "the Lexus and the olive tree" in "healthy balance"—will not be as practical as Friedman hopes. Cultures merge and cultures perish; that's life on this planet, and no culture is safe. America may be the world's dominant civilization, but pilgrim garb lies in the dustbin of history, and in many American cities it's now easier to get good sushi or enchiladas than good meatloaf.

That globalization abets economic inequality is a common complaint, and Friedman indulges it a bit uncritically. It is true, as he notes, that globalization can widen the income gap in developed nations, where blue-collar workers suddenly face low-wage competition from abroad. But other aspects of the problem are less straightforward. Friedman says that income inequality among nations grew between 1960 and 1995. Yes, but a major reason was the number of countries that resisted true globalization—Third World nations clinging to statist economies, living off Cold War subsidies, keeping market forces at bay, while rich nations got richer.

Similarly, Friedman cites—again, as if globalization were the culprit—the economic gap in Egypt between a modernized elite and the country's teeming masses. But the problem in Egypt is that the teeming masses by and large haven't been plugged into the global economy. As Friedman himself notes but doesn't adequately emphasize, the big gap in more-

globalized developing nations (such as Thailand) is between the traditional rural poor on the one hand and, on the other, a more affluent urban sector consisting of entrepreneurs and blue-collar workers who benefit from global capital.

For the most part, Friedman's fretting is well targeted. When cultural homogenization stirs fundamentalist backlash, fomenting civil war or terrorism, that is not merely an aesthetic problem. What Friedman calls "the super-empowered angry man"—the fusion of burning grievance and explosive high technology—is indeed a looming peril. So is the environmental damage wrought by industrialization. (Here, alas, Thailand is again a good example.)

Sometimes solutions will arise, as the problems themselves do, beyond the bounds of any one nation. Friedman recounts how environmental groups rallied against an ill-conceived Brazilian dredging project that had been driven by the global demand for local soybeans. South American environmentalists hooked up with their North American counterparts and persuaded the Inter-American Development Bank to pressure South American politicians to rethink the project. Such supranational assaults on globalization's excesses may be the wave of the future, and, though Friedman arguably underplays this trend, he has a good name for it: learning "to use globalization against itself."

The value of this book's vantage point—the sensible center—is nicely highlighted by the op-ed page Friedman calls home. To one side is columnist Bob Herbert, who reflexively recycles horror stories about clothing factories in Southeast Asia, never pausing to ask: if those factories are really a step back into the dark ages, how come they're besieged with job applicants? How come the workers who want to shut them down are American, not Asian?

To the other side is A. M. Rosenthal. As Herbert fights oppressive capitalism, Rosenthal fights the remnants of oppressive communism, notably China's government. Rosenthal's concerns, like Herbert's, are often valid, but, also like Herbert's, self-defeating when pursued single-mindedly. If American policymakers adopted Rosenthal's basic platform—demanding full human rights for everyone on the planet by this evening—American indignation would impede the commercial development that has manifestly expanded personal freedom in China.

Between Herbert and Rosenthal sits Friedman, the only *Times* columnist who writes regularly about world affairs with sobriety and sophistication. If this book becomes a basic guide to globalization for American opinion makers, as it well may, that will be a good thing.

> ROBERT WRIGHT is the author of *The Moral Animal* (1994). His next book, to be published in January by Pantheon, is *Nonzero: The Logic of Human Destiny*.

Of Monocles and Myopia

THE WORLD THROUGH A MONOCLE:
The New Yorker at Midcentury.

By Mary F. Corey.
Harvard Univ. Press. 251 pp. \$25.95

by Amy E. Schwartz

Writing a book about a magazine is a complicated feat. How to cull, from miles of consciously ephemeral

material, the nuggets that reveal something enduring about a decades-long publishing endeavor and its era? How to

untangle a magazine's many different voices and positions over time, without waxing too excitable at "contradictions" that are merely hallmarks of the genre—for instance, the contrast between editorial matter and advertising columns? Mary F. Corey solves some of these problems and trips over others in *The World through a Monocle: The New Yorker at Midcentury*, a sprightly if sometimes overearnest attempt to read the venerable weekly magazine as a prism and prime shaper of the liberal intellectual consensus in the prosperous years after World War II.

On one level, this thesis is so obvious that it hardly needs elaboration. As a "text" and mirror of the culture, *The New Yorker* is perfect. For decades it functioned as taste arbiter for a deeply loyal readership, as a vehicle for groundbreaking journalism, and, simultaneously, as a showcase for the most conspicuous sort of luxury consumption. How could the magazine *not* reflect a large slice of the world as it appeared to that readership—a group whose attachment to both magazine and worldview was displayed vividly, not to say poignantly, in the cries of agony when the editorship passed to Tina Brown in 1992?

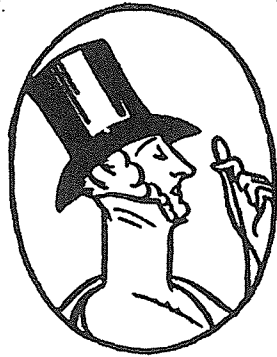
The World through a Monocle, though, goes further. Corey, a lecturer in history at the University of California, Los Angeles, contends that the combined message of right thinking and gracious living projected by *The New Yorker* made it not just a beloved magazine but an "organ of cultural absolution." The elegant literary metaphors of E. B. White and the sly assumptions behind the cartoons papered over gaps in the logic of the postwar liberal consensus. They allowed readers to believe in American goodness and "progressive imperialism" while evincing just the right level of horror at injustice and ignoring their own large blind spots on race, gender, class, and the like. "In its

pages," the author writes, "elitism coexisted with egalitarianism, conspicuous consumption commingled with anticommmercialism, materialism with idealism, and sexism with gender equality."

New Yorker writers' viewpoints did vary over the years, but it's not clear that the variations really support the weight of this analysis. What Corey calls the "uncommon capacity to present overlapping and contradictory cultural ideas without apology" is, after all, the very lifeblood of any magazine that seeks to keep readers engaged. Offering too tightly controlled a voice or too monolithic a worldview has killed many a magazine.

Corey is more persuasive in using the magazine's editorial choices to trace cultural fault lines or to locate major shifts, sometimes shifts caused by the articles themselves. The publication of John Hersey's *Hiroshima* as a full issue of the magazine in 1946 was one such moment, signaling the swing from utopian thinking about the power of the atom to horror at a nuclear world. Another swing voice, so to speak, was the reporting of John McNulty, "the poet laureate of the Third Avenue bar," whose perceptions throughout the 1940s helped nudge readers from the old trope of drunkenness as literary mystique to the modern view of alcoholism as tragic pathology.

Corey cleverly traces the "cultural anxieties" that gave rise to a genre of articles she terms "Maids Say the Darndest Things," and the anxieties behind a string of stories (fiction and nonfiction) that put racist views in the mouths of presumably uncultured "others," mostly southerners. (At the same time, she points out, hardly any issue of the magazine lacked a cartoon featuring a stereotypically primitive, African-looking witch doctor or South Sea islander.) While employing many indubitably "liberated" women as correspondents and editors, the magazine shied away from anything like feminism and



made endless comic use of the stereotyped suburban women who controlled their husbands, henpecked them, and shopped away their earnings.

While seeing through the magazine's implication that racism afflicted only faraway primitives, Corey makes a sort of reverse version of the same error. Time and again she doggedly unearths the "paradox" or "contradiction" in some piece of reportage without seeming to entertain the possibility that the piece's author, way back in the benighted 1950s, might not only have been aware of the paradox but was actually seeking to illuminate it. Some of this reflects tone-deafness to the different genres that make up a magazine's mosaic. A Talk of the Town item about a misspelled note from the maid probably does betray unconscious anxiety about having servants, as Corey contends, but a Peter DeVries short story about the identical episode is likely to be drawing attention to that anx-

iety. Likewise, the author engages in lengthy and flatfooted analysis of Edmund Wilson's two-part article, published in 1949, about the Shalako, a religious ritual held on the Zuni Indian reservation. In mapping its conflicting messages about the white man's depredations and the ambiguous role of the (white) journalist in reporting them, Corey seems oblivious to the fact that these conflicts are the meat of Wilson's exquisite irony.

Despite its analytic weaknesses, *The World through a Monocle* offers plenty of enjoyable and valuable cultural history. It is perhaps best read in tandem with one of the many memoirs about the magazine, such as Brendan Gill's *Here at The New Yorker* (1975), which remind the reader that this was not merely an abstract social "text" but a living endeavor produced by real and idiosyncratic people.

> AMY E. SCHWARTZ writes about cultural issues for the Washington Post.

Warfare by the Numbers

THE PITY OF WAR:
Explaining World War I.

By Niall Ferguson.
Basic. 563 pp. \$30

by Andrew J. Bacevich

Soldiers, statesmen, and scholars have long shared a common conceit: that, given sufficient effort and the right analytical tools, they might one day fully decipher the nature of war. As to where that understanding would lead, though, these groups part company. The soldiers and statesmen imagine bending war to their will and employing military power more effectively. The scholars, in contrast, dream that a full understanding would halt the military miscalculation, slaughter, and pointless destruction that have constituted so much of contemporary history. This impressively researched and highly original but uneven book falls square-

ly in the latter tradition.

The subject of *The Pity of War* is World War I, arguably the most pointless and destructive conflict in the bloody century now coming to a close. Rather than offer a grand narrative of the war, Niall Ferguson, who teaches modern history at Oxford University, takes aim at a series of myths that, in his view, have clouded our understanding of the so-called Great War. Above all, he intends to refute the view that the war somehow qualifies as tragedy, its origins, conduct, and outcome the product of vast and uncontrollable forces. He argues instead for seeing it as a series of monumental blunders result-

ing from the recklessness, stupidity, and cowardice of specific individuals.

Ferguson's self-consciously revisionist book, which stirred a great deal of controversy when it was published in Britain last year, covers a wide range of topics. Revisiting familiar terrain, the author examines the war's origins and probes the failure of the Schlieffen Plan, on which Germany's hopes for quick victory in 1914 hinged. But he also ventures onto less traveled ground, addressing matters such as propaganda, the will of men to fight, and the complexities of surrender under the horrific conditions of the trenches.

Addressing these topics, Ferguson employs an idiosyncratic methodology. Memoirs, official reports, battlefield testimonials, and eyewitness journalism provide the very stuff of history for the typical specialist in military affairs. These Ferguson disdains as self-serving or biased, useful only to erect straw men for subsequent demolition. In place of such traditional sources, he offers data. Indeed, his achievement in amassing and analyzing data is nothing short of phenomenal. This hefty volume contains nary a map, yet it is festooned with dozens of graphs and tables, quantifying everything from "Total military personnel as a percentage of population for the five great powers, 1890–1913/14" to "British and German food consumption as a percentage of peacetime consumption, 1917–1918." In essence, Ferguson views World War I through the lens of political economy.

Applied to issues of grand strategy or the macroeconomics of war management, the technique yields important insights. Ferguson effectively argues, for example, that British and German strategic interests were by no means incompatible before the outbreak of hostilities. He skewers Sir Edward Grey, Britain's Germanophobic foreign sec-

retary, who, partly for the sake of domestic politics, insisted on dispatching the British Expeditionary Force to France in 1914—an action that condemned his countrymen to a needless war and ultimately cost them their empire. Similarly, the author makes a compelling case that, despite their efforts to subject Germany to a Carthaginian peace, the supposed victors ended up bearing the brunt of the war's costs.

In a demonstration of statistical precision that is, depending on one's point of view, either awe inspiring or slightly loony,

he calculates that killing an enemy soldier cost \$36,485.48 for the armies of the Triple Entente, but only \$11,344.77 for the Central Powers. The gap between these two figures, according to Ferguson, holds enormous importance. Indeed, "the greatest of all paradoxes of the First World War is that, despite being disastrously disadvantaged in economic terms, the Central Powers were far more successful in inflicting death on

their enemies." He cites this gap (correctly) as evidence of the superior fighting power, soldier for soldier, of the German army. Further, he uses it to suggest that the Allied strategy of attrition was an abject failure. Indeed, he concludes that the Allies never really defeated the German army in the field.

With data so boldly auguring victory, what went wrong for Germany? Ferguson differs with interwar proponents of the notorious "stab in the back" theory only in the culprit he holds responsible. Rather than traitorous politicians, he fingers General Erich Ludendorff, whose famous loss of nerve after Germany's failed spring 1918 offensive set events in motion that culminated in an armistice by November. When Ludendorff's confidence in eventual victory faltered, according to Ferguson, the



morale of the troops under his command collapsed. Recalculating the costs of fighting on, German soldiers decided that the cause was no longer worth risking their lives. In ever-increasing numbers, they began throwing down their arms. The outcome of the war, according to Ferguson, thus reflected the common soldier's willingness to surrender, not the German army's capacity to kill. "It was Ludendorff who delivered the fateful stab," he writes, "and it was in the German front, not the back."

But in dealing with these inherently unquantifiable matters, Ferguson's certitude is misplaced. His explanation—the outcome of a great armed struggle not simply determined but effectively reversed by the momentary lapse of a single individual—is too pat. War, as Clausewitz wrote, lies in the realm of chance, its conduct shrouded by fog and complicated by pervasive friction, a contest pitting governments and armies and peoples against one another, with the verdict determined as much by moral factors as by

material ones. To pretend that a single factor explains the outcome of any conflict is as misleading as to imagine that, having cast the die for war, we can control its course. That was true during 1914–18 and it remains true in 1999, as the surprises and miscalculations of NATO's war against Yugoslavia attest. The closer Ferguson ventures to the Western Front—that is, to the real war—the less persuasive he becomes.

To reaffirm that war is slippery and elusive is not to suggest that soldiers, statesmen, and scholars should abandon their efforts to understand its nature. But we should be wary of reductive explanations that can foster dangerous illusions. Imaginatively conceived and well worth reading, *The Pity of War* makes an important contribution to the vast literature of World War I. But, inevitably, it does not provide the last word on this particular war, much less war in general.

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Contemporary Affairs

MYTHS OF RICH AND POOR:
Why We're Better Off than We Think.
By W. Michael Cox and Richard Alm.
Basic. 256 pp. \$25

Despite the booming economy, declining unemployment, and quiescent inflation, many commentators accentuate the negative. There is still poverty. (An emphatic yes, the worst fault of the American system.) Income inequality keeps growing. (Yes, but almost everyone is better off in today's less-equal system than in yesterday's, which was more equal at a lower level.) The information economy rewards the educated. (Yes, but the same system's prosperity now allows the country to offer higher education to almost everybody.) The economy has intractable and incurable structural problems. (Didn't we just hear that about the federal deficit?) Wall Street might collapse. (Sure, but that would be true even if the economy were weak.)

A few writers, among them Derek Bok, Robert Samuelson, and David Whitman, have

made the case that, for the majority of Americans, living standards—the most important overall gauge of the economy—keep rising. Joining this literature is the impressive *Myths of Rich and Poor*. Cox, an official of the Federal Reserve Bank in Dallas, and Alm, a reporter for the *Dallas Morning News*, set out to "provide an antidote to the prevailing pessimism" regarding the economy, and they deploy a profusion of facts and data in behalf of their cause.

Myths of Rich and Poor is strongest where it marshals evidence on the physical betterment of American life—bigger homes, safer cars, dramatically improved health care, abundant (perhaps overabundant) affordable food, easier access to higher education, greater retirement security. Baby boomers often sing the blues about how their parents had a better life in the 1950s, but measured by material standards, nearly everyone is much better off today.

The authors engagingly make this point by estimating how long a typical worker (that is, a

nonsupervisory, hourly wage earner) would need to work in order to afford various consumer goods. A square foot of new house cost 6.5 hours of work time in the 1950s; now it's 5.5 hours. Home air conditioning systems once cost about 40 hours of work per 1,000 BTUs; now it's four hours. The McDonald brothers' original cheeseburger of the 1950s cost a half-hour's wages; now it's three minutes'. A gallon of milk now costs less than half as many work-minutes as it did in the 1950s. And so on. Calculations such as these demonstrate that, judged by buying power, the American economy is serving most citizens well.

Cox and Alm also provide the historical perspective that's often missing from laments about the contemporary economy. Almost half of the economy was agrarian a century ago, and the service sector overtook manufacturing in size not in the 1990s but in the 1930s—facts frequently overlooked by those who think an economy based on a relatively small heavy-industrial sector is unprecedented and spooky. *Myths of Rich and Poor* also contains some hysterical past predictions of economic doom, such as Martin van Buren's 1829 warning that the construction of railroads would end prosperity by undermining the canal system—and, at any rate, “the Almighty certainly never intended that people should travel at such breakneck speeds.”

Where *Myths of Rich and Poor* falters is by equating a high living standard with a happy citizenry. As the University of Michigan researcher Ronald Inglehart has shown, there is surprisingly little correlation between affluence and happiness. Most Americans are better off in material terms than they were even a short time ago, and that's good. But affluence is only one aspect of what really makes human beings rich or poor. Love, community, morality, and spirituality can mean just as much.

—Gregg Easterbrook

THE POLAR BEAR STRATEGY:
Reflections on Risk in Modern Life.
By John F. Ross. Perseus. 208 pp. \$25

THE CULTURE OF FEAR:
Why Americans Are Afraid of the Wrong Things.
By Barry Glassner. Basic. 276 pp. \$25

Six men hiking across the Arctic tundra, with one rifle among them, come upon the

tracks of a large carnivore. They argue at some length about what to do. Unable to agree, they do nothing, just muddle onward.

This is the engaging lead to *The Polar Bear Strategy*. Ross is a senior editor of *Smithsonian*, and the book grew out of an article he wrote for the magazine in 1995. The book reflects its origins: it is compact, lucid, insightful, scientifically sound but eminently readable, and written for the layperson.

The author shows that the sources of peril, small and large, are ubiquitous: diet, cigarettes, dioxin, pesticides, road rage, air travel, nuclear power, amniocentesis, even five-gallon buckets (in which about 50 children drown every year). Until quite recently, individuals and society relied largely on the “polar bear strategy”—all worry and argument, but no planning.

Now, though, we often see what Ross terms the “Orwellian side of risk management”—the proliferation of buzzers, fences, and speed bumps; the warning printed on the child's Batman costume (“FOR PLAY ONLY: Mask and chest plate are not protective: Cape does not enable user to fly”). Scientists and regulators have grown so adept at finding risks that risk management now intrudes into every corner of our lives. The intrusions encourage us to cede responsibility, to be passive, to view ourselves as victims.

Swayed by the mass media and advocacy groups, meanwhile, most of us worry too much about insignificant risks while all but ignoring truly substantial threats. The most serious of our biomolecular enemies, Ross notes, originate in our geophysical and biological surroundings: in smoking, bad diet, and our own genetic heritages. We now understand the consequences of smoking and diet. Soon we will possess detailed information about our individual genetic frailties, giving us still greater power to choose and control—a development we can welcome and a responsibility we should embrace.

Glassner's *Culture of Fear* focuses on how public perceptions of risk are shaped. The Batman cape warning appears here too, as do asbestos, breast implants, and airplane crashes. But Glassner is mainly interested in our social aversions. A professor of sociology at the University of Southern California, he contends that mass media, inept experts, and other fear-mongers profit economically or politically from manipulating our aversions. Conservative

foundations orchestrate public loathing of “political correctness” on campus (it’s really just “civility”). Violent inner-city males and TV violence aren’t the problem; the gun industry is. Overblown concerns about on-line smut, missing children, teen moms, and illegitimacy all divert us, Glassner says, from “facing up to our collective lack of responsibility toward our nation’s children.”

So what should we fear? Glassner has his list, a distinctly political one: “hunger, dilapidated schools, gun proliferation, and deficient health care for much of the U.S. population.” To resolve these real problems, we must “finance and organize.” Where Ross prescribes better-informed individual choices, Glassner seeks a solution in collective action.

—Peter Huber

HOME TOWN.

By Tracy Kidder. Random House. 338 pp. \$25.95

American culture of the late 20th century holds that everything significant happens in the big city. It is acknowledged, perhaps, that strong character and noble suffering exist in the rural heart of this great country, but the national secular religion maintains that our political, artistic, and civic genius resides in the great metropolises of New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago; secondarily in the old and new worlds of Boston, San Francisco, and perhaps Miami; and, somewhat grudgingly, in the decadent bureaucratic pits of Washington. Left out of the calculus are the smaller cities and towns where the society carries out its essential business and endures its angst in microcosm—left out, that is, until a schoolchild slaughters his classmates and teachers, or a tornado wipes out a community.

Now along comes master chronicler Kidder, who focuses his considerable talents on Northampton, Massachusetts. Like every other distinct community across America that has its own soul, Northampton is hardly immune to outside influences and internal dysfunction. Far from it. But its people know who they are and what they want from life; their pride in their community and their

fundamental faith in the future gets them through all manner of adversity and confusion. “If you do all your growing up in the same small place,” writes Kidder, “you don’t shed identities. You accumulate them.” During his several years of intense reporting in the town, he particularly followed the life and times of one Tommy O’Connor, the youngest member of a large working-class family who became a policeman and whose experiences offer a winding, revealing (if at times overdramatized) path through the recent adventures of Northampton.

Some will insist that Northampton is not in any sense typical—that, for example, the presence of Smith College distorts and softens its experience. But Kidder does not claim to have looked for anything representative of a grand phenomenon. As with his other successful and sensitive works, including *The Soul of a New Machine* (1981) and *House* (1985), he has sought merely to tell a good story in a way that teaches us something. That he has done.

—Sanford J. Ungar

HARD BALL:

The Abuse of Power in Pro Team Sports.

By James Quirk and Rodney Fort. Princeton Univ. Press.

248 pp. \$22.95

When I was growing up in a Boston suburb, for \$2 I could watch NBA double-headers in Boston Garden or sit in the Fenway Park bleachers and see the Red Sox fade. Today those humble seats go for \$12 and \$14; getting closer to the action can run as high as \$85 at the Fleet Center, where the Celtics now play their home games. The



good old days were never quite as good as we remember them, but such examples do show how much has changed for the average fan. Now, *everything* seems big league: the money made by owners and investors, the players' salaries, the television contracts, the ticket prices. At the very top, the quality of play in baseball, football, hockey, and basketball is probably better than ever, but the expansion of the leagues has meant a dilution of talent. Blackout rules and premium-channel cable contracts, meanwhile, keep games off free TV. As a result, fans now pay more to see less talent play less often.

Economists Quirk and Fort have written a short, accessible book that explodes some myths (e.g., the escalation of player salaries has driven up ticket prices) and compellingly argues for radical change. In examining this big-money industry—teams in the four major professional leagues earned more than three-quarters of a billion dollars in 1996—their analysis is economic, but their methodology is that of investigative journalists: follow the money.

The authors show that the major financial beneficiaries of the big TV contracts are the owners, not the networks or the stations. But most of that largesse flows through the owners to the players, who, since the advent of free agency and strong unions in the mid-1970s, have earned something approximating their financial value to the organization.

Just as the owners grumble at contract time, most pro sports teams operate on thin profit margins. And winning does not always increase net profits.

So who's to blame for the fans' plight? According to the authors, the culprit is the leagues, which are structured as monopoly cartels. Protected by Congress from the antitrust lawyers at the Department of Justice, they are able to extract tax breaks and other bribes from state and local politicians who are desperate to keep teams in the neighborhood. Quirk and Fort recommend splitting each of the big-league cartels into several competing leagues, on the model of the AT&T breakup. But they do not address the political obstacles to their plan—the millions that the leagues and owners spend on Washington lobbying and campaign contributions.

Creating a competitive environment for professional team sports is an issue waiting for an ambitious politician, one who is willing to stand up to entrenched interests. It would take a politician running for national office without a full-blown agenda, probably a Republican who believes that consumers benefit from competitive markets. Ideally the candidate would know about pro sports from personal experience as, say, a managing partner of a major league baseball team. Are you listening, George W. Bush?

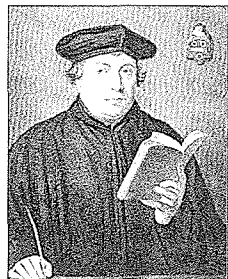
—Marty Linsky

Religion & Philosophy

MARTIN LUTHER: *The Christian between God and Death.*

By Richard Marius. Harvard Univ. Press. 542 pp. \$35.

When the great Catholic humanist Desiderius Erasmus advocated a moderate approach to reforming the corrupt and corrupting 16th-century church, Luther the absolutist would have nothing of it. A figure of prodigious energy, but wracked and agonized and subject all his life to spells of depression, Luther railed against Erasmus and other champions of reason. We



know the dignified and purposeful Erasmus through his portrait by Hans Holbein the Younger. The Luther of this absorbing and dramatically shaped new biography should have sat for Hieronymus Bosch, or for Edvard Munch in our own century.

Marius, the author of a biography of Thomas More, regards Luther's temperament as his tragedy, and the author's sympathies are with the Erasmuses of the world. He concedes Luther his peculiar greatness, but he does not forgive the defects of character and personality that, in Marius's uncommonly harsh view, brought

horrors: "For more than a century after Luther's death, Europe was strewn with the slaughtered corpses of people who would have lived normal lives if Luther had never lived at all." Marius cannot shake his awareness of the enduring consequences of the man's actions, for better and for worse. Luther's translation of the Bible helped shape the modern German language, but his nationalism and his insistence that people obey their rulers helped shape modern Germany.

Born in 1483 into a Europe haunted by death and plague, by skepticism, and by threats to belief, Martin Luther became a monk after he endured a terrifying apparition on a country road during a thunderstorm. Marius argues that he was impelled throughout his life by an overwhelming fear of death as nothingness. For Luther, religion was the means of conquering death through belief in the Jesus Christ of Scripture, which the individual Christian could interpret without direction from the church. Indeed, the Roman Catholic Church, its superstitions, and its hated pope had to go.

By his early thirties, Luther was a figure to reckon with, ready to set himself against centuries of Catholic practice, as he did in challenging indulgences and sacraments. He was declared a heretic by Emperor Charles V after a showdown with the secular and religious authorities at the Diet of Worms in 1521. "By 1526," writes Marius, "the most creative part of his life was over, and his ceaseless battles with adversaries descended often into repetitive invective and vituperation that weary the soul." Many of those adversaries were Luther's fellow reformers, but he became as doctrinaire as a pope in resistance to their claims. Although Marius acknowledges that the final two decades of Luther's life merit fresh consideration, he confesses that he is not the man for the job. It takes a wise biographer to beg off.

Marius devotes much of the book to considering the key texts through which Luther evolved and spread his beliefs (the American edition of Luther's works runs to 55 volumes). The author admirably explains the theology, but contemporary readers, free to worship the planet Pluto if they choose, may tire of the furious old controversies. In a way, our freedom is part of Luther's legacy, because the scourge of religious war unleashed by his rebellion against the Catholic Church led in time to an age of reason (though not of reasonableness).

That consequence would have appalled him, but readers of this book may see it as a nice justice—a divine justice, even.

—James Morris

***BUILDING A PROTESTANT LEFT:
Christianity and Crisis Magazine,
1941–1993.***

By Mark Hulsether.

Univ. of Tenn. Press. 400 pp. \$38

Some readers may prefer to retitile this book *Dismantling a Protestant Left*. In the wake of Vietnam, black power, and women's liberation, the more-or-less unified Protestant left of World War II—pro-labor, pro-Allies, pro-Niebuhr realism—was split in fragments. *Christianity and Crisis* magazine tried to bridge the gaps, both inside and outside the church. But, in the view of many centrist observers, the bridging efforts simply endorsed identity politics, exacerbated the divisions, and, ultimately, doomed *Christianity and Crisis*. For these critics, the magazine's heroic founding generation—including Reinhold Niebuhr and John Bennett—was ill served by its successors, who fell victim to the same utopian longings that Niebuhr and Bennett had tried to foil in the 1940s.

But Hulsether, a professor of religious studies at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is shrewd to stick to his "building" metaphor. To begin with, the fragmentation that afflicted liberal Protestantism (and liberalism generally) after Vietnam was not altogether new. Rather, it was an extension of splits that developed in the late 1940s and 1950s between hawks and doves, and between cultural traditionalists and modernists on such issues as sexual morality. In addition, Bennett himself, as chairman of the *Christianity and Crisis* editorial board in the late 1960s and senior contributing editor in the early 1970s, sought some accommodation with anti-war, feminist, and minority groups, which were—rightly, in his view, and Hulsether's—demanding structural reforms in race relations, education, family, and treatment of the poor at home and abroad.

In Hulsether's judgment, the magazine's demise in 1993 is not evidence that it should have stuck to its original Niebuhrian guns. Even Niebuhr, before his death in 1971, was questioning his earlier Cold War militancy, especially on the morality of nuclear deterrence. Rather than signaling the failure of pro-

gressive liberalism, the death of *Christianity and Crisis* resulted from collapsed bridges linking liberal sub-movements—gays and lesbians, environmentalists, feminists, African Americans and other racial and ethnic groups. Liberalism's voices simply grew too numerous for a single magazine to encompass. So, in Hulsether's view, religious and secular liberalism may be stronger than we think.

But if liberals are going to reassert themselves, as Hulsether hopes, they will need to take better stock of the intellectual power of the conservative forces arrayed against them. The "democratic capitalism" of Michael

Novak and Peter Berger (both former contributors to the magazine), which seemed ridiculous to many social-justice liberals in the 1970s and 1980s, does not look quite so laughable now. To mount a new assault on inequality, religious liberals will have to reexamine their presuppositions about freedom and individual responsibility, as many black intellectuals such as Orlando Patterson and Stephen Carter have been doing. That kind of intellectual reexamination is the aspect of Bennett's Christian pragmatism that contemporary leftists should be most eager to emulate.

—Richard Wightman Fox

Arts & Letters

DANGEROUS WATER: A Biography of the Boy Who Became Mark Twain.

By Ron Powers. Basic. 328 pp. \$24

Most literary biography leaves the image of a sour old man in pince-nez and tweeds chasing a fabulous butterfly. Sometimes he nabs the creature and pins it to his corkboard. Often he misses it altogether. In either case, we spend far too much time with the lumbering academic and not nearly enough time with his prey.

That's not the case with this account of Mark Twain's early years. It's easy to see how Powers won a Pulitzer in 1973; he writes marvelously. Also—equally important—he knows when to shut up. In an era when well-meaning hacks cheerfully rework the King James Bible, Powers lets his subjects speak. He quotes Twain, of course, but also his doltish brother, Orion, as well as newspaper accounts, letters, other historians, any source of light.

Because there's so little cotton batting, one comes almost immediately on the raw nature of the boy who became Mark Twain, a nature quite out of the ordinary before he ever wrote a word. In the summer of 1844, for instance, when he was eight, measles swept through Hannibal, Missouri. Each day, more children died. "The mothers of the town were nearly demented with fright," Twain later recalled. When his best friend

came down with the disease, Twain sneaked into his house, was thrown out, sneaked in again, and climbed into bed with the sick boy. "It was a good case of measles that resulted," Twain wrote later. "It brought me within a shade of death's door. . . . I have never enjoyed anything in my life any more than I enjoyed dying that time." Courage? Excessive sympathy? A desperate need for attention? Who knows, but this is not your average youth.

Another great flaw in literary biography is that writers often lead dull lives. Not Twain. He saw men shot and knifed to death, saw them drown, saw a white man murder a slave with a lump of iron ore—all before he was 11 years old.

Fortunately for us, his brother had a print shop, and by the time Twain was 12 he was working there, sitting on a box in order to reach the type cases, puffing on a cigar. "As he worked and smoked," Powers writes, "he was building his literary consciousness letter by letter, word by word, line by line. More than the adventure books of his young boyhood, more even than the Bible, these years of typesetting would anneal him to language by making it a tactile presence in his hands, with weight and shape and scent, the scent of the ink. The paradigm of typesetting remained a lifelong guiding principle of Mark Twain's writing and even speaking style. As fast and torrentially as his work could flow, 20 man-



uscript pages a day in the throes of inspiration, his sentences were always *constructed*, never dashed. The right word obsessed him. . . . The difference between the *almost right* word and the *right* word is really a large matter—'tis the difference between the lightning-bug and the lightning.'"

We love to linger in this "gigantic childhood." Certainly it was lit by lightning. But this book is aptly titled. These were dangerous waters. Almost nobody got out alive.

—Benjamin Cheever

TELLER OF TALES:

The Life of Arthur Conan Doyle.

By Daniel Stashower. Henry Holt. 412 pp. \$32.50

On a summer night in 1930, some 6,000 well-dressed Londoners crowded into Royal Albert Hall. They had come to see and hear the renowned Scottish author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, for whom a chair waited on the stage. One technicality set this hastily arranged public appearance apart from countless others: Conan Doyle had died five days before. Seeing no sign of their man, skeptics began stealing out of the hall. The emcee—a psychic of dubious gifts—shouted, "He is here! He is here!" Everyone stopped, and all eyes locked hungrily on the empty chair.

Conan Doyle's latest biographer, himself a writer of detective novels, tackles the hardest part of his job first: How could a writer of such intelligence and principle, a gifted physician, explorer, athlete, war veteran, husband, and father—how could this man have believed in spooks and fairies? A "cordial disbeliever," Stashower argues for "sympathy rather than derision." After reading this account, few readers are likely to rush out to buy Conan Doyle's *Coming of the Fairies* (1922), but they will understand that there was more to his life than Sherlock Holmes.

Born in Edinburgh in 1859, Conan Doyle grew up poor, the second son of an artistic, high-strung alcoholic father, and the lively, educated mother whom he adored. He got a decent (if detested) Jesuit education, and studied medicine at the University of Edinburgh. One of his professors, Joseph Bell, had an uncanny ability to deduce an entire life story from particulars of accent, clothing, and manner. "Well, my man," Bell would say to a plain-clothed stranger, "you've served in the army."

"Aye, sir." "Not long discharged?" "No, sir." "A Highland regiment?" "Aye, sir." "Stationed at Barbados?" "Aye, sir." It was a small step from there to Sherlock's "You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive."

Published in *The Strand* starting in 1891, the adventures of Sherlock Holmes became the *Star Trek* of their day, and Conan Doyle grew "suddenly, colossally famous" for something he considered far less noteworthy than his other writings. So popular were the detective stories that, when the author killed off his celebrated character in 1893 (temporarily, as it developed), 20,000 people canceled their subscription to the magazine, Londoners wore black mourning bands, and members of the Royal Family were said to be distraught. Conan Doyle expressed only relief. "If I had not killed [Holmes]," he said in a speech to the Author's Club, "he would certainly have killed me."

Conan Doyle never got his fondest wish—to be viewed as a writer of the first rank. Stashower makes a case for *The White Company* (1891) and other historical novels, but doesn't pretend to share his subject's enthusiasm for the occult writings. Many fine minds took up spiritualism at that time. W. B. Yeats traveled far down the path of ghosts and fairies, and, like Conan Doyle, had a wife who practiced automatic writing. But where Yeats's traffic in the supernatural yielded superb poems such as "Lapis Lazuli," Conan Doyle's resulted in a silly book about Atlantis.

Stashower has turned out an unselfconscious, easy read—affectionate and fair-minded, genially short on the naughty bits now endemic to the genre. He hides a prodigious amount of work beneath the surface, so that what the reader sees is not webbed feet paddling strenuously but a swan serenely floating. Conan Doyle and his brilliant detective both would have liked this book.

—A. J. Hewat

WALKER EVANS.

By James R. Mellow. Basic. 654 pp. \$40

By 1956, when this biography ends, the photographer Walker Evans (1903–75) had done his most important work. In his last years, he spent too little time looking into a viewfinder and too much time looking into a bottle. Still, these final two decades of his life, for which the publisher appends a chronology, might have given a perspective to Evans's achievements

that this unfinished book (the author died before completing it) never attains.

For example, in 1960 a second edition of *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* appeared, doubling the number of photographs from the 1941 first edition of that seminal collaboration between Evans and writer James Agee. In 1966, a major project from the 1930s and 1940s featuring hidden-camera portraits Evans had taken on the New York City subway got an exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art and was published as the book *Many Are Called*. In 1971, John Szarkowski curated a major retrospective of Evans's work at the Museum of Modern Art. During these final years, Evans had close friendships with younger photographers such as Szarkowski, Lee Friedlander, Robert Frank, and William Christenberry. The reader longs to hear them talk about their friend.

Mellow is best known for his books *Charmed Circle: Gertrude Stein and Company* (1974) and *Nathaniel Hawthorne in His Times* (1980), which won a National Book Award. It may be a little unfair to say that this book seems perfunctory compared to those, given its unfinished state—but perhaps no more unfair than publishing it at all.

I wonder, though, whether Mellow's imagination would ever have caught fire with Evans, a man who was essentially private, solitary, and somewhat dour. Even his best-known photographs, of those Alabama sharecropper families in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, which seem so politically charged at this distance, came much more from a personal aesthetic than any encompassing vision of what the world should be. Evans had first wanted to be a writer; his aesthetic as a photographer was in the plain style of Lincoln or Twain. It was a style that perfectly matched his times, with its urgent program to ennoble the common man. But Evans embodied the style and not the program, which is why he could just as easily ennoble buildings, cars, and graveyards as

those who built and would rest in them.

—Robert Wilson

SURVIVING LITERARY SUICIDE.

By Jeffrey Berman. Univ. of Massachusetts Press. 290 pp. \$60 hardcover, \$18.95 paper

Surviving Literary Suicide is an important book about suicide and the psychological impact of its literary portrayals. A professor of English at the State University of New York at Albany, Berman assigned his graduate students writings about suicide by six authors (Kate Chopin, Ernest Hemingway, Sylvia Plath, Anne Sexton, William Styron, and Virginia Woolf), and had the students keep diaries recording their responses to the works.

Not one to celebrate self-inflicted death, Berman nonetheless captures well, and in detail, the profound despair experienced by the authors. Most powerful for me, though, were the strength, insight, and humanity of the students' responses to what they read. Here, for instance, is one student's outrage at how the cerebral dissections of Plath's life and work overlook her suffering: "I picture them fighting over the souvenirs of her demise . . . and forgetting the person who went through the infernal pain. Readers may reify Plath, and the 'cost' to them is that they forget to be human, forget that their subject of study was also a person whose life hurt so much that she was forced to end it."

Works that glorify suicide may pose risks to readers, but Berman reminds us of the affirmation of life that can come from great literature. One student wrote of how Styron's wonderful, and wonderfully influential, *Darkness Visible* (1990) reached through her own depression: "William Styron, the one who made it through, the one who did not succumb. While I still identify more with Anne Sexton, it is you toward whom I gravitate because you are breathing." Berman has written an excellent book.

—Kay Redfield Jamison

Science & Technology

BRAIN POLICY:

How the New Neuroscience Will Change Our Lives and Our Politics.

By Robert H. Blank. Georgetown Univ. Press. 208 pp. \$60 hardcover, \$21.95 paper

The human brain, the source of political ideas, is increasingly becoming the object of policy, too. According to Blank, a professor of political science at the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, the implications

are virtually limitless—the developing “arsenal of techniques for physical, chemical, and potentially genetic control” is destined to “shake the foundations of social thought.”

So far, the debate over brain policy has focused largely on violence and addiction. If some brain defects predispose people to violence or drug addiction, how can we blame them for doing what, in effect, comes naturally? Blank believes that acknowledging the influence of genes and biochemistry does not “force us to abandon the notion of a free will, although it does require a refinement of it.” With few exceptions, individuals still must bear responsibility for their actions, because “brain damage or abnormality remains subjective and links to any specific behavior are tenuous at best.”

Conceivably, though, future discoveries may strengthen the chain of causality between brain defects and aberrant behavior. Neurochemical determinism could collide with much more than just our criminal code. “Biological models of behavior . . . will always be controversial in Western societies,” Blank points out, for they “challenge the foundational concepts of democracy: equality, individual freedom, and free will.”

As if understanding misbehavior weren't contentious enough, scientists are seeking refined methods for altering it. Some of these techniques already are with us: children on Ritalin, adults on antidepressants and mood stabilizers, the elderly on drugs aimed at enhancing mental performance, the anxious of all ages on tranquilizers. In the near future, increasing numbers of us will be taking drugs to enhance memory, sociability, and virility (Viagra is just the first).

Blank favors greater regulation to cope with the emerging psychotechnologies. He envisions legislation requiring “health-outcomes impact statements” for new brain-related technologies, and giving “health-outcomes boards” the authority to decide whether social benefits exceed the costs. He acknowledges, though, that this sort of central planning clashes with our emphasis on individual rights over collective interests. Still, such boards are perfectly consistent with recent shifts of power and responsibility in the field from scientists and medical practitioners to entrepreneurs and bureaucrats.

Americans, Blank argues convincingly, don't yet appreciate the enormous potential of neuroscience—or its likely social and political impacts. That can be explained in part by the news media's fascination with the new genetic technologies and a few other scientific fields. Neuroscience hasn't yet come up with a Dolly. But, as the author makes clear, brain modification—even more than genetic engineering—will profoundly influence our lives in the decades to come.

—Richard Restak

FOR THE TIME BEING.

By Annie Dillard. Knopf. 205 pp. \$22

Author of the Pulitzer-winning *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (1974), Dillard muses on those expanses of space and time that, in John Updike's words, “conspire to crush the humans.” Drawing on Eastern and Western thought, the intricacies of the natural world, and the beliefs of 18th-century rabbi Baal Shem Tov and French paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin, she contemplates the insignificance of an individual life when weighed against the age of the universe and “the whole vast anonymous army of living humanity.”

Dillard probes our perceptions, misperceptions, and blind spots. Why, she wonders, does she find it easy to fire up moral urgency over a girl lost in a Connecticut forest, but difficult even to comprehend the death of 138,000 Bengalis in a flood (her daughter suggests “lots and lots of dots, in blue water”)? “Individuals blur,” Dillard writes. “Journalists use the term ‘compassion fatigue.’ What Ernst Becker called the denial of death is a kind of reality fatigue.”

“Excavating the Combe Grenal cave in France, paleontologists found 60 different levels of human occupation.” Disquieting as it may be to contemplate a faraway future in which we will be just one more layer, Dillard takes some reassurance from the faraway past. Today's gloomsayers, pronouncing civilization's imminent decline, have a great many forebears. “Already in the first century thinkers thought the world was shot to hell.” And Augustine, looking back on the apostles, lamented, “Those were last days then; how much more so now!”

—Paul Feigenbaum

History

EVERYDAY STALINISM: *Ordinary Life in Extraordinary Times—* *Soviet Russia in the 1930s.*

By Sheila Fitzpatrick. Univ. of Chicago Press. 288 pp. \$27.50

Communism is too dull, the humorist Fran Lebowitz once remarked, and fascism is too interesting. But it was the gray Soviet communists who made the most spectacular break with the past, founding a regime that lasted nearly three-quarters of a century, three generations, holding together the last of the multina-



tional empires into the 1990s. No state, no matter how ruthless or tyrannical, could manage such longevity without popular support or at least complicity. In *Everyday Stalinism*, Fitzpatrick, a professor of modern Russian history at the University of Chicago, examines how ordinary people came to terms with the Stalinist system at its sinister peak in the 1930s.

While citizens faced ubiquitous hardships and constraints, a utopian official culture flourished. Propaganda trumpeted the vast public works projects under construction and the plans for dramatically rebuilding Moscow itself. Palaces of labor and culture arose in the cities. Heroes emerged, too, men and women who dramatically exceeded their production targets. The regime even announced that notorious criminals, such as the sleeping-car robber Count Kostia, had spontaneously decided to turn themselves in and go straight. And Stalinism bred its own peculiar form of consumer society, with advertising intended not to

promote the sale of goods (which were unavailable anyway), but to educate the popular taste for a future era of abundance—including varieties of cheese and the indispensable condiment, ketchup.

The Great Purges that began in 1937 were inaugurated from above, but citizens' resentment and anger (sometimes laced with anti-Semitism) at the privileged few who enjoyed the fruits of the Soviet utopia lent a surprising popular appeal to everything from shop-floor scapegoating to show trials. And terror fed on itself as anxious men and women made pre-emptive denunciations of their own. A regime that began as the embodiment of science and rational planning, Fitzpatrick observes shrewdly, ended up treating its elites with such caprice that managers (as well as writers) were driven to fearless rule breaking and risk taking. The high expectations and inadequate allocations of Stalin's plans rewarded masters of stratagems and workarounds and paradoxically doomed the overcautious.

The author's rich materials challenge readers to build their own model of Stalin's people, their complicity and resistance. For citizens tapping through its dark labyrinth, communism also could be too interesting.

—Edward Tenner

THE PASSING OF AN ILLUSION: *The Idea of Communism in the* *Twentieth Century.*

By François Furet. Trans. by Deborah Furet. Univ. of Chicago Press. 596 pp. \$35

Illusions die hard, and nowhere harder than among intellectuals. In the *New York Review of Books* earlier this year, 19 scholars chastised Sam Tanenhaus for having offhandedly observed that the revisionist case—that America was to blame for the Cold War—had collapsed along with the Soviet Union. Tanenhaus, they said, was engaging in unseemly "triumphalism." In truth, he had

confined himself to dismissing the flapdoodle peddled for the past few decades by many of those revisionist scholar-polemicists. But what if he *had* expressed satisfaction over the demise of the Soviet state? Doesn't the fall of one of the most villainous regimes in history provide some cause for celebration?

As the Tanenhaus contretemps attests, communism attracted many enthusiasts and apologists among Western intellectuals. *The Passing of An Illusion* traces the origins of this appeal. Furet (who died in 1997) comes to the task with firsthand experience: he himself was a communist from 1949 to 1956. His own intellectual odyssey anticipated the shift that took place in France two decades later, as the elite repudiated communism after the mid-1970s publication of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago*.

Communism from the outset exerted an idealistic appeal as a challenge to capitalism. What greatly strengthened that appeal, the author contends, was the appearance of fascism in Germany and Italy. In his most controversial argument, he maintains that communism and Nazism were kissing cousins, both derived from the hatred of the bourgeoisie that developed in the 19th century. "The bourgeoisie incarnated capitalism, the forerunner (for Lenin) of Fascism and imperialism and (for Hitler) of Communism, which were the origins, respectively, of all they hated."

Nothing enrages the Left, American and European, more than likening communism to Nazism. Obviously, there is the crucial difference that Hitler launched a racial war against the Jews, while Stalin carried out indiscriminate purges and uprooted entire peoples. But Furet rightly notes that the similarities between these two evil, totalitarian regimes cannot be overlooked. Communism in Europe was made more acceptable by the antifascist struggle against Germany. "The reason the anti-Fascist idea made such waves in postwar Europe after losing its point of application," Furet brilliantly observes, "was that it prolonged the terrible experience of World War II by labeling and giving a meaning to human suffering." By putting themselves (eventually) on the right side of history during the war, in other words, the communists could claim the banner of justice and righteousness for years to come.

As the Soviet system degenerated into the torpor of Brezhnevism, American scholars began to argue that communism could have taken a milder third way. Worthy principles, in this view, had been botched in the application. Gorbachev's reforms did seem to point the way to a kinder, gentler communism, but the collapse of the Soviet Union put an end to such speculation. "Communism," Furet observes, "is completely contained within its past." There are few better starting points to understanding that past than this study.

—Jacob Heilbrunn

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FROM THE CENTER

In Washington, a city renowned for too many meetings, it is notoriously difficult to catch the attention of decision makers. Yet I have been struck, as the Center's activities have grown, by the high level of participation at our conferences and other events and by the high level of interaction between the Center and the policy community. Here are some highlights of the Center's life during the past several months.

This spring, the Center entered the world of television with three broadcasts drawing on the expertise of the Center's staff and scholars. Organized by the Close Up Foundation and C-SPAN, the programs, examining the Cold War, the maintenance of peace today, and environmental challenges, are aimed chiefly at high school students. A similar audience is the target of a Channel One Network broadcast from the Center on U.S. engagement in the world. Together, these programs will reach more than 70 million viewers, giving the Center visibility even as they help educate future leaders.

We have also inaugurated a new series of short meetings called the Director's Forum. These gatherings are designed to provide leaders in various fields with a memorable visit to the Center and the opportunity to informally address an audience of a hundred or so—and to field its highly informed questions. Among the first speakers were Prime Minister Constantine Simitis of Greece, Ambassador Raymond Chretien of Canada; and General Barry R. McCaffrey, director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy. Future guests will range from cabinet officials and congressional leaders to mayors and foreign heads of state.

Several officials have come to the Center to explain initiatives and to seek the ideas of scholars, staff, and policymakers. Secretary Dan Glickman of the Department of Agriculture discussed planning for food security into the next century. Secretary Donna E. Shalala of the Department of Health and Human Services reviewed her department's work on children's issues. The senior State Department official

working on environmental policy came seeking help in thinking about the critical environmental challenges of the next quarter-century. Ambassador Thomas S. Foley spoke about the state of U.S.-Japanese relations.

The regional programs at the Center are alive with activity. The Asia Program has brought just about every senior Asian policy official in the government for sessions at the Center. The Kennan Institute, now in its 25th year, has established a presence in Moscow and Kyiv and may be the most respected American institution in Russia and Ukraine. The Latin

America Program stays close to cutting-edge issues in the hemisphere, from Cuba and conflict resolution in Colombia and Guatemala to the problem of creating sustained economic growth.

The Center's Cold War International History Project is also leaving its mark. Painstaking research by its scholars in the archives of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe has shed light on, for example, the 1980–81 Solidarity crisis in Poland and the history of the Korean War (see Kathryn Weathersby's related article on page 91).

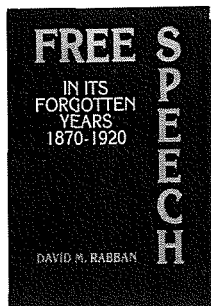
Many Center scholars juggle their research and writing with news media requests for interpretation and commentary. A British scholar working on NATO and the Balkans was in much media demand throughout the spring before he had to return to London. A leading American specialist on Iraq spends a good deal of her time interpreting Saddam Hussein and his antics. One of our scholars was herself a member of the media, on leave from the *New York Times* to complete a book about Iran.

All of these efforts reflect the commitment of the Center's staff and scholars not only to superior research and writing but to regular interaction with people in the world of policy. Woodrow Wilson himself would heartily approve the kind of mark his namesake is making on this city today.

Lee H. Hamilton
Director



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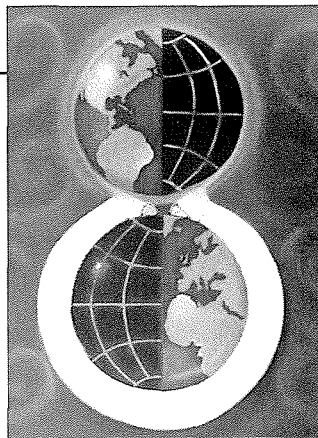
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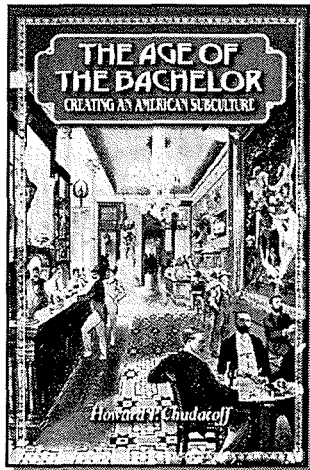
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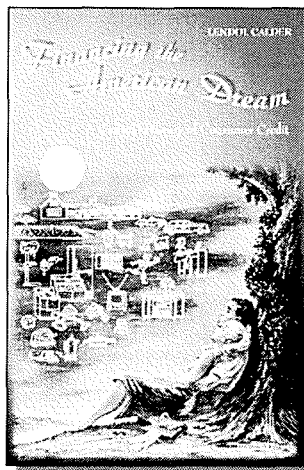
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