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EDITOR'S COMMENT

Scholars come in many guises, some in the gowns of academe and some in the workaday worsted of the professional and business worlds. We are fortunate to have in this issue one of the more interesting thinkers from the world of "affairs," Peter Drucker. Of course, some might object that Drucker is just as much a cap-and-gown sort as any tenured classicist. After all, he has roosted in academe for more than 50 years, currently at the Claremont Graduate School. While the objection has some merit, it misses the larger point. Dr. Drucker came from the world of business and management, and he is still an important contributor to it. Born in Vienna, he received a doctorate in law and worked as a bank economist, journalist, and business consultant for more than a decade before landing his first academic post. Since his first book, *The End of Economic Man* (1939), Drucker has continued his practical involvement in managerial matters, bringing his experience to bear in 27 books on the workings of the corporation, the economy, and the larger society. He has been, among other things, one of the more forceful advocates of the privatization of certain government functions. In this issue, Drucker turns his attention to a global change in the making—the rise of the knowledge society.

Discerning readers will notice a more minor change afoot, this one in the design of the *WQ*. Our consultant, Tawney Harding, has given us an overdue face-lift. Her aim is not to overwhelm the written word but to set it more cleanly and elegantly in a new type and against a more pleasing background. We like what she's done so far. We hope you do, too.

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AT ISSUE

Rough Beast Time

And what rough beast, its hour come round at last,
Slouches towards Bethlehem to be born?

—W. B. Yeats, "The Second Coming"

Around the world, rough beasts are busily slouching. They are the nations recently emerged from decades of communist misrule, or those on the verge of similar emergence, while some additional few are escapees from other forms of authoritarian governance, both of the right and left persuasions. What all have in common, from Russia and Poland to Zambia and Nicaragua, is their embryonic political form. What shapes they may eventually assume remains the great mystery of our time.

Not surprisingly, these various nivities-in-the-making have occasioned a wide range of scholarly prognosis. From one corner, what might be caricatured as the Francis Fukuyama "end-of-history" corner, come hosannahs about the vindication and triumph of the liberal ideal. To these optimists, it is only a matter of time—and not much time, at that—before the rest of the world jumps on the free-market-and-democracy bandwagon.

From the opposite corner weigh in the doom-sayers. How, they ask, can countries with no tradition of rights or democracy turn into Swedens or Britains overnight, or next week, or even within the next 100 years? They point to the absence of legal and constitutional traditions, civil society, and other elements of a democratic infrastructure. Given such realities, they conclude, no one should be surprised that democracy in Nicaragua and Brazil appears to be unraveling; that the forces of reaction are gaining ground in Russia; that ethnic resentments, pent up for more than 45 years in such countries as Yugoslavia, Romania, and Germany, are once again breaking out all over.

Poised somewhere between the two parties, though tending more toward the latter, is historian John Lukacs, a scholar of rare, if often cranky, independence. He insists that we are seeing not the end of history but the end of the 20th century—a century that began in 1914 and ended in 1989—and

with it the end of the modern state. If anything is in the ascendant, Lukacs argues in *The End of the Twentieth Century and the End of the Modern Age*, it is nationalism—a primitive creature that antedates the state that it is now outliving. The brave new world to come may be ugly, but just as Lukacs anticipates no Hegelian liberal apotheosis, so he expects no inevitable apocalypse.

Lukacs is not alone in championing modest expectations. Historian Martin Malia, writing in the *New Republic*, argues that the current crisis in the former Soviet Union is the very "stuff that exits from communism are made of." Because exits from communism are still something quite new under the sun, Malia's confidence may be premature, but at least he asks the right question: Why should anybody in the West have expected the formerly communist nations to have an easy time crawling out from under the rubble of a failed social and political experiment? Certainly, the ruling *nomenklatura* of the former Soviet Union, roughly five percent of the empire's population, had every reason to make such an exit as difficult as possible. And many of them are doing just that.

It is easy to understand the behavior of the old *nomenklatura* in Russia or Poland or Romania, or that of the communist elites who are still holding on in China, Cuba, and North Korea. Self-interest is no mystery. Less easy to comprehend has been the gloomy chorus of Western scholars who see nothing but failure and ineptitude in the earliest efforts to bring about political and economic reform.

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Malia cites three such scholars in his field—Stephen Cohen, Jerry Hough, and Peter Reddaway—though, in fairness, he could have cited many others, and others far more pessimistic. Cohen is a vociferous opponent of economic shock therapy, calling it an inappropriate American import that has undercut the achievements of Soviet

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industrialization and the Soviet welfare system. Hough would like to see Yeltsin replaced by so-called centrist Arkadi Volski, a leader of the Civic Union, the club of choice among old-style industrial managers. Reddaway points to errors on Yeltsin's part, fraudulent economic strategies, and beneath it all a fatally autocratic political culture from which Russia will never escape.

It would be easy to describe such criticism as giving aid and comfort to the enemy. It is not. Nor is it a case of ideological knee-jerkery. The three commentators occupy quite distinct positions on the political spectrum, from Cohen on the left to Reddaway in the center to Hough somewhere off on his own. All three are serious, intelligent, well-meaning scholars, widely respected within their field. The problem, however, may be precisely the field within which they are so widely respected, not just the field of Russian studies but the social sciences generally.

What is it about the social sciences that makes them so inadequate to this "interesting" time? German political scientist Heinrich Vogel, in a talk delivered at the Woodrow Wilson Center last fall, decried what he calls "mantras in Western transformation rhetoric," the Procrustean application of such concepts as "chaos," "stability," "democracy," and "the Western market economy" to situations where they fit uncomfortably at best. "Post-Soviet societies," Vogel remarked, "are so far away from internal balance, in such disarray that outside calls for 'stability' are tantamount to the support of forces who may be dreaming of a new equilibrium in repression."

At the same time, Vogel cautioned, efforts by legions of Western consultants to promote Western models of law, economy, and administration as though they belonged "to one denomination" rather than representing "different variants of the Western world" have only added to the confusion and raised expectations. Vogel sensibly appealed for a new and more nuanced language, one which he quite reasonably believes "can make a difference in the political reality."

But the problem may run deeper still, to the very character of those categories for whose renovation Vogel calls. For even in Vogel's measured approach, we may detect the curse of scientism: a blind faith in the methods and aims of science, particularly as applied to subjects that are essen-

tially unamenable to scientific analysis.

Is it merely humanistic arrogance to level such a charge against the social sciences? Not at all, for the humanities themselves are equally implicated, having adopted many of the same scientific pretensions that hobble the various social sciences. Historians, or at least many of them, are as likely as political scientists or sociologists to resort to behavioral or structural models as well as to their own encrusted theories of national character. And they do so, it seems, without having profited from mistakes they made during the Cold War.

Classicist W. R. Connor, in a trenchant essay published two years ago in the *American Scholar*, asked his fellow scholars, "Why Were We Wrong?" Why, that is, had Western observers of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe been so surprised by what happened in 1989? The answer, according to Connor, was that scholars had fallen into the habit of studying their subject through the keyhole of social science, focusing on a limited range of factors such as military force, agricultural productivity, and the behavior of party and state elites. Ignored, Connor said, were "the passions—the appeal of ethnic loyalty and nationalism, the demands for freedom of religious practice and cultural expression, and the feeling that the regime had simply lost its moral legitimacy. These considerations were 'soft' or 'unscientific,' and those who emphasized them could be scorned."

Connor offered more than a postmortem over the body of failed scholarship. Looking to the future, he argued that what was needed for the education of leaders and citizens was not "more elaborate calculations, more sophisticated modeling, or greater expenditures on the familiar forms of 'security studies,'" but instead a "greater attunement to emotional and moral factors, to the persistent claims of primary attachments, and of religious, ethnic, and national identities." True security would be found not in the misguided scientific quest for systems of predictability but, Connor concluded, in "an awareness of complexity, a respect for limits, and what the Greeks would call 'practical intelligence.'"

If Connor's advice is today being largely ignored within the academy, should those who live and toil beyond the cloistered halls be concerned? After all, what is the danger of intellectual irrelevance? Unfortunately, it may be considerable. In precarious times, ideas are decisive, as are val-

ues and individuals. Yet most social scientific theories—whether structural, behavioral, or evolutionary—tend to scant all three.

It would be particularly tragic if the citizens and leaders of the democratic world forgot how important ideas and ideals were in bringing about a favorable end to the Cold War. The testimony of Václav Havel and other witnesses to the importance of standing firmly by principles should have made this clear. Nevertheless, the voices of relativism are once again making themselves heard, and are doing so in the most influential places. The day after Russia's reform-minded acting prime minister Yegor Gaidar was forced to resign, the *New York Times* ran an op-ed piece by an American economist saying that a partial return to the centralized industrial-planning system of the former Soviet Union might not be so bad. After all, the economist suggested, such a centralized system would not be so different from the industrial policies being proposed by some of America's Democratic leadership. This was not merely a case of bad timing on the part of the *New York Times*; it signaled a return to the same kind of fuzzy relativism that marked much Western analysis during the Cold War, a relativism that blurs the all-important distinctions between democratic and nondemocratic institutions and practices.

Those on whom we count most to make such distinctions are, of course, our heads of state. Yet in addition to forgetting the importance of moral distinctions, we also seem to be forgetting the importance of leaders. Whether it was Lech Walesa opening the way to democracy in Poland or Deng Xiaoping controlling change to preserve the communist regime in China, recent history should have taught us that individuals matter tremendously, for better and for worse. Although much has been said against Ronald Reagan by his critics, it is hard to find fault with the former president on one crucial point: He realized that principles firmly stood by can change the world.

He knew, in a way that we can only hope our current leader knows, that to say decisively one thing is good and another evil is the real foundation of a vision. To act on anything less, however enlightened one's motives, is to give room to the worst opportunists.

There is no question that democratic nations will have to provide material aid to the newly liberated nations of the world, but realistically there are limits to how much can—and even should—be given. When it comes to the struggle of ideas, however, democracies can provide almost limitless support. Whether or not they possess the will and energy to do so is uncertain. Also uncertain is how helpful that support will be. The performance of Western intellectuals during the Cold War gives one little cause for hope, but some notable exceptions fend off despair, among them theologian and author Reinhold Niebuhr.

Writing at the end of World War II, Niebuhr described the struggle between good and evil in this world as a struggle between the "children of light" and the "children of darkness." He believed that the former, though full of the best intentions, were dangerously prey to notions of innate goodness and human perfectibility. Such credulity made them vulnerable to the wiles of the children of darkness, who play only according to the rules of self-interest. Niebuhr called on the children of light to arm themselves "with the wisdom of the children of darkness but remain free from their malice" so that they might "beguile, deflect, harness, and restrain self-interest, individuality, and collectivity for the sake of community."

Whether he single-handedly accomplished what Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., described as a "revolution in American liberal thought," Niebuhr made a difference in the course of world events. Without denying ambiguities, he knew where it was important to take a stand, and his message was heard by those who went on to wage and win the Cold War. This time of rough beasts calls for thinkers who are just as principled, just as wise, and just as strong.



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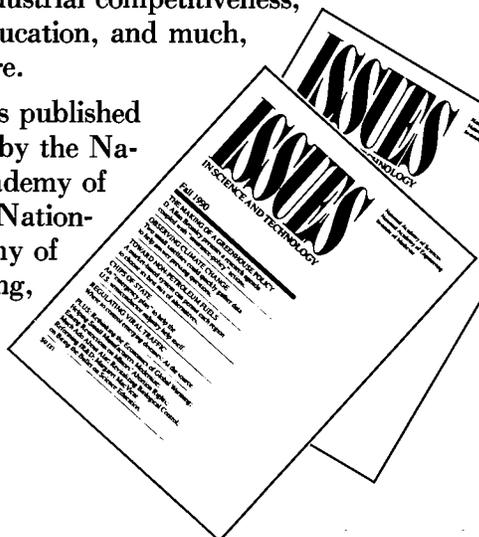
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THE DRAGON STIRS

BY ANNE THURSTON

Since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, China's moribund communist dynasty has been at least partially revived. But as Deng Xiaoping, architect of the restoration, approaches his 89th year, China finds itself on the brink of a most uncertain future. Anne Thurston, a veteran China-watcher recently returned from the People's Republic, looks at the puzzles and contradictions of the present for clues to where Asia's greatest dragon may head.



Communism has collapsed in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, together with stability, and the prospects for anarchy and economic ruin now seem as likely as democracy and capitalist prosperity. With Yugoslavia plunged into the abyss of "ethnic cleansing," the language of the Holocaust is being revived, and the world

stands in wait for the next outburst of nationalist and ethnic hostilities. Of the six remaining states that claim to be communist, two—North Korea and Cuba—totter on the edge of economic collapse, North Korea with apparent stoicism, Cuba with rumblings of discontent. An impoverished Vietnam courts foreign investment, Cambodia is apparently ungov-



Year of the Dragon, by Qin Dahu

ernable, and Laos has almost disappeared from memory.

Alone among communist states, past or present, China is thriving, so vibrant with economic energy that analysts are speaking of an "economic miracle." For more than a decade, the country's gross national product (GNP) has grown at an average rate of nine

percent a year, and in 1992 the increase was an astounding 12 percent. A recent survey by the *Economist* argues that China has "brought about the biggest improvements in human welfare anywhere at any time." The most relentlessly optimistic observers believe that in more than a decade of economic reform, China has accidentally stumbled upon the se-

cret of how to proceed, with minimal disruption and social unrest, from a centrally planned socialist economy to a free-market (but not entirely privatized) system. The *Economist* speculates about the global impact of a modern, industrialized, export-oriented, 21st-century China. The secret, according to the Chinese leadership, is "socialism with Chinese characteristics."

Certain other "Chinese characteristics," these of a more purely political nature, may not augur so well for that same leadership. Despite the ideological novelty of communism, the history of the People's Republic appears to be following a very traditional Chinese pattern. For thousands of years, the imperial dynasties of the Middle Kingdom have risen and fallen in a cyclical pattern, with an initial period of vigor and energy followed by the onset of corruption, then decline, and finally internal rebellion and a challenge to dynastic rule. Some dynasties in decline were able to meet the challenge by subduing the forces of opposition, rebuilding the economy, cleaning up corruption, and reviving the moral codes upon which the dynasty had been founded. The question today is whether—or at least how long—the communist dynasty will be able to withstand the challenges to its authority.

At the time of Mao Zedong's death in September 1976, the People's Republic of China stood precariously at the brink—the populace demoralized by decades of class struggle and political persecutions, the economy crippled by socialist constraints, the more competent of the Communist Party's leaders either purged or dead, the government intimidated into inaction by its aging dictator-emperor and the radical clique that surrounded him. The communist regime, it appeared, was losing all legitimacy—or what was once called the Mandate of Heaven.

But within weeks of Mao's death, the

"Gang of Four," which included his wife, Jiang Qing, was arrested, and the stage was set for the gradual ascent to power of Deng Xiaoping, the man many believed to be the most astute and capable survivor of the Long March generation. When Deng assumed power two years later, he set out to implement an old-fashioned, dynastic-style restoration. Today, still paramount leader despite his semi-retirement, he is universally credited with his country's economic ascent.

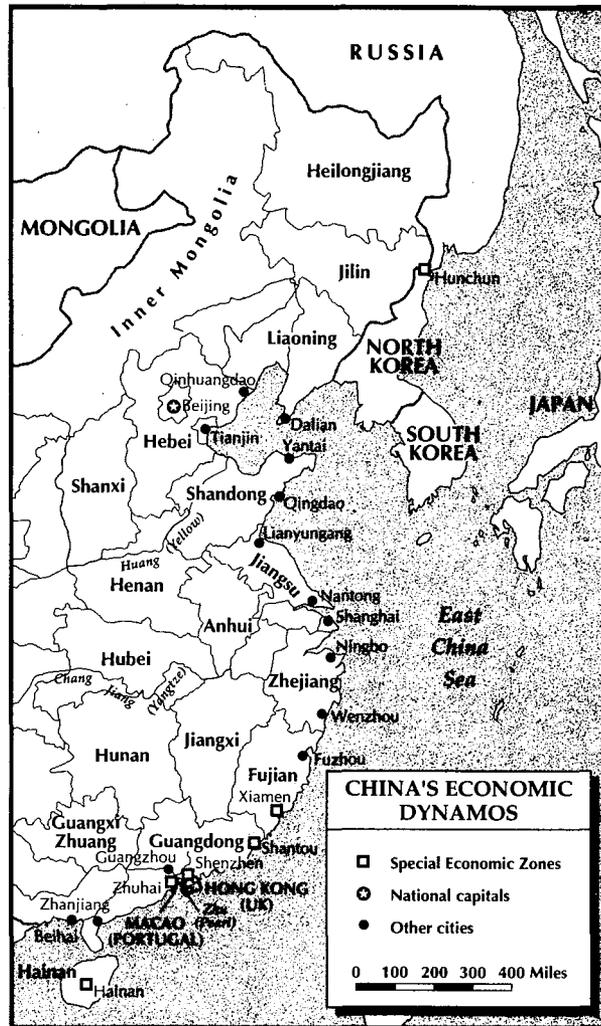
Determined to transform China into a modern, industrialized nation-state, Deng made it his goal to quadruple the 1978 GNP and assure the vast majority of his comrade citizens a comfortable standard of living by the year 2000. The first step in his ambitious plan was the decollectivization of agriculture. Over a period of several years, the gigantic communes were gradually broken up, and the land was distributed to peasant families. Actual ownership of land remained with the collective, and peasant farmers contractually agreed to sell a fixed amount of their harvest to the collective each season. In a matter of years, however, the peasants' leases had been extended so far into the future that they were able to act as if the land they farmed were theirs. Land could not be sold, but rights to the land were marketable. Freed from the straitjacket of bureaucratic control, agricultural production rose, increasing at the rate of three percent a year.

At the same time, restrictions on other forms of rural enterprise were ended, and light industry began to boom. When Deng came to power such industry accounted for no more than 20 percent of rural output; today it accounts for some 45 percent. (Forty percent of the country's industrial laborers live and work in rural areas.) Owned by local governments at the county, township, or village level, "township and village enter-

Anne Thurston, a former Wilson Center Fellow, writes about modern China. She is the author of Enemies of the People (1987) and A Chinese Odyssey (1992) and is currently collaborating on a book with Mao Zedong's personal physician, Dr. Li Zhisui. Copyright © 1993 by Anne Thurston.



Deng Xiaoping, second from left, and a daughter, Deng Nan, on their famous trip to southern China in January 1992—a trip that signaled the return to the pre-Tiananmen spirit of reform. In addition to the Special Economic Zones shown on the map, a number of other cities and regions have been granted special economic privileges and dispensations.



prises" (TVEs) constitute a uniquely Chinese form of ownership and control. According to Donald Anderson, the president of the U.S.-China Business Council, TVEs grew last year by 29 percent. China's great economic expansion owes a great deal to the growth of its rural industry.

Deng also opened China to outside investment, permitting the establishment of companies that are jointly owned and managed. Hong Kong investors have led the way and are, according to economist Jan Prybla, responsible for two-thirds of all current investment in China. Taiwan is a second and in-

creasingly important source of foreign investment, followed by Japanese, American, Canadian, European, and Australian companies. Joint ventures, too, have grown and prospered and are the second driving force behind China's current economic boom, their output growing last year at the galloping rate of 49 percent.

Deng's policy of economic liberalization has been coupled with tight political control. While opening the door to foreign investment, technology, and management skills, he has tried to keep it

closed to such "bourgeois liberal" ideas of democracy, freedom, and human rights. A centrist, Deng has been forced to fight continual rear-guard battles within his own party in order to bring about economic reforms. The more conservative hardline faction, led by the aged and ostensibly retired Chen Yun and publicly represented by Premier Li Peng, subscribes to the "birdcage" theory of economic management—limited market freedom within the parameters of a central state plan. The hardliners know the impossibility of opening the door economically while keeping it closed politically, and they are well aware that Western political values pose a direct challenge to their authority.

The liberals, by contrast, advocate both the continued expansion of China's market economy and gradual political reform—increased power for the National People's Congress, the country's nominal legislature, and consultation with the so-called democratic parties within the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

While the hardliners' position has generally dominated, the birdcage began to break even before the spring of 1989. But when hundreds of thousands of demonstrators gathered that spring in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, framing their demands in the rhetoric of democracy and freedom, the hardliners' worst fears seemed to come true. After weeks of indecision and inaction, the party conservatives finally prevailed over such liberal reformers as party chief Zhao Ziyang, who recognized the legitimacy of some of the protesters' demands and was willing to grant concessions to them. Deng sided with the conservatives and ordered the military into Beijing. The demonstrations that had brought millions of people peacefully to Tiananmen Square were denounced as "turmoil," the work of a small band of counterrevolutionaries preaching bourgeois liberalization and calling for the overthrow of the Communist Party and its government. As the army surrounded the city and began moving toward

Tiananmen Square, residents poured into the streets to prevent its advance, pelting the soldiers with chunks of sidewalk cement and whatever else they could find. In some spots, the army opened fire. Hundreds of Beijing citizens were killed. With martial law now in force in the capital (it had been formally declared on May 20), recriminations against the "counterrevolutionaries" began. Zhao Ziyang was purged, together with liberal reformers at all levels of the party and government hierarchy, and several of his closest supporters were jailed while others fled abroad.

Many Chinese believe that Deng Xiaoping knew immediately that military intervention had been a mistake. The international outcry, the sudden pall that descended over Beijing, the archaic Stalinist rhetoric of the hardline conservatives that came to dominate the press—all brought the momentum of reform to a halt. The hardliners gained the upper hand. Vindicated, it seemed, was their charge that foreign investment was part of a larger Western conspiracy of "peaceful evolution," and that the marketplace had been used to introduce the ideas of democracy and freedom to China. Deng's views went into temporary eclipse. They did not regain ascendance until the spring of 1992.

The comeback actually began in January 1992, when Deng visited the special economic zone (SEZ) of Shenzhen in Guangdong province, just north of thriving and capitalist Hong Kong. A boom town that 15 years ago had a population of 70,000 and was little more than a transit point on the Hong Kong-Guangzhou railroad, Shenzhen is one of four SEZs that were established in 1980 to attract foreign investment, technology, and managerial skills and to foster the growth of an export economy. By confining the flirtation with capitalism to discrete geographical areas, the reasoning went, "spiritual pollution" from the West could be contained while the experiment was conducted.

Shenzhen today flashes with high-rise office buildings and glitzy hotels. It has a popu-

lation of two million legal residents and probably another half million illegal "floaters." The monthly wage of the average unskilled worker in Shenzhen is between 500 and 700 yuan (roughly 5.7 of which equal one U.S. dollar) compared to 150 to 200 yuan in other parts of Guangdong. The city boasts numerous new and aspiring millionaires and owes its prosperity to investment that flows in from the British crown colony, to minimal interference by the party bureaucracy, and to its determined emulation of the capitalist metropolis just across its border. Because Shenzhen possesses the closest thing China has to a genuine market economy, it is anathema to the party hardliners.

Accompanied on his January trip by his daughter, Deng Nan, and by China's president, Yang Shangkun (the mastermind of the military crackdown in Beijing), Deng praised Shenzhen's economic success and predicted that southern China would soon become Asia's "fifth dragon." Traveling from Shenzhen to Zhuhai, another thriving special economic zone in Guangdong province, Deng visited joint-venture factories and high-tech enterprises. He lauded the economic miracle and criticized leftist hardliners who opposed reform, calling on the rest of the country to emulate the south.

That Deng's remarks were first published only in Hong Kong and Guangdong is testimony to the hardliners' control of the Chinese media. When the *People's Daily*, the nationally circulated newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party, finally published the story of Deng's visit on April 28, 1992, the dam suddenly burst. The pall that had hung over much of the country since the Beijing massacre began to lift. The mood in China changed. Since then, the race to get rich has been on. In a country where the calculation of time has long been tied to key events—before or after the "liberation" of 1949 that brought the Communist Party to power, before or after the Cultural Revolution that began in 1966—everything now is dated from the time "Deng Xiaoping went south."



The city of Xiamen, like Shenzhen, is a flourishing SEZ. Located in Fujian province on the South China coast directly opposite the Guomindang-controlled island "province" of Taiwan, Fujian has historically been one of China's most outward-looking regions and is the ancestral home of many of the people who fled to Taiwan after the revolution. Today the area is rife with Deng-wrought contradictions. The enduring if quiescent civil war between the mainland and the island province makes it necessary for legal visitors from Taiwan to enter by way of Hong Kong, even as a lively trade in the smuggling of goods and people is plied by boats on the Taiwan straits. The 75-minute flight from Hong Kong to Xiamen is filled with Taiwan businesspeople—not the supranational class of sleek, impeccably tailored, business-school graduates who have been key actors in the development of Hong Kong but weathered, chain-smoking men in rumpled, ill-fitting suits and their loudly-attired female counterparts.

I took this much-traveled route to the People's Republic last December. The man sitting next to me looked much like the other Taiwan businessmen on board. Before the plane took off, he located the air-sickness bag and used it frequently as a makeshift spittoon. The two Taiwan women on the flight had the same weathered look as the men, though they attempted to cover the ravages of the sun with heavy applications of eyebrow pencil, white powder, bright red lipstick, and rouge. Their clothes were garish, their costume jewelry jangled ostentatiously, and when they



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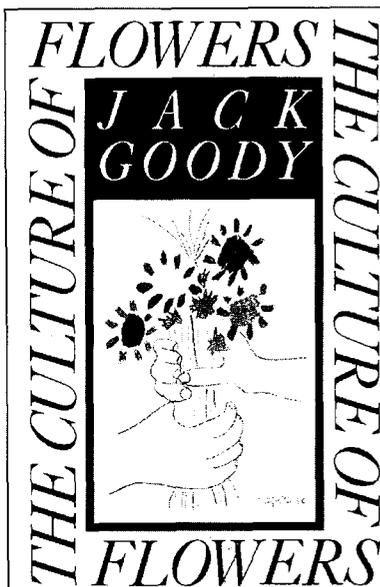
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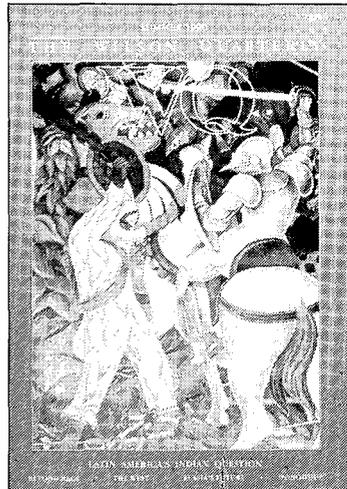
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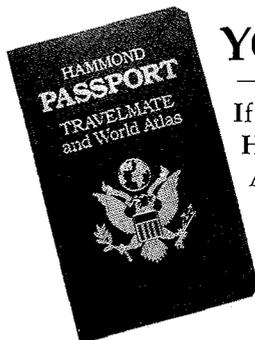
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walked, they wobbled uncertainly on their high-heeled shoes.

My fellow travelers were Taiwan's nouveau riches, successful farmers turned entrepreneurs, the very people whom some mainlanders charge are more interested in making a fast yuan in Fujian than in contributing to the long-term development of the province. Official encouragement to foreign investors stipulates a three-year exemption from taxes, and in response many Taiwan entrepreneurs have engaged in a sort of guerrilla investment strategy—starting businesses that will reap profits within three years, then dismantling them and moving on to new endeavors.

Though some mainlanders resent them, the Taiwan businesspeople are also the envy of their Fujian compatriots. Taiwan's own economic miracle is one that the people of Xiamen wish they could reproduce. "The wrong side won," say many Xiamenites of the civil war that ended with the establishment of the People's Republic of China on October 1, 1949. The expression of such sentiments would have earned mainlanders a lengthy stint in labor reform only a few short years ago. Today, even the dress of their Taiwan compatriots is studiously copied, a Chinese version of dress-for-success.

While the plane sat on the Hong Kong tarmac, the stewardesses distributed newspapers—Chinese-language Hong Kong dailies to the businesspeople, the *South China Morning Post* to the three English speakers on board. The separation of Princess Diana and Prince Charles was the lead that morning, followed by a report on continuing Communist Party invective against the newly appointed Hong Kong governor, Christopher Patten. With the British crown colony scheduled to be handed back to the mainland government in 1997, Patten had surprised everyone and outraged the mainland by insisting on construction of a \$22-billion airport. He had also ruffled feathers by pushing for an expansion of democratically elected representation on the colony's Legislative Council and making ef-

forts to ensure that a bill of rights would remain in force after the 1997 takeover. Beijing wonders why the British rulers have waited so long to introduce democracy and argues that airport construction will both deplete the Hong Kong coffers and saddle the communist government with unwanted expenses. Beijing also asserts that after 1997 it will honor no contracts to which it has not been a party. Hong Kong investors are jumpy.

The *South China Morning Post* shows little sympathy for the party bosses in Beijing. One story reports on a New York meeting of Human Rights in China, held only two days before. Another discusses the continuing fallout over the return to China of the young Tiananmen activist, Shen Tong. In the spring of 1989, while a student at Peking University,* Shen had participated in efforts to negotiate initiation of a "dialogue" between student protesters and the party leadership. One of the first of the young dissidents to reach the United States legally following the massacre of June 4, Shen had returned to China in the summer of 1992 accompanied by television crews, surreptitiously photographing prisons and meeting with numerous dissidents in scattered parts of the country. Shen had been incarcerated in Beijing on September 1, only hours before he was scheduled to hold a press conference to announce the opening of a Beijing branch of his Boston-based Fund for Democracy in China. Although he was released eight weeks later, on October 24, and was returned to the United States, reports continued to circulate that many of the dissidents he had met in China were being detained, brought in for interrogation, or otherwise harassed by China's public-security apparatus. The *South China Morning Post* reported the detention of two more such activists.

As the plane began its descent into Xiamen, the stewardesses returned to collect the newspapers while a matter-of-fact voice announced over the intercom that the People's

*Convention provides for the old-style transliteration of Beijing, Peking, in the exclusive case of the university's name.

Republic of China prohibited passengers from carrying Hong Kong newspapers onto its soil. Deng Xiaoping's political quarantine was still securely in place.

On the ground, during the long drive to my hotel, a newly built Holiday Inn, I struck up a conversation with the driver, a man in his middle thirties who introduced himself as Xiao Chen, or "Little" Chen. A talkative taxi driver, as most travelers know, is often the quickest and most reliable guide to the local mood, and Xiao Chen was as talkative as the ride was long. The roads that day were clogged with trucks, and the congestion was made worse by road repairs and construction. Pollution-control devices are apparently unknown in China, and the air was hazy with fumes. New buildings were going up everywhere, and many were cheerily bright, a welcome departure from the gray-brown concrete-slab structures that seem to be the architectural wave of the future in other parts of China. Finding myself amid all these symbols of China's modernization—traffic jams, pollution, and construction—I started with the obvious, and safest, topic, the city's thriving economy.

Xiao Chen, a product of five years of primary-school education, voiced cautious optimism about Xiamen's economic future. A new mayor had just assumed office, and he was younger, more dynamic, and more open to the West than his predecessor. A new industrial town was under construction on the outskirts of the old, Xiao Chen told me, financed largely by investments from Taiwan. He pointed out the new housing that was going up all over the city.

I told Xiao Chen that his government had not allowed me to bring in a newspaper from Hong Kong and wondered how he got his news. The television and radio have plenty of news, he assured me, and there were many programs from Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the United States.

I asked how he had followed the recent U.S. elections and what he thought of Bill

Clinton.

Xiao Chen said that he was unaware of the recent elections in the United States and that he had never heard of Bill Clinton. The "news" he watched on Chinese television consisted of movies, soap operas, and Hong Kong's pop culture. He was not interested in politics, he explained, not in Chinese politics and not in American politics. He did not believe in Deng Xiaoping and the Communist Party, and he did not believe in democracy, either. Even in democracies, he said, politics is nothing but struggle. Politics is like watching a play. It had nothing to do with him. He had never heard of Shen Tong and cared nothing for human rights.

"What are you interested in?" I asked.

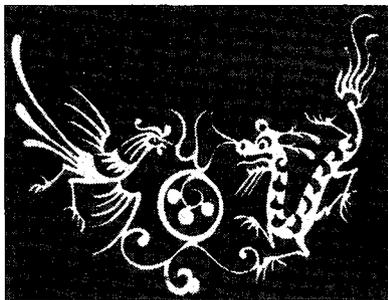
"Making money," Xiao Chen replied, repeating a familiar rhyme, "*Wo buyao quan, wo jiu shi yao qian*"—"I don't want power, I just want money."

Xiao Chen saw himself as an independent entrepreneur, one of a growing number of brash young risk-takers who are giving up the "iron rice bowl" of jobs in state enterprises to strike out on their own. The Polish-built taxi was his, bought six months earlier with the pooled savings of his family and friends. He was working 14, 15, 16 hours a day, seven days a week, earning five or six times what his friends in state-owned factories made.

But his situation was precarious. He felt insecure. He still owed money, and his current income depended on the continued presence of foreigners—businesspeople from Taiwan and Hong Kong especially. Several years ago he had tried to go it alone, opening a small restaurant not far from a foreign hotel. Business had thrived until June 1989. When the army moved into Beijing, the foreigners went home, and his business collapsed, leaving him with a lingering antipathy toward the student demonstrators and unsympathetic to the democratic ideals they had espoused. As an independent entrepreneur, he was without an official work unit and thus ineligible for public health insurance. His wife had just given birth prematurely, and the baby was

still in an incubator. The medical costs totaled thousands of yuan. He was not entitled to state-owned housing, either. Still living with his parents, he and his wife wanted to buy their own apartment—another impossibly large outlay of cash. They would be responsible for the costs of their child's education, too.

Crime, increasing at an alarming rate, was another source of insecurity, and taxi drivers, Xiao Chen told me, were particularly vulnerable. Several had been robbed in recent months, and two had been killed. A few had lost their cars to thieves. The thick wire-mesh screen separating the driver's seat from the passengers' was testimony to Xiao Chen's caution. He also went to monthly meetings sponsored by the local public-security bureau, and for further protection he had begun to invoke the gods. A bright red Buddhist good-luck symbol dangled from his rear-view mirror, exactly where many of his colleagues, in similar attempts at propitiation, had hung likenesses of Mao. As we sat in the morning traffic jam, I noted that the charms dangling from the rear-view mirrors of other city vehicles were running about three to one in favor of Mao.



China's putative economic miracle looks different on the ground from what appears in all the statistical profiles. Not everyone is convinced that China's current economic situation ought to be described as a miracle, least of all its alleged beneficiaries, the Chinese people themselves. Deng Xiaoping's "socialist market economy"

looks very much like the early stages of capitalism, and capitalism in its early stages is neither pretty nor benign. (Might it not have been Marx's biggest mistake, after all, to have taken the early stages of capitalism as the harbinger of the last?) Not only are "the rich getting rich and the poor getting poorer," as so many Chinese observe, but many who have yet to be touched by the new prosperity believe that those with the greatest wealth are those who deserve it least. To many Chinese, not surprisingly, the growing economic disparities seem patently unfair. And yet despite its ugliness and unfairness, this scramble for private wealth is probably China's greatest hope for the future.

At the top of China's new economic ladder stands a select and carefully defined group consisting of sons (and a few daughters) of men who, on the eve of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, ranked at the level of minister or above—not more than about 3,000 people in all. Known in popular parlance as the *taizidang*—the princes' party—members of this new economic elite are often thousands of times richer than the average Chinese, who still has an average income of only \$350 a year. When Deng's reforms began, the "princes" were offered pride of place not only in the government and the military but in the huge trading companies that sprang up when the door was opened to trade and foreign investment. The salaries of these aristocrats are modest, but their perquisites are lavish—imported luxury cars, special housing and stores, the best in free medical care, foreign credit cards, frequent travel abroad. Many of the *taizidang* are millionaires many times over.

The stock market is one source of their wealth. When China's first stock market opened in Shenzhen in 1990, the princes were encouraged to invest on the inside track—as a way both of demonstrating their faith in China's reformist future and of proving that this otherwise most capitalist of institutions was really just "socialism with Chinese characteristics." The son of one-time

foreign minister Chen Yi is said to have recently told an audience of Chinese students in the United States that the first 10,000-yuan investment he made several years ago is now worth 800 times that, about one-and-a-half-million dollars.

The second source of wealth is described by a variety of euphemisms—"tea money," "welfare money," "errand money." A charitable translation of tea money is commission; the more accurate is bribe. The right to do business with China's economic elite is tied to the payment of tea money, the amount of which naturally varies according to the deal. Payment may be in cash or kind. A Mercedes-Benz and \$100,000, the latter deposited in a Hong Kong bank, is not an unusual payment for connections made or agreements reached in a major contractual deal. The more profitable contracts are those for military equipment, and the richest of the *taizidang* are said to be in the military. He Pengfei, the son of the late marshal He Long and now a military leader himself, is reputed to be the richest of them all. Some Chinese companies are said to maintain full-time staffs to manage the transfer of tea money from Hong Kong banks to private accounts in Switzerland, and recent newspaper reports allege that millions of dollars in hard currency are being invested not in China, where the development of infrastructure such as energy and transportation is most desperately needed, but in profit-making ventures abroad, from Hong Kong to Bangkok and from Los Angeles and Florida to Peru.

During the political demonstrations in the spring of 1989, protests against the nepotism of China's highest-ranking officials served as a rallying cry uniting all sectors of Chinese society—students and intellectuals, workers and entrepreneurs. Few ever accused leading officials themselves of being personally corrupt. The problem was that they allowed their children to be. One of the jokes that circulated in Tiananmen Square had Deng Xiaoping talking with Zhao Ziyang,

the reform-minded party chief who was soon to be purged.

"We can stop the protests immediately by killing just two people," Deng says to Zhao.

"Which two?" Zhao asks.

"Your son and mine," replies Deng.

Among the big-character protest posters that filled the outdoor bulletin boards of every university campus in Beijing was one that compared the jobs of the sons and daughters of China's high-ranking officials with those of ranking officials in the democratic world. Ronald Reagan's son, one poster noted, was unemployed.

By all accounts, the wealth of the *taizidang* has only grown since the Tiananmen protests of nearly four years ago, and with it the cynicism and mistrust of the country's citizenry. What is different since Deng Xiaoping went south, some argue, is that now everyone has the opportunity to be corrupt. To get rich is indeed glorious.

Government officials at all levels of the hierarchy—central, provincial, and local—form the next, and much larger, corps of beneficiaries of the Deng reforms. Years of bureaucratic experience have left these hard-working and enterprising officials with the powerful *guanxi wang*—web of connections—necessary to succeed in China. The means they use to expand their livelihoods do not differ greatly from those of the *taizidang*. Rumor has it, for instance, that the vice mayor of Shenzhen has made a billion yuan on the stock market in the city he helps administer. The part-socialist, part-capitalist nature of the Chinese economy, and the consequent disparity between artificially low state-set prices and the higher prices of the market, provide another boost to these bureaucrats' income. Government officials with access to goods at low state prices can enrich themselves greatly through free-market sales. Rake-offs of government funds and the imposition of an increasing variety of local taxes provide another means of enrichment, as do gifts from constituents.

In the rush to get rich, the power of Chinese officialdom—to grant or withhold all manner of licenses and permits, to tax, to arrange—is great, and gifts are a means to smooth the way. Chinese New Year is a particularly propitious time to ensure future favor with officialdom, and recent stories in the Chinese press report that lines to the doors of officials often extend for blocks. Some receiving lines are said to move so quickly that the applicants have time only to deposit their gifts and name cards and quickly shake hands before being pushed unceremoniously out the back door. Well-watered bureaucrats are said to have liquor supplies that would extend well into the 21st century, if enjoyed at the rate of a bottle a week.

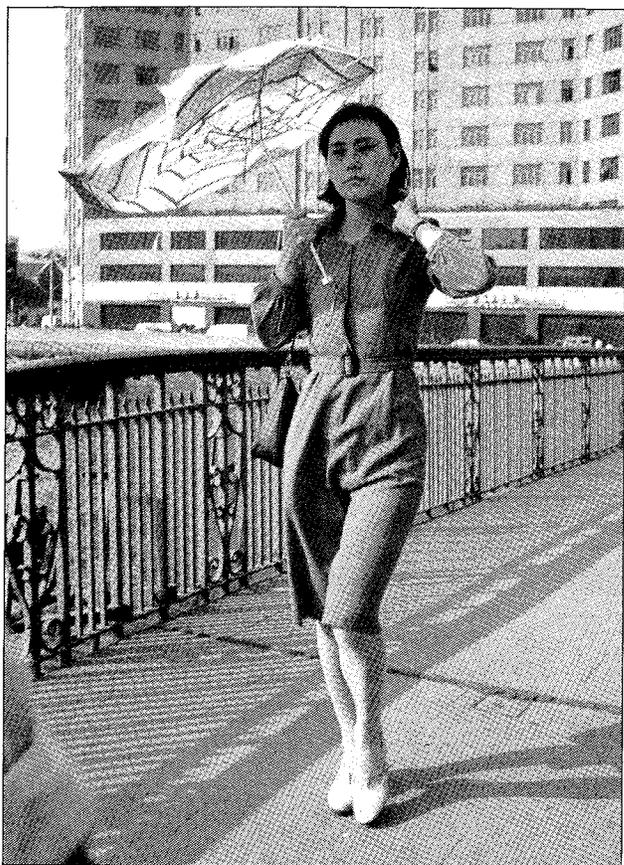
Priate entrepreneurs form the third cadre of China's nouveaux riches. The more visible and apparently more numerous of the new entrepreneurs are the brash cigarette-smoking, cellular-phone-toting young men who can be seen in every hotel lobby and coffee shop of China's bigger



Above: The new entrepreneur of South China

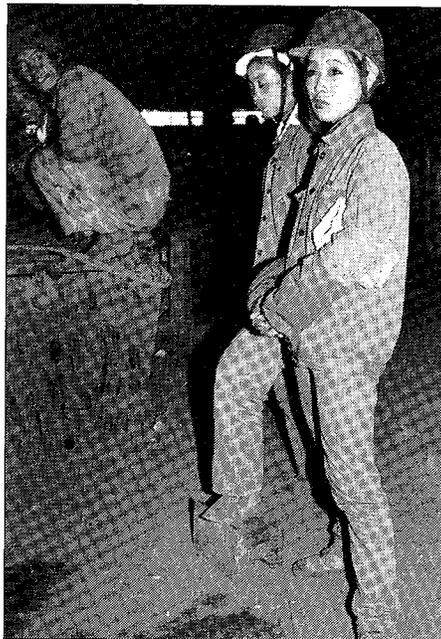


Left: Party cadres in front of a portrait of Lenin



Above: A glamorous woman of Shanghai

Below: Factory workers on break



Right: A peasant woman of Guangxi Province



cities. In a country where for 30 years any tendencies toward capitalist activity were punishable by imprisonment, labor reform, internal exile, or even death, and where the state-enterprise system cultivated a mind-numbing passivity, only the young, daring, and marginal (or, like the *taizidang* and the officials, the very well-connected and safe) are likely to jump at early opportunities to break out of the mold.

The vast majority of China's urban population continues to be employed by the state within the work-unit (*danwei*) system. More than a place of work, the *danwei* is also a welfare organization. Employment, until recently, has been for life, and monthly salaries are small but certain—so certain that motivation is minimal, the eight-hour workday a joke, and featherbedding endemic. The work unit provides housing at pennies a day, and medical care is free. The price of such security is submission. The leader of the unit has a tyrant's hold over his subordinates—from granting permission to marry to implementing the policy of one child per family, from conducting classes in political study to granting permission to travel or study abroad. The leader's power to give and withhold creates a psychology of dependence that makes breaking away too painful to contemplate. Few work-unit drones are willing to give up guaranteed lifetime employment, housing, and medical care for the uncertainties and risks of the entrepreneur.

Given the pervasiveness of the work unit, it is hardly surprising that the first true freelance entrepreneurs have been the young, the disaffected, the criminal, or the daring. These are people whose background or legal status make them ill-suited or ineligible for jobs with the state. They are the daredevils of Chinese society, for whom anything goes and often does. Several years ago, a disproportionate number of vendors in Beijing's "Okay Alley," the bustling open-air clothing market just southeast of the Ritan Park diplomatic area, were ex-convicts fresh out of jail. More recently, many newly released political dissi-

dents—daring, young, rejected by the state—are joining the ranks of the entrepreneurs. Some have been spectacularly successful, making tens of thousands of yuan in a single fantastic deal.

For some, land speculation has been the route to instant wealth. In keeping with continued lip service to socialism, land is still owned by the state—the "whole people" in the communist lexicon. But the rights to use that land can be sold. With foreign firms building new factories and the growing need for private housing by foreign expatriates and returned overseas Chinese, the demand for such rights is rising in tandem with the price. The story of the young Beijing hopeful who left his 200-yuan-a-month job, borrowed 20,000 yuan from a bank, and headed south to make his fortune is typical. The young speculator located a spot of land in the Xiamen suburbs, persuaded the township officials to sell him rights for 20,000 yuan, then found a Hong Kong developer willing to buy the rights for 200,000 yuan, leaving the young speculator with 180,000 yuan in profit. In three short months he made what would have taken 75 years to earn in his job at a state-run enterprise.

For some, the stock market brings similar rewards. Every young Chinese has a friend or a classmate who borrowed money, went south, and made a killing on the Shenzhen stock market—500,000 yuan in a matter of months, the equivalent of several lifetimes of earnings from a state job.

Stories of such successes were no doubt a contributing cause of the Shenzhen riot in the summer of 1992. When application forms required for the purchase of stocks ran out, anxious buyers accused local officials of having hoarded the forms for themselves. The tens of thousands of people who had lined up outside more than 300 Shenzhen banks and brokerage houses turned nasty and rampaged through the streets chanting "down with corruption," attacking plainclothes police, overturning vehi-

cles, and setting at least one van on fire. The police responded with tear gas and small-arms fire. The number of arrests and injuries resulting from the riot has never been officially reported.

The Chinese stock market is a gamble rather than an investment, a lottery rather than a calculated risk. Purchasers have no control over which stock they will buy; instead, they compete for the chance to purchase whatever they are offered. Nor is there information about the financial standing and operations of the companies whose stocks are put on sale. In Hangzhou, the magnificent lakeside city in wealthy Zhejiang province in southeastern China, stock-market results are electronically posted in several storefront shops. The shops have the atmosphere of the New York Off-Track Betting offices, with small crowds of otherwise unoccupied men loitering for hours in the hope that their vigilance will help them win.

Scams abound. The favorite in Xiamen, played in hotel coffee shops, is the cellular-phone version of the chain letter that promises participants geometric returns on their money. Calling by cellular phone, the organizer locates, say, 10 people willing to "invest" 1,000 yuan with the promise that in a month they will receive double their money. With that money in hand, the organizer continues the game, gathering maybe 1,000 yuan from 30 people and making the same promise to them. After skimming off some for himself, he fulfills his promise to the original 10, who are therefore eager to reinvest their funds. The game continues until it breaks down, and the organizer either flees with the money, goes underground, or is tracked and set upon by angry losers. Police patrols in Xiamen have recently been beefed up—not to stop the scam itself but to prevent the outbursts of violence when the game finally collapses.

Even though it may be ultimately beneficial, there is something deeply troubling about the fervor with which money is now being pursued, particularly

from the perspective of the Chinese everyman. For all the glitter and new-found wealth, China remains a poor and backward country. The educational level of its people is low, the opportunities are few, and those that exist are inequitably distributed, either within locales or across them. The phenomenon of southern China is spreading north, and now Shanghai's Pudong district is slated for major economic development. The drive for prosperity is also spreading inland, where the majority of the Chinese people, some 600 million of the 1.1-billion total, now live. Stymied by inefficient state-owned enterprises, conservative officials, and a lack of economic expertise, China's heartland will have difficulty catching up with the economic boom. As the *Washington Post* recently reported, the annual income of peasants in Guangdong province in 1985 was 25 percent higher than that of their inland neighbors in Hunan. By 1990, the Guangdong peasants were earning twice as much as those in Hunan.

But what is most distressing about China's new drive to get rich is the absence of what Tocqueville and others would call a civil society. The quest for prosperity is proceeding with only minimal laws and no agreed-upon moral framework, without freedom of the press or the right to free association, without the moderating force of religion, without even basic agreement on the new rules of the game, without any sense of working together toward a common goal. The atmosphere is reminiscent instead of the many political campaigns that have upset China's equilibrium for more than four decades—campaigns in which the entire population was mobilized to rid the nation of landlords or rightists or sparrows, campaigns to build backyard steel furnaces or to study Lei Feng, or to buy "patriotic" cabbage or destroy the "four olds." Chinese will tell you that the game is being played with such fanaticism not because people are confident about the future but because they are so uncertain about it. Many are convinced, as Mao used to say, that "the Russia of today is the China of tomorrow." Another

popular saying, "*Ye chang meng duo*" ("The night is long and dreams are many"), suggests that the situation is temporary and that it is therefore best to seize opportunity while you can. "It's a doomsday mentality," says Zhang Xiaogang, formerly an editor at one of China's major newspapers and now a student of political science living in the United States.

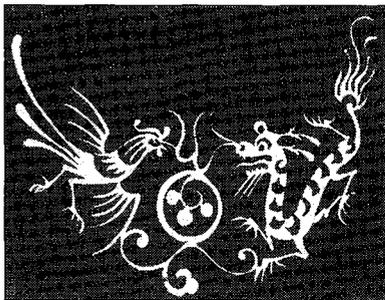
Everyone knows that nothing is fair, that things are bad and getting worse. Many are determined to live and love their final days with gay abandon. Some men take second and third wives, building separate new homes to house each new spouse—a modern adaptation of the traditional custom of the wealthy gentry. One young entrepreneur, a married man who runs a thriving computer company, bragged to me about spending two or three nights each week in the beds of other women. He does so, he said, not only with his wife's knowledge but also with her blessings. Women, when their husbands can afford it, are retreating to the home, there to serve as the traditional housewife, mother, and servant. Prostitution, which for decades the communist government boasted had been eliminated altogether, is visibly on the rise. Businessmen from Taiwan and Japan are the more obvious customers, and some of the sex tours that men from both countries used to take to now AIDS-plagued Bangkok have changed their destination to the southern coast of China, an ironic commentary on party propaganda about "spiritual pollution" from the West. In the Holiday Inn Xiamen, an American scholar was recently approached by a prostitute charging \$100 U.S. a night. With foreigners willing to spend such money and the value of a university degree in decline, some of the prostitutes are said to be college students. Traffic in women is on the rise, with village men buying brides and sometimes kidnapping them. Marlowe Hood, a journalist with years of experience in China, writes that the kidnapping and sale of people is a 100-million-yuan-a-year business. In 1991, in a single medium-sized city in

coastal Shandong province, officials rescued more than 1,000 women and children who had been sold into bondage, breaking up 54 human-trafficking rings in the process.

The black market thrives with apparent impunity. Small family-owned businesses change money as a service on the side, and the gang-run operations solicit openly on the streets. In southern China, almost any tender is accepted as payment—the Chinese *renminbi* (currency), the certificates that serve as the official exchange for foreign currency, Hong Kong or American dollars, and the Japanese yen. Prices are listed in *renminbi* and recalculated at the black-market rate according to the currency used.

While China is still safer than the streets of New York, crime is rising at an alarming rate. Major criminal cases have increased tenfold during the last decade. Theft is the most obvious crime. Americans visiting China in the 1970s reported that empty ballpoint pens and discarded pantyhose left in hotel wastebaskets were returned to them days later in another town in a calculated demonstration of national honesty. Today, while hotel theft is hardly endemic, travelers bearing laptop computers are wary of leaving their equipment unguarded, and foreign residents who travel by public bus and train have been victimized by bag-slashing robbers. Long-distance travel by public bus or train is much less safe than in the past, and Chinese report instances of whole villages organizing to stop and plunder freight trains moving through their territory—a 1990s version of America's Wild West. Marlowe Hood reports a dramatic increase in underground "black-society" gangs—traditional criminal brotherhoods—that range from small bands of highway robbers to international heroin syndicates, from mob-run cigarette stands on urban street corners to nationwide publishing networks operating outside the state-run monopoly, from local sects rooted in superstition to secret societies with hundreds of members. Traditionally, such black-society gangs have grown in numbers and eventually in political importance in

times of dynastic decline. In a nation without a true civil society, they are the logical response to the decline of central political authority.



China is in a state of moral disarray. Old values have crumbled, and new ones have not yet been found. But the problem is even more acute than the "normal" identity crisis that every nation faces in the passage from traditionalism to modernity or from one political and economic system to another. Traditional Confucian culture has been eroding for more than a century, beginning with China's defeat in the Opium War with Great Britain in 1842 and followed by the assault from the country's intellectuals demanding democracy and science during the May Fourth Movement of 1919. The problem has been aggravated by the moral debilitation and the chronic uncertainty engendered by the Communist Party's politics of hate, more than 40 years of political agitation against one "enemy" after another. Millions of landlords perished during the land-reform campaign of the early 1950s, a period many Chinese still describe as the "golden years" of communist rule. Half a million intellectuals were declared rightists in 1957 and sent to prison, labor reform, or exile. Many did not return for more than 20 years. In 1959, '60, and '61, somewhere between 30 and 40 million people above and beyond the normal natural mortality rate died as a result of Mao Zedong's utopian and egregiously ill-conceived Great Leap Forward, a campaign to gather the nation's

peasants into huge communes and to put millions to work at backyard steel furnaces producing useless globs of metal. Mao promised that this effort would enable China's industrial production to catch up with and overtake Great Britain's in a mere 15 years. The resulting famine was the largest man-made disaster in history. Responsibility rested clearly with Mao and with a Communist Party that never opposed him. Yet neither the party chairman nor the party itself was ever held fully accountable.

Instead, in 1966, Mao Zedong launched his Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, turning against the very officials, including Deng Xiaoping, who had directed the retreat from the Great Leap Forward and put the country back on its economic feet. Almost the entire corps of the country's intellectuals, the best and the brightest of China, were labeled "enemies of the people." Middle-school and university students around the country were mobilized, first to attack their teachers and professors and then to struggle against anyone suspected of having a "bourgeois" or "reactionary" past. As the movement unfolded, thousands, tens of thousands, and finally millions of people were drawn in. China destroyed itself from within. Student turned against teacher, child against parent, colleague against colleague, friend against friend, wife against husband. Hundreds of thousands died, more were sent to prison and labor reform camps, and when the prisons and camps were filled, millions were shipped to "May Seventh Cadre Schools" in remote areas of the countryside. Eighteen million "educated youth" of middle-school age were separated from their families and sent to the countryside to "learn from the poor and lower middle peasants." The fabric of Chinese society was rent, and the cloth has yet to be repaired. Government intransigence in the face of popular protests during the spring of 1989, and the use of guns against a citizenry that most Chinese perceived to be holding the moral upper hand, have inflicted new wounds that

have not yet begun to heal.

In 1981–82, while living in China, I conducted lengthy interviews with several dozen people who were victims of Mao's Cultural Revolution. Living in China again after the Beijing massacre of 1989, I began to contact those victims anew. The book I had written about their experiences, *Enemies of the People* (1987), concluded with a description of the remarkable patriotism that had survived despite the immense suffering the party had inflicted on the Chinese people and despite the lingering wounds and moral debilitation resulting from decades of political persecution. Even the victims still loved their country and wanted to work for its good. I wanted to understand how the Beijing massacre had affected their love.

The first person I looked for was a woman I had called Liang Aihua. Liang Aihua was an American-educated Ph.D., a returned overseas Chinese, and the most extreme example of blind devotion to country I have ever encountered. Heiress to a family fortune she could have collected had she remained abroad, Liang Aihua had returned to China in 1964 with her husband and two sons to work for the development of her country. When the political persecutions began, her family was immediately set upon by young "revolutionaries," and she lost both her husband and a son to the violence of the Cultural Revolution. But when the movement finally came to a halt and she was offered the opportunity to leave, she chose to stay. She stayed because she felt she still had contributions to make to her country. She stayed because, she said, "I am Chinese."

Liang Aihua was not in Beijing when I looked for her there in the summer of 1989. She seemed to have disappeared. Months later, on a brief visit to Hong Kong, I ran into one of her nieces, the one, in fact, who had helped with the initial introduction. Liang Aihua, she told me, was in Hong Kong. I met with her there. She had left China after the Beijing massacre and had no intention of re-

turning, at least not until the current government was overthrown and some sort of democratic rule established. Her remaining son was a student in the United States, working in exile to bring democracy to China.

Something clearly had changed as a result of the bloodshed on the streets of Beijing. Some elemental bond of loyalty had snapped. Devotion to country and loyalty to government were no longer synonymous. It was possible to love China and oppose Communist Party rule.

"You should be studying the children of the victims of the Cultural Revolution," several of my Chinese friends in Beijing urged when they learned I was trying to find the people I had written about earlier. My Beijing friends were children of victims themselves, and they talked about the psychological devastation that resulted from growing up during the turbulent '60s, witnessing their parents under attack, their mothers forced to denounce their fathers, fathers and mothers in "cowpens" or jail, their families separated and dispatched to different corners of the country. They talked about what it was like as children to be forced to live without their parents, without adult supervision, forming children's gangs for protection and plunder. We talked about a recent sociological study that had asked respondents in several countries to list the 10 people whom they most admired. People from other countries almost invariably listed their father among the top 10. People from China did not. "During the Cultural Revolution, we saw our fathers either persecuting others or being persecuted themselves. In both cases they were cowards," one friend said. "When persecuted, they did not fight back."

"We do not know how to love," said another. "We never had normal families or saw love between our parents." She was in the process of a divorce, and the divorce rate among her friends was high. The Confucian system puts familial loyalty at the root of human relationships, and Chinese abroad have thrived on such Confucian ties, with the fam-

ily business and mom-and-pop shops serving as the path to economic success. Mao and his zealots did their best to destroy this fundamental loyalty on the mainland, but not even the politics of class struggle, pitting family member against family member, completely succeeded. Faced with political adversity, many families pulled together for protection against the hostile state. But many were left in tatters.

In 1989, I found few children of the victims I had interviewed seven years earlier. They had fled to the United States, Canada, Australia, Great Britain, Germany, or Japan. The young manager of the Beijing computer company who spent several nights a week in the beds of other women was one of the few. I had known his family well. He was the brother of Song Wuhao, whose story I had told in *Enemies of the People*. Song Wuhao had been a middle-school student when the Cultural Revolution began, and his American-educated father, an engineer, had come under severe attack. One afternoon in the fall of 1968, father and son had been taken by young revolutionary rebels to a huge "struggle session" and put on the stage together. They beat his father with belts. Then they beat Song Wuhao. They told him that they would stop beating him only if he would beat his own father. Both father and son had told me the story separately, and both had been in tears. Song Wuhao had begged, pleaded, cried. He had fallen on his knees in anger and cried out for mercy. But his persecutors refused to relent and continued beating Song Wuhao until he beat his father. When the beating was over, father and son were separated, not to meet again for 11 years. "From that time on," Song Wuhao said, "I doubted history, I doubted society. I began to recognize that there were evil people governing our country, evil people oppressing the Chinese people I loved." Song Wuhao's ideals were shattered.

Song Wuhao's father died several years ago, largely as a result of the injuries sus-

tained during the Cultural Revolution. His mother died a couple of years later of cancer—a disease that the Chinese view as symptomatic of social malaise. Song Wuhao is in the United States now. Only his brother remains behind, getting richer by the day and falling in love with every attractive woman who comes along. He lives for wealth and pleasure alone.

It is the Cultural Revolution generation and the children of the revolution's victims who are often in the vanguard of the current drive to strike it rich. The *taizidang*, after all, is composed of the sons and daughters of the top-ranking leaders whom Mao turned against and purged. Deng Xiaoping's own son, Deng Pufang, is among them, the former head of the multifaceted and consummately successful Kanghua Corporation. Deng Pufang uses a wheelchair because he is paralyzed from the waist down. When his father was purged in 1967, Deng Pufang also came under attack. He was pushed or fell from an upper floor of a building on the campus at Peking University, where he was a student of astrophysics. In 1986, facing popular charges of corruption, Deng Pufang resigned his directorship of the Kanghua Corporation. Today he stays behind the scenes, his stewardship informal, devoting his efforts to programs in support of people with disabilities.

Chen Yi, one of the 10 marshals of the Chinese Revolution and a former foreign minister of the People's Republic, was attacked in 1967 and died in 1972. A colorful and outspoken man, he had opposed Mao's choice of Lin Biao as second in command. (Lin Biao had proclaimed Mao the equal of Marx and declared that a single word from the Great Helmsman was worth 10,000 from anyone else.) Chen Yi was rehabilitated only in death, after Lin Biao had turned against Mao, plotted a coup d'état against him, and died in an airplane crash while fleeing to the Soviet Union. Today, his son, Chen Xiaolu, an active champion of liberal reform, is a millionaire. The children of Liu Shaoqi—who was Mao's designated successor until he was

purged during the Cultural Revolution, brutally attacked, and left to die of illness and neglect in 1969—are also doing well.

Chinese such as my dissident friend, Ni Yuxian, who spent two years on death row for putting up a big-character poster calling on his fellow citizens to awake and rise up (and who is the protagonist in both Liu Binyan's "A Second Kind of Loyalty" and my own *A Chinese Odyssey*) see the *taizidang's* search for prosperity as their way of saying "never again." Astonished during the Cultural Revolution that their status could so quickly and resoundingly fall and that the power of their fathers could so decisively end, they vowed upon Deng Xiaoping's return to protect themselves forever. Power is always precarious. Money is more certain, Swiss bank accounts are even more so, and investments abroad are considered an excellent means to increase one's wealth.

The brash young men who take up so much public space pursuing their scams and imitating the Taiwanese are also children of victims. Now in their late twenties and thirties, they were born into the Cultural Revolution or grew up during it, witnesses to its brutality. Their disdain for the weak and their determination to live without regard for rules are a natural outgrowth of the period in which they grew up.



The Book of Job notwithstanding, brutality and suffering are rarely ennobling. Hatred usually begets hatred; brutality, the desire for revenge. Abused chil-

dren become abusers. Mao Zedong set out to create a new socialist man by preaching a politics of class struggle and hate. He left China a morally wounded society.

Everyone in China, including the highest leaders, recognizes that the country is suffering from a profound moral crisis. During the period of martial law that followed the military crackdown against the Tiananmen demonstrations in June 1989, Deng Xiaoping attributed the student demonstrations to, among other things, a failure of "ideological" education. He ordered a revival of political-study meetings, with lessons in the "four cardinal principles"—the socialist road, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the Communist Party, and Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought—and calls to emulate the long-deceased model party soldier, Lei Feng. The campaign fell flat. The divergence between the Communist Party's ideals and the *modus vivendi* of its ranking members and their families is too obvious and too great. "It's bad people ordering us good people to do good things," a Beijing friend observed during the course of the campaign.

Chinese have begun searching on their own for an alternative system of values, for new ways to give meaning and order to life apart from the false and hypocritical morality thrust on them by the state. This spontaneous search for an alternative system of values is perhaps the best hope the country now has for the development of independent associations that may lay the groundwork for a genuine civil society. But even the quest for alternatives has a way of being subverted by the combined force of Communist Party interference and the present crisis of values.

Confucianism is being revived and Confucian temples are being rebuilt, but the greatest reason for the revival is the perception that the success of Asia's "four little dragons"—Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and Singapore—rests upon the Confucian ethic. If Confucianism can be reintroduced, the reasoning



As the thoughts of Chairman Mao cease to hold ethical force for most Chinese, many citizens of the People's Republic are beginning to explore other value systems, including that of the sage Confucius.

goes, China itself, the greatest dragon of them all, might finally awake. Confucianism was always the ethic of the state, and therefore it should come as no surprise that the state even now is intent upon directing the revival. The bureaucracy squabbles about who should administer the temples—the office of religion, the cultural bureau, or the local bureau of tourism. The argument is as practical as it is substantive. Overseas Chinese from the four little dragons are major contributors to the temples, and everyone wants a share of the pious offerings.

Buddhism is also finding new and returning adherents, particularly in southern China, where the religion has traditionally been strong. Buddhist temples, refurbished and renovated, now dot the countryside of Fujian and Guangdong. Many of the worshipers pray for prosperity and a son.

Christianity, too, is attracting converts. Churches, both Catholic and Protestant, are being rebuilt everywhere in China, and many of them are filled to overflowing. No Western

observer of a Chinese Christian service would doubt the devotion of many in the congregation, and some of the bravest dissenters against the Chinese state are Christian clergymen who insist on the integrity of their faith. But even the turn toward Christianity has a strongly utilitarian cast. When the Communist Party sent a team to investigate the millions of new Christians who had joined churches in rural Henan in the heartland of central China, they discovered that many converts were drawn by the preachers' emphasis on the correlation between riches and religious belief—as demonstrated by the great wealth of the Christian countries of the West. Christmas was quite fashionable in China last year; families lined up to have their photographs taken next to the Santa Claus in front of Beijing's Friendship Hotel. The state keeps a close watch over Christianity, too, and only so-called "patriotic churches" are permitted. For Catholics, this has meant severing connections with the Vatican. The underground church is growing, and many of China's pris-

oners of conscience continue to be priests who have refused to renounce the pope.

Perhaps the only spiritual alternative without obvious instrumental value—and with a minimum of state control—is that of Taoist retreat, withdrawal into passivity until the situation changes and moral behavior is possible again. Many Chinese who have fled to the United States regard their action as the only moral choice. While many also go to America in search of fortune, believing the streets are lined with gold (the Chinese name for San Francisco is still “old gold mountain”), others believe that in the United States it is at least possible to lead a moral life.

In order both to pursue an alternative set of values and to escape the tentacles of the state, many Chinese are finding it necessary to go underground. Tocqueville observed that in America there are factions but no conspirators, because in countries where associations are free, secret societies are unknown. By contrast, in China, where all associations are either forbidden or controlled by the state, association must take place in secret. Much as the West might hope that the Chinese underground is dominated by members of the democratic movement from the spring of 1989, the truth is probably otherwise. Nativist practices are blossoming in the heartland of China. The village god has returned to rural areas, and so has the local shaman.

Qigong, which roughly translates as “vital life force ability” and is a modern adaptation of traditional breathing and exercise techniques that promise both healing and long life, has been the rage throughout China for several years. “More people know the names of the *qigong* masters than that of [the dissident astrophysicist] Fang Lizhi,” one young journalist pointed out to me during a recent visit to Beijing. Pursued as a cure for cancer, a surefire way to lose weight, a cathartic release, and a means to promote longevity, *qigong* is also linked to the secret-society phenomenon. Zhang Hongbao, a *qigong* master who once mesmerized crowds in Beijing, has,

according to Marlowe Hood, fled to Sichuan to lead the Way of Basic Unity, presiding as a “dirt emperor” over his mountain stronghold and carrying out vendettas against Communist Party officials.

Secret societies of the type that traditionally have sprung up in times of dynastic decline are also growing. Because the societies are secret and headquartered in China’s rural heartland, away from Westerners and foreign influence, their activities are difficult to observe, much less to analyze. Marlowe Hood has come closer than any other journalist to explaining their workings. Quoting from a Chinese Ministry of Public Security report, he notes “a continuous increase in cases of reactionary sect and secret society activity throughout the country.” Long dormant secret societies, such as the Way of Basic Unity, the Way of Original Harmony, and the Big Knife Society, are springing back to life. As Hood observes, “When centrifugal forces periodically tug at the fabric of Chinese society, these secret associations act as magnets, attracting adherents with a million promises of a just and moral order, on the one hand, and economic opportunity, on the other.” The secret society is rural China’s answer to the absence of a civil society, and it is as hostile to Western influence as it is to Communist Party rule.



As China awaits the death of Deng Xiaoping, who will turn 89 in August, and as the turmoil in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe continues, those who specialize in trying to understand

China are called upon to predict the future. Prophecy is difficult in the most stable of circumstances, more so in times of great instability. Theories, nonetheless, abound.

The more optimistic ones suggest that from the current discord will emerge the makings of a democratic polity and a civil society. The growing market economy will produce a demand for law, and the need for economic information will result in demands for freedom of the press. The search for new values and the propensity to form associations in pursuit of those ends, even when those associations are secret societies, will promote the development of a civil society. When the Long March generation of Communist Party leaders departs the scene, the new, younger, more liberal reformers will step forward to lead the country on the road to democracy. Like the lotus blossom that emerges from muddy waters pure and clean, China will also emerge from its present mess.

At the other extreme, the most pessimistic forecast paints China descending further into chaos. According to this reading of the tea leaves, the central leadership after the death of Deng will be so weak and divided, the power struggle so protracted, that no authoritative leader will emerge. At the bottom of society, the strains from the growing inequalities and the gap between rich and poor, coupled with mass cynicism over the play being staged in Beijing, will result in the withdrawal of even the tenuous support for the central government that remains. With "the mountains high and the emperor far away," as the adage goes, the nativist revival will prosper, together with crime and the expansion of black-society gangs. Strongman leaders might emerge in particular locales—cities, provinces, or whole regions—but their activities will be directed downward, to the territory under their control, and outward, to foreign investment and trade, not upward toward the center. Violence, sporadic and unpredictable, will spread. The thriving south may break away from Beijing, entering into formal alliance with Hong Kong and even Taiwan.

The best possible outcome, according to this scenario, involves the great white horse of democracy galloping in to save the day once the pain of continued chaos becomes clear. In the midst of chaos, new leadership will appear, the democrats in exile will return, parliamentary government will be established, and elections will be held.

More conservative predictions focus on the impending deaths of China's octogenarian Long March generation. If Deng Xiaoping is the first to go, hardliners such as the "birdcage" proponent Chen Yun and the equally conservative Bo Yibo will gain the upper hand, and the process of economic reform will slow. Possibilities for political liberalization will diminish. Further reforms will await the deaths of the conservatives, and the political struggle will be protracted.

If, on the other hand, such conservative elders as Chen Yun or Bo Yibo are the first to depart the world, the position of the reformers will solidify, and Deng's policy of economic reform will continue. With the economy on a solid footing, a few measures could be introduced to appease the more democratically inclined. Laws might be instituted to govern economic relationships. The several "democratic parties" could be consulted on policy issues of major importance. The National People's Congress, the country's nominal legislature, could be given a more public and influential role. Press restrictions might be loosened. The result: political stability.

Under such a "neoauthoritarian" system, democracy could become a long-term goal. Because China's economy is still backward, the educational level of its people low, and the population so huge, and because the country lacks a democratic political culture or even the rudiments of a civil society, the introduction of democracy any time soon is simply not feasible. In preparation for the later introduction of democracy, a benignly authoritarian tutelary government could rule, responsive to the people but not directly accountable to them, with the more insistently democratic elements of society, intellectuals in particular,

given greater freedom and leadership roles.

With the possible exception of the dramatic appearance of the great white horse of democracy, all the scenarios are plausible and none is entirely exclusive of any other, the differences often being a matter of short-term versus long-term solutions. Several facts, however, do seem certain:

- First, the political situation in China is inherently unstable. The gross and growing inequities, the corruption and the scams, are breeding grounds of discontent.

- Second, good does not easily or often arise from bad. The search for alternative values will continue.

- Third, the Communist Party has legitimacy in China only as an interregnum, until a new and more viable system of government can be found. Deng Xiaoping has been remarkably successful in instituting a restoration, but the fundamental fact of all restorations is that they merely shore up declining dynasties without ever fully restoring them to political grace. A dynasty in restoration is a dynasty facing its demise.

What happens in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe matters greatly to China, and astute observers see the current degeneration of Russia and the newly independent republics not as a failure of reform but as the cumulative effects of decades of communist rule playing themselves out in tragic fashion. The Chinese say, "Not to reform is to wait for death, but to carry out reform is to look for death."

Death will come in any case. It must, if anything healthy is to be born. China may be exceptional, but it is not the exception. Many of the same problems sweeping the formerly communist states—the profits being reaped by party officialdom, the venality and the cor-

ruption, the gangs and the scams, the anger and hatred and moral debilitation, the return to nativism and the quest for new values—plague China, too. Nowhere in the present or former communist world has an easy solution to the problem of governance been found.

My experience in China has taught me to err on the side of pessimism. My formative intellectual experience was as a student of the Cultural Revolution, and the deepest conviction that such research instilled was a belief in the fragility of civilized behavior, a humbling recognition, described so well by Aldous Huxley, of how easily human beings, seemingly no better or worse than you or me, succumb to barbarous behavior. I see no set of institutions, no new system of values, no leader with moral authority, to prevent China's descent into violence should the permissive set of circumstances arise.

For years, every time I have gone to China, I have carried with me a single sheet of paper upon which is written a prophecy from another revolution that began in failure. It appears on the final page of Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*, when the narrator imagines the last thoughts of Sydney Carton as he prepares to meet the guillotine.

"I see a beautiful city and a brilliant people rising from this abyss, and, in their struggles to be truly free, in their triumphs and defeats, through long years to come, I see the evil of this time and of the previous time of which this is the natural birth, gradually making expiation for itself and wearing out." In China, as in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, the process of expiation and atonement has only just begun. We must prepare for that process to be protracted, and painful for us all.

BACKGROUND BOOKS

The field of contemporary China studies has never been short on punditry, but recent years have witnessed an outpouring of essays and books on the current Chinese condition. The Beijing massacre of 1989 alone produced over 30 books on the 50 days that shook the world. Most of the growing Tiananmen bookshelf consists either of descriptive accounts by foreign eyewitnesses or of emotional autobiographies by Chinese dissidents now exiled abroad. The best analysis of the origins and events of 1989 is probably Tony Saich's edited **The Chinese People's Movement: Perspectives on Spring 1989** (M. E. Sharpe, 1990).

Many recent books on China are more scholarly in nature, and a fair number of these are products of a decade of research on the mainland. New data always recasts conventional wisdom, and the flood of new materials emanating from the People's Republic in recent years has done much to refine and revise our knowledge of the Mao years. This is most clearly evident in Volumes 14 and 15 of **The Cambridge History of China**, edited by Harvard's Roderick MacFarquhar and the late John King Fairbank. In more than 1,800 pages, covering the period 1949-1982, one learns of repeated shifts in government policy, the untold human suffering wrought by utopian ideologists (not the least of whom was the Great Helmsman himself) and vindictive citizens, the schemings of Machiavellian elites, a society struggling for dignity and meaningful life amid repression, and the pressures of national security.

Fairbank, the doyen of American Sinology, also left a lasting intellectual testament in **China: A New History** (Harvard Univ. Press, 1992). While not principally concerned with contemporary China, his effortless travels through millennia of imperial Chinese history challenge orthodox historiography on several fronts and remind one of enduring themes in

China's long history. The same can be said for Jonathan Spence's **Chinese Roundabout: Essays in History and Culture** (W. W. Norton, 1992), a collection of the Yale historian's observations on several centuries of interaction between East and West in China. "Westerners," Spence writes, "have been unclear about China since they first began to live there in any numbers and write about the country at length. The history of our confusion goes back more than 400 years."

Another valuable account placing China's current dilemmas in historical context is W. J. F. Jenner's **The Tyranny of History: The Roots of China's Crisis** (Penguin, 1992). Focusing on the use and misuse of historiography in China, Jenner comes to a discouraging conclusion: The weight of China's authoritarian past is too heavy a burden for the contemporary society to escape.

Brantly Womack's (ed.) **Contemporary Chinese Politics in Historical Perspective** (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991) places Deng's reforms in historical perspective, showing how fundamental Deng's departures have been in relation to China's century-long quest for modernity. Individual chapters examine the erosion of public authority and the growth of a nascent civil society; new channels of political participation at the rice-roots; problems associated with the dismantling of the Stalinist industrial structure; the rise of technocratic elites; and the evolving renegotiation of the social contract between a post-totalitarian state and society.

Anyone wishing to refresh his memory about the atrocities and machinations of the Maoist period can consult three recent sagas. Jung Chang's **Wild Swans: Three Daughters of China** (HarperCollins, 1992) may well be the most important autobiography to issue from the pen of a Chinese since the country

opened up 20 years ago. Jung Chang's is an elegantly written and passionately described account of three generations of women in modern China. Here, for example, she recalls thoughts she had as a young instructor of English at Sichuan University shortly before going to England on a scholarship: "The Silk River meandered past the campus, and I often wandered along its banks on my last evenings. Its surface glimmered in the moonlight and the hazy mist of the summer night. I contemplated my 26 years. I had experienced privilege as well as denunciation, courage as well as fear, seen kindness and loyalty as well as the depths of human ugliness. Amid suffering, ruin, and death, I had above all known love and the indestructible human capacity to survive and pursue happiness."

In its own way, John Byron and Robert Pack's *The Claws of the Dragon* (Simon & Schuster, 1992) also exposes the world of Chinese power and privilege under communism. Theirs is the account of the evil Kang Sheng, China's Beria. Kang Sheng was for many years Mao's henchman and was the father of communist China's security services. Rich in detail, Byron (a pseudonym) and Peck expose the shady underworld of the communist elite and their intramural persecutions.

If the picture is not made adequately clear in *Claws of the Dragon*, it certainly is in Harrison Salisbury's *The New Emperors: China in the Era of Mao and Deng* (Little, Brown, 1992). For years China-watchers have sought to understand the inner workings of and the relationships among the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) elite. In one volume veteran foreign correspondent Salisbury has provided more juicy tidbits about this subject than any other book that has emerged during 70 years of CCP machinations (including the Red Guard materials of the 1960s). Salisbury's highly readable account is derived from extensive interviews with high-ranking colleagues of Mao and Deng, but readers should be wary of Salisbury's data, much of which is presented without adequate verification or footnoting.

In recent years, scholars have paid considerable attention to the redefinition of state-society relations in the People's Republic. A collection of essays by leading American China scholars in Arthur Lewis Rosenbaum's edited *State and Society in China: The Consequences of Reform* (Westview, 1992) examines the nexus in varying social sectors. The withdrawal of the state and increased social autonomy has been argued by many, but this view is provocatively countered by Cornell University political scientist Vivienne Shue. Her brief but important book, *The Reach of the State: Sketches of the Chinese Body Politic* (Stanford Univ. Press, 1988), argues that during the Maoist era the state's power was never as pervasive in rural areas as many had assumed. At the same time, she finds, post-Mao reforms strengthened certain aspects of state power, particularly in areas such as grain procurement, while weakening the state's hand in such matters as birth control and tax collection.

Similar complexities are explored in two superb accounts of rural life and politics under the reforms: Jean C. Oi's *State and Peasant in Contemporary China* (Univ. of Calif. Press, 1989), and Daniel Kelliher's *Peasant Power in China: The Era of Rural Reform, 1979-89* (Yale Univ. Press, 1992). Oi studies the division of the harvest and employs a patron-client model to explain the relationships of authority in the Chinese countryside. Kelliher's contribution reveals the degree to which peasants set the state's agenda, rather than vice versa. Both of these studies should be required reading for people trying to understand the changes that have affected 800 million Chinese peasants.

These volumes on rural life and politics generally paint a picture of stubborn localism, where the Leninist party-state barely exists. One gets a different picture from Kevin O'Brien's *Reform Without Liberalization* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1990) and Barrett L. McCormick's *Political Reform in Post-Mao China* (Univ. of Calif. Press, 1990). Both

books portray a political system in which Leninist norms and institutions remain primary, despite their eroding efficacy under Deng's reforms. O'Brien finds that, while enlivened, China's parliament remains coopted by the CCP, while McCormick argues that patronage and corruption (both of which have risen markedly under the reform program) are integral aspects of Leninist rulership. Leninist parties typically penetrate their societies and set up webs of organizational dependency.

Two other recent books on Chinese politics offer a more variegated picture of political change in China. In **From Revolutionary Cadres to Party Technocrats in Socialist China** (Univ. of Calif. Press, 1991), Berkeley political scientist Hong Yung Lee portrays a new bureaucratic elite increasingly technocratic and competent. The contributors to Kenneth G. Lieberthal's and David M. Lampton's edited volume **Bureaucracy, Politics, and Decision Making in Post-Mao China** (Univ. of Calif. Press, 1992) develop the thesis of "fragmented authoritarianism" to describe a bureaucratic system characterized by bargaining, competition, and compartmentalism. The bargaining perspective is useful, and the authors' emphasis on bureaucracy is a good reminder of the enduring importance of state institutions in an

increasingly market-driven society.

What will post-Deng China look like? What variables will shape the passage to the post-Deng era? While it is impossible to answer the former question, three recent studies shed considerable light on the latter: the Asia Society's annual **China Briefing**, 1992, edited by William A. Joseph (Westview, 1993); Steven M. Goldstein's **China at the Crossroads: Reform after Tiananmen** (Foreign Policy Assoc. Headline Series, 1992); and **China in the Nineties: Crisis Management and Beyond**, edited by David S. G. Goodman and Gerald Segal (Oxford Univ. Press, 1991). All three focus on the present and sketch the limits of change and principal trends in China today. "After Deng's death . . .," writes Goldstein, "the new leadership will undoubtedly come under increased political pressure from both conservatives who would like to restrict ties with the outside world as well as regional forces seeking broadened ties. Although the initial instincts of Deng's successors are likely to be inclined toward a continuation of Deng's economic policies and thus a more accommodating posture toward the United States as major economic support of China's reform effort, there are numerous factors that might move policy in a much different direction."

—David Shambaugh

David Shambaugh, formerly director of the Asia Program at the Woodrow Wilson Center, teaches Chinese politics at the University of London and is the editor of the China Quarterly. His most recent book is Beautiful Imperialist: China Perceives America, 1972–1990 (Princeton Univ. Press, 1991).

Th. Jefferson
JEFFERSON
IN HIS TIME

"If America is wrong, Jefferson is wrong," an early biographer wrote.

"If America is right, Jefferson is right." This year, on his 250th birthday, it would appear that Jefferson was wrong. Many historians of late have found the third U.S. president guilty of racism and other sins that besmirch the national character. Gordon Wood, by contrast, argues that Jefferson has never been an apt mirror of America. He was a representative figure of his day whose words haunt us because, unlike him, they transcend his own time.

BY GORDON WOOD

Americans seem to have forgotten nothing about Thomas Jefferson, except that he was once a living, breathing human being. Throughout our history, Jefferson has served as a symbol of what we as a people are, someone invented, manipulated, turned into something we like or dislike within ourselves—whether it is populism or elitism, agrarianism or racism, atheism or liberalism. We continually ask ourselves whether Jefferson still survives, or what still lives in his thought, and we quote him on nearly every side of every major question in our history. No figure in our past has embodied so much of our heritage and so many of our hopes.

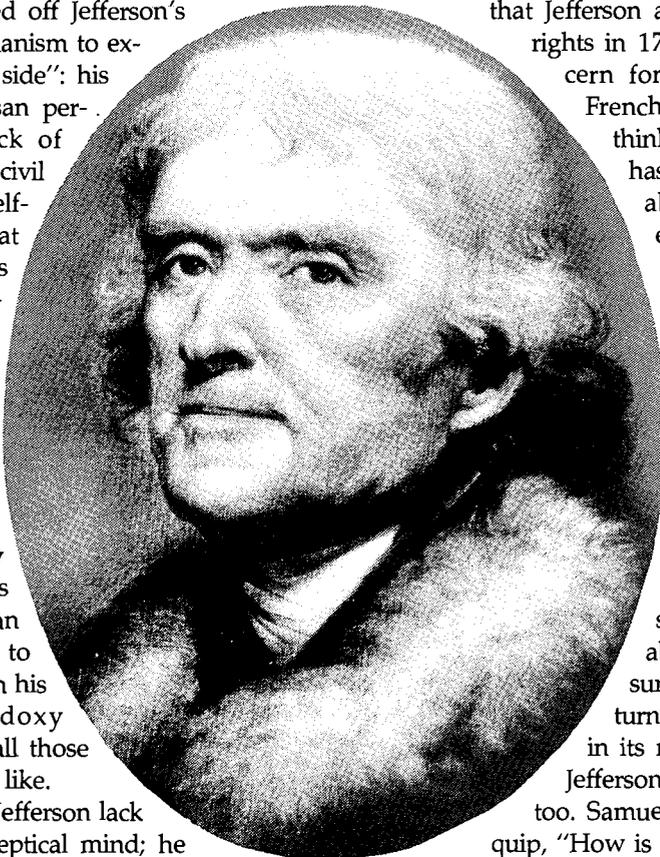
In his superb *The Jefferson Image in the*

American Mind (1960), Merrill Peterson showed that American culture has always used Jefferson as "a sensitive reflector . . . of America's troubled search for the image of itself." The symbolizing, the image-mongering, and the identifying of Jefferson with America has not changed a bit since Peterson's book was published, even though the level of professional historical scholarship has never been higher. If anything the association of Jefferson with America has become more complete. During the past three turbulent decades many people, including some historians, have concluded that something is seriously wrong with America and, therefore, that something has to be wrong with Jefferson.

The opening blast in this criticism of Jef-

erson was probably Leonard Levy's *Jefferson and Civil Liberties: The Darker Side* (1963). No subtle satire, no gentle mocking of the ironies of Jefferson's inconsistencies and hypocrisies, Levy's book was a prosecutor's indictment. Levy ripped off Jefferson's mantle of libertarianism to expose his "darker side": his passion for partisan persecution, his lack of concern for basic civil liberties, and a self-righteousness that became at times out-and-out ruthlessness. Far from being the skeptical enlightened intellectual, allowing all ideas their free play, Jefferson was portrayed by Levy and others as something of an ideologue, eager to fill the young with his political orthodoxy while censoring all those books he did not like.

Not only did Jefferson lack an original or skeptical mind; he could in fact be downright doctrinaire, an early version of a "knee-jerk liberal." In this respect he was very different from his more skeptical and inquisitive friend James Madison. Jefferson, for example, could understand the opening struggles of the French Revolution only in terms of a traditional liberal antagonism to an arrogant and overgrown monarchy. He supported the addition of a bill of rights to the federal Constitution not because he had thought through the issue the way Madison had but largely because he believed that a bill of rights was what good governments were supposed to have. All of his liberal aristocratic French friends said so; indeed, as he told his fellow Americans, "the



enlightened part of Europe have given us the greatest credit for inventing this instrument of security for the rights of the people, and have been not a little surprised to see us so soon give it up." One almost has the feeling

that Jefferson advocated a bill of rights in 1787-88 out of concern for what his liberal French associates would think. One sometimes has the same feeling about his antislavery statements, many of which seem to have been shaped to the expectations of enlightened foreigners.

It is in fact his views on black Americans and slavery that have made Jefferson most vulnerable to modern censure. If America has turned out to be wrong in its race relations, then Jefferson had to be wrong too. Samuel Johnson with his quip, "How is it that we hear the

loudest yelps for liberty from the drivers of Negroes?" had nothing on modern critics. Who could not find the contrast between Jefferson's great declarations of liberty and equality and his life-long ownership of slaves glaringly inconsistent? Jefferson undoubtedly hated slavery and believed that the self-evident truths that he had set forth in 1776 ought eventually to doom the institution in the United States. Early in his career he tried unsuccessfully to facilitate the manumission of slaves in Virginia, and in the 1780s he worked hard to have slavery abolished in the new western territories. But unlike George Washington, he was never able to free all of his slaves. More than that, as recent historians

have emphasized, he bought, bred, and flogged his slaves, and he hunted down fugitives in much the same way his fellow Virginia planters did—all the while declaring that American slavery was not as bad as that of the ancient Romans.

Some recent historians even claim that Jefferson's attitudes and actions toward blacks were so repugnant that identifying the Sage of Monticello with antislavery discredits the reform movement. Jefferson could never truly imagine freed blacks living in a white man's America, and throughout his life he insisted that the emancipation of the slaves be accompanied by their expulsion from the country. He wanted all blacks sent to the West Indies, or Africa, or anywhere out of the United States. In the end, it has been said, Jefferson loaded such conditions on the abolition of slavery that the antislavery movement could scarcely get off the ground. In response to the pleas of younger men that he speak out against slavery, he offered only excuses for delay.

His remedy of expulsion was based on racial fear and antipathy. While he had no apprehensions about mingling white blood with that of the Indian, he never ceased expressing his "great aversion" to miscegenation between blacks and whites. When the Roman slave was freed, Jefferson wrote, he "might mix with, without staining the blood of his master." When the black slave was freed, however, he had "to be removed beyond the reach of mixture." Although Jefferson believed that the Indians were uncivilized, he always admired them and made all sorts of environmental explanations for their differences from whites. Yet he was never able to do the same for the African American. Instead, he lastingly clung to the view that blacks were inherently inferior to whites in

both body and mind.

It has even been suggested that Jefferson's obsession (shared by so many other Americans) with black sensuality was largely a projection of his own repressed—and, perhaps in the case of his attractive mulatto slave Sally Hemings, not-so-repressed—libidinal desires. The charge that Jefferson maintained Hemings as his mistress for decades and fathered several children by her was first made by an unscrupulous newspaperman, James Callender, in 1802. Since then, historians and others have periodically resurrected the accusation. In fact, in the most recent study of Jefferson's political thought, political scientist Garrett Ward Sheldon treats Jefferson's "keeping of a black mistress" as an established fact, a "common transgression of his class."

In her 1974 psychobiography of Jefferson the late Fawn Brodie made the most ingenious and notorious use of Callender's accusation, building up her case for the passionate liaison between Jefferson and his mulatto slave largely through contrived readings of evidence and even the absence of evidence. In accord with our modern soap-opera sensibilities, Brodie naturally turned the relationship into a secret love affair. Brodie's suggestion of a love match aroused a great deal of controversy, perhaps because so many people believed it or at least were titillated by it. A novel based on Brodie's concoctions was written, and there was even talk of a TV movie.

These may seem like small and silly matters, but they are not—not where Jefferson is involved—for the nature of American society itself is at stake. The relationship with Sally Hemings may be implausible to those who know Jefferson's character intimately. He was, after all, a man who never indulged his passions but always suppressed them. But whether he had a relationship with Hemings, there is no denying that Jefferson presided

Gordon Wood, professor of history at Brown University, will be a Wilson Center Guest Scholar during 1993–1994. He is the author of The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1788 (1969) and The Radicalism of the American Revolution (1992). A longer version of this essay will appear in Jefferson Legacies, edited by Peter Onuf (Univ. of Va. Press, 1993).



The Embargo Act (1807) severely damaged President Jefferson's popularity. A contemporary cartoon depicted him as at once an impractical dreamer and a would-be monarch.

over a household in which miscegenation took place, a miscegenation that he believed was morally repugnant. Thus any attempt to make Jefferson's Monticello a model patriarchal plantation is compromised at the outset.

Everyone, it seems, sees America in Jefferson. When Garry Wills in his *Inventing America* (1978) argued that Jefferson's Declaration of Independence owed less to the individualism of John Locke and more to the communitarian sentiments of the Scottish moralist Francis Hutcheson, one critic accused Wills of aiming "to supply the history of the Republic with as pink a dawn as possible." So too the shame and guilt that Jefferson must have suffered from his involvement in slavery and racial mixing best represents the shame and guilt that white Americans feel in their tortured relations with blacks. Where Jefferson for Vernon Louis Parrington and his generation of the 1920s, '30s, and '40s had been the solution, Jefferson for this present generation

has become the problem. The Jefferson that emerges out of much recent scholarship therefore resembles the America that many critics have visualized in the past three decades—self-righteous, guilt-ridden, racist, doctrinaire, and filled with liberal pieties that under stress are easily sacrificed.

Quite clearly, no historical figure can bear this kind of symbolic burden and still remain a real person. Beneath all the images, beneath all the allegorical Jeffersons, there once was a human being with very human frailties and foibles. Certainly Jefferson's words and ideas transcended his time, but he himself did not.

The human Jefferson was essentially a man of the 18th century, a very intelligent and bookish slaveholding southern planter, enlightened and progressive no doubt, but like all human beings possessing as many weaknesses as strengths, inclined as much to folly as to wisdom. Like most people

caught up in fast-moving events and complicated changing circumstances, the human Jefferson was as much a victim as he was a protagonist of those events and circumstances. Despite all his achievements in the Revolution and in the subsequent decades, he was never in control of the popular forces he ostensibly led; indeed, he never even fully comprehended these forces. It is the ultimate irony of Jefferson's life, in a life filled with ironies, that he should not have understood the democratic revolution that he himself supremely spoke for.

It is true that much of Jefferson's thinking was conventional, although, as historian William Freehling points out, he did have "an extraordinary gift of lending grace to conventionalities." He had to be conventional or he could never have had the impact he had on his contemporaries. His writing of the Declaration of Independence, he later correctly recalled, was "not to find out new principles, or new arguments, never before thought of . . . ; but to place before mankind the common sense of the subject, in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent, and to justify ourselves in the independent stand we are compelled to take."

Jefferson's extraordinary impressionability, learning, and virtuosity were the source of his conventionality. He was very well-read and extremely sensitive to the avant-garde intellectual currents of his day. And he was eager to discover just what was the best, most politically correct, and most enlightened in the world of the 18th century. It was his insatiable hunger for knowledge and his remarkable receptivity to all that was new and progressive that put him at the head of the American Enlightenment.

The 18th-century Enlightenment represented the pushing back of the boundaries of darkness and what was called Gothic barbarism and the spreading of light and knowledge. This struggle occurred on many fronts. Some saw the central battle taking place in natural science and in the increasing under-

standing of nature. Some saw it occurring mostly in religion, with the tempering of enthusiasm and the elimination of superstition. Others saw it happening mainly in politics—in driving back the forces of tyranny and in the creating of new free governments. Still others saw it in the spread of civility and refinement and in the increase in the small, seemingly insignificant ways that life was being made easier, politer, more comfortable, more enjoyable for more and more people. In one way or another, the Enlightenment activities involved the imposition of order and reason on the world. To contemplate aesthetically an ordered universe and to know the best that was thought and said in the world—that was enlightenment.

Jefferson participated fully in all aspects of the 18th-century Enlightenment. He was probably the American Revolutionary leader most taken with the age's liberal prescriptions for enlightenment, gentility, and refinement. He was born in 1743 the son of a wealthy but uneducated and ungentle planter from western Virginia. He attended the College of William and Mary, the first of his father's family to attend college. Like many of the Revolutionary leaders who were also the first of their family to acquire a liberal arts education in college, he wanted a society led by an aristocracy of talent and taste. For too long men had been judged by who their fathers were or whom they had married. In a new enlightened republican society they would be judged by merit and virtue and taste alone.

Jefferson was not one to let his feelings show, but even today we can sense beneath the placid surface of his autobiography, written in 1821 at the age of 77, some of his anger at all those Virginians who prided themselves on their genealogy and judged men by their family background.

In its opening pages Jefferson tells us that the lineage of his Welsh father was lost in obscurity: He was able to find in Wales only two references to his father's family. His mother, on the other hand, was a Randolph, one of the distinguished families of Virginia. The

Randolphs, he said with about as much derision as he ever allowed himself, "trace their pedigree far back in England & Scotland, to which let everyone ascribe the faith & merit he chooses." He went on to describe his efforts in 1776 in Virginia to bring down that "distinct set of families" who had used several legal devices to confine the inheritance of property both to the eldest son (primogeniture) and to special lines of heirs (entail) so as to form themselves "into a Patrician order, distinguished by the splendor and luxury of their establishments." Historians have often thought Jefferson exaggerated the power of primogeniture and entail and this "Patrician order." Not only was the setting aside of entails very common in Virginia; the "Patrician order" seemed not all that different from its challengers. But Jefferson clearly saw a difference, and it rankled him. The privileges of this "aristocracy of wealth," he wrote, needed to be destroyed "to make an opening for the aristocracy of virtue and talent"—of which he considered himself a prime example.

To become a natural aristocrat, one had to acquire the attributes of a natural aristocrat—enlightenment, gentility, and taste. We will never understand the young Jefferson until we appreciate the intensity and earnestness of his desire to become the most cosmopolitan, the most liberal, the most genteel, and the most enlightened gentleman in all of America. From the outset he was the sensitive provincial quick to condemn the backwardness of his fellow colonials. At college and later in studying law at Williamsburg he played the violin, learned French, and acquired the tastes and refinements of the larger world. At frequent dinners with Governor Francis Fauquier and his teachers, William Small and George Wythe, Jefferson said he "heard more good sense, more rational and philosophical conversations than in all my life besides." Looking back, he called Williamsburg "the finest school of manners and morals that ever existed in America." Although as a young man he had seen very few works of

art, he knew from reading and conversation what was considered good; and in 1771 he wrote a list, ranging from the Apollo Belvedere to a Raphael cartoon, of those celebrated paintings, drawings, and sculptures that he hoped to acquire in copies. By 1782, "without having left his own country," this earnest autodidact with a voracious appetite for learning had become, as the French visitor Chevalier de Chastellux noted, "an American who . . . is at once a musician, a draftsman, an astronomer, a geometer, a physicist, a jurist and a statesman."

In time Jefferson became quite proud of his gentility, his taste, and his liberal brand of manners. In fact, he came to see himself as a kind of impresario for America, rescuing his countrymen from their "deplorable barbarism" by introducing them to the finest and most enlightened aspects of European culture. When Americans in the 1780s realized that a statue of Washington was needed, "there could be no question raised," he wrote from Paris, "as to the Sculptor who should be employed, the reputation of Monsr. Houdon of this city being unrivalled in Europe." No American could stand up to his knowledge. When Washington timidly expressed misgivings about Houdon's doing the statue in Roman style, he quickly backed down in the face of Jefferson's frown, unwilling, as he said, "to oppose my judgment to the taste of Connoisseurs."

Jefferson's excitement over the 16th-century Italian, Andrea Palladio, whose *Four Books of Architecture* was virtually unknown in America, was the excitement of the provincial discovering the cosmopolitan taste of the larger world. He became ashamed of the "gothic" Georgian architecture of his native Virginia, and he sought in Monticello to build a house that would do justice to those models that harked back to Roman antiquity. In the 1780s he badgered his Virginia colleagues into erecting as the new state capitol in Richmond a magnificent copy of the *Maison Carrée*, a Roman temple from the first century

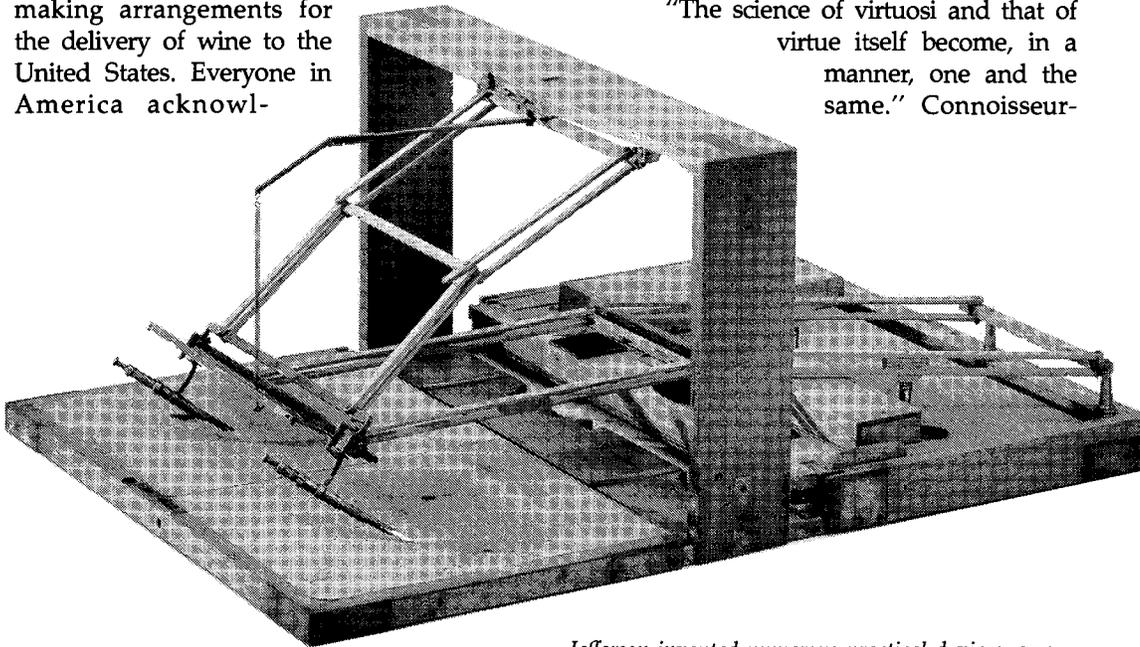
A.D. at Nîmes, because he wanted an American public building that would be a model for the people's "study and imitation" and "an object and proof of national good taste." Almost singlehandedly he became responsible for making America's public buildings resemble Roman temples.

No American knew more about wine than Jefferson. During his trips around Europe in 1787-88 he spent a great deal of time investigating French, Italian, and German vineyards and wineries and making arrangements for the delivery of wine to the United States. Everyone in America acknowl-

other Revolutionary leaders, but he was by no means unique in his concern for refining his own sensibilities as well as those of other American citizens. This was a moral and political imperative of all of the Founding Fathers. To refine popular taste was in fact a moral and political imperative of all the enlightened of the 18th century.

The fine arts, good taste, and even good manners had political implications. As the English philosopher Lord Shaftesbury had preached, morality and good taste were allied:

"The science of virtuosi and that of virtue itself become, in a manner, one and the same." Connoisseur-



Jefferson invented numerous practical devices, among them this contrivance for copying letters.

edged his expertise in wine, and three presidents sought his advice about what wine to serve at presidential dinners. In everything—from gardening and food to music, painting, and poetry—Jefferson wanted the latest and most enlightened in European fashion.

It is easy to make fun of Jefferson and his parvenu behavior. But it would be a mistake to dismiss Jefferson's obsession with art and good taste merely as a trivial affectation, or as the simple posturing and putting on of airs of an American provincial who would be the perfect gentlemen. Jefferson might have been more enthusiastic about such matters than the

ship, politeness, and genteel refinement were connected with public morality and political leadership. Those who had good taste were enlightened, and those who were enlightened were virtuous.

But note: *virtuous in a modern, not an ancient, manner.* Politeness and refinement tamed and domesticated the severe classical conception of virtue. Promoting social affection was in fact the object of the civilizing process. This new social virtue was less Spartan and more Addisonian, less the harsh self-sacrifice of antiquity and more the willingness to

get along with others for the sake of peace and prosperity. Virtue in the modern manner became identified with politeness, good taste, and one's instinctive sense of morality. As the 18th-century Scottish philosopher Lord Kames said, "a taste in the fine arts goes hand in hand with the moral sense, to which indeed it is nearly allied."

Indeed, there was hardly an educated person in all of 18th-century America who did not at one time or another try to describe people's moral sense and the natural forces of love and benevolence holding society together. Jefferson's emphasis on the moral sense was scarcely peculiar to him.

This modern virtue that Jefferson and others extolled was very different from that of the ancient republican tradition. Classical virtue had flowed from the citizen's participation in politics; government had been the source of his civic consciousness and public spiritedness. But modern virtue flowed from the citizen's participation in society, not in government, which the liberal-minded increasingly saw as the source of the evils of the world. "Society," said Thomas Paine in a brilliant summary of this common enlightened separation, "is produced by our wants and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections, the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions." It was society—the affairs of private social life—that bred sympathy and the new domesticated virtue. Mingling in drawing rooms, clubs, and coffeehouses—partaking of the innumerable interchanges of the daily comings and goings of modern life—created affection and fellow-feeling, which were all the adhesives really necessary to hold an enlightened people together. Some of Jefferson's contemporaries even argued that commerce, that traditional enemy of classical virtue, was in fact a source of modern virtue. Because it encouraged intercourse and confidence among people and nations, commerce, it was said, actually contrib-

uted to benevolence and fellow-feeling.

Jefferson could not have agreed more with this celebration of society over government. Indeed, Paine's conventional liberal division between society and government was the premise of Jefferson's political thinking—his faith in the natural ordering of society, his belief in the common moral sense of ordinary people, his idea of minimal government. "Man," said Jefferson, "was destined for society. His morality, therefore, was to be formed to this object. He was endowed with a sense of right and wrong, merely relative to this The moral sense, or conscience, is as much a part of a man as his leg or arm" All human beings had "implanted in our breasts" this "love of others," this "moral instinct"; these "social dispositions" were what made democracy possible.

The importance of this domesticated modern virtue to the thinking of Jefferson and of other Americans can scarcely be exaggerated. It laid the basis for all reform movements of the 19th century and for all subsequent liberal thinking. We still yearn for a world in which everyone will love one another.

Probably no American leader took this belief in the natural sociability of people more seriously than Jefferson. His scissors-and-paste redoing of the New Testament in the early years of the 19th century stemmed from his desire to reconcile Christianity with the Enlightenment and at the same time to answer all of those critics who said that he was an enemy of all religion. Jefferson discovered that Jesus, with his prescription for each of us to love our neighbors as ourselves, actually spoke directly to the modern enlightened age. Jefferson's version of the New Testament offered a much-needed morality of social harmony for a new republican society.

Jefferson's faith in the natural sociability of people also lay behind his belief in minimal government. In fact, Jefferson would have fully understood the Western world's present interest in devolution and localist democracy.

He believed in nationhood but not the modern idea of the state. He hated all bureaucracy and all the coercive instruments of government, and he sometimes gave the impression that government was only a device by which the few attempted to rob, cheat, and oppress the many. He certainly never accepted the modern idea of the state as an entity possessing a life of its own, distinct from both rulers and ruled. For Jefferson there could be no power independent of the people, in whom he had an absolute faith.

Although he was not a modern democrat, assuming as he did that a natural aristocracy would lead the country, he had a confidence in the capacity and the virtue of the people to elect that aristocracy that was unmatched by any other of the Founding Fathers. Jefferson like the other Founding Fathers had doubts about all officials in government, even the popularly elected representatives in the lower houses of the legislatures ("173 despots would surely be as oppressive as one"); but he always thought that the people, if undisturbed by demagogues or Federalist monarchists, would eventually set matters right. It was never the people but only their elected agents that were at fault.

Not only did Jefferson refuse to recognize the structure and institutions of a modern state; he scarcely accepted the basic premise of a state, namely, its presumed monopoly of legitimate control over a prescribed territory. For him during his first presidential administration (1801–1804) the United States was really just a loosely bound confederation, not all that different from the government of the former Articles of Confederation. Hence his vision of an expanding empire of liberty over a huge continent posed no problems for his relaxed idea of a state. As long as Americans continued to believe certain things, they remained Americans. Jefferson could be remarkably indifferent to the possibility that a western confederacy might break away from the eastern United States. What did it matter? he asked in 1804. "Those of the western confederacy will be as much our children & de-

scendants as those of the eastern."

It was Jefferson's extraordinary faith in the natural sociability of people as a substitute for the traditional force of government that made the Federalists and especially Alexander Hamilton dismiss him as a hopeless pie-in-the-sky dreamer. The idea that, "as human nature shall refine and ameliorate by the operation of a more enlightened plan," government eventually "will become useless, and Society will subsist and flourish free from its shackles" was, said Hamilton in 1794, a "wild and fatal . . . scheme," even if its "votaries" like Jefferson did not always push such a scheme to the fullest.

Jefferson and other Revolutionary leaders believed that commerce among nations in international affairs was the equivalent to affection among people in domestic affairs. Both were natural expressions of relationships that needed to be freed of monarchical obstructions and interventions. Hence in 1776 and in the years following, Jefferson and other Revolutionary idealists hoped to do for the world what they were doing for the society of the United States—change the way people related to one another. They looked forward to a rational world in which corrupt monarchical diplomacy and secret alliances, balances of power, and dynastic rivalries would be replaced by the natural ties of commerce. If the people of the various nations were left alone to exchange goods freely among themselves, then international politics would become republicanized and pacified, and war itself would be eliminated. Jefferson's and the Republican party's "candid and liberal" experiments in "peaceable coercion"—the various efforts of the United States to use nonimportation and ultimately Jefferson's disastrous Embargo of 1807–09 to change international behavior—were the inevitable consequences of this sort of idealistic republican confidence in the power of commerce.

Conventional as Jefferson's thinking might often have been, it was usually an enlightened conventional radicalism that he es-

poused. So eager was he to possess the latest and most liberal of 18th-century ideas that he could easily get carried away. He, like "others of great genius," had "a habit," as Madison gently put it in 1823, "of expressing in strong and round terms impressions of the moment." So he alone of the Founding Fathers was unperturbed by Shays's rebellion in 1786-1787. "I like a little rebellion now and then," he said. "It is like a storm in the Atmosphere." It was too bad that some people were killed, but "the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure." Similar rhetorical exaggeration accompanied his response to the bloody excesses of the French Revolution. Because "the liberty of the whole earth" depended on the success of the French Revolution, he wrote in 1793, lives would have to be lost. "Rather than it should have failed, I would have seen half the earth desolated. Were there but an Adam & an Eve left in every country, & left free, it would be better than as it now is." Unlike Coleridge and Wordsworth and other disillusioned European liberals, Jefferson remained a champion of the French Revolution to the end.

He saw it, after all, as a movement on behalf of the rights of man that had originated in the American Revolution. And to the American Revolution and the rights of man he remained dedicated until his death. In the last letter he wrote he described the American Revolution as "the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to bind themselves, and to assume the blessings and security of self-government."

Yet during Jefferson's final years in retirement these expressions of confidence in the future progress of the Enlightenment came fewer and farther between. The period between Jefferson's retirement from the presidency in 1809 and his death in 1826 was a tumultuous one in American history—marked by war with the British and Indians, a severe commercial panic, the

rapid growth of democracy and evangelical religion, and the Missouri crisis over the spread of slavery. It was also not a happy time for Jefferson. To be sure, there was the Sage of Monticello relaxing among his family and friends and holding court on top of his mountain for scores of visiting admirers. There was his reconciliation with John Adams and the wonderful correspondence between the two old revolutionaries that followed. And there was his hard-fought establishment of the University of Virginia. But there was not much else to comfort him.

The world around him, the world he helped to create, was rapidly changing, and changing in ways that Jefferson found bewildering and sometimes even terrifying. The American Revolution was unfolding with radical and unexpected developments. American society was becoming more democratic and more capitalistic, and Jefferson was not prepared for either development. By the end of his life Jefferson had moments of apprehension that the American Revolution, to which he had devoted his life, was actually in danger of failing. In response his speech and action often did not accord with what we now like to think of as Jeffersonian principles. He turned inward and began spouting dogmas in a manner that many subsequent historians and biographers have found embarrassing and puzzling.

After Jefferson retired from public life in 1809, he became more narrow-minded and localist than he had ever been in his life. He had always prided himself on his cosmopolitanism, yet upon his retirement from the presidency he returned to Virginia and never left it. In fact, he virtually never again lost sight of his beloved Blue Ridge. He cut himself off from many of the current sources of knowledge of the outside world, and became, as one of his visitors George Ticknor noted, "singularly ignorant & insensible on the subjects of passing politics." He took only one newspaper, the *Richmond Enquirer*, and seemed to have no strong interest in receiving his mail. In all this he differed remarkably

from his friend and neighbor James Madison. Madison, said Ticknor, "receives multitudes of newspapers, keeps a servant always in waiting for the arrival of the Post—and takes anxious note of all passing events."

Jefferson's turn inward was matched by a relative decline in the place of Virginia in the union. Decay was everywhere in early 19th-century Virginia, and Jefferson felt it at Monticello. Despite his life-long aversion to public debts, his private debts kept mounting, and he kept borrowing, taking out new loans to meet old ones. He tried to sell his land, and when he could not he sold slaves instead. He feared that he might lose Monticello and complained constantly of his debts, but he refused to cut back on his lavish hospitality and expensive wine purchases.

Unable to comprehend the economic forces that were transforming the country and destroying the upper South, Jefferson blamed the banks and the speculative spirit of the day for both his and Virginia's miseries. It is true that he accepted the existence of commerce and, after the War of 1812, even some limited manufacturing for the United States. But the commerce he accepted was tame and traditional stuff compared to the aggressive commerce that was taking over northern America in the early 19th century. Jefferson's idea of commerce involved little more than the sale abroad of agricultural staples—wheat, tobacco, and cotton. His commerce was not the incessant trucking and trading, the endless buying and selling with each other, that was coming to characterize the emerging northern Yankee world. That kind of dynamic domestic commerce and all the capitalistic accouterments that went with it—banks, stock markets, liquid capital, paper money—Jefferson feared and despised.

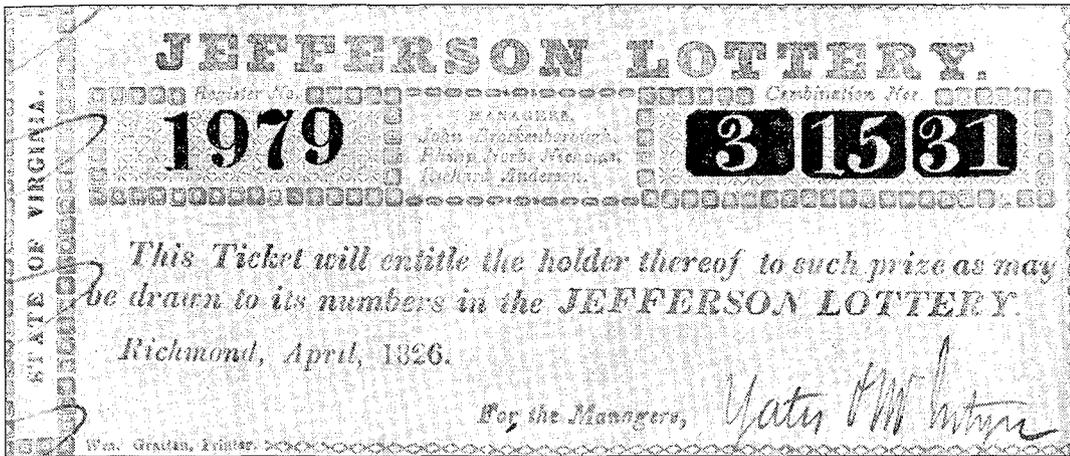
He did indeed want comforts and prosperity for his American farmers, but like some modern liberals he had little or no appreciation of the economic forces that made such prosperity and comforts possible. He had no comprehension of

banks and thought that the paper money issued by banks was designed "to enrich swindlers at the expense of the honest and industrious part of the nation." He could not understand how "legerdemain tricks upon paper can produce as solid wealth or hard labor in the earth." As far as he was concerned, the buying and selling of stocks and the raising of capital were simply licentious speculation and wild gambling—all symptoms of "commercial avarice and corruption."

The ultimate culprit in the degeneration of America, he thought, was the corrupt and tyrannical course of the national government. The Missouri Crisis of 1819–1820, provoked by northern efforts to limit the spread of slavery in the West, was to Jefferson "a fire bell in the night," a threat to the union and to the Revolutionary experiment in republicanism. He believed that the federal government's proposed restriction on the right of the people of Missouri to own slaves violated the Constitution and threatened self-government. Only each state, he said, had the "exclusive right" to regulate slavery. If the federal government arrogated to itself that right, then it would next declare all slaves in the country free, "in which case all the whites within the United States south of the Potomac and Ohio must evacuate their States, and most fortunate those who can do it first."

Jefferson became a bitter critic of the usurpations of the Supreme Court and a more strident defender of states' rights than he had been even in 1798 when he penned the Kentucky Resolution justifying the right of a state to nullify federal laws. While his friend Madison remained a nationalist and upheld the right of the Supreme Court to interpret the Constitution, Jefferson lent his support to the most dogmatic, impassioned, and sectional-minded elements in Virginia, including the arch states'-rightists Spencer Roane and John Randolph. He became parochial and alarmist, and his zeal for states' rights, as even his sympathetic biographer Dumas Malone admits, "bordered on fanaticism."

For someone as optimistic and sanguine in



Two months before Jefferson died, admirers held a lottery to help him pay his debts.

temperament as Jefferson usually was, he had many gloomy and terrifying moments in these years between 1809 and 1826. What happened? What accounts for these moments of gloom and these expressions of fanaticism? How can we explain Jefferson's uncharacteristic but increasingly frequent doubts about the future?

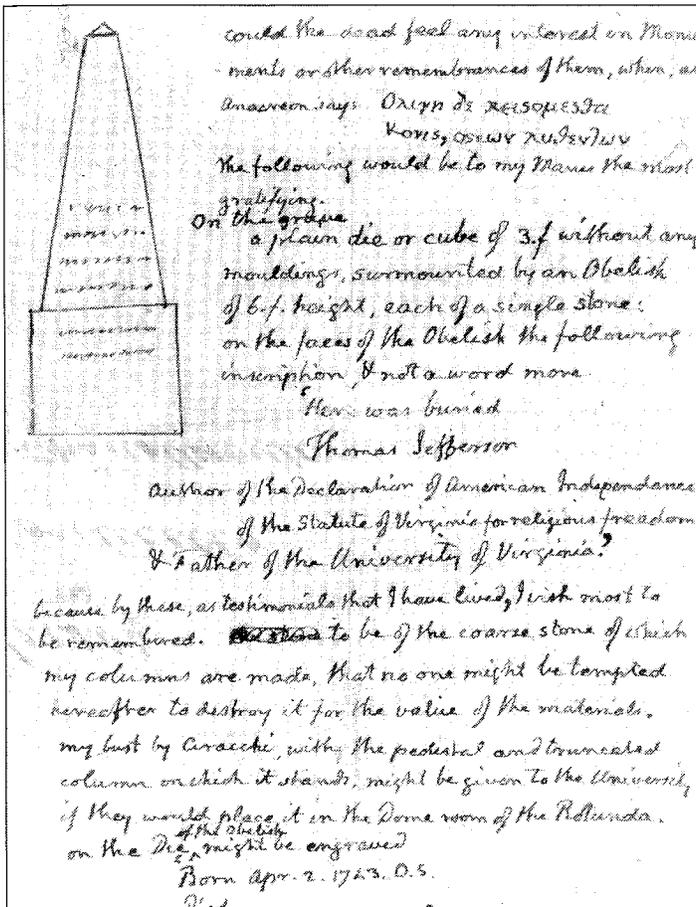
Certainly his personal troubles, his rising debts, the threat of bankruptcy, the fear of losing Monticello, were part of it, but they are not the whole explanation. Something more is involved in accounting for the awkwardness of his years of retirement than these outside forces, and that something seems to lie within Jefferson himself—in his principles and outlook, in his deep and long-held faith in popular democracy and the future.

No one of the Revolutionary leaders believed more strongly in progress and in the capacity of the American people for self-government than did Jefferson. And no one was more convinced that the Enlightenment was on the march against the forces of medieval barbarism and darkness, of religious superstition and enthusiasm. So sure was he of the future progress of American society that he was intellectually and emotionally unprepared for what happened in the years following his retirement from public office. He was unprepared for the democratic revolution that

he himself had inspired. In the end Jefferson was victimized by his overweening confidence in the people and by his naive hopefulness in the future. The Enlightenment and the democratic revolution he had contributed so much to bring about and his own liberal and rosy temperament finally did him in.

Jefferson's sublime faith in the people and the future is the source of that symbolic power he has had for succeeding generations of Americans. He was never more American than when he told John Adams in 1816 that he liked "the dreams of the future better than the history of the past." He was always optimistic; indeed, he was a virtual Pollyanna about everything. His expectations always outran reality, whether they concerned French aristocrats who turned out to be less liberal than his friend Lafayette, or garden vegetables that never came up, or misbehaving students at the University of Virginia who violated their honor code, or an American Revolution that actually allowed people to pursue their pecuniary happiness. He was the pure American innocent. He had little understanding of man's capacity for evil and had no tragic sense whatsoever.

Through his long public career, while others were wringing their hands, Jefferson remained calm and hopeful. He knew slavery was a great evil, but he believed his genera-



Jefferson modestly requested that his epitaph record only that he was the "Author of the Declaration of American Independence, of the Statute of Virginia for religious freedom & Father of the University of Virginia."

tion could do little about it. Instead he counseled patience and a reliance on the young who would follow. When one of those younger men, Edward Coles, actually called on Jefferson in 1814 to lend his voice in the struggle against slavery, he could only offer his confidence in the future. "The hour of emancipation is advancing, in the march of time. It will come . . ."

It was the same with every difficulty. In one way or other he expected things to work out. In 1814 he saw his financial troubles coming at him and his household like "an approaching wave in a storm; still I think we shall live as long, eat as much, and drink as much, as if the wave had already glided un-

der the ship. Somehow or other these things find their way out as they come in, and so I suppose they will now." Was not progress on the march, and were not science and enlightenment everywhere pushing back the forces of ignorance, superstition, and darkness? The future, he felt, was on his side and on the side of the people. A liberal democratic society would be capable of solving every problem, if not in his lifetime, then surely in the coming years.

But Jefferson lived too long, and the future and the coming generation were not what he had expected. Although he continued in his public letters, especially to foreigners, to affirm that progress and civilization were still on the march, in private he became more and more apprehensive of the future. He sensed that American society, including Virginia, might not be getting better after all, but actually going

backward. The American people were not becoming more refined, more polite, and more sociable; if anything, he believed, they were more barbaric and factional. Jefferson was frightened by the divisions in the country and by the popularity of Andrew Jackson, whom he regarded as a man of violent passions and unfit for the presidency. He felt overwhelmed by the new paper-money business culture that was sweeping through the country and never appreciated how much his democratic and egalitarian principles had contributed to its rise.

Ordinary people, in whom he placed so much confidence, more certainly than his friend Madison had, were not becoming more

enlightened. In fact, superstition and bigotry, which Jefferson identified with organized religion, were actually reviving, released by the democratic revolution he had led. He was temperamentally incapable of understanding the deep popular strength of the evangelical forces that were seizing control of American culture in these early decades of the 19th century. He became what we might call a confused secular humanist in the midst of real moral majorities. While Jefferson in 1822 was still predicting that there was not a young man now alive who would not die a Unitarian, Methodists and Baptists and other evangelicals were gaining adherents by the tens of thousands in the Second Great Awakening. In response all Jefferson could do was blame the defunct New England Federalists and an equally bewildered New England clergy for spreading both capitalism and evangelical Christianity throughout the country.

Jefferson's solution to this perceived threat from New England and its "pious young monks from Harvard and Yale" was to hunker down in Virginia and build a university that would perpetuate true republican principles. "It is in our seminary," he told Madison, "that that vestal flame is to be kept alive." Yet even building the university brought sorrow and shock. The Virginia legislature was not as eager to spend money for higher education as he had expected. His support of the university became more of a political liability in the legislature than an asset.

The people in fact seemed more sectarian

and less rational than they had been at the time of the Revolution. They did not seem to know who he was, what he had done. Was this the new generation on which he rested all his hopes? During the last year of his life, at a moment, says his biographer Malone, of "uneasiness that he had never known before," Jefferson was pathetically reduced to listing his contributions during 61 years of public service in order to justify a legislative favor. No wonder he sometimes felt cast off. "All, all dead!" he wrote to an old friend in 1825, "and ourselves left alone midst a new generation whom we know not, and who know not us."

These were only small cracks in his optimism, only tinges of doubt in his democratic faith, but for an innocent like him these were enough. Jefferson went further in states'-rights principles and in his fears of federal consolidation than his friend Madison did because he had such higher expectations of the Revolution and the people. He had always invested so much more of himself intellectually and emotionally in the future and in popular democracy than Madison had. Jefferson was inspired by a vision of how things could and should be. Madison tended to accept things as they were. Madison never lost his dark foreboding about the America yet to come, and he never shed his skepticism about the people and popular majorities. But Jefferson had nothing but the people and the future to fall back on; they were really all he ever believed in. That is why we remember Jefferson, and not Madison.

THE RISE OF THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

BY PETER F. DRUCKER

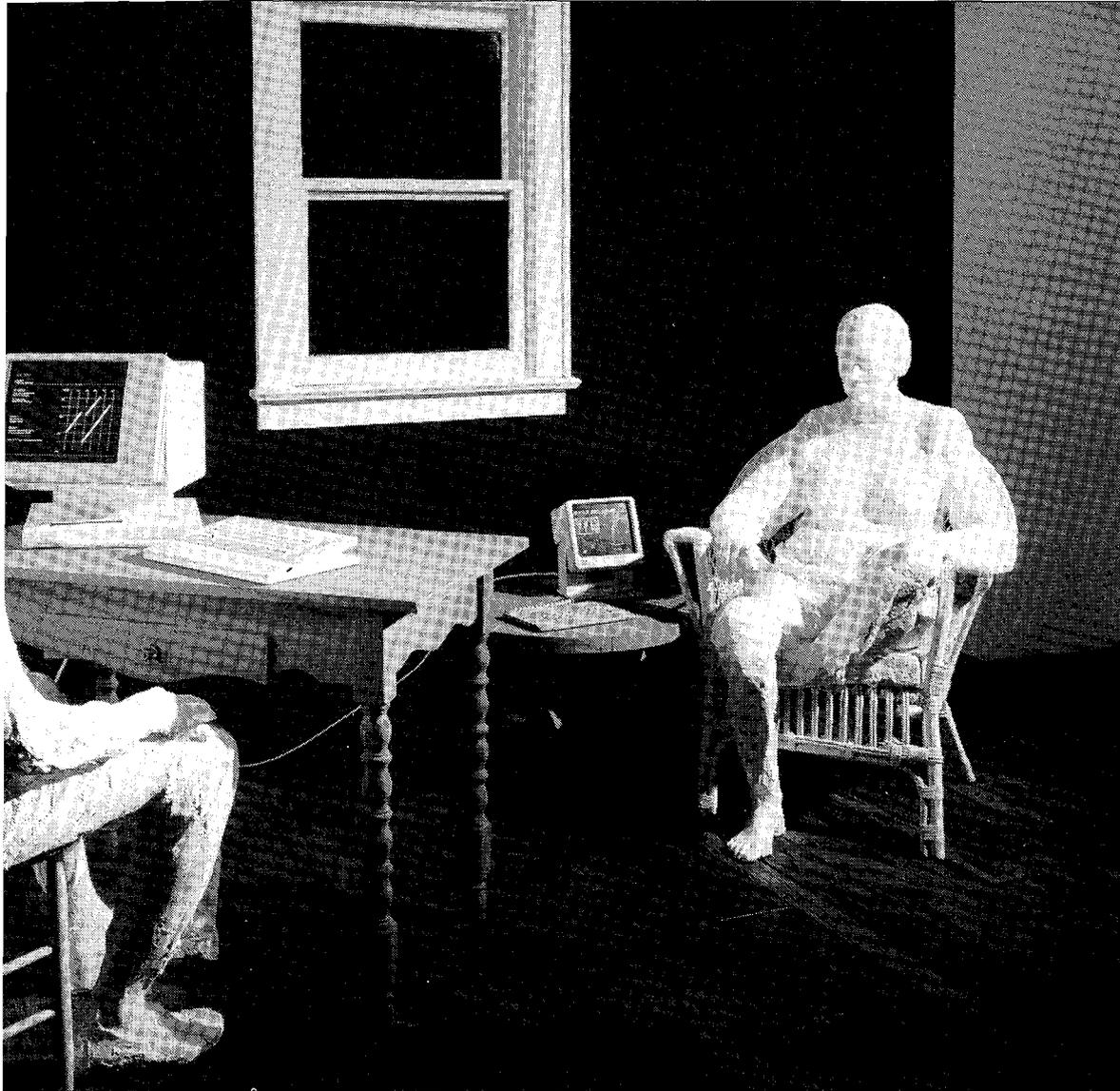
Since ancient times, new knowledge and new inventions have periodically remade human societies. Today, however, knowledge is assuming greater importance than ever before. Now more essential to the wealth of nations than either capital or labor, Peter Drucker argues here, it has already created a "postcapitalist" society and promises further transformations on a global scale.



In only 150 years, between about 1750 and 1900, capitalism and technology conquered the globe and created a world civilization. Neither capitalism nor technical innovations were new; both had been common, recurrent phenomena throughout the ages in both the West and the East. What was new was the speed of their diffusion and their global reach across cultures, classes, and geography. And it was this speed and scope that converted technical advances into the Industrial Revolution

and capitalism into Capitalism. Instead of being one element in society, as all earlier expressions of capitalism had been, Capitalism—with a capital C—became society. Instead of being confined, as always before, to a narrow locality, Capitalism prevailed throughout all of Western and Northern Europe by 1850. Within another 50 years it spread throughout the entire inhabited world.

This transformation was driven by a radical change in the meaning of knowledge. In both the West and Asia knowledge had al-



George Segal's *Machine of the Year* (1983)

ways been seen as applying to *being*. Almost overnight, it came to be applied to *doing*. It became a resource and a utility. Knowledge had always been a private good. Almost overnight it became a public good.

For 100 years—in the first phase—knowledge was applied to *tools, processes, and products*. This created the Industrial Revolution. But it also created what Marx called “alienation” and new classes and class war, and with them communism. In its second phase, beginning around 1880 and culminating

around World War II, knowledge in its new meaning came to be applied to work. This ushered in the Productivity Revolution, which in 75 years converted the proletariat into a middle-class bourgeoisie with near-upper-class income. The Productivity Revolution thus defeated class war and communism. The last phase began after World War II. Knowledge is being applied to *knowledge* itself. This is the Management Revolution. Knowledge is now fast becoming the *one* factor of production, sidelining both capital and labor. It may

be premature (and certainly would be presumptuous) to call ours a "knowledge society." So far we have only a knowledge economy. But our society today is surely "postcapitalist."

From earliest times, new tools, new processes, new materials, new crops, new techniques—what we now call "technology"—diffused swiftly throughout the Old World. Few modern inventions, for instance, spread as rapidly as a 13th-century one: eyeglasses. Derived around 1270 from the optical experiments of an English Franciscan friar, Roger Bacon, reading glasses for the elderly were in use at the papal court at Avignon by 1290, at the sultan's court in Cairo by 1300, and at the court of the Mongol emperor of China no later than 1310. Only the sewing machine and the telephone, fastest-spreading of all 19th-century inventions, moved as quickly.

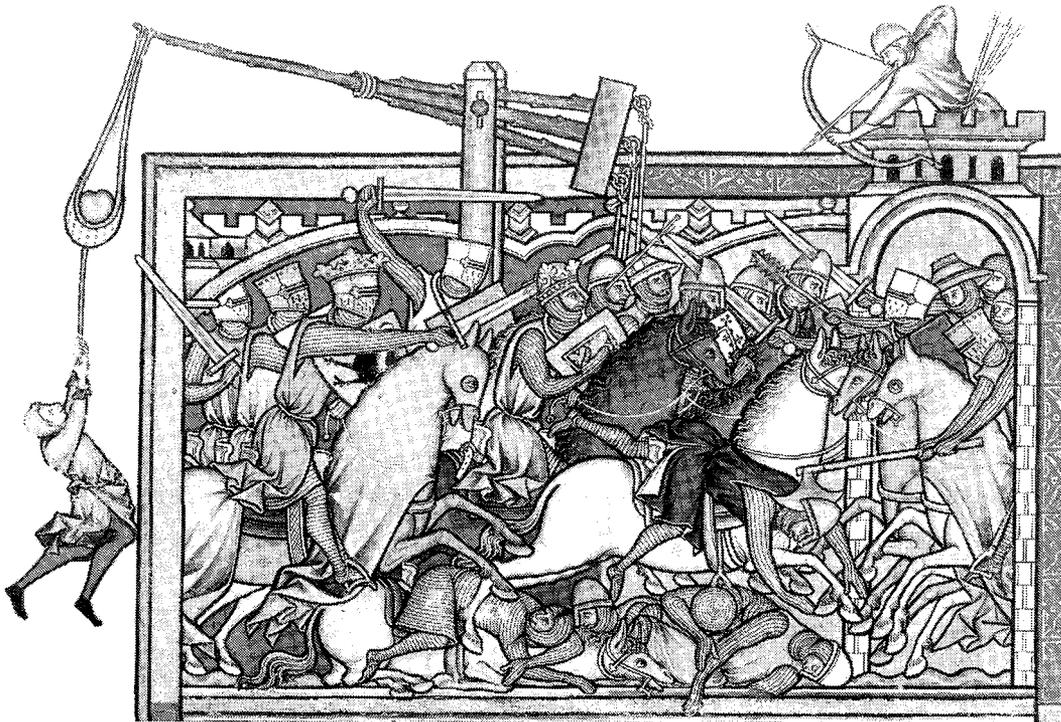
But earlier technological change almost without exception remained confined to one craft or one application. It took another 200 years, until the early 16th century, before Bacon's invention acquired a second application: to correct nearsightedness. Similarly, the redesign of the windmill around A.D. 800, which converted it from the toy it had been in antiquity into a true machine, was not applied to ships for more than 300 years. Ships were still oared; if wind was used at all to propel them it was as an auxiliary and only if the breeze blew in the right direction.

The inventions of the Industrial Revolution, however, were immediately applied across the board, and across all conceivable crafts and industries. They were immediately seen as technology. James Watt's redesign of the steam engine between 1765 and 1776 made it into a cost-effective provider of power. Watt himself throughout his own pro-

ductive life focused on only one use of his engine: to pump water out of mines—the use for which the steam engine had first been designed by Thomas Newcomen in the early years of the 18th century. But one of England's leading iron masters immediately saw that the redesigned steam engine could also be used to blow air into a blast furnace, and so he put in a bid for the second engine Watt built. Furthermore, Watt's partner, Matthew Boulton, promptly promoted the steam engine as a provider of power for all kinds of industrial processes, especially, of course, for what was then the largest of all manufacturing industries, textiles. Thirty-five years later, an American, Robert Fulton, floated the first steamboat on New York's Hudson River. Twenty years later the steam engine was put on wheels and the locomotive was born. And by 1840—at the latest by 1850—the steam engine had transformed every single manufacturing process, from glassmaking to printing. It had transformed long-distance transportation on land and sea, and it was beginning to transform farming. By then, too, it had penetrated almost the entire world—with Tibet, Nepal, and the interior of tropical Africa the only exceptions.

As in the 19th century, most people today still believe that the Industrial Revolution was the first time a change in the "mode of production" (to use Karl Marx's term) changed social structure and created new classes, the capitalist and the proletariat. It was not. Between A.D. 700 and 1100 two new classes emerged in Europe as a result of technological change: the feudal aristocracy and urban craftsmen. The knight was created by the invention of the stirrup, an innovation coming out of Central Asia around the year A.D. 700; the craftsman by the redesign of water wheel and windmill into true

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The age of the feudal knight, an invincible fighter supported on horseback by stirrups, was already succumbing to technological and social change at the time of this 13th-century French painting.

machines that, for the first time, used inanimate forces rather than muscle as motive power.

The stirrup made it possible to fight on horseback. Without it a rider wielding a lance, sword, or heavy bow would have been thrown off his horse by the force described in Newton's Third Law: "To every action there is always opposed an equal reaction." For several hundred years the knight was an invincible fighting machine. But this machine had to be supported by a "military-agricultural complex"—something quite new in history. Germans until this century called it a *rittergut*, a knight's estate endowed with legal status and with economic and political privileges, and populated by at least 50 peasant families to produce the food needed to support the fighting machine: the knight, his squire, his three horses, and his 12 to 15 grooms. The stirrup, in other words, created feudalism.

The craftsmen of antiquity had been slaves. The craftsmen of the first "machine age," the craftsmen of Europe's Middle Ages, became the urban ruling class, the "burghers" who created Europe's unique city, and both the Gothic period and the Renaissance.

The technical innovations—stirrup, water wheel, and windmill—traveled throughout the entire Old World, and fast. But the social transformations involved in this earlier industrial revolution remained largely contained within Europe. Only in Japan around A.D. 1100 did there arise proud and independent craftsmen who enjoyed high esteem and, until 1600, considerable power. But while the Japanese adopted the stirrup for riding, they continued to fight on foot. The rulers in rural Japan were the commanders of foot soldiers—the *daimyo*. They levied taxes on the peasantry but possessed no feudal estates. In China, in India, and in

the world of Islam, the new technologies had no social impact whatever. Craftsmen in China remained serfs without social status. The military did not become landowners but remained, as in Europe's antiquity, professional mercenaries. Even in Europe, the social changes generated by this early industrial revolution took almost 400 years to take full effect.

By contrast, the social transformation of society brought about by Capitalism and the Industrial Revolution took fewer than 100 years in Western Europe. In 1750 capitalists and proletarians were still marginal groups. In fact, proletarians in the 19th-century meaning of the term—that is, factory workers—hardly existed at all. By 1850 capitalists and proletarians were the dynamic classes of Western Europe. They rapidly became the dominant classes wherever capitalism and modern technology penetrated. In Japan the transformation took fewer than 30 years, from the Meiji Restoration in 1867 to the war with China in 1894. It took not much longer in Shanghai and Hong Kong, Calcutta and Bombay, or in the tsar's Russia. Capitalism and the Industrial Revolution—because of their speed and their scope—created a world civilization.

Unlike those "terrible simplifiers," Hegel, Marx, and other 19th-century ideologues, we know that major historical events rarely have just one cause and just one explanation. They typically result from the convergence of a good many separate and independent developments. Many disparate trends—most of them probably quite unconnected with one another—went into making capitalism into Capitalism and technical advance into the Industrial Revolution. The best-known theory—that Capitalism was the child of the "Protestant Ethic"—expounded in the opening years of this century by the German sociologist Max Weber, has been largely discredited. There is simply not enough evidence for it. There is only a little more evidence to support Karl Marx's earlier thesis that the steam engine, the new

prime mover, required such enormous capital investment that craftsmen could no longer finance their "means of production" and thus had to cede control to the capitalist. There is one critical element, however, without which capitalism and technical advance could not possibly have turned into a worldwide social pandemic. It is the radical change in the meaning of knowledge that occurred in Europe around the year 1700.

There are as many theories about what we can know and how we know it as there have been metaphysicians, from Plato in antiquity to Ludwig Wittgenstein and Karl Popper in our own century. But since Plato's time there have been only two theories in the West—and since roughly the same time, two theories in Asia—regarding the meaning and function of knowledge. According to Plato, Socrates held that the only function of knowledge is self-knowledge, that is the intellectual, moral, and spiritual growth of the person. Socrates' ablest opponent, the brilliant and learned Protagoras, held, however, that the purpose of knowledge is to make the holder effective by enabling him to know what to say and how to say it. For Protagoras knowledge meant logic, grammar, and rhetoric—later to become the trivium, the core of learning in the Middle Ages and still very much what we mean by a "liberal education" or what the Germans mean by *allgemeine Bildung* (general education). In Asia there were essentially the same two theories of knowledge. Knowledge for the Confucian was knowing what to say and how to say it, the way to advancement and earthly success. Knowledge for the Taoist and the Zen monk was self-knowledge, and it was the road to enlightenment and wisdom. But while the two sides thus sharply disagreed about what knowledge means, they were in total agreement about what it did not mean. It did not mean *ability to do*. It did not mean utility. Utility was not knowledge; it was skill—the Greek word for which is *techné*.

Unlike their Eastern contemporaries, the

Chinese Confucians, with their infinite contempt for anything but book learning, both Socrates and Protagoras respected *techné*. But even to Socrates and Protagoras, *techné*, however commendable, was not knowledge. It was confined to one specific application and involved no general principles. What the shipmaster knew about navigating from Greece to Sicily could not be applied to anything else. Furthermore, the only way to learn a *techné* was through apprenticeship and experience. A *techné* could not be explained in words, whether spoken or written. It could only be demonstrated by one who had mastered it. As late as 1700 or even later, the English did not speak of "crafts." They spoke of "mysteries"—not only because the possessor of a craft skill was sworn to secrecy but also because a craft by definition was inaccessible to anyone who had not been apprenticed to a master and taught by example.

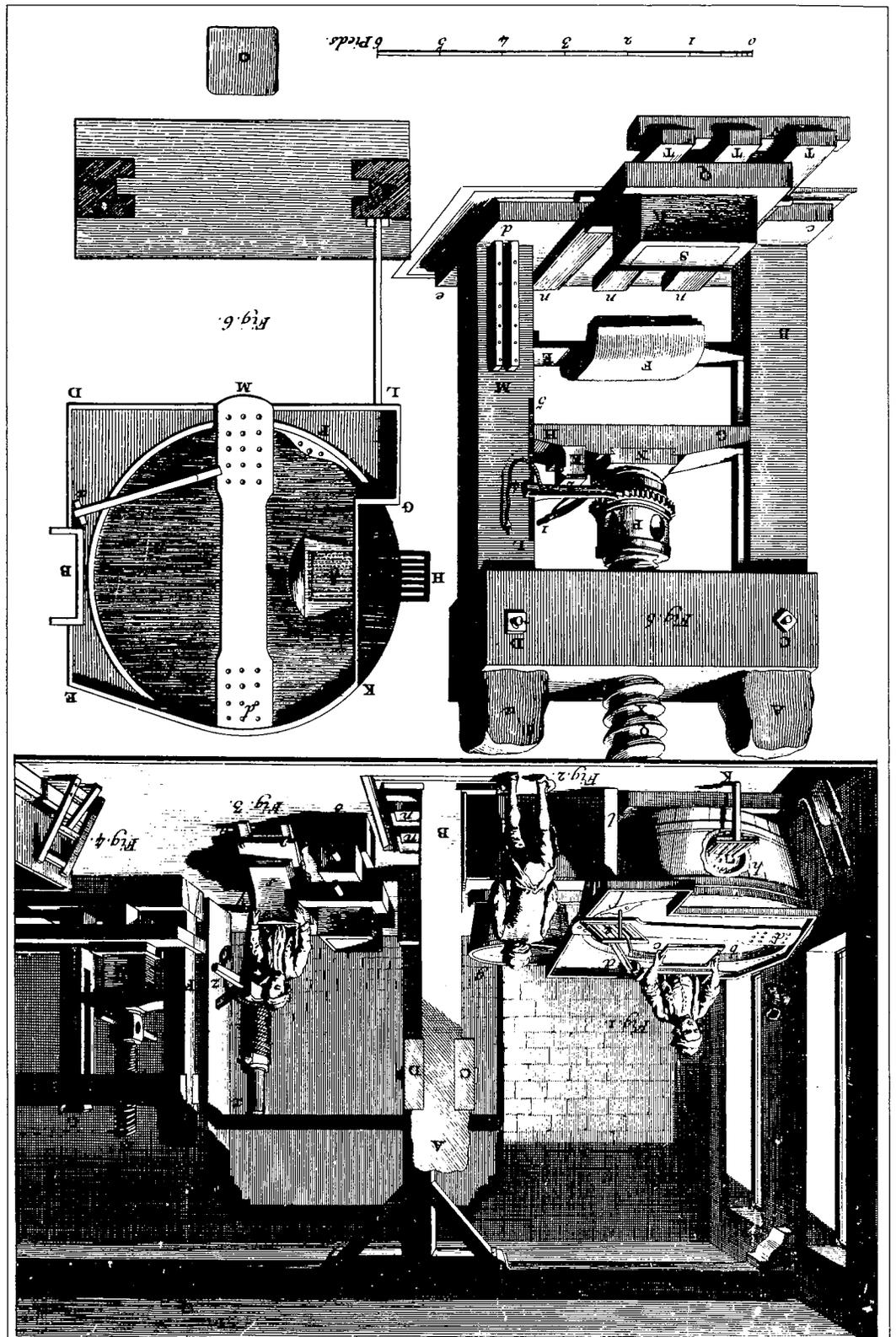
Then, beginning after 1700—and within the incredibly short span of 50 years—technology was invented. The very word is a manifesto in that it combines *techné*, that is the mystery of a craft skill, with *logy*, organized, systematic, purposeful knowledge. The first engineering school, the French *École des Pontes et Chaussées*, was founded in 1747, followed around 1770 in Germany by the first school of agriculture, and in 1776 by the first school of mining. In 1794 the first technical university, France's *École Polytechnique*, was founded and with it was born the profession of engineering. Shortly thereafter, between 1820 and 1850, medical education and medical practice were reorganized as a systematic technology.

As part of a parallel development in Britain, the meaning of patents shifted between 1750 and 1800. Once monopolies to enrich royal favorites, patents now were granted to encourage the application of knowledge to tools, products, and processes, and to reward inventors, provided they published their inventions. This not only triggered a century of feverish mechanical invention in Britain; it finished craft mystery and secretiveness.

The great document of this dramatic shift from skill to technology—one of the more important books of all time—was the *Encyclopédie* (1751–72), edited by Denis Diderot and Jean d'Alembert. This monumental work attempted to bring together in organized and systematic form the knowledge of all crafts, and in such a way that the non-apprentice could learn to be a "technologist." It was by no means accidental that articles in the *Encyclopédie* that describe individual crafts such as spinning or weaving were not written by craftsmen. They were written by "information specialists": people trained as analysts, as mathematicians, as logicians. Both Voltaire and Rousseau were contributors. The underlying thesis of the *Encyclopédie* was that effective results in the material universe—in tools, processes, and products—are produced by systematic analysis, and by systematic, purposeful application of knowledge. But the *Encyclopédie* also preached that principles that produced results in one craft would produce results in any other. That was anathema, however, to both the traditional man of knowledge and the traditional craftsman.

None of the technical schools of the 18th century aimed at producing new knowledge—nor did the *Encyclopédie*. None even talked of the application of science to tools, processes, and products, that is, to technology. This idea had to wait until around 1840, when Justus Liebig, a German chemist, applied science to invent artificial fertilizers and a way to preserve animal protein, in the form of meat extract. What the early technical schools and the *Encyclopédie* did, however, was perhaps more important. They brought together, codified, and published the *techné*, the craft mystery, as it had been developed over millennia. They converted experience into knowledge, apprenticeship into textbook, secrecy into methodology, doing into applied knowledge. These are the essentials of what we have come to call the Industrial Revolution, in other words, the transformation by technol-

Diderot's Encyclopédie included descriptions of some 250 crafts. This illustration is one of more than a dozen accompanying a lengthy technical article on paper- and book-making.



ogy of society and civilization worldwide.

It is this change in the meaning of knowledge that then made modern Capitalism inevitable and dominant. Above all, the speed of technical change created a demand for capital far beyond anything the craftsman could possibly supply. The new technology also required the concentration of production: thus the shift to the factory. Knowledge could not be applied in thousands of small individual workshops and in the cottage industries of the rural village. The new technology also required large quantities of energy, whether water power or steam power, which also encouraged concentration. Although they were important, these energy needs were secondary. The central point was that production almost overnight moved from being craft-based to being technology-based. As a result the capitalist moved into the center of economy and society.

As late as 1750, large-scale enterprise was governmental rather than private. The earliest and for many centuries the greatest of all manufacturing enterprises in the Old World was the famous arsenal owned and run by the government of Venice. And the 18th-century "manufactories" such as the porcelain works of Meissen and Sèvres were still government-owned. But by 1830 large-scale private capitalist enterprise dominated in the West. By the time Karl Marx died in 1883, private capitalist enterprise had penetrated everywhere except to such remote corners of the world as Tibet and the Empty Quarter of Arabia.

Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* appeared in the same year—1776—in which James Watt patented the perfected steam engine. Yet the *Wealth of Nations* pays practically no attention to machines or factories or industrial production. The production it describes is still craft-based. Even 40 years later, after the Napoleonic Wars, factories and machines were not yet seen as central even by acute social observers. They play practically no role in the economics of David

Ricardo. Even more surprising, neither factory workers nor bankers can be found in the novels of Jane Austen, England's most perceptive social critic. Her society (as has often been said) is thoroughly bourgeois. But it is still totally preindustrial, a society of squires and tenants, parsons and naval officers, lawyers, craftsmen, and shopkeepers. Only in far-away America did Alexander Hamilton see very early that machine-based manufacturing was fast becoming the central economic activity. But few even among his followers paid much attention to his 1791 *Report on Manufactures* until long after his death.

By the 1830s, however, Honoré de Balzac was turning out best-selling novel after best-selling novel depicting a capitalist France whose society was dominated by bankers and the stock exchange. And 15 years later, capitalism, the factory system, and the machine, were central in the mature works of Charles Dickens, as were the new classes, the capitalists and the proletarians. In *Bleak House* (1852), the new society and its tensions form the subplot in the contrast between two able brothers, both sons of the squire's housekeeper. One becomes a great industrialist in the North who plans to get himself elected to Parliament to fight the landowners and break their power. The other chooses to remain a loyal retainer of the broken, defeated, ineffectual, precapitalist "gentleman." And Dickens's *Hard Times* (1854) is the first and by far the most powerful industrial novel, the story of a bitter strike in a cotton mill and of class war at its starkest.

The social tensions and conflicts of the new order were created by the unheard-of speed with which society was transformed. We now know that there is no truth in the nearly universal belief that factory workers in the early 19th century were worse off and treated more harshly than they had been as landless laborers in the preindustrial countryside. They were badly off, no doubt, and harshly treated. But they flocked to the factory precisely because they were still better off

there than they were at the bottom of a static, tyrannical, and starving rural society. The new factory workers experienced a much better "quality of life." In the factory town infant mortality immediately went down and life expectancy rose, thus triggering the enormous population growth of industrializing Europe. Today—in fact, since World War II—we have the example of the Third World countries. Brazilians and Peruvians stream into the *favelas* and barrios of Rio de Janeiro and Lima. However hard, life there is better than in the impoverished *Noreste* of Brazil or on Peru's altiplano. As an Indian saying goes, "The poorest beggar in Bombay still eats better than the farm hand in the village."

While industrialization from the beginning meant material improvement rather than Marx's famous "immiseration," the pace of change was so breathtaking as to be deeply traumatic. The new class, the "proletarians," became "alienated," to use Marx's term. Their alienation, Marx predicted, would make inevitable their exploitation. They were becoming totally dependent for their livelihood on access to the "means of production," which were owned and controlled by the capitalist. This, Marx predicted, would increasingly concentrate ownership in fewer and bigger hands and increasingly impoverish a powerless proletariat—until the day when the system would collapse of its own weight, with the few remaining capitalists being overthrown by proletarians who "had nothing to lose but their chains."

Most of Marx's contemporaries shared his view of capitalism even if they did not necessarily share his prediction of the outcome. Even anti-Marxists accepted Marx's analysis of the "inherent contradictions of capitalism." Some, such as J. P. Morgan, the American banker, were confident that the military would keep the proletarian rabble in check. Liberals of all stripes believed that somehow there could be reform and amelioration. But practically every thinking person of the late

19th century shared with Marx the conviction that capitalist society was a society of inevitable class conflict—and in fact by 1910 most "thinking people," at least in Europe (but also in Japan), were inclining toward socialism. The greatest of 19th-century conservatives, Benjamin Disraeli, saw capitalist society very much as Marx did. So did his conservative counterpart on the Continent, Otto von Bismarck, and it motivated him, after 1880, to enact the social legislation that ultimately produced the 20th-century welfare state.

By 1950 a good many observers already knew that Marxism had failed both morally and economically. (I had said so already in 1939, in my book, *The End of Economic Man*.) But Marxism was still the one coherent ideology for most of the world. And for most of the world it looked invincible. What finally overcame the "inevitable contradictions of capitalism," the "alienation" and "immiseration" of the proletarians and with it the "proletarian" condition altogether? The answer is the *Productivity Revolution*.

When knowledge changed its meaning 250 years ago, it began to be applied to tools, processes, and products. This is still what "technology" means to most people and what is being taught in engineering schools. But two years before Marx's death the Productivity Revolution began. In 1881, Frederick Winslow Taylor, then a foreman in a steel plant, first applied knowledge to the study of *work*, the analysis of work, and the engineering of work.

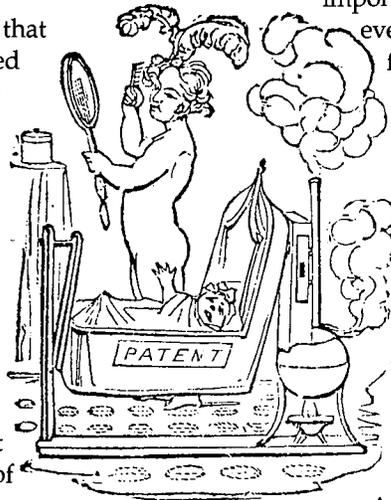
In the West the dignity of work has received lip service for a long time. The second oldest Greek text, following the Homeric epics by only 100 years or so, is a poem by Hesiod (eighth century B.C.), entitled *Works and Days*, which sings of the work of the farmer. One of the finest Roman poems is Virgil's *Georgics*, a cycle of songs about the farmer's labor written in the first century B.C. Although there is no such concern with work in Asia's literary traditions, the emperor of China once a year touched a plow to celebrate rice planting. But neither in the West nor in

Asia did work receive more than token gestures. Neither Hesiod nor Virgil actually looked at what a farmer *does*. Nor did anybody else throughout most of recorded history. Work was beneath the attention of the educated, the well-to-do, and the powerful. Work was what slaves did. "Everybody knew" that the only way a worker could produce more was by working longer hours or by working harder. Marx too shared this belief, as did every other 19th-century economist or engineer.

It was by pure accident that Taylor, a well-to-do, educated man, became a worker. Poor eyesight forced him to abandon plans to enter Harvard, where he had been accepted, and to take instead a job as an apprentice machinist. Being highly gifted, Taylor very soon rose to be one of the bosses. His metalworking inventions made him a rich man very early. What got Taylor started on the study of work was his shock at the mutual and growing hatred between capitalists and workers, which had come to dominate the late 19th century. Taylor, in other words, saw what Marx saw and what Disraeli and Bismarck saw. But he also recognized something else: The conflict was unnecessary. He set out to make workers productive so that they would earn decent money.

Taylor's goal was not to improve efficiency. It was not to create profits for the owners. To his death he maintained that the major beneficiary of rising productivity had to be the worker, not the owner. His main concern was the creation of a society in which owners and workers, capitalists and proletarians, had a common interest in productivity and could build a relationship of harmony based on the application of knowledge to work. His lesson has been best understood by Japan's post-World War II employers and unions.

Few thinkers in history have had greater impact than Taylor. And few have been so willfully misunderstood and so assiduously misquoted. In part, Taylor has suffered because history has proven him right and the intellectuals wrong. In part, Taylor is ignored because contempt for work still lingers, above all among the intellectuals. Surely shoveling sand—the subject of Taylor's most famous analysis—is not something an "educated person" would appreciate, let alone consider important. In much larger part, however, Taylor's reputation has suffered precisely because he applied knowledge to the study of work. This was anath-



The steam engine's influence was felt in many different realms—including the popular imagination.

ema to the labor unions of his day, and they mounted against Taylor one of the more vicious campaigns of character assassination in American history. Taylor's crime,

in the eyes of the unions, was his assertion that there is no "skilled work." In manual operations there is only "work." All work can be analyzed the same way. Any worker who is willing to do the work the way analysis shows it should be done, is a "first-class man," deserving a "first-class wage"—that is, as much as, or more than, the skilled worker got with his long years of apprenticeship.

The unions that were most respected and powerful in Taylor's America were the unions in the government-owned arsenals and shipyards in which, prior to World War I, virtually all peacetime U.S. defense production occurred. These unions were craft monopolies, and membership in them was largely restricted to sons or relatives of members. They required an apprenticeship of five to seven years but had no systematic training or work study. The unions allowed nothing to be writ-

ten down. There were not even blueprints or any other drawings of the work to be done. Union members were sworn to secrecy and forbidden to discuss their work with non-members. Taylor's assertion that work could be studied, analyzed, and divided into a series of simple repetitive motions, each of which had to be done in its one right way, in its own best time, and with its own right tools, was indeed a frontal attack on such encrusted guild practices. And so the unions vilified him. They even succeeded in persuading Congress to ban Taylor's "task study" method in government arsenals and shipyards, a ban that remained in force until after World War II.

Taylor's dealings with owners were as bad as those with unions, a fact that further hurt his cause. While he had little use for unions, he was contemptuous of owners. His favorite epithet for them was "hogs." And then there was his insistence that the workers rather than the owners should get the lion's share of the increased revenue that the application of his theory of "Scientific Management" would produce. Adding insult to injury, his "Fourth Principle" demanded that work study be done in consultation, if not in partnership, with the worker. Finally, Taylor held that authority in the plant should be based not on ownership but solely on superior knowledge. He demanded, in other words, what we now call "professional management"—and that was anathema to 19th-century capitalists. They bitterly attacked him as a troublemaker and a socialist. (Some of his closet disciples and associates, especially Carl Barth, his right-hand man, were indeed avowed leftists and strongly anticapitalist.)

Taylor's axiom that all manual work, skilled or unskilled, could be analyzed and organized by the application of knowledge seemed preposterous to his contemporaries. The ancient belief that there was a mystique to craft skill continued to be accepted for many years after Taylor made his case. This belief encouraged Hitler in 1941 to welcome

war with the United States. For the United States to field an effective force in Europe would require a large fleet to transport troops, and America at that time had almost no merchant marine or destroyers to protect it. Modern war, Hitler further argued, required precision optics in large quantities for bombsights and other devices, and there were no skilled optical workers in America.

Hitler was absolutely right. The United States did not have much of a merchant marine, and its destroyers were few and ludicrously obsolete. It also had almost no optical industry. But by applying Taylor's "task study," American industry, which played a far more important role in war production than the old government arsenals, learned how to train totally unskilled workers, many of them former sharecroppers raised in a preindustrial environment, and convert them in 60 or 90 days into first-rate welders and shipbuilders. The United States trained within a few months the same kind of people to turn out precision optics superior in quality to what the Germans produced, and did this, furthermore, on an assembly line.

Taylor's greatest impact was in showing the importance of training. Only a century before Taylor, Adam Smith had taken for granted that it took at least 50 years of experience (and more likely a full century) for a country or a region to acquire the necessary skills to turn out high-quality products. His examples were the production of musical instruments in Bohemia and Saxony and of silk fabrics in Scotland. Seventy years later, around 1840, August Borsig—one of the first people outside England to build a steam locomotive—invented what is still the German system of apprenticeship, combining practical plant experience under a master with theoretical grounding in school. This system remains the foundation of Germany's industrial productivity. But even Borsig's apprenticeship took three to five years. Then, first during World War I, but especially during World War II, the United States systematically applied

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<i>Mr. Ton per man per day</i>	16	34	
<i>Mr. Carriage per man per day</i>	\$1.15	\$1.33	
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Taylor’s approach, training “first-class men” (and women) to perform simplified tasks in a few months’ time. This, more than any other factor, explains why the United States was able to defeat Japan and Germany.

All earlier economic powers in modern history—England, the United States, Germany—emerged through leadership in new technology. The new post-World War II economic powers—first Japan, then South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore—all owe their rise to an appreciation of Taylor’s teachings about training. It enabled them to endow a still largely preindustrial and therefore still low-wage work force with world-class productivity in practically no time. In the post-World War II decades Taylor-based training became the one truly effective engine of economic development.

The application of knowledge to work af-

ter 1880 explosively increased productivity.* For hundreds of years there had been no increase in the ability of workers to turn out goods or to move goods. Machines created greater capacity. But workers themselves were no more productive than they had been in the workshops of ancient Greece, in building the roads of imperial Rome, or in producing the highly prized woolen cloth that gave Renaissance Florence its wealth. But within a few years after Taylor began to apply knowledge to work, productivity began to rise at a rate of 3.5 to four percent annually, which meant that productivity doubled every 18 years or so. Ever since Taylor’s principles took hold at the turn of the century, productivity has increased some 50-fold in all advanced countries. On this unprecedented expansion rest all the increases in both standard of living and quality of life in developed countries.

Half of this additional productivity has been used to increase purchasing power—creating a higher standard of living. But people have used between one-third and one-half to increase their leisure time. As late as

*The term *productivity* was unknown in Taylor’s time. In fact, it was unknown until World War II, when it first began to be used in the United States. As late as 1950 the most authoritative English dictionary, the *Concise Oxford*, still did not define the term as it is used today.

1910, workers in developed countries still labored as long as they ever had before, that is, at least 3,000 hours per year. Today even the Japanese work only 2,000 hours, Americans around 1,850, and Germans at most 1,600—and all three nations produce 50 times as much per hour as they produced 80 years ago. Other substantial shares of the increased productivity have been taken in the form of health care, which has grown from a negligible percentage of gross national product (GNP) to between eight and 12 percent in developed countries, and in the form of education, which has grown from around two percent of GNP to 10 percent or more.

Most of this increase—as Taylor predicted—has been taken by the workers, that is, by Marx's proletarians. Henry Ford brought out the first cheap automobile, the Model T, in 1908. It was cheap, however, only by comparison with all other automobiles on the market, which in terms of average incomes cost as much as a two-engine private plane costs today. At \$825, the Model T cost what an American industrial worker earned in three to four years—80 cents was then a good day's wage (and, of course, there were no benefits). Today, a unionized automobile worker in the United States, Japan, or Germany, working only 40 hours a week, earns \$50,000 in wages and benefits—\$45,000 after taxes—which is roughly six times what a cheap new car costs today.

By 1930 Taylor's Scientific Management—despite resistance from unions and intellectuals—had swept the developed world. As a result Marx's proletarian became a bourgeois. The blue-collar manufacturing worker rather than the capitalist became the true beneficiary of Capitalism and the Industrial Revolution. This explains the total failure of Marxism in the highly developed countries for which Marx had predicted revolution by 1900. It explains why, after 1918, there was no proletarian revolution, even in the defeated countries of Central Europe where there was misery, hunger, and un-

employment. It explains why the Great Depression did not lead to a communist revolution, as Stalin and practically all Marxists had confidently expected. By the 1930s, Marx's proletarians had not yet become affluent. But they had already become middle class. They had become productive.

Darwin, Marx, and Freud make up the trinity often cited as the "makers of the modern world." Marx would be taken out and replaced by Taylor if there were any justice. But that Taylor is not given his due is a minor matter. It is a serious matter, however, that too few people realize that it is the application of knowledge to work that created developed economies by setting off the productivity explosion of the last hundred years. Technologists give credit to machines, economists to capital investment. But both elements were as plentiful in the first hundred years of the capitalist age, that is before 1880, as they were afterward. But there was absolutely no increase in worker productivity during the first hundred years—and consequently also little increase in workers' real incomes or any reduction in their working hours. What made the second hundred years so critically different can be explained only as the result of *the application of knowledge to work*.

The Productivity Revolution, however, has come to an end. When Taylor started propounding his principles, nine out of every 10 working people did manual work, making or moving things, whether in manufacturing, farming, mining, or transportation. The productivity of people engaged in making and moving things is still going up at the historical rate of 3.5 to four percent annually—and in American and French agriculture, even faster. Forty years ago people who engaged in work to make or to move things were still a majority in all developed countries. By 1990 this group had shrunk to one-fifth of the work force. By 2010 it will constitute no more than one-tenth. Increasing the productivity of manual workers in manufacturing, in farming, in mining, in transportation, can no longer create wealth by itself. The Productivity Revolu-

tion has become a victim of its own success. From now on what matters is the productivity of nonmanual workers. And that requires *applying knowledge to knowledge*.

When I decided in 1926 not to go to college after finishing secondary school, my father was quite distressed. Ours had long been a family of lawyers and doctors. Yet my father did not call me a dropout. He did not try to change my mind. And he did not even predict that I would never amount to anything.

I was a responsible adult wanting to work as an adult. (That I then also got a doctorate on the side had more to do with my trying to annoy my father than with any belief on my part that it would make any difference in my life and career.) Thirty years later, when my son reached age 18, I practically forced him to go to college. Like his father, he wanted to be an adult among adults. Like his father, he felt that in 12 years of sitting in school he had learned little, and that his chances of learning much by spending four more years in school were not particularly great. And yet by 1958, 31 years after I had moved from being a high-school graduate to being a trainee in an export firm, the college degree had become a necessity. It had become the passport to virtually all careers. Not to go to college in 1958 was "dropping out" for an American boy who had grown up in a well-to-do family and who had done well in school. My father did not have the slightest difficulty finding a trainee job for me in a reputable merchant house. Thirty years later such firms would not have accepted a high-school graduate as a trainee. All of them would have said, "Go to college for four years—and then you probably should go on to graduate school."

In my father's generation—he was born in 1876—going to college was either for the sons of the wealthy or for a very small number of poor but exceptionally brilliant youngsters (such as himself). Of all the American business successes of the 19th century, only one went to college: J. P. Morgan, who went

to Goettingen to study mathematics but dropped out after one year. Few others even attended high school, let alone graduated from it. By my time, going to college was already desirable. It gave social status. But it was by no means necessary, nor much of a help in one's life and career. When I made my first study of a major business corporation, General Motors (published as *Concept of the Corporation* in 1946), the GM public-relations department tried very hard to conceal the fact that a good many of the company's top executives had gone to college. The proper thing then was to start as a machinist and work one's way up. As late as 1960, the quickest route to a middle-class income—in the United States, Great Britain, and Germany (though already no longer in Japan)—was to go to work at age 16 in one of the unionized mass-production industries. There one earned a middle-class income after a few months—the result of the productivity explosion. These opportunities are practically gone. Now there is virtually no access to a good income without a formal degree attesting to the acquisition of knowledge that can be obtained only systematically and in a school.

The change in the meaning of knowledge that began 250 years ago has transformed society and economy. Formal knowledge is seen as both the key personal resource and the key economic resource. *Knowledge is the only meaningful resource today*. The traditional "factors of production"—land (i.e. natural resources), labor, and capital—have not disappeared, but they have become secondary. They can be obtained, and obtained easily, provided there is knowledge. And knowledge in this new meaning is knowledge as a utility, knowledge as the means to obtain social and economic results.

These developments, whether desirable or not, are responses to an irreversible change: *Knowledge is now being applied to knowledge*. This is the third and perhaps the ultimate step in the transformation of knowledge. Supply-

AN INTERVIEW WITH PETER DRUCKER

WQ: *American schools now seem incapable of educating students even in the traditional curriculum. How can they hope to prepare youngsters for the new era you describe?*

Drucker: It isn't true that American schools are incapable of educating students. The parochial schools, both Catholic and Protestant, do a reasonable job by being totally old-fashioned, that is, by running the way they did during the 1950s. This is exactly what the Japanese are doing, too. In fact, the various Christian schools, Catholic and Protestant, are almost indistinguishable—except for the cross on the wall and the absence of "examination hell"—from Japanese schools. And a good many experimental schools, such as those in Harlem's District Four in New York City, do a good job.

There is an old saying of mountaineers and hikers: If you have lost your way, don't try to be clever. Go back to where you last knew where you were. I am an old "progressive educator"—I taught at two ultraprogressive colleges, Sarah Lawrence and Bennington, during the 1940s—but it's clear to me that we have lost our way since the 1950s. Other countries—Japan, Germany, France—stayed where they were, and their schools still work. We have to go back, I have become increasingly convinced. That's why I believe that we have no choice but to go ahead with voucher plans that allow parents to put their children in schools of their choice. At least the kids will acquire core skills and—the most important things—standards and self-confidence.

Above all there are three things children need to obtain very early: the ability to read, which is still the foundation skill; self-confidence, which means success in one area; and the ability to learn in other areas. None of these do America's public schools pay much attention to today.

WQ: *You emphasize the need to educate people broadly in what you call the "knowledge," or various technical disciplines. Which ones?*

Drucker: I have an old answer that I used to give to students 50 years ago (and which Montaigne had, though he formulated it differently): Be a first-rate expert in one area and at least a journeyman in a second and totally unrelated one. This way you'll *understand*. If you know only one area you can't understand; and if you try to cover more than two you'll be a dilettante.

This kind of exposure does not have to come in school. One of the more successful people I know today, for instance, is a physician who at the same time has learned enough to manage successfully a fair-size medical clinic. Another is the head of a medium-size company who came up through the financial route but has learned enough biology to work closely with his scientists.

Or look at what volunteers get when they join groups at one of the pastoral churches. The groups cut across all social layers and people work together in, say, the church's drug-abuse program. While they are volunteers, they are not dilettantes. Counseling is professional work. The volunteers gain respect for one another and also for a very different kind of work.

WQ: *Although the Japanese colossus seems somewhat diminished today, Japan will remain one of America's major competitors in the future. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the two countries in the new economy you describe?*

Drucker: Never underrate the Japanese. That said, they may be in for many years of transition. The competitors to watch out for now may no longer be primarily the Japanese but the Chinese and other economic newcomers.

The Japanese advantage is clearly shrinking—the Japanese are wedded to a "bigger is better and the biggest is best" approach. Our main competitive advantage in the knowledge economy is that the young people increasingly get training with the big companies but then quit—something you still cannot easily do in Japan—and go to work for me-

dium-size or small businesses. As a result, these businesses have the talent they need to succeed. And it is becoming increasingly clear that the future no longer belongs to the giants. They are too slow, too bureaucratic, and too focused on what worked yesterday.

Our competitive disadvantage is rooted in the failure so far to work out the implications of the shift of corporate ownership from individuals to institutional investors and as a result the absence of any paradigm for corporate governance—something which I have written about at considerable length in the past, most recently in my book *Managing for the Future* (1992). This failure largely explains the short-term preoccupations of America's large companies.

WQ: *In Frederick W. Taylor's time the key conflict was between "capital" and "labor." Is there a comparable conflict today?*

Drucker: The significant division in postcapitalist society is between knowledge workers and nonknowledge, service workers, between, for instance, lawyers, advertising copywriters, and teachers, on the one hand, and salespeople, clerks, and window washers, on the other. But it isn't a conflict, and I hope it never will become one. The two kinds of workers are moving in different directions. There will be tension between the two groups unless a way is found for the service workers to rapidly increase their productivity and their income potential.

The situation today is very different from any the world has seen before. The nature of social mobility has changed. The idea that there was no upward mobility in earlier society is a kind of Marxist nonsense. In fact, mobility was probably greater in 18th- and 19th-century Europe than it has ever been in this country. But if you moved out of your class, you moved out. You cut your bonds. That's what happens in the black community today. A colleague of mine, whose parents were sharecroppers and who is now a full professor and a very distinguished one, has totally cut his bonds with his background. Totally. That was common in the past. The saying was that if a bright boy from a blue-collar family got a scholarship, his father would say, "I've lost my son. I'm very proud of him, but I've lost him." That's not true in most of

our society today. Now in the same family you might have a fellow who becomes a doctor while his brother or sister works at a check-out counter in a store, yet they remain a family. And that is why the analogy with conflicts and class war is probably the wrong analogy. But the division between knowledge workers and service workers is a source of tension.

WQ: *How does your vision of the knowledge society differ from that of Daniel Bell, who argued in *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* (1973) that such a society, unable to provide a transcendent ethic for its people, was bound to experience a profound cultural crisis?*

Drucker: Daniel Bell and I—I in 1969, he four years later—started at very different points but came out at pretty much the same place. Even earlier, in my 1959 book *Landmarks of Tomorrow*, I tried to sketch out the kind of philosophy and ethic Bell was asking for. I called the chapter, overoptimistically, "The New Philosophy Comes to Life." It hasn't. And because I cannot answer the question I am profoundly interested in the rapidly growing pastoral churches in this country, which the new affluent two-earner families are coming to in great numbers in a search for community, ethics, and responsibility.

Altogether our society will have to be based on *individual responsibility*. There are some movements in that direction. We now expect the person to take responsibility for keeping himself or herself healthy. We now expect—or are moving toward expecting—that parents take responsibility for the education of their children, which is what the voucher movement is all about. We now increasingly expect individuals—and especially people with a lot of schooling—to take responsibility for their careers, since obviously the corporate personnel department is unable and unwilling to do so (despite all the talk about "organization development" and "management development"). But these are still only signs.

There is a great deal of talk today about "empowerment"—a term I have never used and never will. It does not do any good simply to take power from the top and move it to the bottom. Power always corrupts unless it is first earned through responsibility.

ing knowledge to find out how existing knowledge can best be applied to produce results is, in effect, what we mean by management. But knowledge is now also being applied systematically and purposefully to define what new knowledge is needed, whether it is feasible, and what has to be done to make knowledge effective. It is being applied, in other words, to systematic innovation.

This third change in the dynamics of knowledge can be called the Management Revolution. Like its two predecessors—knowledge applied to tools, processes, and products, and knowledge applied to work—the Management Revolution has swept the earth. It took 100 years, from the middle of the 18th century to the middle of the 19th century, for the Industrial Revolution to become dominant and worldwide. It took some 70 years, from 1880 to the end of World War II, for the Productivity Revolution to do so. It has taken fewer than 50 years—from 1945 to 1990—for the Management Revolution to prevail.

When they hear the word “management,” most people still hear “business management.” Management did first emerge in its present form in large-scale business organizations. When I first began to study management some 50 years ago, I too concentrated on business management. But we soon learned that management is needed in all modern organizations, whether they are businesses or not. In fact, we soon learned that it is needed even more in organizations that are not businesses, whether not-for-profit (what I call “the Social Sector”) or government agencies. They need management the most precisely because they lack the discipline of the bottom line. That management is not confined to business was recognized first in the United States. But it is now becoming accepted in all developed countries. We now know that management is a generic function of all organizations, whatever their specific mission. It is the generic

organ of the knowledge society.

Management has been around for a very long time. I am often asked whom I consider the best or the greatest executive. My answer is always “the man who conceived, designed, and built the first Egyptian pyramid more than 4,000 years ago—and it still stands.” But management as a specific kind of work was not seen until after World War I—and then by a handful of people only. Management as a discipline emerged only after World War II. As late as 1950, when the World Bank began to lend money for economic development, the word “management” was not even in its vocabulary. In fact, while management was *invented* thousands of years ago, it was not *discovered* until after World War II.

One reason for its discovery was the experience of World War II and especially the performance of American industry. But perhaps equally important to the general acceptance of management has been the performance of Japan since 1950. Japan was not an underdeveloped country immediately after World War II, but its industry and economy were almost totally destroyed and it had practically no domestic technology. The nation's main resource was its willingness to adopt and to adapt the forms of management that the Americans had developed during World War II (especially training). By the 1970s it had become the world's second leading economic power and a technology leader.

When the Korean War ended in 1953 South Korea was even more devastated than Japan had been eight years earlier. And it had never been anything but a backward country; indeed, the Japanese had systematically suppressed Korean enterprise and Korean higher education during their 35 years of occupation. But by using the colleges and universities of the United States to educate its able young people and by importing and applying management, South Korea became a highly developed country within 25 years.

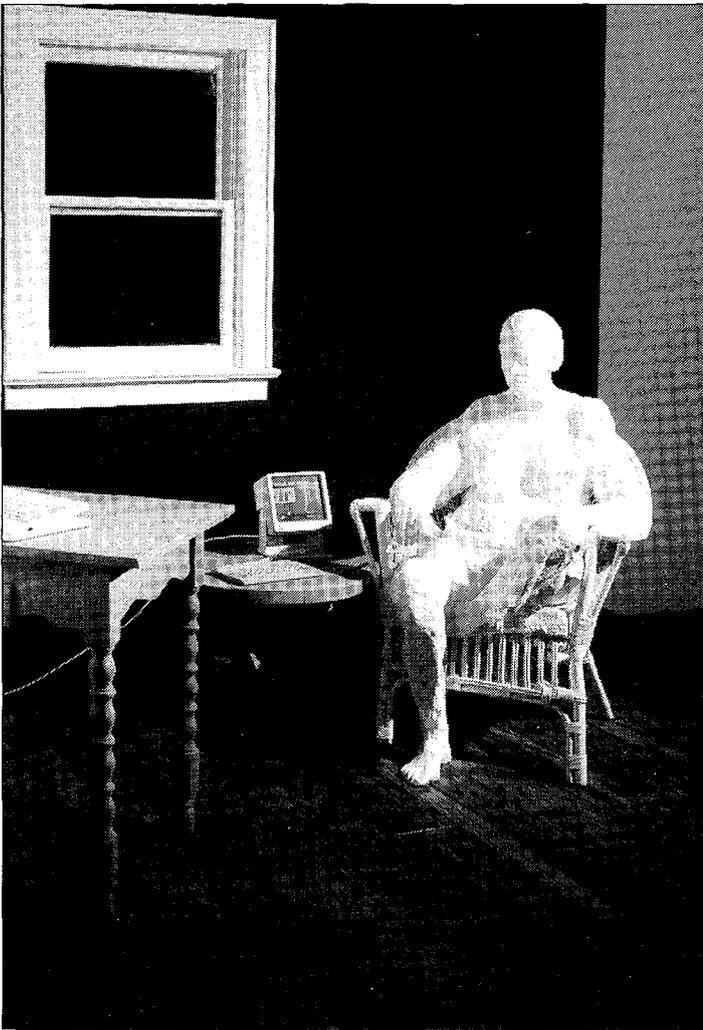
With this powerful expansion of management came a growing understanding of what management really is. When I began to study

management, during and immediately after World War II, a manager was defined as "someone who is responsible for the work of subordinates." A manager in other words was a "boss," and management was rank and power. This is probably still the definition many people have in mind when they speak of managers and management. But by the early 1950s the definition had already changed to "a manager is responsible for the performance of people." Now we know that this is also too narrow a definition. The right definition is "a manager is responsible for the application and performance of knowledge." Implicit in this definition is that we now see

knowledge as the essential resource. Land, labor, and capital are chiefly important as restraints. Without them even knowledge cannot produce. Without them even management cannot perform. Where there is effective management, that is, application of knowledge to knowledge, we can always obtain the other resources. The fact that knowledge has become *the* resource, rather than a resource, is what makes our society "postcapitalist." It changes, and fundamentally, the structure of society. It creates new social dynamics. It creates new economic dynamics. It creates new politics.

Underlying all three phases in the shift to knowledge—the Industrial Revolution, the Productivity Revolution, the Management Revolution—is a profound change in the meaning of knowledge. We have moved from *knowledge* to *knowledges*.

Traditionally, knowledge was general. What we now consider knowledge is of necessity highly specialized. We never before spoke of a man or woman "of knowledge." We spoke of an "educated person." Educated persons were generalists. They knew enough to talk or write about a good many things, enough to understand a good many things. But they did not know enough to do any one thing. Knowledge today must prove itself in action. What we now mean by knowledge is information effective in action, information focused on results. Results are outside the person, in society and the economy, or in the advancement of knowledge itself. To accomplish anything, this knowledge has to be highly specialized. This is the very



reason why the tradition—beginning with the ancients but still persisting in what we call “liberal education”—relegated it to the status of *techné* or craft. It could neither be learned nor taught. Nor did it imply any general principle whatever. It was specific and specialized. It was experience rather than learning, training rather than schooling. But today we do not speak of these specialized knowledges as “crafts.” We speak of “disciplines.” This is as great a change in intellectual history as any ever recorded.

A discipline converts a craft into a methodology—such as engineering, the scientific method, the quantitative method, or the physician’s differential diagnosis. Each of these methodologies converts ad hoc experience into a system. Each converts anecdote into information. Each converts skill into something that can be taught and learned. The shift from knowledge to knowledges has given knowledge the power to create a new society. But this society has to be structured on the basis of knowledge being specialized and of “knowledge people” being specialists. This gives them their power. But it also raises basic questions—of values, of vision, of beliefs, in other words, of all the things that hold society together and give meaning to life. It also raises a big—and new—question: What constitutes the educated person in the knowledge society?

Tomorrow’s educated person will have to be prepared to live in a global world. It will be a Westernized world. But educated people will also live in an increasingly tribalized world. They must be able to be citizens of the world—in their vision, their horizons, their information—but they will also have to draw nourishment from their local roots and, in turn, enrich and nourish their own local culture.

Most, if not all, educated people will practice their knowledge as members of an organization. The educated person will therefore have to prepare to live and work simultaneously in two cultures, that of the intellec-

tual, the specialist who focuses on words and ideas, and that of the manager, who focuses on people and work. Intellectuals need their organization as a tool; it enables them to practice their *techné*, their specialized knowledge. Managers see knowledge as a means to the end of organizational performance. Both are right. They are poles rather than contradictions. Indeed, they need each other. The intellectual’s world, unless counterbalanced by the manager, becomes one in which everybody “does his own thing” but nobody does anything. The manager’s world becomes bureaucratic and stultifying without the offsetting influence of the intellectual. Many people in the postcapitalist society will actually live and work in these two cultures at the same time. And many more could and should be exposed to both by rotation early in their career—by having the young computer technician, for example, serve as a project manager and team leader. All educated persons in the postcapitalist society will have to be prepared to understand both cultures.

For the educated person of the 19th century *techné* were not knowledge. They were already taught in the university. They had become “professional disciplines.” Their practitioners were “professionals” rather than “tradesmen” or “artisans.” But they were not part of the liberal arts or of the *allgemeine Bildung* and thus not part of knowledge. Now that the *techné* have become *knowledges*, they have to be integrated into knowledge. The classics, whatever that term may mean, may still be the core of the educated person’s knowledge. But the *techné*, too, have to be incorporated into the educated person’s learning. That the liberal arts they enjoyed so much in their college years do not do that, cannot do that—in fact refuse even to try—is the reason why many young people repudiate them a few years out of college. They feel let down, indeed, betrayed. They have good reason to feel that way. Liberal arts and *allgemeine Bildung* that do not integrate the knowledges into a “universe of knowl-

edge" are neither liberal nor *bildung* (education). They fall down on the first task: to create mutual understanding—that "universe of discourse" without which there can be no civilization. Instead of uniting, such liberal arts fragment.

We neither need nor will get polymaths who are at home in many knowledges. We will probably become even more specialized. But what we do need—and what will define the educated person in the Knowledge Society—is the ability to understand the knowledges, from law to computer science. What is each about? What is it trying to do? What are its central concerns? What are its central theories? What major insights has it produced? What are its important areas of ignorance, its problems, its challenges? To make knowledges into knowledge requires that the holders of the knowledges, the specialists, take responsibility for making both themselves and their knowledge area understood. The media, whether magazines, movies, or television, can help. But they cannot do the job. Nor can any other kind of popularization. The knowledges must be understood as what they are: serious, rigorous, demanding. And such understanding can be acquired only if the leaders in each of the knowledges—beginning with the learned professors in their tenured university chairs—take responsibility for making their own knowledge understood

and are willing to do the hard work this requires.

Capitalism had been dominant for over a century when Karl Marx in the first volume of *Das Kapital* (1867) identified it as a distinct social order. The term *capitalism* was not coined until 30 years later, well after Marx's death. It would therefore not only be presumptuous in the extreme to attempt to write *The Knowledge* today; it would be ludicrously premature. All that can be attempted is to describe society and polity as we begin the transition from the Age of Capitalism (which, of course, was also the Age of Socialism). But we can hope that 100 years hence a book of this kind, if not a book entitled *The Knowledge*, can and will be written. For that would mean that we have successfully weathered the transition upon which we have embarked. It would be as foolish today to predict the Knowledge Society as it would have been to predict in 1776—the year of the American Revolution, of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, and of James Watt's steam engine—the society of which Marx wrote 100 years later, and as it was foolish of Marx to predict "with scientific infallibility" 20th-century society.

But one thing is predictable: The greatest change will be in the form and content of knowledge, in its meaning and its responsibility, and in what it means to be an educated person.

BACKGROUND BOOKS

Futurology tends to make scholars queasy. They generally prefer to leave the forecasting trade to science-fiction scribblers, freelance prognosticators, and other untenured sorts. Social scientists somberly agree that their work must have "predictive value," but actual predictions, apart from economists' exercises in number crunching, are few. It is unique, then, to find somebody from the scholarly world who not only has tried his hand at prediction but is in a position to act: Secretary of Labor Robert Reich.

The former Harvard professor cannot be faulted for pulling his punches. "We are living through a transformation that will rearrange the politics of the coming century," he begins **The Work of Nations** (Knopf, 1991). "There will be no national products or technologies, no national corporations, no national industries." In Reich's new world aborning, the wealth of nations depends upon workers who develop the strategic problem-solving, problem-identifying, and brokering skills driving today's high-value production. These "symbolic analysts," as Reich calls them, include engineers and management consultants as well as film editors and architects.

The United States excels at producing symbolic analysts, Reich says. What worries him is the fate of the remaining four-fifths of the population—and the prospect that the symbolic analysts, finding more in common with their counterparts overseas than with their fellow Americans, will quietly retreat to their own affluent exurban communities. The answer, Reich argues, is to equip more Americans to *apply* symbolic analysis, to prepare the grocery-store checkout clerk, for example, to help manage inventory. In Reich's view, that will require massive new spending on education, training, nutrition, and health care.

Joel Kotkin's **Tribes: How Race, Religion, and Identity Determine Success in the New Global Economy** (Random, 1991) also depicts a world in which nation-states hardly matter. Kotkin, a Senior Fellow at the Center for the New West in Denver, argues that several quintessentially cosmopolitan, globally dispersed ethnic groups or "tribes"—the Jews, Japanese, Indians, "Anglo-Americans," and Chinese—are uniquely positioned to succeed in this new world. "It is likely such dispersed peoples—and their worldwide business and cultural networks—will increasingly shape the economic

destiny of mankind," Kotkin predicts.

While Reich and Kotkin see the new world economy as an interconnected "global web," traditional "armed camp" metaphors persist in Lester Thurow's **Head to Head: The Coming Economic Battle Among Japan, Europe, and America** (Morrow, 1992) and Paul Kennedy's **Preparing For The Twenty-First Century** (Random, 1993). To Thurow and Kennedy, knowledge, technology, and skills are important but not decisive. Institutions, beliefs, political policies—and national differences—matter a great deal. Thurow, dean of MIT's Sloan School of Management, argues that Americans and their companies must change their ways—concentrating on production instead of consumption, for example, and maximizing market share rather than profits. Kennedy's book, which expands upon his much-discussed (if seldom read) *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (1987), is a compendium of worldwide economic, demographic, and technological trends, surprising in neither its content nor the ambiguity of its predictions.

The history of transformations on the scale of today's suggests that such modesty may be wise. How could those who lived through the subtle, centuries-long emergence of capitalism detailed in Fernand Braudel's three-volume **Civilization and Capitalism, 15th–18th Centuries** (Harper, 1983–85) have realized what they were creating when they expanded medieval fair markets or petitioned their sovereigns for charters to send out trading ships? Like Braudel's medieval traders, we are confronted today by many small but significant choices, most of them involving uses of the computer and other new information technologies.

In **The Age of the Smart Machine: The Future of Work and Power** (Basic, 1988), for example, Shoshana Zuboff of Harvard Business School stresses that computerizing the workplace can lead down two very different paths. Using the new technology only to automate existing jobs will further depersonalize work. Going beyond automation to create what Zuboff calls "informating," however, holds out the promise of empowering workers with knowledge of the production process and the ability to participate in its management.

At several paper mills Zuboff studied, workers not so long ago operated a single piece of equipment on a production line, dipping their hands into the pulp to gauge its progress. Today, however,

they do their jobs from computer control rooms. Where the transition to "informating" is succeeding, these workers are no longer merely repeating routine tasks; they are analyzing data, which encourages them "to notice, to think, to explore, to experiment, to improve."

Likewise in the schools, writes Sherry Turkle, an MIT sociologist, there are important choices to be made. If computers are used only as tools to implement conventional teaching methods, their potential will be squandered. But if students are allowed to adapt computers to their own learning styles, the machines may become arenas for exploration and self-expression, more akin to musical instruments than to hammers. "The question is not what the computer will be like in the future," Turkle argues in **The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit** (Simon & Schuster, 1984), "but what will *we* be like?"

Most speculation focuses more on technology than on people. Stewart Brand looks at the future of "idiosyncratic systems" in **The Media Lab: Inventing the Future at MIT** (Viking, 1987). These include electronic newspapers that customize themselves to fit a reader's tastes, and educational software that molds itself to a child's learning style. Brand, the founder of *The Whole Earth Catalog*, sees in such technology the hope of "connecting, diversifying, [and] increasing human complexity rather than reducing it."

A different kind of liberation is hoped for by George Gilder, who sees a global network of interactive telecomputers linked by fiber optics as the key to a rebirth of American individualism. "Through this crystal web," he writes in **Life After Television** (Norton, 1992), "we can reclaim our culture from the centralized influence of mass media. We can liberate our imaginations from programs regulated by bureaucrats, chosen by a small elite of broadcasting professionals, and governed by the need to target the lowest common denominators of public interests."

There are some, however, who see the alternatives posed by the likes of Gilder, Turkle, and Zuboff as no alternatives at all. All of the "choices," argues Neil Postman in **Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology** (Knopf, 1992), are dictated by technology and deflect consideration of the uses to which technology and

knowledge are to be put. "Self-directed" computer learning, for example, is offered as a wonderful humanistic panacea, but it could spell the end of cooperative group learning in the classroom.

Postman, chairman of the department of communication arts at New York University, regards such naive computer worship as a symptom of "Technopoly," a state of culture and of mind in which "culture seeks its authorization in technology, finds its satisfactions in technology, and takes its orders from technology." Technopoly "casts aside all traditional narratives and symbols that suggest stability and orderliness, and tells, instead, of a life of skills, technical expertise, and the ecstasy of consumption." Signs of technology's dominion, Postman maintains, are everywhere—from the doctor's office, where technology encourages physicians to treat patients as inanimate objects, to the classroom, where children are classified according to their scores on intelligence tests.

Postman's antidote is a new curriculum based on "the transcendent belief that humanity's destiny is the discovery of knowledge"—through both the arts and the sciences, and not only for the sake of technological progress but to conquer "loneliness, ignorance, and disorder."

Benjamin Barber, a Rutgers University political scientist, sees a Technopoly-like "McWorld tied together by technology, ecology, communications, and commerce" as one of two possible global futures. The other, even gloomier, is "Jihad," the "retribalization" of large portions of the post-Cold War world and an eruption of the great sectarian plagues, war and civil strife. In an article in the *Atlantic* (March 1992) based on his forthcoming book, Barber suggests that neither of these forces—one that integrates and homogenizes, another that divides and tribalizes—needs or promotes democracy. The real challenge of the 21st century, he insists, is political: to preserve democracy.

Perhaps this suggests why scholars shy away from prognostication. The future may bring the diminution of traditional politics, à la Reich, or its violent reassertion, as in Barber's Jihad. One thinker's dawning era of humanistic promise may look to another like dread Technopoly. Imagining the future, it seems, is less important than interrogating it in order to understand the present.

CURRENT BOOKS

After Chaos

ARTIFICIAL LIFE: The Quest for a New Creation. By Steven Levy. Pantheon. 390 pp. \$25

COMPLEXITY: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos. By M. Mitchell Waldrop. Simon & Schuster. 380 pp. \$23

COMPLEXITY: Life at the Edge of Chaos. By Roger Lewin. Macmillan. 208 pp. \$22

We take our metaphors where we can find them. With every scientific revolution, failed or otherwise, new metaphors and images wedge themselves into the public mind. In the 19th century, "entropy" and "the Second Law of Thermodynamics" generated a perverse glee among those, including Protestant fundamentalists, who were taken with the idea that the universe is heading inevitably toward a state of complete disorder, a scientific version of the biblical fall. Earlier in this century, "relativity" and "the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle" (i.e. there is no such thing as an immaculate perception) provided English majors and seminarians with offbeat dissertation topics. Then came successive waves of journal articles in the humanities whose keywords included one of the four C's—*cybernetics*, *catastrophe theory*, *chaos*, and now, the newest of them all, *complexity*.

Several years ago, James Gleick's *Chaos* (1987) popularized the notion that there is a new science of chaos. Tiny differences in the numbers plugged into seemingly simple equations, such as those used to model weather or the turbulent flow of water, Gleick showed, can lead to wild swings in the output. The behavior of these so-called chaotic nonlinear systems can be predicted only if we can be *infinitely* precise about the initial conditions; since that is impossible we are left with systems that, though completely deterministic, exhibit what to all appearances is random behavior.

Not all nonlinear systems are so badly behaved, and that is where complexity comes in. Once again simple systems turn out to be

full of surprises, but instead of spiraling off into chaos they produce intricate patterns that seem to capture the essence of what we mean by complexity. In the jargon of this emerging field, complex adaptive systems—which might include cells, brains, organisms, ecosystems, and maybe even corporations and economies—exist on the "edge of chaos," in a regime not so ordered as to be rigid and dull but not so chaotic as to be meaningless. Like water turning from solid to liquid to vapor, the story goes, these systems go through "phase transitions" from order to chaos. And when they are poised on a cusp between these two extremes, such "complex systems" gain the ability to gather and process information, a flexibility that allows them to both alter and adapt to their worlds.

Whether this is more than an arresting metaphor is still anybody's guess. In the meantime, science journalists, hoping to replicate Gleick's success, have seized on complexity as the hot new topic. For the last few years they have been descending on an interdisciplinary research center called the Santa Fe Institute, which functions as the focus of the quest, to explain how complexity arises from simplicity—networks of genes giving rise to cells, networks of cells giving rise to organisms, networks of organisms giving rise to societies, all because of their ability to process information. The hope is that all of these webs are strung together according to general rules that have eluded mainstream science, that there is a science of complexity.

With all the sudden attention, scientists at the Santa Fe Institute must feel at times like the local Pueblo Indian communities being scrutinized by anthropologists. While some retreat into their offices for the more civilized company of computer screens, others have come to enjoy the limelight, repackaging their lives with the kinds of anecdotes they have learned that journalists like to hear. The result has been a

number of magazine articles and three recent books—Steven Levy's *Artificial Life*, M. Mitchell Waldrop's *Complexity*, and Roger Lewin's *Complexity*—in which we can read about the fomenters of this revolution. We hear, for example, three renditions of the life of Stuart Kauffman, a philosopher-turned-physician-turned-theoretical biologist, who is so sure that humanity must be more than a random fluke that he is trying to recast Darwinian evolution and uncover a grammar that leads inexorably to increasingly complex creatures. We also get the thrice-told tale of Christopher Langton, a Vietnam-era conscientious objector and blues guitarist who survived a horrible hang-gliding accident and went on to launch a new field called Artificial Life ("A-life," for short), which attempts to create self-reproducing computer programs so fluid and complex that it might someday seem smug and anthropocentric not to grant that they too are alive. Hovering in the background of all three books is Murray Gell-Mann, who is more gun-shy of journalists. Gell-Mann, who earned his Nobel Prize for the ultimate simplification, showing how hundreds of subatomic particles can be reduced to a handful of quarks, has come to Santa Fe to study the other side of the story: how nature goes from the simple to the complex.

These and the other scientists featured in these books are fascinating, brilliant people. Still, no one but a reviewer, who gets the books for free, is likely to read all three. But deciding among them is not an easy task.

First out of the chute was Levy, whose publisher ensured that his book came out in time to benefit from the publicity surrounding the biennial Artificial Life conference, which was held in Santa Fe last summer. Levy was there for a book-signing at a store just off the Plaza, where the first customers got free t-shirts with the legend "Get A-Life." Perhaps because it was first, *Artificial Life* feels rushed in places, but for the most part it is a solid piece of work. Levy showed in his first book, *Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution* (1985), how good he is at capturing the excite-

ment of quixotic seekers on the fringe of computer science. One of the best chapters of *Artificial Life*, called "Garage Band Science," tells how, long before the Santa Fe Institute began, several young veterans of the chaos wars, including Doyne Farmer and Norman Packard, started a research lab in an old adobe tavern down the hill from nearby Los Alamos. Following their intuition that life is a process that can be skimmed from its carboniferous substrate and programmed into a computer, the three scientists studied mathematical kaleidoscopes called cellular automata. A cellular automaton consists of a grid of cells that changes colors according to a few simple rules. Displayed on a computer screen at lightning speed, cellular automata can generate astonishingly complex patterns, some capable of navigating around their checkerboard universe and even cloning themselves. In explaining how this works, Levy gives a nice historical sketch of John Horton Conway, who in the days before cheap, abundant computer power, invented one of the more well-known cellular automata, *The Game of Life*, by manipulating tokens on a vast expanse of graph paper.

The next book on the shelves was Waldrop's *Complexity*. Though he focuses more broadly on complex systems—economies as well as organisms—and specifically on the Santa Fe Institute itself, we learn a lot about A-life along the way. Readers of the journal *Science* know that Waldrop is very good at translating the grayest abstractions into pictures we can hold comfortably in our heads. His book includes the best descriptions I have read of what can be very difficult work: Kauffman's attempts to tease out hidden orders that would show evolution to be less of a free-for-all than traditional Darwinists suppose, for example, or Langton's invention of the so-called lambda parameter, which may provide a rough measure of where a cellular automaton lies on a continuum between order and chaos. The other books say that there is something called the lambda param-

eter; Waldrop tells readers precisely what it is.

But Waldrop's apparent efforts to emulate Tracy Kidder's book, *Soul of a New Machine* (1981), are less successful. In Kidder's book, the drama comes from the reader's wondering whether the hero-engineers will succeed or fail in developing a new computer, and we know we will find out before we turn the final page. We will not know for years whether the Santa Fe Institute will come to be seen as the catalyst of a new science or as a noble footnote to history. Consequently, it is hard to develop an interest in all the institutional minutiae and blow-by-blow descriptions of political battles that Waldrop presents. The people-to-science ratio is much higher than in *Chaos*. Gleick used the scientists as vehicles to explain some pretty abstract mathematics; one learns very little about their personal lives and feels none the poorer for it. The scientists in *Complexity* are spun into full-blown characters. Much of this is very well done, but (as I heard the wife of one of the scientist-characters say) by the time you have read the third or fourth life story of an unappreciated genius who found a home at the intellectual mecca in Santa Fe, it is an effort to keep from skimming.

Both Levy's and Waldrop's books set a fast (sometimes frenetic) pace with the volume of the prose set at full blast. In some ways, then, it is refreshing to find that the third complexity book, by Roger Lewin, is more low-key, focusing on relaxed encounters with remarkable people. I liked how Lewin, whose long career as a science writer (he was also an editor at *New Scientist* and *Science*) gives him perspective and authority, and he ranges farther afield than Waldrop does. In addition to the conversations in Santa Fe, we listen in on discussions with the likes of Dan-

iel Dennett and Patricia Churchland, two philosophers who speculate on the most complex of complex systems, human consciousness, and with those, like Stephen Jay Gould, who view the work at Santa Fe with a more jaundiced eye. Lewin's book is shaped not by the happenstances of the Santa Fe Institute but by the author's own curiosity. The scientific explanations are not as crisp or detailed as Waldrop's; nor is the writing as well-honed. But science writing too often comes off like cheerleading, and Lewin makes up for some of the book's shortcomings with his more detached, critical tone.

Yet I felt that even Lewin could have been more skeptical. Like the other two authors, he treats the idea of a phase transition between order and chaos as though it were done science. One would not know from these books that a backlash against the idea is already developing. The term *edge of chaos* has become so nearly a cliché that whenever it is uttered at the Santa Fe Institute, one can count on hearing groans from the loyal opposition. In their recent work, even some of the institute's more enthusiastic supporters raise serious questions about ideas that all three books take as gospel.

We will have to wait to see how all of this comes out. Meanwhile, now that the journalists have had their say, it will soon be the scientists' turn. Kauffman, Langton, and Gell-Mann all have contracts to write books about complexity. And they are aiming their words not at their students or colleagues but at the book-buying public.

—George Johnson is an editor for "The Week in Review" section of the *New York Times*. His most recent book is *In the Palaces of Memory: How We Build the Worlds Inside Our Heads* (1991).

The Amoralist

KISSINGER: A Biography. By Walter Isaacson. Simon & Schuster. 893 pp. \$30

Except for John Kennedy, no recent public figure in American life has been the subject of more adulation and attack than Henry Kissinger. By 1974, five years after leaving his professorship at Harvard, Richard Nixon's national security adviser and secretary of state had ascended to the superstar status reserved for Hollywood actors and sports heroes. In an hour-long television documentary that year, ABC's Ted Koppel described the country as "half-convinced that nothing was beyond the capacity of this remarkable man. Kissinger already threatens to become a legend, the most admired man in America, the magician, the miracle worker."

Kissinger consciously contributed to this larger-than-life portrait by encouraging a view of himself as America's first true practitioner of *Realpolitik*—a combination of Machiavelli, Metternich, and Bismarck—who popularized the term geopolitics, offered brilliant monologues on world affairs in a German accent, and had the capacity to meet every conceivable challenge abroad. The Watergate crisis, which led to the first resignation of a president in U.S. history, added to Kissinger's hold on the public imagination. "As an individual I led a charmed life," Kissinger wrote in his memoirs. "I became the focal point of a degree of support unprecedented for a non-elected official. It was as if the Public and Congress felt the national peril instinctively and created a surrogate center around which the national purpose could rally."

Yet Kissinger was never immune to criticism. Stories about his arrogance, affinity for intrigue, bureaucratic back-stabbing, ruthless treatment of subordinates, and willingness to lie to the public, press, and Congress to advance himself and his policies coincided with his rise to prominence as a master of the diplomatic game. This assault on his reputation

reached something of a high point in 1983 with the publication of Seymour Hersh's *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House*. Graphic details about Kissinger's sycophancy toward superiors and abuse of staffers—as well as about illegal wiretaps to plug press leaks—caused some Americans to have second thoughts about Dr. Kissinger. When coupled with complaints that the Nixon-Kissinger policies unnecessarily extended the war in Vietnam at a cost of more than 20,000 American lives, provoked the slaughter of millions of Cambodians, and caused the toppling of a democratically elected regime in Chile and the death of its president, Salvador Allende, Kissinger's reputation suffered a further erosion.

Now comes a new, massively detailed biography by *Time's* assistant managing editor,



Walter Isaacson. The book provides a fresh look at Kissinger—an interpretation based on extensive interviews with some 150 people, including Richard Nixon and Kissinger himself, previously unavailable transcripts of conversations, and numerous documents from the Nixon Presidential Papers Project in Alexandria, Virginia. Yet, despite Isaacson's impressive research, the great bulk of the documentary record on Kissinger's service as national security adviser and secretary of state was unavailable and will remain so until at least five years after Kissinger's death. Kissinger dismisses the need to open these materials any time soon by cavalierly arguing that "what is written in diplomatic documents never bears much relation to reality." He should understand, however, that it is in the national interest for Americans to have a realistic understanding of their history. Isaacson's book is a significant advance toward that end, but historians will do well to press the case for early disclosure of the entire Kissinger record.

Isaacson's reconstruction of Kissinger's life from those records at his disposal makes a powerful indictment of the man's character and behavior. It is a portrait of a temperamental neurotic, an insecure but stunningly brilliant man whose paranoia, petty rages, and deceitfulness in the service of his ambitions make the reader cringe at the thought that such ugly characteristics could have been rewarded with such high station and so much honor. Isaacson pulls no punches in describing this side of Kissinger's nature. In fact, the recounting of Kissinger's intrigues against and manipulation of university and government colleagues, including President Nixon, Secretary of State William Rogers, and Secretaries of Defense Melvin Laird and James Schlesinger, become at times a distraction from the larger public matters on which Kissinger's historical reputation must ultimately rest. There sometimes is a quality of journalistic sensationalism to Isaacson's revelations about Kissinger's personality. And while such disclo-

tures propelled the book onto bestseller lists, they may in the long run diminish it as a serious work of analysis about some of the more important foreign-policy decisions of the latter 20th century.

That is particularly unfortunate because Isaacson provides telling insights into and astute assessments of Kissinger's diplomacy in Vietnam, the opening to China, détente with the Soviet Union, and the 1973 Yom Kippur War. On balance, Isaacson sees Kissinger's diplomacy as a success story. He writes: "The structure of peace that Kissinger designed places him with Henry Stimson, George Marshall, and Dean Acheson atop the pantheon of modern American statesmen. In addition, he was the foremost American negotiator of this century and, along with George Kennan, the most influential foreign policy intellectual." All this was accomplished, Isaacson points out, despite the fact that Kissinger lacked "an instinctive feel for American values and mores" and failed to satisfy American cravings for a "moral" foreign policy based on democratic give-and-take.

However much Isaacson's book may add to Kissinger's reputation for undemocratic and unprincipled actions, it will do little to undermine his continuing grip on the country's imagination. As the journalist George Black wrote in September 1992, Kissinger's "public reputation has never stood higher. His advice bends ears in the nation's top boardrooms, and the rest of us can rely on hearing those familiar wet-gravel tones on TV whenever international events require expert commentary." Henry Kissinger is, so to speak, our foreign-policy safety net. Should some awful maelstrom erupt abroad, we can continue to look to Dr. Kissinger for life-saving advice. Especially at a time when the country sees the need for a domestically minded president, it reassures Americans to know that Kissinger remains ready to provide needed expertise in foreign affairs.

But will we truly want it? Yes and no. Kissinger's record of foreign-policy leadership was a mixture of big successes and big fail-

ures. Perhaps the most striking feature of Kissinger's public service was his eagerness to address large questions. Kissinger shared with men like Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon an affinity for the grandiose. Each of them was determined to leave a large mark on American life. But large designs do not necessarily make for an unblemished record.

Kissinger, as Isaacson depicts him, was at his best in dealing with the Middle East, China, and the Soviet Union. The Nixon-Kissinger actions here will be remembered as vital achievements in the winning of the Cold War, comparable to the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, John F. Kennedy's resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis, his Test Ban Treaty, and Ronald Reagan's later embrace of Gorbachev, perestroika, and glasnost. Likewise, Kissinger will win high marks for his shuttle diplomacy during and after the Yom Kippur War. His efforts to strike a balance between Israel and Egypt will be celebrated as ultimately leading to the Camp David Accords and greater stability in the Middle East.

Yet, as Isaacson shows, Kissinger also bears (along with Nixon) a heavy burden of guilt and shame for the massive loss of life and the substantial suffering inflicted on Southeast Asia. The two men's conviction that U.S. prestige required a slow, negotiated withdrawal from Vietnam—which in turn led to attacks upon Cambodia that brought internal instability and millions of deaths to that benighted country—was a flawed judgment.

It deserves to be remembered as among the worst decisions made by American statesmen in this century. And it was an extension of the deeper failing that will plague Kissinger's reputation forever. His affinity for realism—his readiness to sacrifice moral considerations for what he considered the national interest—should remind us that America's greatness as a nation rests partly on our antagonism to the more disastrous aspects of traditional international power politics.

In the final analysis Kissinger's record—and the heated response to it by the public and the press—seem a microcosm of America's 20th-century struggle with itself over realism and idealism. His use of balance-of-power diplomacy to advance the national interest takes its place in this country's century-long transformation into an orthodox nation-state practicing power politics. By contrast, complaints about Kissinger's unethical or illegal foreign policy reflect America's ongoing belief in, and hope for, a world governed by right rather than might. Ultimately, biographers and historians will debate and study Kissinger for what he tells us not only about U.S. diplomacy but also about the national anguish over what makes sense in our conduct of foreign affairs.

—Robert Dallek is professor of history at UCLA and the author of *Lone Star Rising: Lyndon Johnson and his Times, 1908–1960* (1991).

Criticizing the Critics

A HISTORY OF MODERN CRITICISM, 1750–1950: Volume 8; French, Italian, and Spanish Criticism, 1900–1950. By René Wellek. Yale. 367 pp. \$42.50

A history of literary criticism? Why would anyone want to read such a thing? One possible answer is that literary criticism is comment on literature as an

image of human life, a fiction of possible lives. There is no reason to believe that the lives that have been lived exhaust the possibilities of living. The future may contain lives you or I could not imagine. So we have literature—as we have painting, sculpture, music, film, and dance—to sustain us in the conviction that life is, or may be, more various than anyone has known it to be.

Literary critics are concerned with such possibilities, such fictions. They bring to their talk about poems, novels, and stories many different interests. A work of literature may be read with many concerns in mind—religious, social, political, historical, or aesthetic. You might read *Pride and Prejudice* to understand what the lives of young, genteel, unaffluent English women in the early years of the 19th century were like, why the question of marriage was so urgent, how it comes about that one young woman differs so much from her sisters, her mother, and her father—or you might read it to see what the English novel in the early 19th century was up to and good at. Then again you might read it to marvel at the inventive power of a writer named Jane Austen, or, alternatively, to consider the creative capacity of the English language in particular or of language in general. Or you might simply read it for entertainment, diversion, to pass the time that would have passed anyway but not as pleasantly. Such is literary criticism. But why, having talked about literature, would anyone want to talk about the criticism of it—or to write a history of that criticism?

Because literary criticism is part of the history of ideas, of what the mind has made. You are interested in the ideas people have had and continue to have. Ideas, in this case, about literature. Why not? Literary criticism is at least as interesting as philosophy, if only because it deals with imagined lives in some relation to chaos and order, to possibility and fate, to conditions and the ingenuity called upon to overcome them. Literature is other lives, so far as they can be imagined and understood. To write the history of literary criticism is to write the history of certain ideas that have arisen from the experience not of writing literature but of reading it. That is where René Wellek comes in. He is interested in the ideas critics have had who have read many works of literature and tried to make sense of their experience as readers.

But Wellek, I am pleased to note, is not a detached observer. He has an axe to grind. As a young man in Prague, he took part in a

particular movement of literary theory and criticism which considered literature as an aesthetic activity, one that entails a formally distinctive use of language. The problem was how to show those formal attributes in practice and to distinguish the literary or poetic use of language from other, more mundane employments of it. A difficult proceeding. Impelled by his formalist conviction, Wellek proposed to trace the history of literary criticism as it has been practiced during the past 200 years in many countries and many languages. The present volume concludes his long travail. For ease of reference and to note the scale of his undertaking, I list the earlier volumes: (1) *The Later Eighteenth Century*, (2) *The Romantic Age*, (3) *The Age of Transition*, (4) *The Later Nineteenth Century*, (5) *English Criticism, 1900–1950*, (6) *American Criticism, 1900–1950*, and (7) *German, Russian, and Eastern European Criticism, 1900–1950*.

In 1982 Wellek, now professor emeritus of literature at Yale, published *The Attack on Literature, and Other Essays*. I shall refer to two of those essays, "Literature, Fiction, and Literariness" and "Reflections on my *History of Modern Criticism*." In the first of these Wellek defended his understanding of literature. While he conceded that any kind of writing may be of interest to someone for some purpose, it is reasonable to claim for literature a particular form of existence and a corresponding privilege. Literature exists and may be recognized as "high imaginative fiction"—*fiction* in the sense of a world conceived rather than a world alluded to or annotated; *imaginative*, meaning that a writer, composing a work of literature, exerts the distinctively human capacity to imagine what otherwise does not exist; *high*, presumably in the sense of spiritually and morally serious rather than trivial or sordid. Literature, Wellek declared, is an aesthetic experience that "yields a state of contemplation, of intransitive attention that cannot be mistaken for anything else." Wellek means that while one reads the mind is content to pay full attention

to the object, say a novel, and to postpone, for the time being, going forward to any other experience or interest. Wellek's precursors here are Kant and Schiller. The aesthetic experience is, as they have taught us to say, disinterested; it is pure; it is not possessive or predatory.

But Wellek hasn't gone much further than this to say what precisely the mind is doing while it pays the work of art the tribute of intransitive attention. The clearest account of this "act of the mind," so far as my reading goes, is in Susanne K. Langer's *Feeling and Form* (1953), where works of art are deemed to be created "only for perception." Their elements, Langer maintains, have no other design upon us than to be perceived. If I am listening well to a symphony, I am paying such complete attention to its internal relations, experiencing its forms with such concentration of mind in their favor, that every other interest I have in my life is suspended.

Criticism comes into existence as debate about literature. Wellek wants to understand the history of criticism as one might hope to understand the history of any other ideas. Over the centuries, criticism has become an apparently endless argument about a few concepts, notably concepts of language, style, meaning, form, structure, and beauty. To understand the debate, we should hold it within brackets, to see criticism "as a relatively independent activity," not for the purpose of establishing "criticism for criticism's sake" but to keep our minds concentrated on the main issues. Wellek has been examining criticism, according to this understanding of it, for many years and making his own sense of it in these eight volumes.

His achievement is immense. Only a great linguist and a tough-minded scholar could have written this *History*. So much talk, so many distinctions, all those languages, those contexts. I hope his work will continue to be appreciated. But I can't be sure that it will be. Wellek brings the story of criticism to a con-

clusion, if not to an end, in 1950, just at the moment when criticism, in his view, started turning into something else. In 1953 Roland Barthes published *Writing Degree Zero* and announced that "the whole of literature, from Flaubert to the present, has become the problematics of language." This is another story, as Wellek says, and he evidently does not propose to tell it. He says nothing about critical theory or practice in the past 30 years. Nor does he use its strange words like indeterminacy, *différance*, deconstruction, phallogocentric, and minority discourse.

So the *History* is likely to be consulted rather than read; or, if read, construed as a monument to humane letters and scholarship, a concatenation of once-proud hopes. Wellek's terms of reference are nearly gone. Take for instance his use of the word "aesthetic." In American colleges and universities it is becoming virtually impossible to gain a hearing for "aesthetic function," much less for its dominance in a work of literature. Only a few years ago, Wellek said that "we must concede the final inexplicability of a great work of art, the exception of genius." It would be hard to write a less fashionable sentence. It is widely deemed a scandal to talk of genius; and a scandal just as grave to speak of "a great work of art" without indicting its author. Wordsworth, it is now common to claim, should have written not about his feelings on the occasion of visiting Tintern Abbey but about the "wretched of the earth" who sheltered behind its walls. And so on. The motto for this indictment comes from Walter Benjamin: "There is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism." So an interest in literature and criticism, such as Wellek has been expressing for many arduous years, is now commonly—not universally—regarded as sleeping with the enemy.

No matter. Wellek believes, I assume, that great literature will continue to attract the intransitive attention he describes, and that the history of criticism will

continue to interest a sufficient number of readers. But this final volume doesn't make a strong case for criticism as a lively debate. Perhaps Wellek got tired and couldn't face the chore of dealing with the proliferation of critical theories as they have been made to serve every conceivable ideological cause. Who could cope with this exorbitance? There is another problem. Wellek knows, or thinks he knows, what literature is, what the literary character of language is. I judge that he has lost patience with the error of other critics. He can't be expected to dispute with adepts of deconstruction, feminism, postmodernism, queer theory, cultural studies, and a babel of other rhetorics. Wellek confines his attention to the standard sages. The big names in the present volume are Jean-Paul Sartre, Paul Valéry, Benedetto Croce, and José Ortega y Gasset. But each of these is presented as a sloppy thinker, and the whole progress of modern criticism appears as a trek from one Cave of Error to the next. Even when he falls into enthusiasm, Wellek recovers his severity almost at once.

The labor of writing this *History* has evidently been appalling, and it shows. Wellek often drives himself to paraphrase a book he

finds uncongenial or indeed silly—Jacques Maritain's *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, for instance. He does his best to be equable, but in the end confesses that "an outsider who is suspicious of vague and mystical concepts" cannot make much of Maritain. "It is a pity," he wearily reports, "that such a book, filled with fine reflections on poetry, on inspiration, and on different genres and figures in literary history, ends with a somewhat empty gesture toward a religious metaphysics." It is a more acute pity that Wellek has felt honorably obliged to read hundreds of such babbling books.

In the end, the *History of Criticism* is most interesting, most touching, as Wellek's intellectual autobiography. The pressure of his life in literature and criticism is felt in a word here, a word there, an interpolated *strange* or *curious* or *odd* when Wellek cannot bear to leave the paraphrased sentences without comment. His own life is in those adjectives, for the most part ruefully enforced.

—Denis Donoghue, a Wilson Center Fellow, holds the Henry James Chair of Letters at New York University. His most recent book is *The Pure Good of Theory* (1992).

OTHER TITLES

Contemporary Affairs

BOILING POINT: Democrats, Republicans, and the Decline of Middle-Class Prosperity. By Kevin Phillips. Random House. 307 pp. \$23

The "American dream" has always been vague, but most people (especially outsiders) have assumed that it was fundamentally material rather than spiritual. Phillips's sprawling threnody to American exceptionalism makes the assumption explicit. His argument is that the American "middle-class squeeze" has reached a decisive historical

moment. "Previous cyclical troughs for the U.S. middle class," he writes, were "mere hiccups in the historical expansion that reached a late 20th-century zenith at some point in the 1960s or 1970s when 50 to 55 percent of Americans belonged to an economic middle class without any foreign or historical equivalent." Other analysts tend to see the present economic slippage of the American middle class as merely another symptom of worsening global economic conditions, but Phillips puts the blame on specifically American circumstances, on bad choices made by American business and political leaders.

Phillips has some claim to the role of a political prophet. His *Emerging Republican Majority* (1967) predicted the conservative resurgence—and, as the architect of Richard Nixon's 1968 "southern strategy" he helped bring it about. Two decades later, in *The Politics of Rich and Poor* (1990), he suggested that middle-class woes might finally break the Republican monopoly on the White House. The relatively short time it took Phillips to go from a Republican to a Democratic Jeremiah was the time it took America, he believes, to undergo a secret revolution. In the early 1950s, he points out, \$600,000-a-year executives were taxed at around 75 percent of their income, while the median family "breadwinner" (in his quaint terminology) paid five percent. By the late 1980s "the effective combined rate of federal taxes on median or average families had climbed to the 25-28 percent range," while taxes on half-million dollar incomes had



fallen to almost the same level. "There, in a sentence," he says, "was the fiscal revolution."

But what is the middle class, anyway, in a "classless society" such as America? Even though Phillips is always ready to make assertions about "the middle-class psyche," his characterization is purely financial: It is the mathematical middle-income group. He indignantly dismisses any alternative methods that might take behavior or attitudes into account. Such rigidity forces him to banish from the middle class those most bourgeois of professions, medicine and law, and to cast them as profiteering enemies of his median group. The tendency of young householders, unable to achieve their parents' norm of "a suburban home with two reasonably new cars in the garage," to substitute "stylish clothing and sophisticated wine and food" he mocks as "simulating affluence." Such reasoning reduces his middle class to a tabular abstraction drained of social or cultural content.

Phillips's assessment of the American dream in strictly financial terms also makes it hard to assess his dark hints that bourgeois "boiling-points" have alarming political consequences. Historically, populist movements have involved marginal groups, but for the first time, he argues, it is the middle class that is in revolt. What, exactly, are the terrifying signs of this revolt? Phillips has little to display other than George Bush's receipt of a smaller percentage of the vote in 1992 than Herbert Hoover got in '32 and, also, the twangy antiestablishment gibes of a Texas billionaire. Knowing what has happened to the middle class elsewhere in the industrial world might allow readers to evaluate not Phillips's statistics—which most economists accept—but his prognostications about what these statistics portend. Yet almost the only analogy Phillips offers is to the *brede middenstand* (broad middle group) of the 17th-century Dutch Republic, with its comely houses along the Keizersgracht and Heerengracht. Readers skeptical of Phillips's barely veiled threat of a populist or fascist reaction to overtaxation may take comfort from the fact that the middle class of Amsterdam and Utrecht survived the decline on which he morbidly focuses. There is life after exceptionalism.

NO FRIENDS BUT THE MOUNTAINS: The Tragic History of the Kurds. By John Bulloch and Harvey Morris. Oxford. 242 pp. \$25

During the 1991 Persian Gulf War, responding to President George Bush's call for the oppressed peoples of Iraq to rise up, Kurdish guerrillas seized control of much of northern Iraq. Once the UN truce was signed, Saddam Hussein sent his surviving troops north, slaughtering the lightly armed Kurds and driving millions more into exile. For the Kurds, the Allies' indifference to their fate was business as usual. Constituting the world's largest stateless nationality, the Kurds reside in countries where they have at times been denied the use of their language and even fatally poisoned by chemical sprays—persecutions that are rarely reported in the world press. Why this neglect? British journalists Bulloch and Morris suggest that the major international powers share an "Arabocentric view" of the Middle East. Those who consider the region essentially an Arab domain believe that the claims of the Palestinian Arabs demand attention and redress, while those of the Kurds, an ancient non-

Arabic people, seem less legitimate. It has hardly helped that Kurdistan is partitioned among five countries (Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Syria, and Armenia) and that Kurdish insurgents are too faction-ridden to form a single independence movement. In this first book-length history of the Kurds in English, Bulloch and Morris make clear that the Arab-Israeli conflict is neither the longest nor the bloodiest struggle in the Middle East.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION: Catholic Priests and the Sexual Abuse of Children. *By Jason Berry.* 407 pp. *Doubleday.* \$22.50

In the summer of 1983, in the heart of Louisiana's Cajun country, a nightmare became real when two parishioners of St. John's Catholic church learned that their trusted pastor, Father Gilbert Gauthé, had been sexually abusing their three sons, along with dozens of other St. John's altar boys. Horrible as the crime was, the response of the church hierarchy to its disclosure was nearly as appalling. Gauthé, it turns out, had been removed from a previous assignment for similar offenses. The vicar general of the diocese tried to downplay the more recent incidents, cautioning that too much talk might hurt Gauthé's career.

While journalist Berry devotes considerable space to the Gauthé affair and other similar scandals, his book is far more than a mere exposé. A devout Catholic, Berry is concerned with fundamental problems threatening the Catholic church, including the practice of celibacy and the evasive political machinations of an out-of-touch church hierarchy. Celibacy, Berry believes, and the allied opposition to women in clerical roles, are at least partially responsible for the declining number—and quality—of those choosing a priestly vocation. While there has been throughout history no lack of sexually active priests, giving rise to one scandal or another, seldom have there been so many as today. And according to several priests whom Berry quotes, there has never been so large a preponderance of gay clerics—around 40 percent, by many estimates.

To be sure, very few homosexuals are pedophiles, and heterosexuals can also be fixated upon children. The larger point of Berry's book is that an unhealthy, unventilated atmosphere now prevails in the Catholic church—one that could bring on legions of angry Luthers, far less temperate than

the loyal Erasmians of Berry's stripe. The Vatican would do well to listen now.

A DAY IN THE NIGHT OF AMERICA. *By*

Kevin Coyne. *Random House.* 316 pp. \$22

THE TWENTY-FOUR HOUR SOCIETY: Understanding Human Limits in a World That Never Stops. *By Martin Moore-Ede.* *Addison-Wesley.* 230 pp. \$22.95

America's "new frontier," declares journalist Kevin Coyne, is the night. No nation in history (except, possibly, contemporary Japan) has ever had so many people working through the night—7.3 million—as America does now. To map this world, Coyne zigzagged nocturnally through 41 states, covering 18,000 miles and consuming, no doubt, about as many gallons of coffee. He accompanied oil workers on the Alaskan pipeline, Federal Express package handlers, and Las Vegas "working girls" on their nightly rounds. He soon came to view day workers "the way the military often sees civilians—pampered, undisciplined, ignorant of life's harsher truths." Most Americans who work at night do so not because they want to but because the job requires it. And the monetary rewards for night labor are meager, at best. Still, Coyne concludes his survey with an upbeat message: Humans can adapt to almost any situation.

Moore-Ede, a physiologist at the Harvard Medical School, disagrees. Why, he asks, have most notorious industrial accidents—Bhopal, Chernobyl, the Rhine chemical spill—occurred at night? Human sleep rhythms, millennia in the shaping, are ill-suited to a technological society that demands of everyone, from hospital employees to Wall Street currency traders, an elusive efficiency at 3 A.M. Moore-Ede, however, is not a Luddite who would (so to speak) turn back the clock. He proposes alternative night-work measures—ranging from artificial lighting that mimics the sun's rays to "polyphasic sleep" (strategic napping) to machines that monitor alertness. Such precautions, he believes, can save lives and billions of dollars. The growing world of night work has, until now, caught planners unprepared. No one foresaw that differences between day and night would become blurred in response to a global economy driven by telecommunications, computers, and faxes. "Societal revolutions," Moore-Ede comments, "have the habit of sneaking up on us."

History

PROTECTING SOLDIERS AND MOTHERS:

The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States. By *Theda Skocpol*. Harvard. 714 pp. \$34.95

For decades scholars have been trying to understand why the American welfare state was such a late bloomer and why, by European standards, its growth remains stunted. Was the absence of a strong, European-style labor movement to blame? Or were America's individualistic values? These and other theories are admirably surveyed (and, with varying degrees of success, refuted) by Skocpol, a Harvard sociologist, on her way to introducing yet another theory: The United States was no latecomer; indeed, it pioneered the welfare state.

Her case rests on two early trial runs for a welfare state in America. The first took form with the gradual expansion of Civil War pensions, which were inaugurated to aid disabled veterans and the dependents of men killed in the war. These pensions, Skocpol writes, evolved into "an open-ended system of disability, old-age, and survivors' benefits for any who could claim minimal service time on the northern side of the Civil War." By 1910, more than one third of elderly northern men were receiving federal pensions averaging a relatively generous \$172 annually. Skocpol concedes, however, that the pension system was "not really a 'welfare state.'" It was more an elaborate patronage scheme—the Republican Party's answer to the turkeys handed out at Thanksgiving by Democratic ward heelers—and it helped to ensure the GOP's domination of national politics during the late 19th century.

The first modern welfare-state measures were enacted in Germany during the 1880s and in Britain during the early 1900s, but the United States emphatically declined to join in. An early 20th-century attempt by reform groups such as the American Association for Labor Legislation to win pensions and other programs for the "army of labor" failed miserably. But even as these efforts fizzled, reform-minded women's groups were crusading for programs that could have become, in Skocpol's view, the foundation of a "maternalist" welfare state. By mutual agreement, the sexes inhabited "separate spheres" in late 19th- and early 20th-century America, with men immersed in the world of work and partisan politics and women

presiding over hearth, home, and morals. Middle- and upper-class women, supplied not only with moral authority but with leisure, expanded their horizons through innumerable local church and civic clubs, which were then united through such organizations as the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC). "All clubs," the GFWC stated, "as bodies of trained housekeepers, should consider themselves guardians of the civic housekeeping of their respective communities." They took up a host of causes, from temperance to juvenile delinquency, and pressured many states into enacting labor laws regulating the hours, wages, and safety conditions of female workers. In 1912, the federal government created a Children's Bureau, which during the 1920s briefly offered prenatal and child-care education for mothers.

By the mid-1920s, Skocpol notes, this wave of reform had passed. Women cast their first votes in a national election in 1920, and feminists embarked on a quest for equality, which could not be squared with the notion of separate spheres. The exalted moral status that had allowed women to prevail was gone. Skocpol's study illustrates, albeit unintentionally, that in America receiving public support posed questions that bore a higher moral charge than they did elsewhere. Only extraordinary circumstances could overcome popular doubts about the welfare state. It took nothing less than the Great Depression to bring about passage of the cornerstone Social Security Act of 1935. But uniquely American doubts—as President Clinton's pledge to "abolish welfare as we know it" suggests—still linger.

ANTISEMITISM: The Longest Hatred. By *Robert S. Wistrich*. Pantheon. 341 pp. \$25

Before the 1870s no one ever encountered an anti-Semite, at least by name. Only in that decade did a German journalist, Wilhelm Marr, invent the term *anti-Semitism* to advertise a new, improved way of hating Jews. Prejudice against Jews on religious grounds was then coming to seem backwards, even medieval; Marr and others like him proposed better grounds, reasons based on economics and race—a hatred of Jews that was, so they claimed, modern and "scientific." To understand a prejudice that has existed for millennia but whose shape and justification keep changing, Wistrich, a noted historian at Jerusalem's Hebrew University, has written



Wo er antlopft, findet er verfloffene Türen!

Ahasver wandert durch die Welt!

Er betritt nicht mit gewöhnlicher Kleidung, sondern mit einer dunklen, aus Leder gefertigten, und er trägt die merkwürdige Maske mit einem roten Kreuz auf der Stirn. Die Maske ist für ihn nicht nur eine Maske, sondern eine Waffe, die er gegen die feindlichen Mächte zu verwenden vermag.

Er wandert, und die Welt ist ihm ein großes, unbegrenztes Feld, das er mit seinen Schritten durchwacht. Er sucht die Menschen, die er als Feinde der Menschheit ansieht, und er sucht die Menschen, die er als Freunde ansieht. Er sucht die Menschen, die er als Brüder ansieht, und er sucht die Menschen, die er als Feinde ansieht.

Er sucht die Menschen, die er als Brüder ansieht, und er sucht die Menschen, die er als Feinde ansieht. Er sucht die Menschen, die er als Brüder ansieht, und er sucht die Menschen, die er als Feinde ansieht.

Deutschland ist diesen Völkern die Maser vom Gesicht.

Er wandert die Welt durch, und er sucht die Menschen, die er als Brüder ansieht, und er sucht die Menschen, die er als Feinde ansieht.

Er wandert die Welt durch, und er sucht die Menschen, die er als Brüder ansieht, und er sucht die Menschen, die er als Feinde ansieht.

Deutschland besinnt diesen Völkern dem Leben seines Volkes.

Die Welt kann sich der Gleichheit Erkenntnis nicht verschließen.



sizable remnant remains, and in the Middle East, where Islamic fundamentalists have imported an earlier Christian anti-Semitism to fortify their enmity toward Israel. The particular logic in each case eventually comes to seem almost superfluous: Enough of contemporary politics is sufficiently catastrophic to support most paranoia and conspiracy theories. By the end of his chronicle, even Wistrich questions the ultimate value of his project: What is the sense, he wonders, of applying the historian's rational craft to a history of irrationality?

Arts & Letters

CULTURE AND IMPERIALISM. By Edward W. Said. Knopf. 380 pp. \$25

Critics in the tradition of Matthew Arnold imagine culture to be above the selfish and sordid calculations of politics, a disinterested realm of sweetness and light. Where a social historian would record, for example, that the Greeks practiced slavery, the Arnoldian critic would note how in their culture and art the Greeks fashioned so noble an image of the individual soul that, in the long run, it constituted an argument against slavery.

Said, a professor of literature at Columbia, rejects notions of "high" culture and its essentially benign effects. In his earlier and highly influential book *Orientalism* (1978), he argued that Western writers had created a fictional Middle East, one that served to justify France's and England's imperialistic policies in the region. In *Culture and Imperialism* the suspect on trial is no longer simply the Orientalist but modern Western literature itself. When literary mandarins such as Arnold or T. S. Eliot specify the best that society has known and thought, they are actually, in Said's view, ennobling certain "codes of intellectual and moral behaviour" at the expense of other codes: theirs, in other words, at the expense of those of the oppressed and non-Western. Eliot is thus an imperialist, a literary Cecil Rhodes.

More specifically, Said charges, it is no accident that during the heyday of imperialism the novel "achieved eminence as the aesthetic form." The sense of narrative that 19th-century fiction fostered made the disjointed colonial conquests seem themselves part of an ongoing, necessary narrative, while specific novels, from Dickens's *Great Expectation* to Kipling's *Kim*, defined "us" and "them" in ways that created a rationale for the former gov-

the first single-volume overview of Jew-hatred throughout history.

"Although I loathe anti-Semitism," wrote Harold Nicholson satirically in 1945, "I do dislike Jews." Jews have proved, it seems, rather easy to dislike. After the Diaspora, Jewish exiles—with their prohibitions against intermarriage, their dietary laws, and their doctrine of election—met with distrust wherever they ventured in the Mediterranean world. But pagan "anti-Semitism" (to apply the term generically) hardly differed from other kinds of xenophobia common to the ancient world. Christianity, with its need to distinguish itself from its parent religion, came up with a novel accusation: The Jews had murdered God. This charge, elaborated with salacious and sensational details and drummed into the European populace for centuries, gave anti-Semitism a radically different character. It became theological, *metaphysical*; it no longer even required the presence of Jews. If, during the 18th century, the Enlightenment and French Revolution finally ended legalized discrimination and ghettoization, they paved the way for something worse. Once anti-Semitism was based on pseudoscientific theories of racial pollution, Christians gave up their campaign to convert the Jews. "The Nazis took over all the negative anti-Jewish stereotypes in Christianity," Wistrich writes, "but they removed the escape clause."

Fifty years after the Holocaust, anti-Semitism is again rearing its head, in Poland and Romania, where almost no Jews now live, in Russia, where a

erning the latter. Joseph Conrad, Graham Greene, and V. S. Naipaul might have exposed the evils of colonialism, but Said finds these "reformers" little better than the imperialists they criticized. Conrad's and Greene's fiction still presents a "Western view of the non-Western world," Said writes, that "is so ingrained as to blind [them] to other histories, other cultures, other aspirations."

This kind of argument—which owes a debt to Michel Foucault's linkages between power and knowledge—has become standard fare in the years since *Orientalism* was published. A reader might want less to question it than to wonder why a literary critic has so obviously checked literature at the door. Said discusses a novel no differently than he does a Verdi opera or a film such as *Apocalypse Now*. Since only extractable messages interest him, novels could just as well all be op-ed pieces in the *New York Times*. Said also tends to focus not on the best but on the worst work of an author and, in it, on some minor point. So in a chapter intriguingly titled "Jane Austen and Empire," he deigns to analyze only *Mansfield Park* and, in that, only a few passing references to Sir Thomas Bertram's having been a planter in Antigua, without ever considering the structure, language, characters, or irony of the novel. Does a person come to resemble, finally, that which he most violently opposes? It would seem so. Having so long unmasked Western literature as propaganda, Said writes literary criticism that is itself barely distinguishable from ideological polemics.



CATULLUS. By Charles Martin. Yale. 197 pp. \$30
THE POEMS OF CATULLUS. Translated by Charles Martin. Johns Hopkins. 181 pp. \$35
THE NORTON BOOK OF CLASSICAL LITERATURE. Edited by Bernard Knox. Norton. 866 pp. \$29.95

Who was the first Modernist poet? Ezra Pound? T. S. Eliot? Martin, a critic and translator, suggests an earlier candidate—Gaius Valerius Catullus, a Roman of the first century B.C. Catullus is the only surviving poet from a group known as "the modern ones" (the *neoterics*), a group of Roman bards who sought to throw off the prevailing Homeric yoke and explore new metrical patterns and shorter lyric forms. Even Catullus's subjects—adultery, homosexuality, licentiousness—surprise readers today, who seldom expect such candor in ancient verse. (In fact, as Martin observes, such racy topics were relatively familiar to literate Romans.) Catullus, who was born in Verona but spent most of his brief life (84?–54 B.C.) in a Rome approaching the zenith of its powers and sophistication, has long been regarded as a guilty pleasure among classicists. Repressed by Christian authorities, his work came close to disappearing altogether. After centuries in which he was only a name, a single manuscript of his surfaced in the 14th century in his native Verona, where it was recopied before vanishing forever.

Beyond mere prurience, what is the secret of Catullus's appeal for such 20th-century poets as Pound and Yeats? Catullus sought to explore the kind of truth that exists in everyday life, to release verse from the constraints of the epic. He created short, witty poems, sometimes on deliberately trivial subjects, teasing out his message through irony and innovative perspective. Consider this miniature poem (one of the few possible to quote in its entirety in a stodgy periodical):

I hate & love. And if you should ask how I can do
 both,
 I couldn't say; but I feel it, and it shivers me.

Catullus reveals the same complicated emotions, expressed in conversational tone, whether embarrassing a friend into returning a stolen napkin, attacking a bitter enemy with biting sarcasm, or wooing some object of his affections, notably the married female lover to whom he gave the name Lesbia. The very juxtaposition of Catullus's words and—in a larger sense—of the poems themselves

has a contemporary ring to modern readers. A poem that extols the merits of marital fidelity will be followed by one discussing the potential benefits of adultery; one that speaks of erotic obsession will accompany a poem that treats the sanctity of marriage. It is Catullus's ambivalence, his ability to present contradictory views and to encompass the full erotic spectrum, that led Yeats to invoke his name to mock the logical consistency of modern academics and thinkers:

Lord, what would they say
Did their Catullus walk that way?

Martin's commentary is part of Yale University Press's new Hermes series, whose aim is to reintroduce the classics to a popular audience. Bernard Knox, in his introduction to *The Norton Book of Classical Literature*, reminds us that even fragments of the works of poets such as Catullus "give us unforgettable glimpses into a brilliant archaic world." Those wanting a longer look might start with Knox's introduction to this comprehensive volume. In 40 pages, Knox covers everything from the development of written language to the fall of Rome, tracing the course of classical literature from Homer to St. Augustine. "It would be a pity," Nietzsche wrote in the 19th century, "if the classics should speak to us less clearly because a million words stood in the way." The million words are, by now, probably a billion words, but Martin's study and translation of Catullus, the Hermes series, and Knox's work all skirt the industrial complex of technical scholarship to present ancient literature afresh to the common reader.

UNDERSTANDING THE DEAD SEA

SCROLLS: A Reader from the *Biblical Archeology Review*. Ed. by Hershel Shanks. Random House. 336 pp. \$23

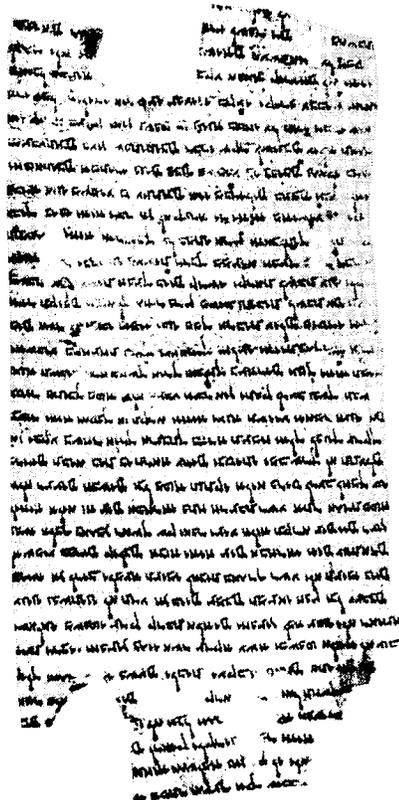
JESUS AND THE RIDDLE OF THE DEAD

SEA SCROLLS. By Barbara Thiering. HarperCollins. 451 pp. \$24

The very name Dead Sea Scrolls has come to evoke, rather like "The Curse of the Mummy," images of temple robbers and age-old intrigue. But if there is a mystery surrounding these documents—the only Hebrew manuscripts on either papyrus or leather to have survived from pre-Christian times—it is a modern one. Not long after Bedouin

shepherd boys discovered them in 1947, a seven-man scholarly team in East Jerusalem gained control of the scrolls and severely limited access to them. "The greatest manuscript find of modern times" (in archeologist W. E. Albright's words) has thus had its meaning deciphered and publicized only piecemeal and slowly. Even the scrolls' long-awaited but unauthorized publication in 1991, through a still-unnamed source, remains something of a puzzle.

Shanks, editor of the *Biblical Archaeology Review* (BAR), here collects from his own publication the more important essays bearing upon the scrolls' meaning. The scrolls have provoked unending controversy by revealing that many practices once thought to be unique to the early Christian church were prefigured by the beliefs and rituals of a Jewish Essene community near the Dead Sea. The little that was previously known about the Essenes came from a few first-century A.D. writers—Josephus, Philo of Alexandria, and Pliny the Elder, the latter of whom characterized the Essene sect as "remarkable beyond all the other tribes in the world,



in that it has no women and has renounced all sexual desire, has no money, and has only palm trees for company." In the Dead Sea Scrolls, however, the Essenes come to life, although it is a life that no one could have imagined for them. They staged sacred meals with eschatological significance, complete with the blessing of bread and wine, and they performed baptisms by immersion. Moreover, both the early Christians and the Essenes expected the Messiah to appear imminently. One scroll, "The Messiah of Heaven and Earth," clearly alludes to the idea of bodily resurrection.

So much from the scrolls seems clear, but a number of questions they raise have no ready answers: Was John the Baptist a member of the community that wrote the scrolls? Was Jesus, in fact, an Essene? Is the "Temple Scroll" the lost sixth book of the Torah? Taken together, however, these essays establish that early Christianity is grounded more completely in Jewish thought than any authority before 1947 had proposed.

If the scholarly team controlling the scrolls was worried about their falling into the wrong hands, *Jesus and the Riddle of the Dead Sea Scrolls* illustrates what happens when they do. There is no direct mention of Jesus in the scrolls, but such a small detail hardly deters Australian biblical scholar Barbara Thiering. She uses them to argue that Jesus was born to an unwed (hence, officially "virgin") woman, that he married twice and fathered three children, and that he did not die on the cross but was drugged and later revived in a cave. What Thiering has done, in fact, is substitute for the *texts* of the scrolls—which are fragmentary, sometimes contradictory, and in archaic script—the idea of a *subtext*, a hidden code, which she then "decodes" into a narrative that is fluent, coherent, and, of course, unverifiable.

There will likely be no such bold and final "solving" of the Dead Sea Scrolls. But a wide range of scholars, such as those represented in the *BAR* reader, are now providing reliable information and possible interpretations of these manuscripts that, as Shanks notes, "ignited the imagination of nonscholar and scholar alike."

THE ULTIMATE ART: Essays Around and About Opera. By David Littlejohn. Univ. of Calif. 303 pp. \$25

Samuel Johnson characterized opera as "an exotick

and irrational entertainment"; two centuries later, the French composer Pierre Boulez proposed blowing up the world's opera houses on the grounds that they were devoted to an absurdly costly and indefensible art form. If opera is a bastard art—the "illegitimate" offspring of music, libretto, dance, historical costume, and theatrical production—then novelist-critic Littlejohn (like Edmund in *King Lear*) argues that bastard is best. For all its hybrid qualities, he insists, opera produces effects, such as "the human voice at its most powerful and expressive," found nowhere else. Littlejohn pursues his argument in essays ranging from "Why We Put Up with Dumb Opera Plots" to the changing public tastes of "The Janáček Boom." Everywhere, Littlejohn opposes popular excesses, such as Peter Sellars's stagings of Mozart, in which the "directorial conceit [is] alien to the score," as well as academic excesses, such as Cornell University's "new opera studies," which treat librettos as autonomous works and subject them to advanced literary theory. Littlejohn may fail to convert the skeptic or to interest the academic specialist: Eschewing theory and what Shaw called the "Mesopotamian words" of technical musical analysis, he writes not to preach to the converts but to delight them.

Science & Technology

THE CREATIVE MOMENT: How Science Made Itself Alien to Modern Culture. By Joseph Schwartz. HarperCollins. 252 pp. \$25

Joseph Schwartz has an unusual complaint: "Our poets do not tell of the intricacies of microminiature electronic circuitry." For that matter, he continues, "the mere mention of relativity makes every intellectual in Europe and the United States start to stammer." To believe the former physics professor, little has changed during the 35 years since C. P. Snow identified the gulf between sciences and the humanities as perhaps *the* problem for modern society.

Schwartz, moreover, maintains that this division is unnecessary, indeed little more than a historical accident. To locate the origins of the accident, he returns to Renaissance Italy, when Galileo's study of the heavenly bodies landed him in trouble with the pope. Galileo's solution was to convert his arguments into the rarefied language of mathematics, which mollified the church by being inaccessi-

ble to the laity. A trend, a long trend, began. Schwartz's book is an examination of those scientific breakthroughs—from Sadi Carnot's heat engine to the creation of nuclear physics and the "genetic revolution"—that were couched in unnecessarily complex terminologies baffling to the layperson. "The form in which understanding in physics [and other contemporary sciences] is expressed," he writes, "has been mistaken for the understanding itself." Schwartz himself wrote *Einstein for Beginners* (1979) to demonstrate how technical scientific theories can be made comprehensible to the general reader.

Is there a solution to the "two-cultures" problem? Is it even possible for science again to learn the language of daily speech? Schwartz's proposals for achieving popular scientific literacy—supporting a Green-movement awareness of the environment and adding a new undergraduate-level science course on technology—seem feeble. What Schwartz has to offer is less a program than a different perspective. Science writers today tend to fall into two opposing camps: the supporters who view science as the most legitimate method of acquiring knowledge and the detractors who take stock of ever more deadly engines and destructive technologies. To his credit, Schwartz avoids the stock jargon of either group. He wants to promote science but at the same time to shame it into abandoning its claim to an "occult" or privileged status. His outlook, at least, is refreshing.

THE ANT AND THE PEACOCK: Altruism and Sexual Selection from Darwin to Today. By *Helena Cronin*. Cambridge. 490 pp. \$39.95

Despite its imposing simplicity and awesome explanatory power, the theory of natural selection has never achieved the status of a universally accepted scientific law. As recent surveys reveal, an astonishingly large proportion of people in the otherwise rational West do not believe in evolution. Belief, however, is not the only issue: The idea of design-without-a-designer has had to struggle for survival against not only those who dislike its implications but also those who just misunderstand

it—including many eminent scientists. Cronin, an infectiously enthusiastic classical Darwinist at Oxford, begins her book with a handy if unsympathetic survey of rival views such as creationism, idealism, and Lamarckism, all of which she dismisses as "follies" and "hopelessly off-target."

Cronin is not, however, attempting to argue the perfection of Darwin's original ideas. Rather she confronts two crucial weaknesses that even many Darwinians have skimmed over. These problems are "beauty" and "altruism." The peacock's beautiful tail, for example, requires enormous energy to grow, even while it hampers the bird's ability to fly—hardly a solid support for Darwin's theory that only traits useful for survival survive. And neuter ants, with what Cronin calls "saintly self-abnegation," work dutifully for the community, seemingly in denial of natural selection's famous self-interested, utilitarian imperative. Beauty and altruism were telling arguments against Darwin a century ago and caused him immense difficulty. To explain beauty, Darwin resorted to the argument of sexual selection—that peahens, for example, preferred mates with gaudier tails—an idea that other 19th-century male scientists mocked. They maintained that females could never choose anything consistently enough to have a lasting evolutionary effect. To explain altruistic behavior, Darwin was driven even further afield: He posited a rudimentary moral sense in animals.

Cronin proves a stricter Darwinian than Darwin himself. The problem of altruism, she writes, "dissolves, gratifyingly, before our eyes" when we take a "gene-centered view" of evolution. Since the 1960s the idea of selfish genes has become increasingly accepted. According to this view, animals, once considered the basic evolutionary unit, are nothing more than vehicles for the transmission of genes between generations. The problem of beauty is more intractable, and Cronin (and others) are reviving Darwin's once-ridiculed idea of sexual selection. Sensible peahens could well prefer menfolk with sexy tails, she argues, because such plumage might indicate beneficial genetic characteristics. Darwinism is now in the midst of a revival, and perhaps not since the master himself has it found a more eloquent exponent than Cronin.

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POETRY

W E L D O N K E E S

Selected and Introduced by Joseph Brodsky

If Weldon Kees were alive today, he would be 79 years old; but the first thing that makes this unthinkable is his poems. Their vehement bleakness makes it all too plausible that on July 19, 1955, when a car registered in his name was found near the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, the 41-year-old Weldon Kees had committed suicide.

No body was ever found. Now and then a rumor would have him alive and well under an assumed name, south of the border. However, during the last 35 years, nothing even remotely close to his diction, either under his or an assumed name, has appeared in print. As far as this evidence goes, the poet is dead.

Suicide, as the great Czech poet Vladimir Holan once said, is not an exit; it is the word "exit" painted on a wall. Suicide—or, for that matter, a disappearing act—is also bad PR, particularly when the general disposition of the public toward poetry is that of benign neglect (of such extraordinary proportions, it must be added, that one wonders what the word *benign* is doing here). Whatever happened to the body of Weldon Kees, the body of his work, given the size of this nation's potential readership, might just as well also rest at the bottom of the Pacific.

The consolation, perhaps, is that it is not there alone. Scores and scores of outstanding American poets see their work consigned to the same fate by the existing system of book distribution in this country. "The American people"—in the memorable phrase of a former U.S. senator—"have the right to be wrong." This sounds truly democratic and in line with the Constitution, yet nature and Providence, or both, thrust poets into the nation's midst to make it more lucid. As things are, the American people's right to know their own poetry is denied to most of them.

With that, democracy is denied its purpose, for democracy is not an end unto itself. The purpose of democracy is to become enlightened democracy. Democracy without enlightenment is but a well-policed jungle. What does this have to do with Weldon Kees? Not much, perhaps, except that his dark vision could spare many an individual the loneliness of his or her agony. It could because in Kees's poetry agony is raised to the level of art. And this is the level to which, to paraphrase Walter Pater, all human experience, be it negative or positive, aspires.

This is what enlightenment is all about. It should not be mistaken for therapy, although it can perform that task also. At a certain point, men and women should grow up and recognize that they are the sum not only of their intentions and convictions but also of their deeds. In clarifying this point, the poems of Weldon Kees come in handy. He is a poet of remarkable totality of

approach toward the world and his very self. Behind his irate dismissal of both, one discerns a fierce Calvinist spirit; one sees a man summoning his epoch and himself to his own last judgment and finding no argument in either's defense, and, naturally, no grace.

He does this with relish and with savage irony. How is it, one may wonder, that a boy from Nebraska turned into this merciless, supreme agonist? Was there something in his background? Was it the Wall Street Crash, or the years of the Great Depression? Was it the war on the Continent, and perhaps the need to compensate for his guilt at not taking part in it? A failed marriage? Should we wax Freudian?

We should not. Neither taken separately nor in their totality will these explanations account for this poet's diction. They will not because Kees was not alone on the scene, although there is no denying his cooperation in that diction's hardening. Its origins are not in his life but in his very art and in its terrifying ability to impose standards upon work and life alike. The measure of one's surrender to these standards is, frankly, the measure of one's talent, and Kees was a man of immense talent. Herein lies the explanation of his artistic success and his human tragedy.

To put it simply, by the time of Weldon Kees's arrival, the dominant note in poetry on both sides of the Atlantic was that of negation of the modern reality. The source of that note was, of course, European Romanticism; its current mouthpiece, Modernism. To be sure, the reality by and large did not deserve any better. On the whole, art's treatment of contemporary reality is almost invariably punitive—so much so that art itself, especially the incurably semantic art of poetry, can be suspected of having a strong Calvinist streak.

It does: because aesthetic authority cannot be delegated. However, unlike its practitioners, it is capable of an equivalent of grace.

Be that as it may, Kees had no alternative but to pick up that note of negation and play it the best he could. He did, and he played it better than anyone around, to the bitter end. He was a genuine American soloist, with no mute and no support. He played better, to my mind, than Eliot and, on occasion, Auden, whose respective repertoires were wider to begin with. Because they existed, Kees had to go further. He had to go further, I suspect, also because he was from Nebraska. Unlike his great and small contemporaries, he took negation and alienation literally.

His poems display neither the incoherence of nostalgia for some mentally palatable past nor, however vaguely charted, the possibility of the future. All he had was the present, which was not to his Muse's liking, and eventually not to his own either. His poetry, in other words, is that of the here and now and of no escape, except for poetry itself. Yet for all he had to say about the present, his language is amazingly clear and direct, and the formal aspects of his verse are amazingly conservative. Evidently Kees did not feel the imperative of arrhythmia so palpable among his less memorable peers, not to mention successors.

This makes his sanity less questionable than many a melodrama buff would have liked. As for his spiritualistic imagery, that, too, I believe, owes

more to Max Ernst than to his own nightmares. The real nightmare for him was to do a mediocre job; his 1975 *Collected Poems* (edited by Donald Justice) shows him in absolute control of his subconscious. Kees was a professional, not an amateur, and certainly not a sissy. Amateurs and sissies don't write poems as tough as the ones you find in this selection. Once or twice this toughness could be faked, but not for 12 years: the duration of Weldon Kees's career as a poet. Then, too, it's deliberate, which is to say genuine. And it makes one think that whatever happened on July 19, 1955, was not a fluke. It was deliberate.

On that day America lost a very tough poet. For him, it was presumably the end of his rope, but it should not be that way for us. He should be read, and here are a few of his poems. In them, you will hear that keen, implacable, truly American solo, which cannot be mistaken for anything else. This is our trumpet; this, if you will, is our early cool. It is calling to us from the depth of the 1950s, the Eisenhower years. It is very pure, very heart-rending. Its silver penetrates the darkness, and vice versa, almost in gratitude. It sounds sort of like a trumpet solo by Clifford Brown, who also died around the same time.

The Scene of the Crime

There should have been some witness there, accusing—
Women with angry mouths and burning eyes
To fill the house with unforgiving cries;
But there was only silence for abuse.

There should have been exposure—more than curtains
Drawn, the stairway coiling to the floor
Where no one walked, the sheeted furniture,
And one thin line of light beneath the door.

Walking the stairs to reach that room, a pool
Of blood swam in his thought, a hideous guide
That led him on and vanished in the hall.
There should have been damnation. But, inside,
Only an old man clawed the bed, and drooled,
Whispering, "Murderer!" before he died.

The Patient is Rallying

Difficult to recall an emotion that is dead,
Particularly so among these unbelieved fanfares
And admonitions from a camouflaged sky:

I should have remained burdened with destinations
Perhaps, or stayed quite drunk, or obeyed
The undertaker, who was fairly charming, after all.

Or was there a room like that one, worn
With our whispers, and a great tree blossoming
Outside blue windows, warm rain blowing in the night?

There seems to be some doubt. No doubt, however,
Of the chilled and empty tissues of the mind
—Cold, cold, a great gray winter entering—
Like spines of air, frozen in an ice cube.

A Distance from the Sea

To Ernest Brace

"And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not."—Revelations, X, 4.

That raft we rigged up, under the water,
Was just the item: when he walked,
With his robes blowing, dark against the sky,
It was as though the unsubstantial waves held up
His slender and inviolate feet. The gulls flew over,
Dropping, crying alone; thin ragged lengths of cloud
Drifted in bars across the sun. There on the shore
The crowd's response was instantaneous. He
Handled it well, I thought—the gait, the tilt of the head, just
right.

Long streaks of light were blinding on the waves.
And then we knew our work well worth the time:
The days of sawing, fitting, all those nails,
The tiresome rehearsals, considerations of execution.
But if you want a miracle, you have to work for it,
Lay your plans carefully and keep one jump
Ahead of the crowd. To report a miracle
Is a pleasure unalloyed; but staging one requires
Tact, imagination, a special knack for the job
Not everyone possesses. A miracle, in fact, *means* work.
—And now there are those who have come saying

That miracles were not what we were after. But what else
Is there? What other hope does life hold out
But the miraculous, the skilled and patient
Execution, the teamwork, all the pain and worry every miracle
involves?

Visionaries tossing in their beds, haunted and racked
By questions of Messiahship and eschatology,
Are like the mist rising at nightfall, and come,
Perhaps, to even less. Grave supernaturalists, devoted wor-
shippers
Experience the ecstasy (such as it is), but not
Our ecstasy. It was our making. Yet sometimes
When the torrent of that time
Comes pouring back, I wonder at our courage
And our enterprise. It was as though the world
Had been one darkening, abandoned hall
Where rows of unlit candles stood; and we
Not out of love, so much, or hope, or even worship, but
Out of the fear of death, came with our lights
And watched the candles, one by one, take fire, flames
Against the long night of our fear. We thought
That we could never die. Now I am less convinced.
—The traveller on the plain makes out the mountains
At a distance; then he loses sight. His way
Winds through the valleys; then, at a sudden turning of a
path,
The peaks stand nakedly before him: they are something else
Than what he saw below. I think now of the raft
(For me, somehow, the summit of the whole experience)
And all the expectations of that day, but also of the cave
We stocked with bread, the secret meetings
In the hills, the fake assassins hired for the last pursuit,
The careful staging of the cures, the bribed officials,
The angels' garments, tailored faultlessly,
The medicines administered behind the stone,
That ultimate cloud, so perfect, and so opportune.
Who managed all that blood I never knew.

The days get longer. It was a long time ago.
And I have come to that point in the turning of the path
Where peaks are infinite—horn-shaped and scaly, choked with
thorns.
But even here, I know our work was worth the cost.
What we have brought to pass, no one can take away.
Life offers up no miracles, unfortunately, and needs assistance.
Nothing will be the same as once it was,
I tell myself.—It's dark here on the peak, and keeps on getting
darker.
It seems I am experiencing a kind of ecstasy.
Was it sunlight on the waves that day? The night comes down.
And now the water seems remote, unreal, and perhaps it is.

Aspects of Robinson

Robinson at cards at the Algonquin; a thin
Blue light comes down once more outside the blinds.
Gray men in overcoats are ghosts blown past the door.
The taxis streak the avenues with yellow, orange, and red.
This is Grand Central, Mr. Robinson.

Robinson on a roof above the Heights; the boats
Mourn like the lost. Water is slate, far down.
Through sounds of ice cubes dropped in glass, an osteopath,
Dressed for the links, describes an old Intourist tour.
—Here's where old Gibbons jumped from, Robinson.

Robinson walking in the Park, admiring the elephant.
Robinson buying the *Tribune*, Robinson buying the *Times*.
Robinson
Saying, "Hello. Yes, this is Robinson. Sunday
At five? I'd love to. Pretty well. And you?"
Robinson alone at Longchamps, staring at the wall.

Robinson afraid, drunk, sobbing Robinson
In bed with a Mrs. Morse. Robinson at home;
Decisions: Toynbee or luminol? Where the sun
Shines, Robinson in flowered trunks, eyes toward
The breakers. Where the night ends, Robinson in East Side
bars.

Robinson in Glen plaid jacket, Scotch-grain shoes,
Black four-in-hand and oxford button-down,
The jeweled and silent watch that winds itself, the brief-
Case, covert topcoat, clothes for spring, all covering
His sad and usual heart, dry as a winter leaf.

Equinox

Under black lace the bald skull shines and nods,
A melon seasoned in this winter sun,
Bare, yellowed, finial
Above the claw-and-ball-foot chair that mourns
North toward the frozen window and the bay. The gulls
Rise in a long line off the rocks, steer
For the lighthouse, shadowing the boats
That toss, abandoned, far beyond the point.
Dead fish are heaped upon the coast for miles.
Her life is sleep, and pain. With waking
To this sequestered and snow-haunted world,
The black mantilla creaks with frost; red eyes
Break through the rinds of flesh, blur

Toward the dripping faucet and the last cans of
Spaghetti and baked beans, corroding on the shelves.

A bubble, then a sound that borders on a word
Breaks from her mouth. If she could think,
Her eighty years would bend toward Spain
Shadows of *santos*, crowds swarming in the heat,
Plumes, awnings, shields, the sun six hours high . . .

She believes this coast is in the South. A month ago,
Smoke from the village chimneys died. No lights burn
In windows of the cottages. Over the vacant docks
The birds are featureless, but her sight fails
Where these walls end.

Exile without remembrance,
Spawned in the heat to perish in this cold,
Ravaged by paresis, and her sight at last
A blackness in the blood, she moves her chair
Inch by excruciating inch, her face
Steered—raw, blank, aching—toward the beans:
The last survivor of the race.

Late Evening Song

For a while
Let it be enough:
The responsive smile,
Though effort goes into it.

Across the warm room
Shared in candlelight,
This look beyond shame,
Possible now, at night,

Goes out to yours.
Hidden by day
And shaped by fires
Grown dead, gone gray,

That burned in other rooms I knew
Too long ago to mark,
It forms again. I look at you
Across those fires and the dark.

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A READING LESSON

"Of making many books," warns Ecclesiastes, "there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh." Faced with the prospect of digesting centuries' worth of Great Books, the reader today may throw up his hands in despair. Canadian novelist Robertson Davies, himself a maker of many books, offers a remedy: Read selectively, listen to the inner music of a writer's words, and reread books that bring you pleasure.

BY ROBERTSON DAVIES

First of all I think it is desirable to put aside some time for reading—perhaps an evening, or an hour, or half an hour, or even 15 minutes, but a time in which to read and do nothing else and pay no attention to anything but the book.

We can read any way we please. When I was a boy, and was known to be fond of reading, many patronizing adults assured me that there was nothing I liked better than to

"curl up with a book." I despised them. I have never curled. My physique is not formed for it. It is a matter of legend that Abraham Lincoln read lying on his stomach in front of the fire; you should try that in order to understand the extraordinary indifference to physical comfort that Lincoln possessed. I have read about children who "creep away into the attic" to read, and Victorian children's stories are full of children who cannot read any-

where except in a deeply embrasured window seat. You have to find your own best place for reading, and for most of us in the Western world it is sitting in a chair with a decent light—though for Lincolnians, of course, firelight is the thing. I have forgotten those people of whom it is said that they “always have their noses in a book.” This makes reading difficult, but as I have said, you must suit yourself.

You then read your book, somewhat more slowly than modern educationists recommend. Remember, you are trying to find out what the book has to say. You are not straining to reach the end, in order that you may read something else. If you don't like the book, you do not have to read it. Put it aside and read something you do like, because there is no reason at all why you should read what bores you during your serious reading time. You have to read enough boring stuff in the ordinary way of life, without extending the borders of ennui. But if you do like the book, if it engages you seriously, do not rush at it. Read it at the pace at which you can pronounce and hear every word in your own head. Read eloquently.

I know this is heresy. People who teach reading are dead against what they call “verbalizing.” If you verbalize, you lose time. What time are they talking about? Time is one of the great hobgoblins of our day. There is really no time except the single, fleeting moment that slips by us like water, and to talk about losing time, or saving time, is often a very dubious argument. When you are reading you cannot save time, but you can diminish your pleasure by trying to do so. What are you going to do with this time when you have saved it? Have you anything to do more important than reading? You are reading for pleasure, you see, and pleasure is

very important. Incidentally your reading may bring you information, or enlightenment, but unless it brings pleasure first you should think carefully about why you are doing it.

All readers used to verbalize as they read. Indeed, during the Middle Ages people read aloud, and everybody knows the story about the scholar who had to discontinue his studies because he had a sore throat. Because they verbalized—I hate that word, but I can't find another—they truly took in—drank in, one might almost say—what they read and it was impressed on their minds forever.

Verbalizing is also one of the best critical procedures. If you meet with a passage in a book that seems to be in some way dubious or false, try reading it aloud, and your doubts will be settled. The trick of argument or the falsity of emphasis, will declare itself to your ear, when it seemed to be deceiving your eye. Lots of young people come to me to ask my advice about writing. I haven't much to give them, and if they think anyone but themselves can teach them to write, they are sadly mistaken. I am fond of a story about Beethoven, who was approached by a young man who asked him how to become a composer. “I cannot tell you,” said Beethoven, “I really don't know.” “But you have become a composer yourself,” protested the young man. “Yes, but I never had to ask,” was the answer. I tell the young people who come to me to try reading their work aloud, to see how it sounds. “Oh, but I'm not writing for performance,” they say. “Oh yes, you are,” I reply, and often they are mystified. But in truth writing *is* for performance. The great works of imagination—the masterworks of poetry, drama, and fiction—are simply indications for performance that you hold in your hand, and like musical scores they call for skilled performance *by you*, the artist and the reader. Literature is an art, and reading is also an art, and

Robertson Davies has written more than 25 books, including The Personal Art: Reading to Good Purpose (1961), the Deptford Trilogy (Fifth Business, The Manticore, and World of Wonders, 1970–75), The Rebel Angels (1981), and What's Bred in the Bone (1985). This essay is drawn from Davies's Reading and Writing, copyright © 1992 by the University of Utah Press. Reprinted with permission.

unless you recognize and develop your qualities as an interpretative artist you are not getting the best from your reading. You do not play a Bach concerto for the solo cello on a musical saw, and you should not read a play of Shakespeare in the voice of an auctioneer selling tobacco.

This business of verbalizing, of reading so that you hear what is read with the inner ear, is an invaluable critical method when you are reading poetry. Much of what passes as poetry is perishable stuff. Not long ago I was making a comparison between the *Oxford Book of English Poetry* as it appeared in 1900, edited by the late Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, and the latest edition, edited by Dame Helen Gardner. It was an astonishing revelation of change in taste—in the taste of scholars of great reputation who as critics command respect. But I permitted myself—critical worm that I am in comparison with these godlike figures—to wonder if Sir Arthur and Dame Helen had taken the trouble to read aloud all that they offered to the world, with justifiable confidence in their authority, as a survey of the best verse of five centuries. Had Sir Arthur ever really tested “A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot,” on his tongue? If he had done so, could he have missed that what he took for honey was saccharine? Perhaps so; there are elements in literary taste that seem not to be things of reason but of something relating to time, which determines taste. When Dame Helen includes

Lay your sleeping head, my love
Human on my faithless arm

most of her readers will applaud, but what will readers say in another 70 years? Modern disillusion is unlikely to last forever, and nothing rings so hollow as the angst of yesterday.

Reading to hear, rather than merely to comprehend, explains much about the poetry of earlier days. Old ballads, which seem somewhat simple-minded, with their bleak

stories and their repeated refrains, when they pass over the eye, leap into vivid life when they are heard, because they belong to a tradition of poetry that had not renounced the delights of rhyme, rhythm, and the quality of incantation that our distant forebears valued in poetry. Poetry that has decided to do without music, to divorce itself from song, has thrown away much of its reason for being, and a recognition of the element of music in poetry narrows the gap between, for instance, Keats and Byron, which might appear to a reader who had never *heard* them to be almost unbridgeable. Until quite recently there was an academic fashion of looking down on Tennyson, who was said to be mellifluous but simple-minded. But *listen* to Tennyson, and his music will tell you something that the closest sort of mute analysis cannot do, and his stature as a poet is restored and perhaps increased thereby.

I have been talking about poetry, and I do urge you to renew your acquaintance with it, if by chance you have not been reading much poetry lately. Perhaps this is the point at which I should advise you, if you are reading for pleasure, to read several books at once, and to keep on your table a book of poetry, as well as a novel, some essays, and perhaps a play or two. The notion that you have to read solemnly through one book before you can allow yourself to take up another is simple Puritanism, probably left over from childhood. If you choose to be an epicurean reader, which is what I am recommending, there will be times when nothing but poetry will satisfy your appetite, and you must have poetry readily at hand. Perhaps you like to keep up with what the young poets are doing, and that is admirable, but I urge you also to read some poetry that has been tested by time, and which does things that the moderns do not seek to do, or perhaps—I say this almost apologetically—cannot do. One of the things I miss in modern poetry is joy, exuberance, sheer delight in life. That is a quality that preserves a poet marvelously.

Ty hye, ty hye! O sweet delight!
He tickles this age that can
Call Tullia's ape a marmosite
And Leda's goose a swan.

Who writes charming invitations to pleasure in a kind of splendid giggling frolic spirit like that nowadays? Not the people who write lyrics—if they may so be called—for rock music; their joy seems to have its roots in disarray of the mind. But the little squib that I have just quoted springs from joy that is unalloyed, and it was written in a time when the plague and war and the ill-will of nations was just as prevalent on the earth as it is today, and the average expectation of life was about 32 years.

I myself have a taste for Browning. There are times when nothing but Browning will do. He is not particularly musical, and that is odd, because he is one of the few poets who was a technically trained and skilled musician. His language is knotty and there are times when his reader feels like

The old man of Ashokan
Who loved to chew wood, mostly oaken;
Very often he'd quip
With a smile on his lip,
Ah sho' can gnash oak in Ashokan.

Browning's tough colloquialism used to be held against him, and as an undergraduate I encountered professors who would quote:

Irks care the crop-full bird?
Frets doubt the maw-crammed beast?

—and then go off into paroxysms of dusty academic mirth at what they thought was Browning's willful clumsiness. But once you have accustomed yourself to his voice, Browning has golden things to say, and I have been a lifelong champion of *The Ring and the Book*, which is neglected by many readers because it is long and intimidating. But it is also a very great poem, and you do not have to read it all at once. But to sense its worth you should read in it, and reread, at various times in your life. Frequently it recalls to me the

Loathly Damsel of medieval legend, who was repellent at first encounter but who, when embraced, changed into a girl of inexhaustible charm, wisdom, and beauty.

What I have just said about rereading is a point I should like to stress. The great sin, as I have said, is to assume that something that has been read once has been read forever. As a very simple example I mention Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. People are expected to read it during their university years. But you are mistaken if you think you read Thackeray's book then; you read a lesser book of your own. It should be read again when you are 36, which is the age of Thackeray when he wrote it. It should be read for a third time when you are 56, 66, 76, in order to see how Thackeray's irony stands up to your own experience of life. Perhaps you will not read every page in these later years, but you really should take another look at a great book, in order to find out how great it is, or how great it has remained, to you. You see, Thackeray was an artist, and artists deserve this kind of careful consideration. We must not gobble their work, like chocolates, or olives, or anchovies, and think we know it forever. *Nobody ever reads the same book twice.*

Of course everybody knows that, but how many people act upon it? One of the great achievements of literature in our century is Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*; in the edition I have it runs to 12 convenient volumes. In my experience people tend to read it when young, and never to look at it again. But it is not a young person's book. Of course young people should read it, but they should go on reading it or reading in it during the life that follows. When I read it as a young man, the homosexual exploits of the Baron de Charlus seemed extraordinary dispatches from an unknown world; nowadays, when one can meet a mini-Charlus every day of the week, the extraordinary quality has gone. But what has not gone—what is indeed freshly understood—is Proust's serious and compassionate treatment of this theme in a book

of many themes. Charlus is one of those great characters whom we know better than we know most of our contemporaries, and his creator's attitude toward him and his tenderness toward the Baron's dreadful disintegration enlarge our own sensibility and give us a different attitude toward excitable protests on behalf of "gays" in our very un-Proustian society. The Baron would have shrunk from being typified as "gay."

So it is also with another towering creation of this century, James Joyce's *Ulysses*. One cannot, of course, measure what Molly Bloom's magnificent soliloquy at the end of that book has done to enlarge and reshape our ideas about women, but one knows that its influence has been vast. When Sigmund Freud asked his supposedly unanswerable question—"What do women really want?"—he had not read what Molly wanted or he would have phrased it differently. It is not that she *says* what she wants, but she makes us *feel* what she wants, and it is something far beyond the range of any sociological or psychoanalytical answer. Molly wants to live on a mythological level, and that certainly does not mean that she wants to posture as a goddess or indulge in any pseudoclassical antics; it means that she wants a largeness of perception, a wider dimension of life, a psychological freedom that the modern world does not give her. She wants a rich simplicity. And that is the whole thrust of the book. Unaware of the fact, Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus are living out a great classical theme in their dingy Dublin lives, and the greatness of what they are doing eludes them. Eludes them not because they are stupid—they are nothing of the sort—but because it is part of our fate never to see our destiny as a whole or discern the archetypal forces that shape our lives. Molly does not see these things either, but she has an intuitive sense of them, and thus she is able to long for them when the men, corseted in reason and logic, cannot draw so near to this aspect of truth.

Ulysses is a wonder, and we can recur to it time and again with the certainty of finding

new pleasures and new insights. It is also one of the funniest books in our language. The fun lies not in obvious jokes; it is in the grain of the prose, and it rises from the extraordinary mind of the author. When we read, we must always be aware of the mind that lies behind the book. Not that we may be wholly persuaded by it, or that we should have no minds of our own, but that we may share it and be shown new meanings by it. Also that we should assess it. When I was a professor I seemed to meet a great many students who were wholly possessed and beglamoured by Oscar Wilde, and some of them were, for a few weeks, mini-Wildes, dealing extensively in *réchauffé* wit of the 1890s. Sometimes I suggested that they examine, not the refulgent surface, the shot-silk elegance of his prose, but whatever they were able to discern behind it of the mind that had created such beautiful things. It is a Fabergé mind, and although we should not like to be without Fabergé, we should not wish to make him our standard of artistic achievement. There are people who insist that Wilde ranks with Congreve as a great writer of comedy. Consider both minds: Congreve was wise—worldly wise as well—in a degree that Wilde never achieved, kindly, good, generous, fatuous man that he was.

Joyce is an Irishman of a different stripe, and Wilde's admirers might describe him as a dirty-fingernails writer. If Joyce's fingernails are dirty, it is because he has no objection to grubbing in the dirt, if the dirt has anything to tell him. And he has taught us one of the lessons of our century, which is that the dirt has very important things to tell us, because it is from the dirt that we all spring, and no disease is so fatal to an adequate understanding of life as over-refinement, which is inevitably false refinement. For refinement of feeling is surely a quality we bring to everything we touch, and not something that cuts us off from a great part of human experience. Modern hygiene has banished much of the physical dirt of an earlier



day, but the lessons that are hidden in the dirt must not be forgotten.

Of Joyce's other remarkable book, *Finnegans Wake*, I shall not speak, because I have not yet come to any conclusions about it. I know few people who have read it, and of those, I meet fewer still who appear to have come anywhere near to understanding it. I grope in it, holding a candle that is plainly marked "Manufactured by C. G. Jung and Co., Zurich." It is not a candle that Joyce would have approved—he hated Jung because Jung told him something he didn't want to hear—but the Jungian candle is the only one I have.

I hope you do not think that I am being trivial, or treating you with less than proper respect, because I am talking so much about novels. When I was an undergraduate there were still academics who thought novel-reading an inferior sort of literary enjoyment. But a good novel has its roots in life as surely as a good poem and usually more truly than the work of most essayists. It was when I was young that I read the opinion of a critic—popular at that time and now almost forgotten—John Middleton Murry, that "a truly great novel is a tale to the simple, a parable to the wise, and a direct revelation of reality to a man who has made it part of his being." I have never forgotten that and test

the novels I read by its acid, seeking for gold, for gold plate, and for dissembling brass.

The simplest function of the novel is the tale, but only someone who has never tried it thinks that the discovery and relation of a tale is simple work. The wish to be told a story never dies in the human heart, and great storytellers enjoy a long life that more subtle writers sometimes envy. Consider the Sherlock Holmes stories. Unless you are beglamoured by them, they are queer reading. The mysteries that confront the great detective are tailor-made for his style of detection; they

are puzzles suited to a particular puzzle solver. Confront Holmes with a simple backstreet murder or theft, and he would probably have to confess his inferiority to the Scotland Yard bunglers he despised. But the tale-telling is so skillful, the contrast between Holmes and Watson so brilliant, the upper-middle-class level of crime, which is the kind that Holmes usually takes on (you observe that he rarely has truck or trade with the likes of Jack the Ripper), is all so deftly handled by Arthur Conan Doyle that he has created a legend that seems to be increasing 60 years after the death of its creator. Will Virginia Woolf last so long? It seems to me that I see the mists closing in as her novels give place to scandalous revelations about her life.

Then comes the parable. What is a parable? A moral tale, is it not? Such novels are very popular because, whatever appears on the surface, our time loves a display of moralism; innumerable novels are rooted in the words of Saint Paul: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." That is the message of Tom Wolfe's best seller *Bonfire of the Vanities*. It seems to be couched in modern, rather grotty language: Keep your nose clean; don't risk everything for the big bucks; never trust a dame. But behind this street wisdom is the wisdom of Paul, served up with the pepper and tabasco that persuades so many innocent

readers that they are getting something undreamed of in the past.

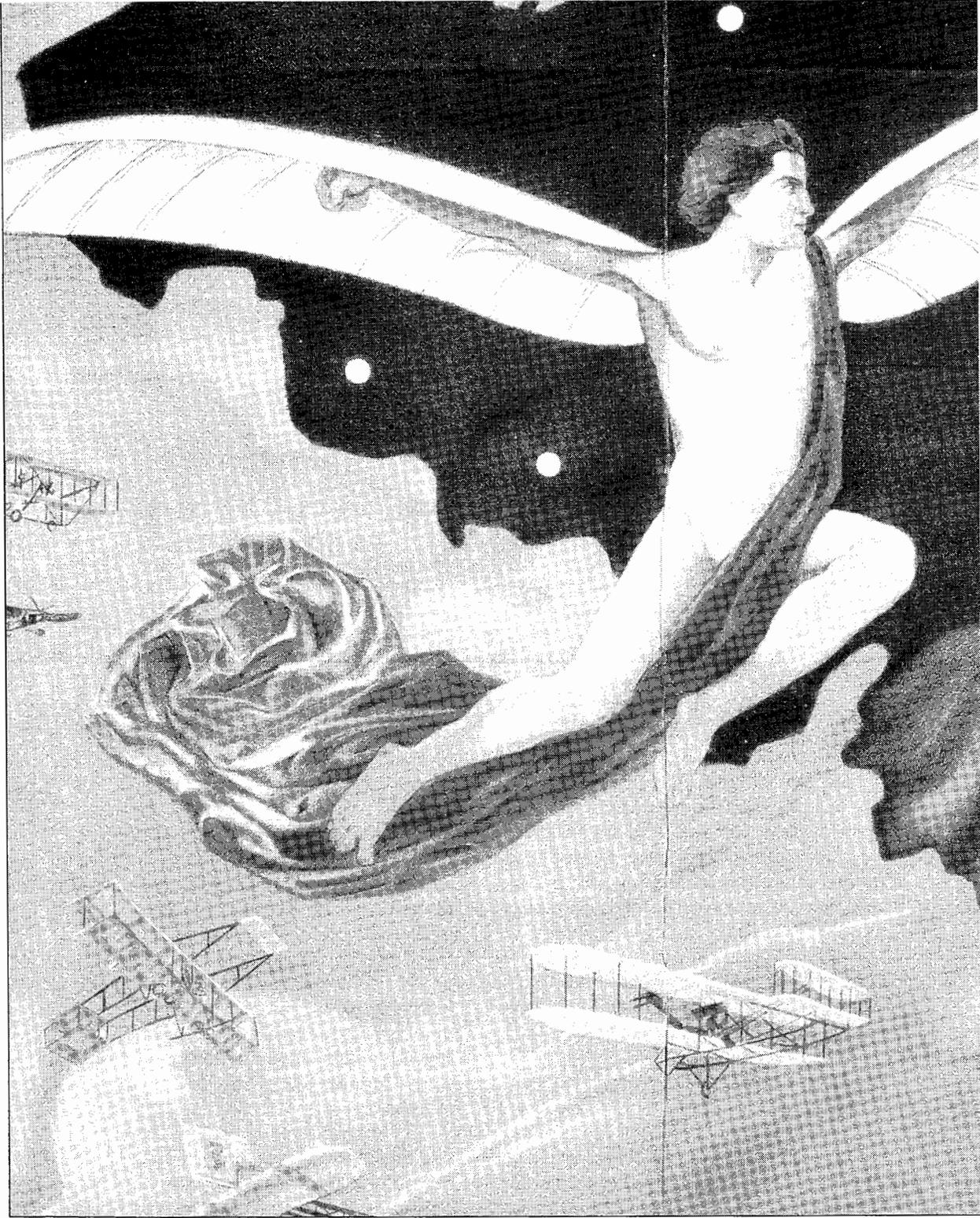
Now, what about the book that is a direct revelation of reality? We all have our favorites, and they are the books that accord with the reality life has brought to us. We cannot hope to grasp total, all-embracing reality. For many people these are the great blockbusters—novels like *War and Peace*, *Crime and Punishment*, *The Magic Mountain*, *Middlemarch*, *Remembrance of Things Past*. I have known people who found this sort of revelation in *Don Quixote*, which I can understand but not accept as my own; I have known others who found it in *Tristram Shandy*, which I confess puzzles me. One must find one's own great novels, which seem to illuminate and explain portions of one's own experience, just as one must find the poetry that speaks most intimately to oneself. For one reader it is Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, for another Wordsworth's *Prelude*, for another *The Ring and the Book*. And so it would be possible to go on elaborating and extending lists, because the choice is great and individual preference the final factor in making a choice. And in addition to these milestones on the most traveled roads, the real enthusiast for reading will find byways, like the works of Rabelais, or Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, or the magpie accumulations of John Aubrey. It is absurd to speak of these books as byways, but I do so because I do not meet many people who read in them frequently, or indeed at all.

How dull he is being, you may think, as I draw near to my conclusion. How like a professor. He is simply parroting Matthew Arnold, with his tedious adjuration that "culture is the acquainting ourselves with the best that has been known and said in the world, and thus with the history of the human spirit." But I assure you that I mean no such thing, and I have always had my reservations about Matthew Arnold,

who was too cultured for his own good. He seems never to have listened to the voices which must, surely, have spoken to him in dreams or in moments when he was off his guard—voices that spoke of the human longing for what is ordinary, what is commonplace, vulgar, possibly obscene or smutty. Our grandparents used to say that we must eat a peck of dirt before we die, and they were right. And you must read a lot of rubbish before you die as well, because an exclusive diet of masterpieces will give you spiritual dyspepsia. How can you know that a mountain peak is glorious if you have never scrambled through a dirty valley? How do you know that your gourmet meal is perfect in its kind if you have never eaten a roadside hot dog? If you want to know what a masterpiece *The Pilgrim's Progress* is, read *Bonfire of the Vanities*, and if you have any taste—which of course may not be the case—you will quickly find out. So I advise you, as well as reading great books that I have been talking about, read some current books and some periodicals. They will help you to take the measure of the age in which you live.

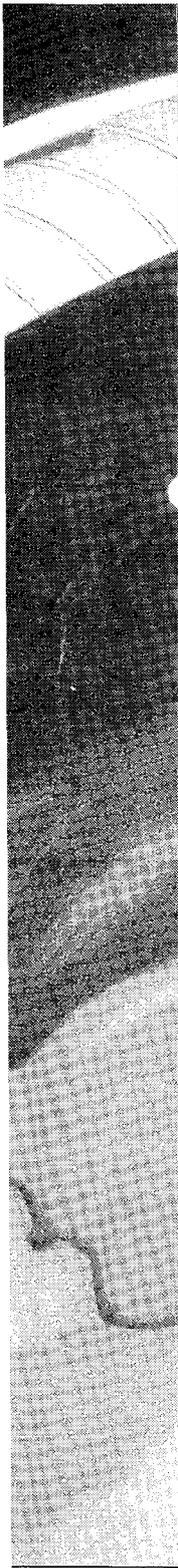
I hope you are not disappointed in the advice I have been giving. Certainly I have not flogged you on to feats of endurance and intellectual stress. Quite the contrary, I have urged you to relax, to read more slowly, to reread books that speak to you with special intimacy, to act out your fictions in your minds, as if you were a great theatrical director with infinite choice in casting, in decor, in all the adjuncts that produce a convincing atmosphere.

I have urged you to allow your poetry to sing to you so that you may hear the authentic bardic voice wherever it is to be found. This is reading for pleasure, not to become immensely widely read, not to become an expert on anything, but to have read deeply and to have invited a few great masterpieces into your life.



"We [Futurists] believe in the possibility of an incalculable number of human transformations, and we say without smiling that wings sleep in the flesh of man."

—F. T. Marinetti



Republic of the Air

Not many years after the Wright Brothers took to the air in 1903, a vast popular culture of aviation took flight with them. Ranging from Mussolini to Russian Futurism to the Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers classic Flying Down to Rio, historian Robert Wohl shows how aviation came to represent the hope of cultural and moral renewal—and how the cult was eventually brought down to earth.

BY ROBERT WOHL

As we scurry through the endless concourses of today's airports on our way to catch a plane, how many of us pause to think that we are about to undertake an essentially *aesthetic* and *moral* experience? Yet only 60 years ago Western culture, high and low, celebrated aviation in just such terms. Hollywood's big studios glamorized the miracle of flight in a spate of star-studded films. Charles Lindbergh acquired the divine sobriquet "the new Christ." And the Modernist architect and city planner Le Corbusier proclaimed the airplane the foremost symbol of the 20th century and the "vanguard of the conquering armies of the New Age."

For Le Corbusier, aviation was not only a technology that held out the promise of moving people and goods more rapidly from one place to another; it was also, and more importantly, a source of *aesthetic energy* and *faith* capable of inspiring new forms

of cultural creation. Le Corbusier insisted that the flying machine and the new perspective it offered on the world, if interpreted correctly, could provide invaluable lessons for architects and urban planners. Indeed, in his unbounded enthusiasm for the new technology, Le Corbusier went so far as to claim that the airplane embodied the same spirit of imagination and "cold reason" that produced the Parthenon. The implication was that the West was on the verge of entering a new classical era of rationalism in which machine-inspired functionalism would dictate design.

But the Age of Aviation, while it left a lasting imprint on the way we live our lives, failed to realize the cultural hopes that Le Corbusier and others had placed in it. Born during the century's first decade, aviation culture reached its apogee during the 1930s and lost much of its vigor and self-confidence during the years that followed the Second World War. To review its history today is to be reminded that our century has been a voracious consumer of ideals and a relentless shatterer of dreams.

Popular enthusiasm for aviation was slow to develop. Though the Wright brothers achieved their first powered flight in December 1903, it was not until they demonstrated their flying machine under controlled conditions at Fort Myer, Virginia, and Le Mans, France, in the fall of 1908 that skeptical observers began to concede that human beings were now capable of navigating the air. Public enthusiasm for the new invention took a quantum leap the following summer when Louis Blériot crossed the English Channel in a daring flight of 36½ minutes. This aerial beau geste set off massive demonstrations in France and England. To capture the public's imagination, Blériot explained, it was necessary to risk everything by flying over water. Nothing could duplicate the sensation

of seeing an airplane disappear alone into oblivion over a boundless sea. Generations of aviators would follow Blériot's example in search of fame and fortune.

Journalists and intellectuals lost no time explaining the meaning of the new technology to their readers. What is striking is how quick they were to interpret the new invention in cultural and political terms. As the Italian man of letters Gabriele D'Annunzio confided to a French interviewer in 1910 soon after taking his first flight, aviation carried within itself "the promise of a profound metamorphosis of civic life" that would have far-reaching consequences for aesthetics as well as for war and peace. New idols would appear; new laws would have to be written; relations among nations would be transformed. High in the sky, above the clouds, customs barriers, property rights, and frontiers lost their meaning. Aviation would create a new civilization, a new way of life, and a new elite. The "Republic of the Air" would exile the wicked and the parasites and would open itself to "men of good will." The "elect" would abandon the "chrysalis of weight" and would take flight.

D'Annunzio's novel *Perhaps Yes, Perhaps No*, published the same year, provided a portrait of the new elite. Its protagonist Paolo Tarsis, like Blériot "a builder of wings" and a record-setting competitor in air meets, escapes from a destructive love affair and a psychologically twisted mistress by flying 135 nautical miles from the west coast of Italy to the island of Sardinia, where he is spiritually reborn. D'Annunzio intuited what would become the recurring refrain of aviation literature. For him, aviation was not a sport, still less a new mode of transportation; it was a means of moral and spiritual transcendence that elevated man above his fate, and this justified the sacrifice of lives that conquering the air would inevitably entail. By accepting the

Robert Wohl, a former Wilson Center Fellow, is professor of history at the University of California at Los Angeles. He is the author of The Generation of 1914 (1979) and the forthcoming A Passion for Wings, volume one of a trilogy about aviation and the Western imagination. Copyright © 1993 by Robert Wohl.

terrible risks of flight and challenging death, he believed, the new elect of pilots could create a religion of speed and escape from the limitations of everyday life. The aviator, in short, was "the messenger of a vaster life," a technological superman whose mission was to triumph over space and time. The earth-bound would have to settle for the vicarious identification they could feel with these "celestial helmsmen" who looked down on those below with a scornful smile.

D'Annunzio's countryman, the founder of Futurism, F. T. Marinetti, took D'Annunzio's message one step further. In his view, technology did not merely offer a topic for literature; it had *replaced* literature and rendered the romantic and sentimental sensibility of the 19th century obsolete. Men would merge with motors. Their will would become like steel. Their vital organs would become as interchangeable as a flying machine's spare parts. The motor was man's "perfected brother" because it was capable of eternal youth. "We [Futurists] believe in the possibility of an incalculable number of human transformations, and we say without smiling that wings sleep in the flesh of man."

If wings slept in the flesh of man, why go on producing literature? Why not fly? One Russian Futurist writer came to just this conclusion. In 1910, soon after publishing his first novel, Vasily Kamensky abandoned literature in order to devote himself to aviation. He later wrote: "I wanted to participate in the great discovery not merely with words, but with deeds. What are poems and novels? The airplane—that is the truest achievement of our time If we are people of the motorized present, poets of universal dynamism, newcomers and messengers of the future, masters of action and activity, enthusiastic builders of new forms of life—then we must be, we have no choice but to be, flyers."

Kamensky went on to become a professional pilot and flew exhibitions until he was nearly killed in 1912, when he lost control of his Blériot XI and crashed into a Polish bog.

Thereafter he wisely limited his aeronautical activities to the realm of the imagination and produced an impressive body of avant-garde poetry, in which he evoked the coming age of flight. In his airminded vision, boys and girls climbed rainbows instead of trees; "clean" and "sublime" technological achievement had rendered the wisdom of the ancients obsolete; electric lights shone brighter than the sun or moon; and aviators, with their record-breaking flights, had taken possession of the earth. Capable of flying anywhere in the world, his pilots spit contemptuously on the subhumans who remained attached to the ground.

To be sure, not all Western poets and intellectuals greeted the coming of the flying machine with the unqualified enthusiasm of D'Annunzio, Marinetti, and Kamensky. Some, like the Viennese journalist and critic Karl Kraus, feared that their contemporaries were becoming the prisoners of their own inventions. They had been clever enough to create sophisticated machines, but they lacked the intelligence to use them properly. Because the air had been conquered, the earth was now condemned to be bombarded. Instead of raising humanity toward the stars, then, aviation had only extended man's misery to the skies, "as if it did not have ample room down below."

The British novelist John Galsworthy also deplored what he called "the prostitution of the conquest of the air to the ends of warfare." "If ever men presented a spectacle of sheer inanity it is now," he wrote in 1911, "when, having at long last triumphed in their struggle to subordinate to their welfare the unconquered element, they have straightaway commenced to defile that element, so heroically mastered, by filling it with engines of destruction. If ever the gods were justified of their ironic smile—by the gods, it is now!"

But Kraus and Galsworthy were exceptions. Even writers who deplored the building up of nationalist tensions and the cult of violence in pre-1914 Europe could not suppress

their enthusiasm for aviation. The passion for flight and the willingness of young aviators to risk their lives, they felt, was a sign of vitality and a demonstration that, contrary to what many claimed, the Western peoples were not in decline. Ancient virtues that many feared had been eroded by urban civilization had reappeared. Heroism had been reborn. The "huddled masses" had been forced to raise their faces away from the dirty city pavements toward the purity of the sky. Or as Edmond Rostand, author of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, put it in a long poem, "Hymn of the Wings," which he devoted to the new technology and its apprentices:

Higher! ever higher, pilot! and glory to men
Of great will!
Glory to those stealers of the flame that we are!
Glory to Humanity!

Looking at pre-1918 Western culture, one cannot help be struck by the variety of contexts in which aviation metaphors appeared. Flight could signify the act of imagination and artistic creation, escape from the constraints of a dreary bourgeois world, triumph over the limitations placed on human beings by nature, ascension toward a new system of perception, or sometimes union with the angels and God. The aviator, in the hands of a painter like the Russian Kazimir Malevich, became a symbol for the man of the future who would liberate himself from the limitations of gravity and earthly space. The connection between avant-garde art and aviation was so natural and so accepted that when the young photographer Jacques Lartigue attended the *Rite of Spring* in June 1913, what he liked about Stravinsky's music was that its throbbing rhythms—*vroum, vroum, vroum*—reminded him of the roar of airplane engines taking off at the airfield he frequented outside Paris, Issy-les-Moulineaux.

For most people, of course, the matter was simpler, though the feelings aroused by the flying machine were no less intense. Coming as it did on the heels of an apparently never-ending series of technological innovations, the

flying machine was interpreted as a confirmation that the Western peoples had subjugated Nature to their will and intelligence, and hence as a promise, even a guarantee, of greater victories to come. To a civilization that had recently extended its dominion throughout the world by means of imperialist expansion and annexation, it seemed natural to turn its energies and its attention to the mastery of the sky. Now that Western man had successfully escaped from the earth and invaded the heavens—a realm formerly preserved for birds, angels, and God—who could say with any certitude where his limitations lay? Time, space, even death might be overcome.

Aviation, then, was the realization of the Promethean dream that had tormented the peoples of the West throughout their history. Through the miracle of flight, myth had been transformed into technological reality. Henceforth technology would take the place of myth. The sky was no longer a limit, but a frontier to be explored and mastered.

The external sign of the flying machine's deepest meaning was the rapidity with which it moved through the air. Born of the "Spirit of Speed," as one pre-1914 poet put it, the airplane was "the youngest child of motion"—the younger brother and successor to the locomotive, the bicycle, and the automobile. Its exploits thrilled the audiences who flocked to air meets and, as a metaphor for modernity, it promised to shrink the world, collapsing days of travel into hours and by doing so enriching and extending life.

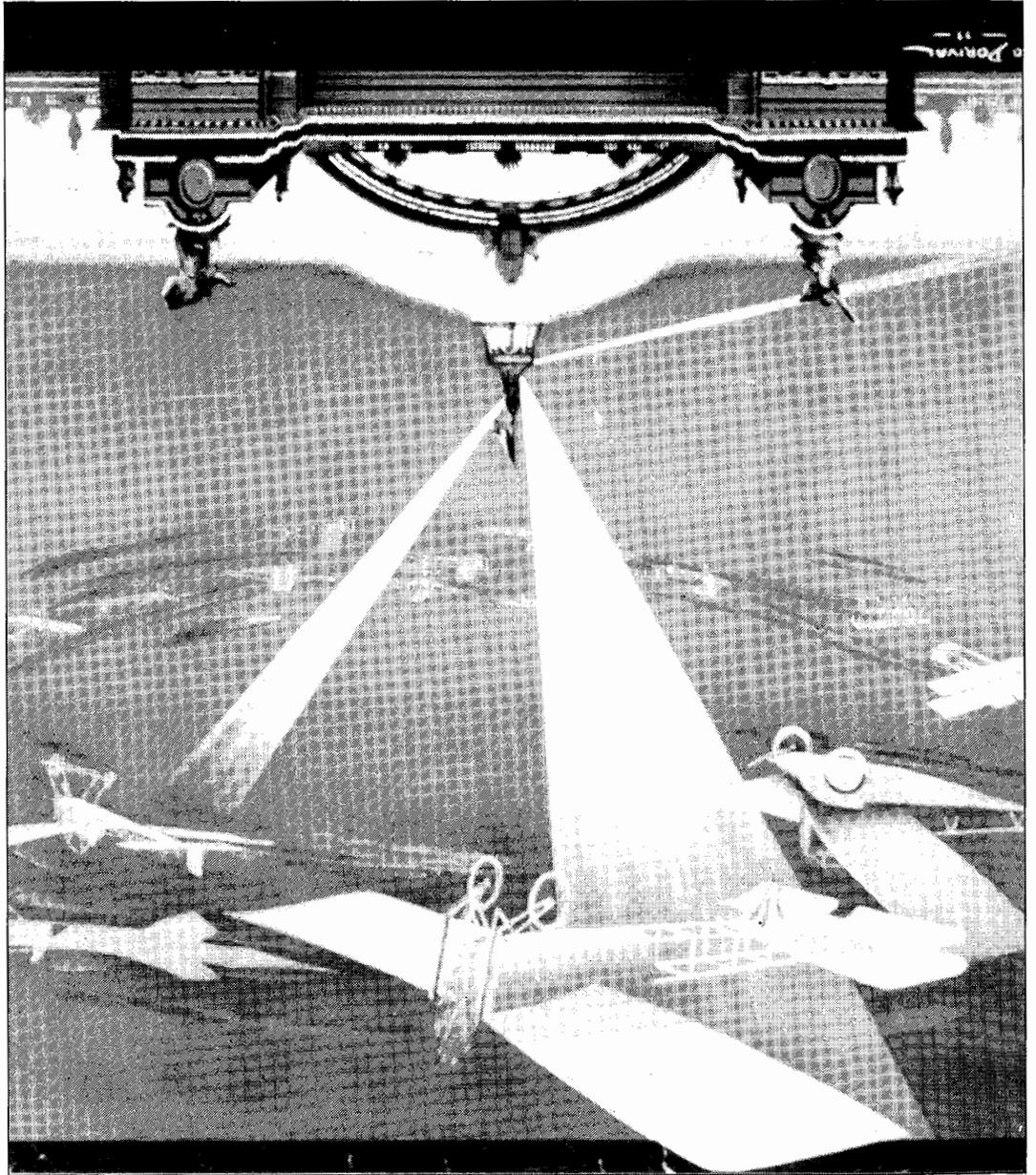
Yet paradoxically, because of the aircraft's fragile construction and the perils of the ever-changing weather, the airplane put the men and women who dared to fly in intimate and dangerous contact with the elements, thus bringing to an end the alienation from nature that many had come to associate with modernity and industrialism. How exhilarating to feel the lash of the wind on one's face and to feel at one with the world as one flew above it! Could there be an experience more intense than pitting one's flying skills against the

fickle moods of the "wayward air"?
Above all, the airplane held out the prospect of freedom: "Freedom," wrote the French aviator and memoirist Francy Lacroix in 1918, "this leap that detaches you from the ground and opens to you the sky. Freedom,

—Le Corbusier

The airplane flies direct from one point to another indifferent to the contours of the earth.

The airplane is nothing except a supporting plane—a means of propulsion.
CLEARNESS OF FUNCTION!



this road without limit that can cross all roads at any altitude and in any direction. Freedom, this infinite conquest of trees, of towns, of plains, and mountains." The freedom to come and go, as you pleased and to leave behind the mundane cares of a corrupt world.

Small wonder, then, that the apostles of the new religion predicted that aviation would bring about a moral and physical regeneration of the Western peoples and a profound renewal of culture. "The music of new times stood above us in the heavens," an air-minded German novelist wrote in 1914; "the song of the future roared confidently; a new world had been born of a different kind and a different form." Those who truly believed in aviation knew that life would never be the same again.

One might guess that the trauma of the First World War would have had the effect of inspiring second thoughts about the conquest of the air. This turned out not to be the case. True, the inhabitants of Paris and London got a preview of aircraft, as H. G. Wells had described them in his 1908 novel *War in the Air*, "dripping death" from the sky. Watching a zeppelin raid over London, D. H. Lawrence had visions of apocalypse and the birth of a new cosmos symbolized by the German airship "calm and drifting in a glow of light, like a new moon, with its light bursting in flashes on the ground." "So it is the end," he wrote in a letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell. "Our world is gone, and we are like dust in the air."

But the dominant image of the aviator that emerged from the war was not that of the merciless bombardier who threatened an end to civilization but rather that of the flying ace, a knight of the air who jousts with blazing machine guns in chivalrous combat above the stalemated and entrenched armies of the ground. Heroes larger than life were driven to seek combat in the clouds—in W. B. Yeats's stirring phrase—not by law or duty nor by cheering crowds but by "a lonely impulse of delight."

In retrospect, it is astonishing how deeply

this image of the aviator became embedded in the popular culture of the Western countries. Scores of books and films were devoted to this theme. Among other things, they testify to the longing for a different type of war from the one most combatants knew during the years between 1914 and 1918.

Charles Lindbergh was only one of thousands of young boys who decided to become an aviator after reading an account of the adventures of a World War I ace. After a brief apprenticeship as a barnstormer, wing-walker, army air force cadet, and airmail pilot, he went on to become the most famous airman in history. Even today, it is difficult to explain his extraordinary and persisting celebrity. Contrary to what many people believe, he was not the first person to fly the Atlantic. A long train of aviators before him (beginning with the American pilot A. C. Read and his crew in 1919) had made spectacular overseas flights that had captured the imagination of the public and the headlines of newspapers throughout the world. But no one before Lindbergh had made the flight alone, and no one before had ever so charismatically incarnated the promise of the airplane to change the world, a mission he invoked when he entitled his 1927 autobiography *We*, suggesting the fusion that Marinetti had earlier predicted between human beings and their machines.

To be sure, when Lindbergh made his prize-winning flight from New York to Paris in May 1927, the groundwork had already been laid for the explosion of aviation culture that would occur over the next decade. In Italy, for example, Mussolini understood that aviation could be used for ideological purposes to identify the new fascist movement he had founded with speed, audacity, and domination of the air. Aviators figured prominently in Mussolini's entourage when he came to power in October 1922 and one of his first actions as premier was to create a Ministry of Aviation, whose portfolio he personally assumed. His goal was not just to develop a powerful air force—indispensable to Italy's imperial expansion—but to cultivate an

aviation consciousness among the Italian people. As he explained to a gathering of aviators in 1923, not everyone could learn to fly. Flying would remain the privilege of an aristocracy. But everyone must long to fly and regard aviators with envy. "All devoted citizens must follow with profound feeling the development of Italian wings."

To implement this program, Mussolini sponsored highly publicized record-breaking flights by Italian aviators and built a monumental Air Ministry in the center of Rome whose lavish murals suggested the omnipresence of Italian air power. His minister of aviation, Italo Balbo, led flotillas of Italian sea-

aviators with poets and airplanes with objets d'art. Marcel Proust found the metaphor of flight so compelling that he used it in his novel *In Search of Lost Time* to express his ascension toward "the silent heights of memory." Jean Cocteau wrote elegant verses celebrating the exploits of his friend, the famous aviator Rolland Garros, and identifying himself as an "aviator of ink." Several best-selling books dealt with the adventures of French aviators during the Great War, the most influential being Henry Bordeaux's biography of the ace Georges Guynemer. In 1924 Louise Faure-Favier, author of the first novel devoted to commercial aviation pilots, called upon



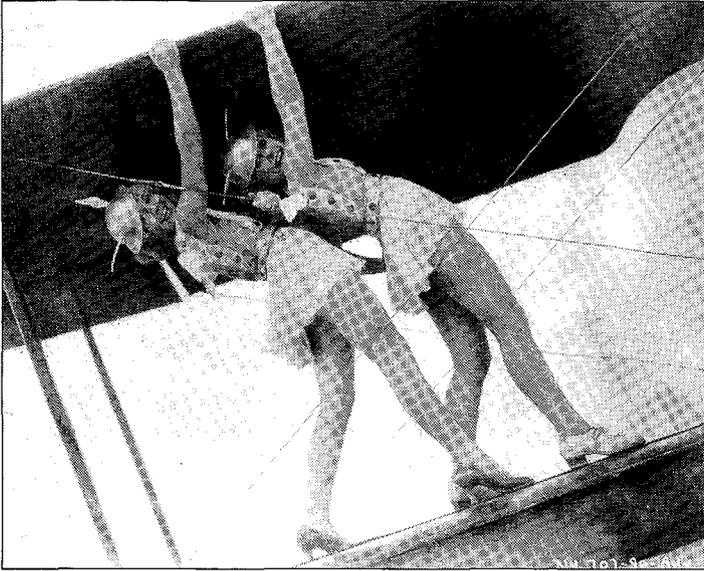
Mussolini endowed his fascist movement with the glamorous aura of airpower. Art from an Italian government calendar of 1941 depicts Il Duce at the controls of an airplane.

planes across the South and North Atlantic, reaching in 1933 as far as Chicago, whose city council erected a monument to Balbo along Lake Michigan and named one of the city's streets after him. Italian artists were encouraged to paint on aviation topics, postage stamps were issued to commemorate Italian aerial triumphs, and Mussolini, who had himself learned how to fly, was often photographed at the controls of Italian military airplanes.

In France aviation had also become a major cultural theme. Ever since Wilbur Wright had first flown near Le Mans in August 1908, French writers had been inclined to identify

French writers to "go up in planes."

But it was not until the publication in 1931 of *Night Flight* by Antoine Saint-Exupéry that the aviation novel was sanctioned by the French literary establishment. Drawing on his friends' and his own experiences as airmail pilots for the line that came to be known as *Aéropostale*, Saint-Exupéry created a portrait of a group of men whose dedication to their craft as aviators was such that it bore no relationship to the cargo that they carried. Flying, for them, was a means of spiritual transcendence that raised them above themselves and allowed them to achieve nobility, even if doing so required their death. Their monk-like



The dancers in *Flying Down to Rio* (1933) perform their routine high above the Brazilian city. Aviation movies were ideal fare for American audiences intent upon soaring above the hard realities of the Depression.

leader, Rivière, lived by a code so austere that he never considered putting the safety of the individual above the common mission: The mail must go through, no matter what the human cost. In a preface to the novel, André Gide, the reigning pope of the French literary establishment, expressed his gratitude to Saint-Exupéry for having elucidated a paradoxical truth that the French badly needed to understand: namely "that man's happiness is not to be found in liberty, but in the acceptance of a duty."

Saint-Exupéry liked to compare the craft of the aviator to that of the carpenter or simple tiller of the soil. The pilot, he said, was an artisan who lived in close communion and harmony with nature. "The machine, which at first seemed to isolate man from the great problems of nature, actually submits him to them with greater force. Alone, amidst the great tribunal that a stormy sky creates for him, the pilot defends his mail against three elementary divinities, the mountains, the sea, and the tempest." But the book with which Saint-Exupéry followed *Night*

Flight—Wind, Sand and Stars (1939)—gave the impression that the aviator represented a new breed of man, a creature both freer and nobler than the ordinary run of human being. And this was precisely the way the book was interpreted by its more authoritative critics, and one of the reasons for its great popular success.

One of the features of aviation culture from the beginning was the ease with which themes and images traversed the intellectual distance separating Modernist and avant-garde culture from mass culture. Hollywood discovered aviation in the 1920s and quickly learned how to adapt the airplane aesthetic to its

own commercial ends. The translation of the culture of flight to film was all the smoother because many of the directors, actors, and writers who participated in the making of Hollywood aviation films were themselves pilots, some of whom had flown in Europe during World War I.

In view of this and the flourishing cult of aces in popular magazines and books, it is not surprising that the aviation topic for which Hollywood showed the most enthusiasm during the late 1920s and 1930s was combat in the skies of France in 1917–18. William Wellman's *Wings*—winner of the first Academy Award in 1928 and dedicated to Charles Lindbergh, whose flight preceded by only a few months the release of the film—portrayed in unforgettable images the mechanical ballet of scout planes making deadly passes in the air. *Wings* managed to give the impression that the actors had fused with their machines, an uncanny realization of Marinetti's prewar Futurist fantasies, but one which, unlike his, reached an audience of millions. Determined to go *Wings* one better, the millionaire aviator Howard Hughes invested \$4 million of his

own money—a fortune in those days—to produce an even more elaborate reconstruction of the aerial war. As late as 1938, in the aftermath of the Munich agreements, Hollywood was busy remaking *Dawn Patrol*, a bitter yet exhilarating look back at the life (and death) of British fighter pilots during the last phase of World War I.

A second theme of aviation culture that Hollywood adopted with alacrity was misogyny, which had already played a leading role in D'Annunzio and Marinetti's prewar writings. Flight in their novels and poems had been a means of escaping from the sordid and demeaning world of women. Hollywood screenwriters could not allow themselves the luxury of such unwholesome literary conceits, but they often presented the female lead as a greater threat to the aviator and his companions than wind, fog, sleet, or snow. In *Wings* the perfect friendship of Buddy Rogers and Richard Arlen is destroyed and Arlen dies because of a quarrel caused by their rivalry for Clara Bow's affections; in *Only Angels Have Wings* (1939), the appearance of Jean Arthur at a tropical hotel-air-drome results in the fatal crash of Noah Berry, Jr., the wounding of the Rivière-like head of the airmail service, Cary Grant, and the death of his best friend, Thomas Mitchell—all because a woman is incapable of understanding the virile feelings and higher ethic that drive aviators to fly and risk their lives.

Watching these films, one would never guess that the 1930s was the great age of the aviatrix. Amy Johnson and Beryl Markham in England, Hélène Boucher and Maryse Bastié in France, Thea Rasche and Hanna Reitsch in Germany, Elinor Smith and Amelia Earhart in the United States all showed by their record-breaking flights that women were as good, if not better, at handling airplanes than men. Flying, said Rasche, was "more thrilling than love for a man and far less dangerous." It was also a means by which women could explore and expand the boundaries of newly acquired freedoms. But on the few occasions during this decade when Hollywood put women be-

hind the controls of a plane, its (mostly male) writers either identified the female flyer with adultery and sent her crashing to her death, as in the 1933 *Christopher Strong*, or they suggested that their protagonist had taken up flying in order to impress or to get closer to the man she loved, as in the 1938 *Tail Spin*. In Hollywood's vision of the world, women aviators invariably ended badly.

Hollywood was much more comfortable when celebrating the marriage of macho men and cutting-edge technology. This was nowhere more evident than in the 1933 musical *Flying Down to Rio*, in many ways Hollywood's most astonishing and exuberant display of aviation madness. Rising above an inconsequential plot based on a triangle between a sultry Brazilian beauty played by Dolores del Río, her rich Brazilian fiancé, and an American aviator-band leader, the film throbs with Latin rhythms, the roar of aircraft engines, and the excitement of exotic settings. The genius of this vibrantly air-minded movie lies in the realization by its makers that flight had become a form of spectacle. Deprived of the use of the nightclub in which they had been appearing, the dancers take to the sky and, strapped to the wings of airplanes, perform their act above the city. Afterwards, in a surprising twist, Del Río's fiancé arranges for her to be married to the American aviator by the captain of the airplane, then parachutes out over the city, leaving the couple to fly away toward eternal happiness. The entire film is full of aviation motifs, designed by Carroll Clark and Van Nest Polglass, and leaves an impression of irrepressible aeronautical enthusiasm and the limitless possibilities of love and international communication opened up by the new technology.

From such romantic heights the cult of aviation was soon to fall. When *Flying Down to Rio* was released, Adolf Hitler had been in power for 11 months. With every year thereafter, the prospect of war seemed more threatening, and many believed that if war came, it

would be decided in the air. The bombing of the Basque town of Guernica in 1937 during the Spanish Civil War provided a brutal example of what lay in store for civilian populations. But flying lost none of its glamour, particularly among the young men who were going to fight the coming war. As the future RAF pilot Richard Hillary explained to a pacifist friend at Oxford: "In a fighter plane . . . we have found a way to return to war as it ought to be, war which is individual combat between two people, in which one either kills or is killed. It's exciting, it's individual, and it's disinterested." The ace myth was clearly still alive and well in 1939.

Hillary and his fellow RAF pilots saved Britain from defeat and probable invasion in 1940, prompting Churchill's eulogy "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few." But for millions of people in Europe and Asia the droning sound of aircraft engines, and the sight of airplane wings, became identified during the years between 1939 and 1945 with death-dealing explosives raining from the sky, gutted buildings, shrieking children, and crowded air-raid shelters in which families huddled together as the ground above them shook. The incineration of entire cities, such as Coventry, Hamburg, Dresden, and Tokyo, was a cruel reminder that, far from bringing an end to war as many had claimed or hoped it would before 1914, the airplane had instead made it impossible to maintain a distinction between combatants and civilians. After Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the world would live with the knowledge that the age of aviation might culminate in the end of civilized life in entire sections of the planet.

Driving through the ruins of Munich in May 1945, Lindbergh, the leading apostle of aeronautical faith in the 1930s, felt a sense of rising apprehension for the future. "A formation of aircraft passes high overhead; a button is pressed; black dots tumble through the air; a pinpoint on earth erupts, and civilization is rubble, smoke, and flame." What was to prevent what had happened to Germany from

happening to the United States? "Our atomic bombs return from Japan to haunt us, and in our science we foresee our doom."

By 1948, when he committed these thoughts to paper in a little book entitled *Of Flight and Life*, Lindbergh's memory of his "mail plane boring northward over moonlit clouds" during the idyllic 1920s had become mingled in his mind with the images of tracers from his fighter, "flaming comets of war-planes, and bombs falling irretrievably through the air." Why, he asked, should he devote his life to developing aviation, "if aircraft are to ruin the nations which produce them? Why work for the idol of science when it demands the sacrifice of cities full of children; when it makes robots out of men and blinds their eyes to God?"

Lindbergh acknowledged that Western man could not live without science and technology. And indeed the great expansion and democratization of commercial aviation began precisely at the time that Lindbergh wrote *Of Flight and Life*. More and more people began to travel by air; airports were expanded into self-contained cities; and airline pilots began to acquire the reputation for unflappable regularity and safety that they possess today, high-tech bus drivers distinguished by the fact that their highways are thousands of feet above the ground and their salaries correspondingly lofty. As airspace is more and more controlled, as airports become increasingly congested, as liability problems drive more and more aircraft manufacturers to abandon the building of light aircraft, the idea of flight as liberation has inevitably lost much of its former meaning. And so too has the belief that aviation was a source of cultural inspiration, "the vanguard of the conquering armies of the New Age."

Not that aviation is incapable of arousing popular enthusiasm. Enter any museum of air and space, and you will find milling crowds—consisting of people of every age—admiring the flying machines and aeronautical icons of the past. Flick on your television

set, and you will have trouble avoiding *The Spirit of St. Louis*, *Twelve O'Clock High*, or *Top Gun*. Glance at the collection of glossy paperbacks in your supermarket, and you will see that the aviation novel continues to sell. Browse through a computer software store, and you will notice that flight simulators are in ample supply. Visit an air show, and you will be astonished to discover how many people still thrill to the sight of airplanes booming through the sky. The opening weeks of the Persian Gulf War, the most extensive and concentrated air operation in history and the first one to be watched as it happened by a mass public, kept Americans glued to their television sets and convinced many that their tax dollars had been wisely spent.

Yet among these devotees of aviation, who believes that the airplane has the power to renew culture, abolish war, create a new type of civilization, cultivate deeper human relationships, or produce a race of supermen? Would it occur to anyone to think that the members of the Navy's Tailhook Association represent a higher form of morality that brings them—and with them, us—closer to the mythical heroes of old?

Is this because the place of aviation was taken by space exploration? I think not. Though most of us are fascinated by space technology, we do not see it as a source of new values and meanings. No astronaut has ever inspired the popular enthusiasm or cult that Lindbergh and other famous aviators and aviatrixes of the pre-World War II period did. Instead of being seen as heroes, the astronauts are perceived as highly trained technicians, which in fact is what they are.

On reflection, it is clear that the waning of aviation culture was implicit in the logic of aeronautical progress. Once flying was no longer dangerous and the skies had become friendly, aviation's role as a means of transcendence was doomed to disappear. The hundreds of passengers who are herded into

today's jumbo jets have scarcely any sensation of having left the ground. They have lost almost completely that intimate contact with the elements that was such an important part of the early charm of flying. For much of their flight, they are unable to see the ground. They know that at 33,000 feet they are safer than they will be when driving home from the airport in their car.

No danger, no mystique. Then, too, the democratization of air travel has deprived the airplane of much of the sacred aura of elitism from which it derived so much of its glamour during the first 30 years of its existence. Familiarity has bred indifference, if not contempt. Who now can appreciate the sense of risk, adventure, and singularity with which the first air travelers committed their lives to the hazards of the sky?

Or does the explanation go even deeper? Could it be that we have lost some of our enthusiasm for the conquest of nature? Perhaps the sense of pride at having dominated the air no longer thrills us in the way it did our predecessors? If so, Charles Lindbergh will once again turn out to be a pioneer. As a young man, Lindbergh believed that the development of commercial aviation was a means of increasing human freedom and bringing the peoples of the world together in understanding and peace. During the last decades of his life, he came to the conclusion that rapid communication brought in its wake "deadly standardization" and the destruction of the environment. The secret of cultural renewal and survival for the human race lay, he now thought, not in the lessons of machines but in the "wisdom of the wildness." Having longed to flee the limitations and constraints of the ground as a young man, Lindbergh spent his last years getting to know the earth. For him, as for us, aviation no longer held the answers to the questions that really mattered.

WHY FREUD HATED AMERICA

Sigmund Freud came to the United States in 1909 an eager admirer of this nation and left after a brief visit one of its more vehement critics. Baffled scholars have gone so far as to wonder if it was the American taste for barbecue that alienated the father of psychoanalysis. Here Howard Kaye argues that Freud was appalled by what American reality revealed about his own theories.

BY HOWARD L. KAYE

Sigmund Freud was well-established but far from famous when he received a letter in December 1908 from G. Stanley Hall, a noted American psychologist and the president of Clark University, inviting him to give a series of introductory lectures on psychoanalysis. The 52-year-old physician would be one of several distinguished speakers at a ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of the Worcester, Massachusetts, institution. It was an exciting opportunity for Freud, but he had misgivings. Like most cultured Europeans of his day, he viewed the United States with casual contempt, considering it a land of vulgarity and prudishness. More to the point, he thought it unlikely that his sexual theories would be well-received by a nation of uncultured prudes. Despite such misgivings, Freud's ambitions for psychoanalysis and vanity prevailed. After further correspondence with Hall, he accepted the invitation. To Carl Jung, then his closest disciple, Freud confessed, "This has thrilled me more than anything else that has happened in the last few years . . . and I have been thinking of nothing else."

To Freud the invitation was tangible evi-

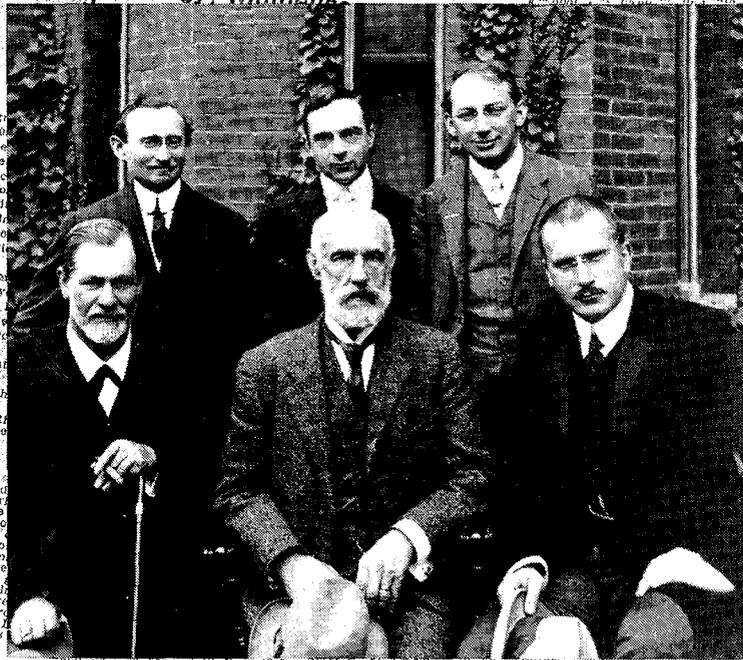
dence that his reputation was at last beginning to grow and that psychoanalysis was achieving respectability. Slowly, he was putting behind him the long years of what he called his "splendid isolation." In 1908, more than 20 years after he had begun the long journey from neurology to psychoanalysis, he reconstituted and formalized as the Vienna Psycho-Analytic Society, the Wednesday-night group of obscure, Jewish, and all-too-bohemian physicians who met at his Vienna flat to smoke and discuss his ideas. He had also attracted new disciples, including several promising foreigners who lent his movement more respectability. As well as Karl Abraham in Berlin and Sándor Ferenczi in Budapest, there were the essential non-Jews, Ernest Jones in London and Jung in Zurich.

Although Freud had written several books, including *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), they had found only a small and specialized audience. The lectures at Clark, which Hall had already made an important American center in the fledgling field of psychology, would mark Freud's first public presentations on psychoanalysis. In attendance would be intel-

Sept. 8

EMINENT EDUCATORS AT CLARK UNIVERSITY

Psychology, Biology, Mathematics



Sigmund Freud sitting with host G. Stanley Hall (center) and Carl Jung (at right) at Clark University.

lectual eminences such as philosopher William James, anthropologist Franz Boas, and neurologist James J. Putnam (later the first president of the American Psychoanalytic Association). Freud's ideas might finally gain a sympathetic hearing within established, albeit American, intellectual circles.

There was, however, another reason for Freud's excitement. As he explained to Jung, Hall's invitation had reawakened his "youthful enthusiasm" for the United States. According to his sister Anna, that enthusiasm was kindled when the 17-year-old Freud encountered the Gettysburg Address and some of Abraham Lincoln's letters at the International Exhibition of 1873, held in Vienna. She later recalled that the young Freud was so en-

thralled that he memorized Lincoln's speech and recited it to his sisters.

To the young Jew coming of age during a brief interlude of liberalization in the Austro-Hungarian Empire and dreaming of a political career, Lincoln's eloquent evocations of the ideals of liberty and equality were deeply stirring. When Austrian anti-Semitism began to increase after the depression of 1873, Freud even considered emigration. In 1882, he wrote to Martha Bernays, to whom he had recently become engaged, "I am aching for independence, so as to follow my own wishes" and said he would likely leave for England, the United States, or even Australia.

It was not only opportunity that beckoned. Freud was attracted to the English-speaking world because of "its sober industriousness, its generous devotion to the public weal, the stubbornness and sensitive feeling for justice of its inhabitants." In contrast to Vienna, ruled by an aristocracy and rife with religious prejudice, the English-speaking world offered "a home where human worth is more respected." During his internship at the General Hospital of Vienna he hung a copy of the Declaration of Independence over his bed.

Even after he married (in 1886) and established his private psychiatric practice, Freud still expected to emigrate to the United States. As a two-month trial period in Vienna stretched into years, however, his sister-in-law Minna began to joke that "he should stay in Austria until his fame reached America, when so many American patients would flock to him that he would be saved the trouble of emigrating."

So when Freud, along with Jung and Ferenczi, arrived in New York City at the end of August 1909, the occasion was fraught with professional and personal meanings. The visit was to be both a triumph for the psychoanalytic movement and the fulfillment of Freud's youthful dream of seeing the New World. He and his entourage spent a week seeing the sights of New York, tromping to Chinatown and Coney Island as well as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, before they traveled on to Worcester. There, much to Freud's surprise, his sexual theories met with little resistance. To the contrary, his five talks were well-received and soberly reported by the Worcester newspapers and the *Boston Evening Transcript*. "In prudish America," he later noted, "it was possible, in academic circles at least, to discuss freely and scientifically everything that in ordinary life is regarded as objectionable." Ernest Jones, a

Freud disciple and future biographer who attended the Clark lectures, reports that a woman in the audience begged him to ask Freud to say *more* on sexual matters—a request that Freud declined.

After the lectures, the visitors took brief trips to Niagara Falls and to Putnam's rustic Adirondack retreat near Lake Placid before returning to New York City and sailing for home. All told, Freud's visit lasted only three weeks. But its effects proved enduring. It profoundly altered not only his view of the country he had admired as a young man but, far more important, the course of his social theory and cultural criticism.

To all outward appearances, the trip was a professional success and a personal triumph, but inwardly Freud was deeply disillusioned. His thoroughly conventional European snobbery toward the New World soon gave way to a pervasive and deeply irrational hatred that grew with the passing years. In the United States his ideas quickly won professional and popular acclaim—they were the stuff of articles in women's magazines by 1915—yet Freud never returned to the scene of his triumph. In fact, he became distraught even when any of his followers crossed the Atlantic, as Jung did only a year later, fearing that they would be tantalized by the country's overwhelming materialism and the temptations of popular acclaim. He came to see the United States as "a gigantic mistake," a "miscarriage," a "bad experiment conducted by Providence." Americans were neurotic and hypocritical. Their manners were lax, their learning superficial, their speech garbled. Fortunately, the country was destined for extinction and, as Freud once told Marie Bonaparte, a Freud acolyte and distant relative of Emperor Napoleon I, "it serves her right. A country without even wild strawberries!"

Howard L. Kaye, a professor of sociology at Franklin and Marshall College, is the author of The Social Meaning of Modern Biology, from Social Darwinism to Sociobiology (1986). He is working on a book about Freud and social theory. Copyright © 1993 by Howard L. Kaye.

Freud's views on the United States became so unremittingly harsh, so prejudiced, that even he recognized the need for some explanation. In his mind, as he wrote on various occasions over the years, it all went back to the various physical ailments he had suffered during his visit: a mild case of appendicitis; an inflamed prostate (which made him experience the scarcity, inaccessibility, and grandeur of American bathrooms with particular resentment); and, above all, an attack of colitis, which he blamed on American cooking. (The offending meal was apparently a steak prepared, as if by "savages," over an open fire at Putnam's Adirondack retreat.) Freud even held America responsible for the deterioration of his handwriting.

His psychoanalytic disciples, while struck by his irrational hatred, offered no less superficial explanations. Jones believed that Freud's hostile reaction was in part that of "a good European with a sense of dignity and respect for learning which at that time was less prominent in America." But on "a more fundamental personal" level, Jones suggested, Freud's animosity "had nothing to do with America itself" but stemmed from his difficulties with American English, which may have revived painful memories of his awkward experiences with French while conducting research in Paris during 1885 and '86. Equally unpersuasive is Sándor Ferenczi's suggestion that Freud's anti-American animus was a defensive reaction against his "American vanity," inspired by the honors he received during his visit.

Freud's most recent biographer, Yale historian Peter Gay, points to the master's quite understandable exasperation with the constant bickering within the American psychoanalytic community but suggests that the ultimate source of his anti-Americanism was a volatile mismatch of cultural characteristics. Freud combined a stiff European sense of bourgeois propriety with distinctly anti-bourgeois attitudes toward sexual liberalization. The Americans he met during his travels, on the other hand, exhibited an equally unusual

mix of materialistic egalitarianism and sexual prudery. In his recent book, *Freud, Jung and Hall the Kingmaker* (1992), Saul Rosenzweig of Washington University suggests that Freud's animosity was the product of a "displaced sibling rivalry" with his brother-in-law Eli Bernays, who had emigrated with his family to New York 17 years earlier. The two men were doubly related: Each had married the other's sister. But Freud had come to dislike Bernays intensely in Vienna, and he was further angered when his brother-in-law made it difficult for him to visit his sister Anna in New York.

While no doubt containing elements of truth, such explanations are inadequate to account for so passionate a hatred. How, for example, could an affront to European refinement in matters of learning and decorum lead to the kind of brutal attack that Freud and the American diplomat William Bullitt launched in their biographical study of Woodrow Wilson, America's exemplary progressive? Written during the 1930s but published only in 1967, in deference to the second Mrs. Wilson, *Thomas Woodrow Wilson: A Psychological Study* has been an embarrassment to Freudians. It is hard to justify its mean-spirited portrayal of "little Tommy Wilson," the weak and neurotic "mama's boy" and father-worshiper who identified with Christ yet ultimately lacked the moral strength either to live up to his ego ideal or to rebel in a "masculine" way against its impossible demands. Freud's defenders may be right in blaming Bullitt for much of the book's crudity, but its scorn and contempt for Wilson were also genuinely Freud's.

How then to explain Freud's loathing for America? His own writings and remarks following his visit offer a clue, for a new theme began to emerge in both his practical and theoretical works: the problem of authority. Freud saw in America something that he had not anticipated, a disturbing disregard for scientific, political, and familial authority that he, like Tocqueville, attributed to American egali-

tarianism. "The Americans," he later complained, "transfer the democratic principle from politics into science. Everybody must become president once, no one must remain president; none may excel before the others, and thus all of them neither learn nor achieve anything." Freud acknowledged in his *History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement* (1914) that "the absence of any deep-rooted scientific tradition in America and the much less stringent rule of official authority" had made it possible for psychoanalysis to gain more rapid acceptance there than in Europe, but he was dismayed to discover that this absence of tradition and authority also contributed to superficial understanding, inconstancy of allegiance, and incessant bickering among his American followers. Rejecting the American principles of equality and competition, which now seemed to Freud to stifle the independence of thought he had hoped to find, Freud wrote to Ferenczi after their trip to say he agreed with Ferenczi's assertion that "the psychoanalytic outlook does not lead to democratic equalizing: There should be an *elite* rather than on the lines of Plato's rule of philosophers."

That Freud was not simply referring to the need for acknowledged authority—his own—within the psychoanalytic movement is made clear by his remarks to the Second Psycho-Analytical Congress in March 1910. There, as in his famous essay on Leonardo da Vinci, which he began writing within weeks of his return from the United States, Freud emphasized "the intensity of people's inner lack of resolution and craving for authority." As evidence of this vital human need for guidance and support, Freud pointed to the "extraordinary increase in neuroses [and "the impoverishment of the ego"] since the power of religion has waned." Only through a transference of "social authority" from religion to science in general, and to psychoanalysis in particular, could "the most radical prophylaxis against neurotic disorders" be achieved.

Toward this end Freud had suggested to Jung two months earlier that psychoanalysis ally itself with the International Fraternity for Ethics and Culture, a secular movement for the promotion of public morality. The suggestion set off an emotional explosion in Jung, bringing to the surface the strong religious, "racial" (Jewish versus Aryan), and theoretical disagreements growing between the two men. Jung bristled at Freud's tepid vision of the public role of psychoanalysis. The idea of scientific moralizing appalled him. Jung longed for an antinomian rebellion led by psychoanalysis, a "drunken feast of joy" in which "ecstatic instinctual forces" would be reawakened and a new myth, or a new religion, would be born. "Must we not love evil," he asked Freud, "if we are to break away from the obsession with virtue that makes us sick and forbids us the joys of life?" Deeply disturbed, Freud urged the younger man to sublimate his unmet religious needs into more practical, and safer, pursuits. Privately, however, Freud turned his attention to unmasking psychoanalytically such religious cravings—both the craving for an authority to submit to and the craving for ecstatic release from its demands—in order to defuse their destructive potential. During the next two years, the split between the two widened, culminating in their break in 1914.

In October 1910, Freud took up the problem of authority once again, this time in the realm of the family. Freud the therapist might have sought to weaken his neurotic patients' irrational ties to parental authority, but Freud the social theorist came to fear challenges to authority. America represented a realization of these fears. Against the suggestions of his Viennese disciples, who believed, not without reason, that they were following their master's lead in arguing that intense parent-child bonds were pathogenic and needed to be diminished through a variety of means—a cooling of the family's emotional climate, a transference of "the essential part of child-raising . . . to a place away from home," and an emphasis on coeducation—Freud pointed

to the disastrous example of America. The American educational system, he argued, citing Hall as his authority, was based on "downgrading the influence of the family" on the character and values of children as much as possible. In addition, Freud said, the American experiment with coeducation had proved harmful: "The girls develop more rapidly than the boys, feel superior to them in everything and lose their respect for the male sex. To this must be added the fact that in the United States, the father-ideal appears to be downgraded, so that the American girl cannot muster the illusion that is necessary for marriage." A weakening of parental, and particularly paternal, authority might have reduced the incidence of neurosis due to sexual repression, Freud suggested, but the cultural costs were great. They could be seen in the Americans' slavishness to public opinion, their embrace of mediocrity, and their antipathy to excellence.

The shift in Freud's critique of America after his visit was paralleled by a significant change in his diagnosis of contemporary Western civilization. He began to move away from his old emphasis on the pathogenic effects of failed sexual repression, a theme he continued to articulate as late as 1908 in his essay, "'Civilized' Sexual Morality and Modern Nervous Illness." Instead he became more and more concerned with the impoverishment of the individual psyche as a result of its detachment from strong ego and cultural ideals and from the social institutions (such as churches) that support them. In *Totem and Taboo* (1913), he began to argue that neurotics were not just the victims of excessive sexual frustration but of failed social institutions and an erosion of "social feeling" that compelled the hapless individual to "endeavor to achieve by private means what is effected in society by collective effort," namely, "the problems of compensating for unsatisfied wishes."

America, in short, came to represent for Freud a dangerous cultural condition toward

which all of Western civilization was headed. He believed that this condition—which he came to call "the psychological poverty of groups"—with its threat to individual health, social order, and cultural achievement, developed in societies such as America where "individuals of the leader type do not acquire the importance that should fall to them in the formation of a group." This posed an obvious question, which Freud did not address: Was not such a society made more likely by his own teachings, which unmasked the father of childhood behind the leader of men, thereby breaking the spell of authority?

After 1910, the origin of this "social feeling" and the causes of its decline became the central question in Freud's writings on social theory. Freud identified a number of sources of social cohesion apart from fear and necessity—love (both homosexual and heterosexual), identification, narcissism, guilt, cultural ideals, envy, coercion, and even reason. But he focused most of his attention on the individual's ambivalent bond to the leader, a bond wrought out of a complex amalgam of love, hostility, and guilt which he first explored in *Group Psychology and Analysis of the Ego* (1921).

Freud recognized, of course, that solidarity with others could be based on the recognition of any common quality or situation—such as race, class, creed, or nationality—but he believed that the strength of such bonds paled before those formed on the basis of a shared and intense emotional bond to a powerful leader like Moses or Napoleon. Even after he is long dead, Freud argued, such a leader is able to weld individuals into a group and even reorder their personalities, partly through the force of his ideas but especially through the power of his personality. The leader serves as a kind of "substitute father," not for the actual father of childhood but for the "paramount and dangerous personality" of childhood fantasy, "to whom one's will [and conscience] has to be surrendered." En-

thrilled by such a figure or ideal, individuals recognize their commonality in their shared love for and bondage to it, and are motivated to master their mutual envy and hostility through the countervailing forces of "communal or group feeling." Most remarkably of all, in their love of the leader they may internalize his ideals and demands, making them their own, thereby achieving greater unity within their psyches and with one another.

In *Group Psychology*, written shortly after World War I, it is clear that what Freud feared most was the destructive power of this "craving for authority." When satisfied, it threatened to produce both psychological and social regression—a loss of intellectual rigor and individuality; a "predominance of the life of phantasy" over reality (amply demonstrated in a gullible world's belief in the "fantastic promises" of President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points); and a release of hostility, even brutality, toward those outside the group. When this craving is frustrated, or when the spell of authority is broken by the death of the leader or disenchantment with him, intolerance and cruelty toward outsiders may subside, but the cost is psychic and social dissolution. The disastrous war just completed offered many cases of both neurosis in individual soldiers and mass panic on the battlefield caused by the loss of a commander. With the "undeniable weakening of religious feelings" in his age, both possibilities, melancholia and mania, seemed to Freud to lie before humanity as it struggled to throw off old ideals and objects while desperately grasping at new ones, among them socialism and nationalism.

Freud's preferred means of breaking this destructive cycle of enchantment and disenchantment was to unmask what he believed was the "infantile" nature of the craving that drove it: the child's love, dependence, and guilt transferred to others. By revealing this transference and using it, Freud hoped that psychoanalysis would dissolve it, thereby producing true in-

dividuals inoculated against communal enthusiasms and capable at last of independence. In a study of Freud's thought, Philip Rieff put the matter succinctly: "A follower can never be as ardent after he recognizes his leader as a father-image."

In *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930), Freud elaborated his ideal of human independence, citing as an example the "cautious business-man" of pleasure carefully utilizing a variety of "techniques of living"—such as love, work, fantasy, and sublimation—rather than foolishly seeking happiness "from a single aspiration," and particularly from the mass delusions of communal life. But once again America loomed in Freud's mind as a warning of the opposite danger, a danger to which his own theory might contribute. In a society of individuals freed from the submission to any authority, each pursuing his or her own pleasure and security, each "has no hesitation" in using, "injuring," "insulting," and "slandering" others. Thus, "Civilization has to use its utmost efforts in order to set limits to man's aggressive instincts and to hold the manifestation of them in check by psychical reaction-formations . . . identifications and aim-inhibited relationships of love." In other words, there was a need for authority in all walks of life. Envy must be transformed into group feeling, aggression toward others into guilt for such temptations, and erotic love into generalized affection. The coercive power of the state and "the interest of work in common" were not enough, in Freud's view, to bind a society (and individual souls) together, particularly as societies become increasingly large and heterogeneous. Small ethnic communities and cultural groups enjoyed the advantage of the "narcissism of minor differences," creating cohesion within the group by expressing hostility toward neighboring peoples. But what could weld together psychologically a society as diverse as America?

It is the weakness of such psychologically binding forces that Freud referred to when he warned of "the psychological poverty of groups." American individualism, egalitarian-

ism, and hostility to personal and communal authority undercut the formation of fellow feeling, the mastery of envy and aggression, and even independence of thought itself. But its greatest danger for Freud was that it failed to inspire and to reconcile such impoverished individuals to the demands and ideals of civilized life and to the sufferings and sacrifices that such a life entails, leaving them exposed to neurosis, discontent, and, as in the case of Jung, a potentially explosive "hostility to civilization" itself in the name of some chimerical redemption. "The present cultural state of America," Freud warned in *Civilization and its Discontents*, amply demonstrated "the damage to civilization which is thus to be feared."

As a theorist, Freud sought to unmask the fantasies and illusions behind both our lowest desires and our highest aspirations. Evil is but a return of the infantile; the sense of justice is but a "reaction-formation" against envy; ideals are only idealizations; the attachment to authority is nothing but the guilty child's longing for protection. Yet Freud, fully aware of the requirements of civilized life, remained personally committed to what he attacked theoretically in the name of individual freedom and social order. Whenever it was brought home to him, Freud attempted to reconcile this fundamental tension with brave words. "What is moral is self-evident," he

said. "To understand all is not to forgive all." He boasted of his own high ideals even in the absence of religious faith. He clung, in other words, to the positivist belief that the ethical demands of civilization could indeed be placed on a rational, scientific basis, at least for the cultural elite. Among these few, civility and the rule of reason had become virtually innate through long practice. What of the masses, in whom "no love for instinctual renunciation" had yet been cultivated? Only through their recognition of authority and their emulation of their leaders could they be raised and "induced to perform the work and undergo the renunciations on which the existence of civilization depends."

The spectacle of an American elite, personified by Woodrow Wilson, crippled by neurosis and moral weakness and thus incapable of leading—and of a people hostile to all authority—must have seemed to Freud to make a mockery of this final hope. Indeed, the dissemination of Freud's own psychoanalytic theory made both moral leadership and moral elevation increasingly suspect. No wonder Freud hated America. It was a symbol of his worst fears and a challenge to his fondest hopes. But above all, it was a portent of precisely the kind of world that his own theoretical and therapeutic efforts might bring into being.

THE PERIODICAL OBSERVER

Reviews of articles from periodicals and specialized journals here and abroad

The New Face of Mexico

A Survey of Recent Articles

Just over a decade ago, Mexico suddenly confronted economic ruin. A decline in world oil prices left it in default on its huge (nearly \$100-billion) foreign debt, and it found itself unable to take out new loans. It became the first developing nation in the 1980s to require major debt-rescheduling. Today, however, after seven years of dramatic and successful reforms, Mexico is a changed nation. Its economy is no longer government-dominated; the telephone company, the banks, and agriculture have been privatized. The door has been opened to foreign competition. Since joining the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1987, Mexico has slashed the average tariff on imports from 45 percent to 9 percent. Inflation has dropped dramatically—from a peak of 159 percent in 1987 to 12 percent last year—as has the government deficit. Real wages, which fell by as much as 50 percent between 1983 and '88, are on the rebound. The economy has begun to grow again.

So successful have the reforms been that the *Economist* (Feb. 13, 1993) declares that President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, who took office in 1988, "has a claim to be hailed as one of the great men of the 20th century." It is a tribute to how far Salinas has taken Mexico that the 24-member Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is taking seriously the application from his Third World nation (with a gross domestic product per person of only \$3,400 in 1991) for membership in that exclusive "rich countries' club."

Perhaps Salinas's greatest achievement, in the eyes of the *Economist* and other observers, has been overcoming Mexico's traditional fear of gringo domination. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), initialed by trade negotiators from Mexico, the United States, and Canada last October and now awaiting ratification, was his idea. Under Salinas's leadership, Mexico seems to have shed much of the debilitating ideological baggage of the past. "After decades of ambivalence toward the United States, Mexico is opening its economy and society to American business culture and values," economist Peter Morici, director of the University of Maine's Canadian-American Center,

writes in *Current History* (Feb. 1993).

Economic reform—launched during the 1980s by Salinas's predecessor, President Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado—led to the closer relationship with the United States. Mexico's economy did not grow at all between 1982 and 1988. Turning that around required getting away from the strong anti-American nationalism that, before de la Madrid and Salinas, had been all but obligatory for Mexican governments. The "Colossus to the North" is Mexico's main commercial partner (buying 60–70 percent of its exports) and main source of capital, notes Jorge Chabat, a professor at the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City, in *Current History*.

That does not mean that antigringoism is dead in this country of 85 million people. But politicians from the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) "no longer run on the rhetoric of gringo bashing," Sidney Weintraub, of the University of Texas's Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, and M. Delal Baer, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies' Mexico Project, observe in the *Washington Quarterly* (Spring 1992). Incidents that once would have set Mexico aflame with nationalistic fervor—such as the U.S. kidnapping in 1990 of a Mexican doctor implicated in the murder of a U.S. official—"are now dealt with calmly as aberrations amenable to correction in an otherwise friendly relationship."

"Mexico is ceasing to be 'Mexico,'" Mark Falcoff, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, writes in the *American Enterprise* (Jan.-Feb. 1993). "That is, Mexico has begun to discard an entire set of civic values and practices that for more than 70 years defined its national identity and made it one of the ideological lodestars of Latin America." One-party rule and economic nationalism, once seen as obvious responses to the Yankee threat, now seem antiquated to many Mexicans.

So far, however, all the change has meant only modest reform of Mexico's political institutions. Salinas, as one pundit put it, has pursued "perestroika without *glasnost*." And so Mexico remains, in Peruvian novelist Mario Vargas Llosa's phrase, a "perfect dictatorship," having all the characteristics of a dictatorship except the appearance of one. Its sys-

tem of presidential absolutism (*presidencialismo*) is hidden behind a veil of constitutional democracy. The PRI, which has ruled Mexico since 1929, has never officially lost a presidential election. "[Salinas's] reforms may be widely lauded," notes the *Economist*, "but they have still been imposed from above."

Jorge G. Castañeda, a professor of international affairs at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, argues in *Current History* that Salinas was forced to undertake his bold program of economic reforms for political reasons. "The leitmotif of the Salinas term has been to win in office the elections he stole at the polls, at least in the eyes of a majority of the Mexican people. In a sense, Carlos Salinas has never stopped campaigning."

His near-defeat in 1988, Susan Kaufman Purcell, vice president for Latin American affairs at the Americas Society, writes in *Current History* (Feb. 1992), was due to the unpopularity of the austerity measures undertaken by de la Madrid at the outset of the debt crisis. Many former PRI supporters, including government bureaucrats and members of PRI-affiliated labor unions, defected from de la Madrid's hand-picked successor, Salinas, to vote for left-wing candidate Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, who promised a return to the status quo ante.

Such a return was not really possible. The protectionist development strategy that Mexico had been following before de la Madrid took office in 1982, which required ever-larger state subsidies to its industries, "was no longer viable," Purcell notes. "Deprived of foreign lending the country had to find other ways to finance itself. The two obvious alternatives were increased exports and foreign investment." But Mexico's protected industries could not hope to compete abroad. Its anti-Americanism, and the government's view that foreign investment was a form of imperialism, did not encourage foreign investors. De la Madrid was forced to make a radical break with the past—and Salinas greatly accelerated the process.

By doing so, Salinas has won credibility, but in the absence of genuine democracy he still lacks legitimacy. His strategy, the *Economist* observes, "has been to open up the political process just enough to prevent the sort of violent protests that would attract international attention and so put NAFTA at risk, while at the same time not diluting the powers of the presidency that have enabled

him to rule so effectively." The result has been some real political change. Before 1988, it would have been unthinkable for any state governments to be in the hands of the opposition to the PRI. But the conservative Party of National Action (PAN) now governs the border states of Baja California and Chihuahua, and also holds the interim governorship of Guanajuato in central Mexico.

"By mid-1991," writes Emory University political scientist Robert A. Pastor in the *Brookings Review* (Winter 1993), "Salinas and the PRI had regained substantial popular support because of the economic recovery and because of a program aimed at helping poor communities. The PRI won an overwhelming victory in the August midterm elections, leaving the opposition demoralized. Again, there were charges of fraud—exaggerated, but not without foundation. By permitting exit polls and replacing three PRI governors who were accused of election irregularities, Salinas sent a signal to the PRI cadre that such 'alchemy' was no longer acceptable. But he also let them know that the 'system' was still being managed."

NAFTA—if ratified by the United States, where it has run into opposition from labor unions and environmentalists—may accelerate Mexico's movement toward democracy. Hector Aguilar Camín, an editor who is close to Salinas, is quoted by Pastor as noting that the "institutional logic" of opening Mexico's economy and linking it with the United States is that ultimately it demands opening "the political marketplace," too.

What is happening in Mexico, say Sidney

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Weintraub and M. Delal Baer, is similar to what has been happening in Taiwan and South Korea and to what happened in Chile under General Augusto Pinochet Ugarte. "Mexican presidents are not dictators in the same mold as Pinochet. But the pattern is a familiar one. Electoral democracy eventually came back to Chile, and it is making inroads in South Korea and Taiwan; and it is also coming, in fits and starts, to Mexico."

Salinas's six-year term expires in 1994. Under the present system of the *dedazo* ("pointing of the finger"), the incumbent will choose his PRI succes-

sor. But today, Andrew Reding, a Senior Fellow at the World Policy Institute, writes in *World Policy Journal* (Spring 1991), "the culture of *presidencialismo* appears more naked than at any time since the ill-fated reign of Porfirio Díaz," the dictator overthrown in 1911. The PRI, says the *Economist*, "cannot afford to maintain its reforming ways without securing real legitimacy for its continued rule. This means winning a presidential election which is seen to be fair." Many observers, both inside and outside Mexico, will be watching next year to see if that happens.

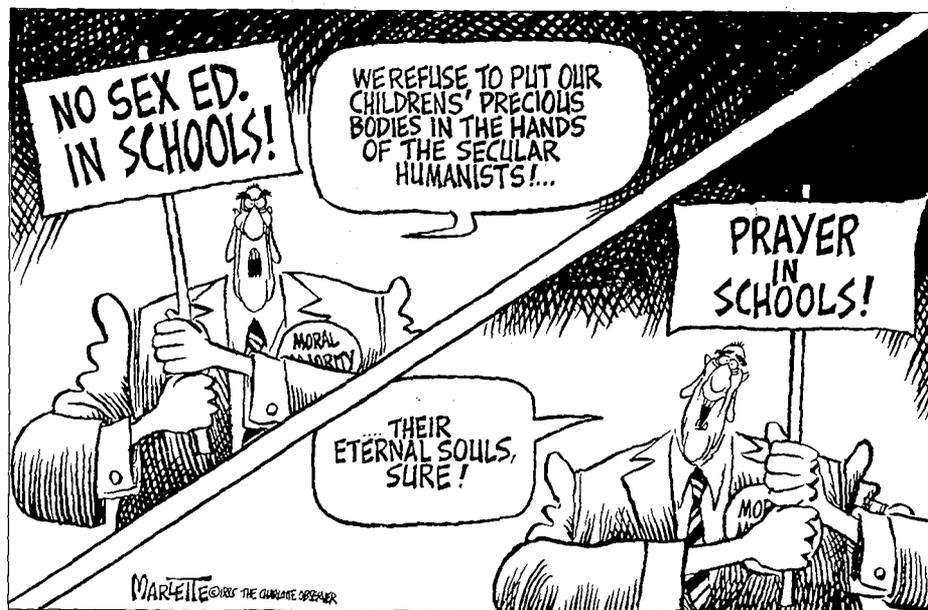
POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

The Politics Of Privacy

"Whose Body Politic?" by Alan Wolfe, in *The American Prospect* (Winter 1993), P.O. Box 383080, Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

Without Ronald Reagan and the Cold War to unite them, conservatives today are badly divided over

abortion and other moral issues. Before liberals congratulate themselves too loudly, warns Wolfe, a dean at the New School for Social Research, they had better recognize that similar dilemmas confront them. Should they, for example, stand by the principle of free speech or back various liberal groups' demands for university "speech codes," antipornography laws, and sexual-harassment regulations?



What is public, what is private? That sometimes perplexing question has long divided conservatives from liberals on such issues as sex education in the schools. More recently, it has divided conservatives from conservatives—and liberals from liberals.

Traditionally, liberals have regarded economic affairs as a public domain open to government intervention, and religion and speech as the realm of sacrosanct private rights. But the rise of cultural and "life-style" issues in American politics since the 1960s has vastly complicated matters. "As a result, it is not at all clear where people who believe in greater equality and social justice ought to stand," Wolfe writes. Liberals have tended toward a kind of cultural libertarianism based on a perpetual expansion of the right to privacy. But Wolfe believes that that route—followed by constitutional scholar Laurence Tribe, among others—is fraught with moral and political hazards. Conservatives stuck to an absolute defense of private economic rights for roughly the first 60 years of the 20th century and paid dearly for it. Their beliefs left them powerless to address some genuine public problems.

Absolutism in the pursuit of privacy likewise threatens liberals, Wolfe warns. Defending abortion rights, "the Left sometimes imagines children as fully public the moment after delivery and fully private the moment before." But if pregnancy is purely private, can the state do nothing to protect the unborn child of a crack-using mother? During the early years of the AIDS epidemic, San Francisco authorities bowed to gay activists' objections and delayed closing gay bathhouses. "It remains impossible to know," Wolfe remarks, "how many individuals are now dead because the right to privacy was deemed more fundamental than the protection of public health."

Wolfe says that only a few kinds of private behavior deserve automatic immunity from regulation—notably those occurring in the bedroom (but not the bathhouse). He offers no axioms for the rest. In fact, his point is that there ought to be no axioms, that "a politics of tolerance and accommodation" is the best way to deal with conflicts between the private and the public. Liberals, he argues, should try to secure their objectives through legislation rather than judicial fiat; they should speak of public responsibilities as well as private rights; and they should demand the tolerance of private behavior by gays and others but stop trying to "legislate positive attitudes" toward them through such measures as curriculum reform.

"We remain best off not trying to separate the public and the private each on its own island but instead building a bridge between them." Conservatives, take note.

Roosevelt Redux?

Writing in *Society* (Mar.-Apr. 1993), Seymour Martin Lipset, a George Mason University sociologist and a Senior Fellow at the Wilson Center, contends that Bill Clinton not only assembled an electoral coalition like Franklin D. Roosevelt's but will govern in much the same way FDR did.

Roosevelt was faced with complex and difficult problems for which there were no agreed upon answers. He integrated into his cooptive style of politicking and policymaking, a trial and error pursuit of answers. He assigned the formulating of policy to assistants and to groups in different cabinet departments with diverse, and often conflicting, approaches to a given area. Recognizing that different values and interests produced a variety of "solutions," he would assign the same problem to people or agencies with varying biases knowing that they would disagree and submit alternative policies to him. He also brought into the discussion individuals or groups from outside the White House, who represented distinctive points of view or elements within the party. By so doing, he gave each one the sense of being involved. At the same time, such procedures gave him the opportunity to make policy, to choose between alternative proposals.

The Roosevelt approach is the way to run the presidency. Some past presidents, like Jimmy Carter, never understood this. Ronald Reagan did understand this, as he noted when he said repeatedly that he modeled himself on Roosevelt. Bill Clinton appears to know this as well. Clearly, the Clinton presidency will be similar to the Roosevelt presidency. Unlike Carter, who let himself be taken over by . . . the liberal wing . . . Clinton is trying to keep in touch with all parts of the party and to cooperate with them. He has appointed people from different segments to administrative and policy positions. His sympathies and inclinations remain on the moderate side, since in any case, he knows that he has to be in the center to be reelected. Clinton, like Roosevelt, will let every faction have its say with him. He will continue the style by which he has run his presidential campaign . . .

Clinton, like Roosevelt and Reagan, will politick—he will work the Hill . . . The American presidency, which is not imperial, requires a head whose time is largely devoted to politics, not to administration. Roosevelt and Reagan understood this. Jimmy Carter and George Bush did not.

Toward a Prozac Presidency?

"*Travails of the Chief*" by Robert E. Gilbert, in *The Sciences* (Jan.-Feb. 1993), New York Acad. of Sciences, Two E. 63rd St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Calvin Coolidge (1872-1933) is remembered as an indifferent president who favored short workdays and long naps. When he died, only four years after leaving the White House, writer Dorothy Parker asked: "How can they tell?" But Northeastern University political scientist Gilbert says that Silent Cal had not always been so given to lassitude.

Elected governor of Massachusetts in 1918, Coolidge proved a vigorous executive and won national acclaim for breaking the Boston police strike of 1919. Elected to the vice presidency the next year, he became president in August 1923 when Warren Harding died of a stroke. "Coolidge moved swiftly and surefootedly to consolidate his hold on the reins of government," Gilbert writes. "He worked long hours and appeared to enjoy himself immensely. In his first message to Congress he set forth in direct, unequivocal language his positions on a wide range of issues. He spoke as a strong, even activist chief executive—quite the antithesis of his historical reputation."

The turnabout in Coolidge's political ways, Gilbert says, came in the summer of 1924, when he was on the verge of a landslide electoral triumph. His 16-year-old son, Calvin, Jr., died of blood poisoning, which had developed from a blister. The tragedy shattered the president. "Unbeknownst to all but a few intimates, Coolidge began suffering

from a paralyzing depression," Gilbert writes. He "withdrew almost completely from interaction with Congress and showed little interest even in the departments of his own government. His workdays shrank, and his naps grew longer and more frequent." Coolidge was only 60 when he died of heart disease.

One way or another, it seems, the stress of life can take a heavy toll in the White House. Leaving aside the four presidents who were assassinated (Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley, and Kennedy) and the six who are still living, Gilbert points out that 21 chief executives died before their time. Only 10 defied the actuaries. The longest-lived ones, ironically, were the first 10 (George Washington through John Tyler), who died at an average age of 77.9 years—well *beyond* their life expectancy.

Stress makes depression and other psychological woes an occupational hazard of the presidency. Yet there are no adequate safeguards to protect against a recurrence of the Coolidge phenomenon.

The 25th Amendment, enacted in 1967, puts the burden on the vice president and the Cabinet to act if the president becomes incapacitated. Determining if a president is physically incapacitated can be difficult enough, Gilbert notes; challenging a president's mental fitness is almost unimaginable.

Suppose in the case of Coolidge, apparently suffering from a major depression, that Vice President Charles G. Dawes had declared the chief executive "psychologically impaired," and then set about removing him from office. The public reaction can only be imagined, Gilbert says, but it "seems unlikely that even Silent Cal would have remained mute in the face of such a challenge."

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

The New Jingoists

"*The New Interventionists*" by Stephen John Stedman, in *Foreign Affairs* (special issue, 1992-93), Council on Foreign Relations, 58 East 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

The intoxicating post-Cold War freedom from old constraints has spawned a new breed of American interventionist. Invoking the moral obligations of the international community, these "new interventionists"—an odd coalition of Wilsonian internationalists and former anticommunist crusaders—

now call for the United Nations to intervene in civil conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, Somalia, and elsewhere. Stedman, a professor at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, contends that many of these "new interventionists" are unrealistic.

To begin with, he notes, civil wars are no more frequent now than they were before the Cold War ended. There are 18 civil wars raging today; in 1985 there were 19. Such conflicts have been among the hardest to settle politically, and today's "should not be expected to be more amenable to

negotiation" than yesterday's. While the superpowers still had leverage, before the Cold War clearly ended, "to settle various disputes such as Angola and El Salvador," their influence over their former allies is now much reduced.

Armed intervention to enforce peace among warring parties, even if undertaken by the UN, is no more likely to succeed in the post-Cold War era than before, Stedman says. Some interventionists have called upon the UN to use military force to compel Cambodia's Khmer Rouge to abide by the 1991 Paris Peace Accords. Why, he asks, "should the United Nations be expected to succeed where the Vietnamese army, one of the world's most disciplined, could not?"

The UN is already "overextended and underfunded," Stedman points out. During the last three years, it has been involved in 14 peace missions—the same number as in all its preceding 43 years. The estimated cost of peacekeeping has grown

from \$750 million in 1991 to \$2.9 billion in 1992, of which member nations have contributed only \$2 billion. "The United Nations has somehow taken on a mythic status as the cure for all ills," Stedman says, "yet it has not received the resources necessary to carry out even the tasks it has embarked on already."

Humanitarian concerns are not enough to justify intervention, Stedman argues. If they were, he says, then, in terms of deaths and genocidal campaigns, Bosnia would trail Sudan, Liberia, and East Timor. "Serbian thugs are certainly rank amateurs compared [with] Cambodia's Khmer Rouge and Mozambique's RENAMO, both of whom have been accorded international legitimacy in the search for peace."

The end of the Cold War, Stedman insists, has not altered the fundamental logic of intervention. It is justified only when international security is clearly at stake, and some civil wars threaten it

Patriotism and Other Loves

The military's resistance to lifting the ban on service by homosexuals has many sources. Not all of them are easy to dismiss, Paul W. Kuhn, a professor at Yale Law School, argues in the *New Republic* (Mar. 8, 1993).

The debate over gay service should be seen as rooted in a conflict between the highest and most serious values and aspirations of our culture. It is a debate not about "lifestyles" but about the conflicting forms and expressions of love. At this level, it is the same debate that we are having about the introduction of women into combat roles. In both cases, the military has reason to worry about the introduction of a wholly virtuous form of private love—the love that founds the family—into the domain of public love, which characterizes the field of battle

The state is held together by a kind of love. That love is most at issue in the management of the military. Instead of "love," we speak of "patriotism." But this is nothing other than the emotional attachment of each citizen to every other and of all to the public order. Plato warns us that between the love of the state and the love of the family there are likely to be deep tensions

When the members of the armed forces worry about homosexuality within the military, the real concern is the threat sexual love poses to the non-sexual love upon which the military is based. Sexual love differentiates. It places one body above all others. To love sexually is not to love everyone. We are each willing to make unique sacrifices for our loved ones—spouses, partners or children. The armed services are the domain of a non-sexual love that expresses the unity of each with every other. This is apparent in the organization of physical space: the "lack of privacy" within the armed services, uniforms and serial numbers are all symbols of the disappearance of the private individual. If women and gays represent a threat to the military, it is the threat of private love to the domain of public love

The border between public and private love was maintained in the past by the division of sexual function. The exclusion of women from the army served, in part, as an exclusion of private love from the army's public space. The introduction of homosexuals into the armed services threatens this same boundary. Both exclusions have had high costs. But unlike the exclusion of blacks in an earlier era, we should not think that these exclusions are simply "mistakes" that can be corrected by a proper understanding of equality.

more than others. "The war in the Balkans is a greater danger to international security than civil wars in Somalia, Liberia or Sudan because it may overwhelm Europe's political stability and economic productivity, prerequisites for Third World development."

Likewise, the goals of any intervention still must be clearly defined. "Only a combination of coherent strategy, sufficient leverage, and a keen sense of timing will allow a third party to bring peace. Most civil wars become amenable to settlement only after they have played themselves out with ferocity." A short-term emphasis on ceasefires, or the provision of humanitarian aid, may sometimes only prolong the bloody conflict rather than end it. Many civil wars, in Stedman's view, may just have to be allowed to run their tragic course.

It Can't Happen Here?

"The Origins of the American Military Coup of 2012" by Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., in *Parameters* (Winter 1992-93), U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pa. 17013-5050.

The year is 2012 and the White House is abruptly taken over by General Thomas E. T. Brutus, heretofore merely the uniformed chief of the unified armed forces. Upon the president's death and the vice president's not entirely voluntary retirement, Brutus declares martial law, postpones elections, and names himself permanent Military Plenipotentiary. The coup is ratified in a national referendum.

This scenario may seem like a fanciful Hollywood film treatment, but Dunlap, an Air Force lieutenant colonel, is afraid that it is becoming all too possible.

Casting his argument in the form of a letter from a senior officer imprisoned for resisting the imagined coup of 2012, Dunlap notes that high public confidence in the military after the Persian Gulf War and disillusionment with most other arms of government made it tempting, with the Cold War over, to give the armed forces major responsibilities for dealing with crime, environmental hazards, natural disasters, and other civilian problems. Other institutions did not seem to be up to the job. Even before then, in 1981, Congress had expanded

the military's role in combating drug-smuggling. "By 1991 the Department of Defense was spending \$1.2 billion on counter-narcotics crusades. Air Force surveillance aircraft were sent to track airborne smugglers; Navy ships patrolled the Caribbean looking for drug-laden vessels; and National Guardsmen were searching for marijuana caches near the borders." Proposals were made to have the military rebuild bridges and roads, rehabilitate public housing, and even help out urban hospitals. U.S. troops were given humanitarian missions overseas, in such countries as Iraq, Bangladesh, the Philippines, and Somalia. When several African governments collapsed around the turn of the century, according to Dunlap's imaginary account, U.S. troops were called upon to provide basic services—and never left. At home, the armed forces had gotten involved in many vital areas of American life, and 21st-century legislators called for even greater involvement.

By taking on civilian tasks, Dunlap contends, the military is diverted from its main mission—waging war and preparing to wage war—and "the very ethos of military service" is eroded. Instead of considering themselves warriors, people in the military come to think of themselves as "policemen, relief workers, educators, builders, health care providers, politicians—everything but warfighters."

"With so much responsibility for virtually everything government was expected to do," his imaginary prisoner recalls, "the military increasingly demanded a larger role in policymaking." Well-intentioned officers, accustomed to the military hierarchy of command, "became impatient with the delays and inefficiencies inherent in the democratic process," and increasingly sought to circumvent it. General Brutus's coup was nothing more than the next logical step.

Rambo Retires

"War Without Killing" by Harvey M. Sapolsky and Sharon K. Weiner, in *Breakthroughs* (Winter 1992-93), Defense and Arms Control Studies Program, MIT, 292 Main St. (E38-603), Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

The American military has always gone to great lengths to minimize deaths in wartime. Now, however, it may be going too far.

It is one thing to keep U.S. soldiers and civilians,

and even enemy civilians, from harm's way, note Sapolsky and Weiner, a professor and graduate student, respectively, in the department of political science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Today, though, Americans seem to have "growing qualms . . . about killing enemy soldiers."

American culture has always bred an extraordinary aversion to death—which is one reason why, to the great consternation of President Bill Clinton, Americans spend so much on health care. In the military, the unusually high value attached to life has long been reflected in a heavy reliance on firepower. "The one sure way to keep American casualties down in war," the authors note, "is to blast away at the enemy"—in effect, as they put it, to substitute capital for labor. This the U.S. military has done with a vengeance. During World War II, it expended one ton of munitions (artillery, bombs, etc.) per "man-year of combat exposure"; in Korea, eight tons; in Vietnam, 26.

But targets have been chosen with increasing selectivity. "Our one big experiment in killing civilians," Sapolsky and Weiner say, came during World War II, when allied strategic bombing (in-

cluding the two atomic bombs) killed 600,000 German and Japanese civilians. By contrast, when a civilian bomb shelter in Baghdad was mistakenly blown up during the Persian Gulf War, alarmed leaders in Washington halted the bombing of Baghdad for several days and nearly called off the air war.

Doubts about killing enemy *soldiers* began creeping in during the Vietnam War—when some Americans saw the enemy as "peasant soldiers fighting for their freedom." By the Persian Gulf War, the U.S. military had wised up. Reporters were kept far from the front lines and the public was shown high-tech missiles smashing cleanly into bunkers and tanks. No dead bodies. When some of the old-fashioned blood-and-guts stuff did slip out—a film clip from an Apache helicopter showing Iraqi soldiers being mowed down—the Pentagon quickly recalled the film. Still, "in large part because of [the military's] reluctance to go on with the killing and a fear of the political reaction," the authors say, President George Bush was forced to end the war before Iraq's Republican Guard could be destroyed.



During Persian Gulf War, word spread quickly about the "Highway of Death," in Kuwait. Far from rejoicing at the death of their Iraqi foes, Americans recoiled.

America's future enemies will not all be as stupid as Saddam Hussein, who foolishly suppressed pictures of the "awful gore" inflicted by American weapons until after the war. Shrewd adversaries will locate their military bases in civilian areas or near cultural and religious landmarks. All of Amer-

ica's weapons, the authors warn "will do little to dissuade an antagonist who knows that we like neither to suffer nor inflict casualties, military or civilian." At some point, they predict, the United States will be unable even to contemplate war, and "isolation will eventually be our answer."

ECONOMICS, LABOR & BUSINESS

The New Wisdom on Minimum-Wage Laws

A Survey of Recent Articles

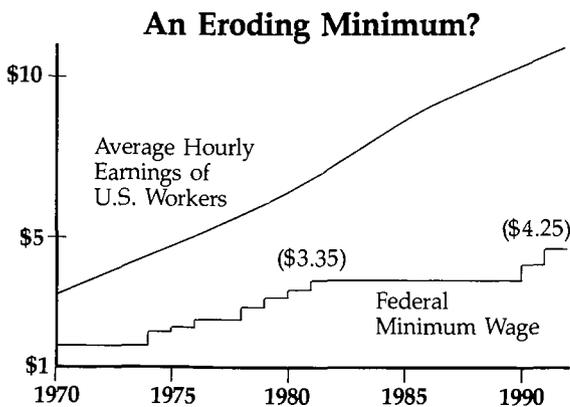
The minimum-wage law, that hardy perennial of American political argument, may soon have its last, best hearing on the political stage. Secretary of Labor Robert Reich wants to increase the current federal minimum wage of \$4.25 an hour by 10 percent—and then index it, thus removing the issue from the political battlefield.

Reich will have at his disposal some surprising new research. After decades of debate, economists by the early 1980s seemed to be in agreement on the subject of minimum-wage laws. The consensus was that they are a decidedly mixed blessing (perhaps not unlike economists themselves). Studies indicated that, other things being equal, a 10-percent increase in the minimum wage reduced teenage employment by one to three percent. (Nearly half of all teenagers now hold jobs.) Agreement among economists being an unnatural state, it is remarkable how long the consensus held up. But lately it has come under challenge from economist-

sleuths who believe they have succeeded in failing to find any evidence that increases in minimum wages cause employment declines, and who, like Sherlock Holmes, discern much significance in the dog that did not bark. The economists present their dissenting findings in *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* (Oct. 1992)—only to have them immediately subjected, in the same issue, to a large dose of cold water from some fellow economist-detectives.

Harvard economist Lawrence F. Katz (now chief economist at the Department of Labor) and Princeton colleague Alan B. Krueger begin the challenge to the conventional wisdom. They surveyed fast-food restaurants in Texas after the federal minimum wage was hiked from \$3.35 to \$3.80 an hour in April 1990 and after it was further increased the following April to \$4.25. They found that at firms most likely to be affected by the change (i.e. those firms employing relatively more low-wage workers), employment actually *increased*. But they take a bit of the edge off this finding by noting that their surveys would have missed any restaurants forced to close by the higher minimum wage, as well as any slowdown it might have brought about in the rate at which new restaurants opened.

The next challenger to appear in *Industrial and Labor Relations Review's* pages is Princeton economist David Card, who flings two separate stones at the conventional-wisdom Goliath. The first takes advantage of the fact that some states raised their minimum wages above the federal one. As a result, the April 1990 boost in the federal minimum wage had no effect on teenagers in California and several New England states. If the federal law had any negative impact at all, it



would have showed up as a change in teenage employment rates in other states relative to the rates in California and New England. But, according to Card, Current Population Survey data show no indication of any such negative impact in those states.

Card hurls his second challenge to the conventional wisdom from California, which raised its minimum wage to \$4.25 an hour in July 1988, long before the federal minimum reached that level. He contrasts the changes in teenage employment there with changes in certain states that did not increase their minimum wages then. Once again, the dog does not bark. "I find no empirical support for the conventional prediction," Card declares. The minimum-wage increase boosted the earnings of low-wage workers in the Golden State but "does not seem to have significantly reduced employment."

The challengers, however, do not have the last word on the subject. University of Pennsylvania economist David Neumark and William Wascher of the National Bureau of Economic Research step forward in *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* to present some new research of their own (and to fault Card for flaws they see in his statistical approach). Analyzing state data for the years 1973–89, they conclude: A 10-percent increase in the minimum wage cuts teenagers' employment by one to two percent.

There is plenty to quibble with in all of these studies. How well, for example, do they adjust for other factors that affect teenage employment, such as the varying economic health of different states? Questions like that suggest that the new debate on the effects of the minimum wage will not be much more conclusive than earlier ones.

No More Number Ones?

"The Rise and Fall of American Technological Leadership: The Postwar Era in Historical Perspective" by Richard R. Nelson and Gavin Wright, in *Journal of Economic Literature* (Dec. 1992), American Economic Assoc., 2014 Broadway, Ste. 305, Nashville, Tenn. 37203.

For more than a decade, more and more voices have been heard bemoaning the loss of U.S. leadership in high technology and calling for a government-led industrial policy to set things right. What such analysts fail to understand, contend economists Nelson of Columbia and Wright of Stanford, is why the United States had its big technological edge in the first place—and why no nation will be able to gain such an advantage again.

After World War II, U.S. firms did seem to own the future. They dominated high-tech fields, particularly computers, transistors, and other semiconductors, and claimed a big share of world markets. At home, technology helped to make U.S. industry the most productive in the world.

This technological lead had two sources, according to Nelson and Wright. The first was America's long-standing dominance in mass-production industries, built on the twin pillars of vast natural resources—coal, iron ore, copper, petroleum, and others—and a vast domestic market. Ample re-

sources and markets spurred technological innovation. The other source of American technological dominance was new: massive postwar investments, both private and public, in research and development (R&D) and in scientific and technical education. The number of U.S. scientists and engineers in industrial research soared from fewer than 50,000 in 1946 to roughly 300,000 in 1962. Total U.S. expenditures on R&D more than doubled between 1953 and 1960. Other nations lagged far behind.

But these advantages were bound to fade. Other nations learned the importance of investing in education, training, and R&D. Falling trade barriers created international markets in both raw materials and finished goods, erasing the advantages America enjoyed in a simpler time. The world's advanced economies have converged and, to an extent, intertwined. There is no sense trying to put Humpty-Dumpty back together again, the authors believe. In this environment, a moment's technological advantage is quickly lost, as other nations adopt the new technology.

Now, the authors speculate, national advantage may be based on "social capabilities," which are the product of the subtle social and political processes that shape savings, investment, and productivity. But in the new world economy, even these advantages are bound to be fleeting.

Why Black Students Are Making Progress

"Why Is Black Educational Achievement Rising?" by David J. Armor, in *The Public Interest* (Summer 1992), 1112 16th St. N.W., Ste. 530, Washington, D.C. 20036.

The bad news about the lives of many blacks living in America's cities is all too familiar: drugs, crime, joblessness, family breakdown, and, by many accounts, failing public schools. Yet, in the face of these oft-reported woes, black students in America over the course of the 1970s and '80s posted substantial gains in math and reading achievement, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). What explains this good news? Armor, a George Mason University sociologist, contends that the most important factor was neither school desegregation nor compensatory-education programs but rather the rising socioeconomic status of many black families.

The students' accomplishment—as measured by NAEP tests, a series of "snapshots" based on samples of schools and students and done for the U.S. Department of Education—is impressive, whatever the reasons for it, especially when contrasted with white achievement, which was largely stagnant over the same period. In reading, for example, the scores of black 13-year-olds jumped from 222 (out of 500) in 1971 to 242 in 1990, cutting the black-white gap nearly in half—from 39 points to 20. In mathematics, the story was much the same, with the black-white gap for 13-year-olds dropping from 46 points to 27.

Educators and others, including the head of the research organization that administers the NAEP, have speculated that the black achievement gains may result in part from school desegregation. Armor, however, says the trends do not match up. Most of the increase in school desegregation took place during 1968–72 and few comprehensive plans were implemented after 1980. The gains in black achievement were as large after 1980 as they were during the '70s. Moreover, recently released data from the NAEP itself show that while blacks in majority-white schools generally scored higher than blacks in predominantly minority schools, the latter students registered equal or greater gains.

Specialists trying to explain the striking progress of black students also have looked to the growth of compensatory-education programs such as Head Start for preschoolers and Chapter I, which gives

extra help to low achievers in poverty-ridden schools. But worthwhile as these programs may be, Armor says, national studies have found that their positive effects are modest or short-lived. "Although compensatory programs may explain some portion of black achievement gains, it is unlikely they account for most of the improvement."

Most national studies of academic achievement show that it is most strongly linked to such socioeconomic factors as parental education, income, and job status, Armor notes. NAEP data suggest the same. In 1971, only 21 percent of black 13-year-olds had parents whose education extended past high school; by 1990, 49 percent did. By the latter year the black parents had achieved near-parity with the white parents, 53 percent of whom had gone beyond high school. "The increased education of black parents is not necessarily the direct cause of achievement gains" by their sons and daughters, Armor says. Rather, it indicates "a host of specific family behaviors and attitudes—such as motivation, educational aspirations, child-rearing practices, help with homework—which [translate] into actual academic improvement for their children." Encouraging such behavior and attitudes within families, he suggests, might help American children of all races and ethnic groups more than all the much-touted schemes for school reform.

My Brother's Keeper

"Selling Poor Steven" by Philip Burnham, in *American Heritage* (Feb.–Mar. 1993), 60 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10011.

It was "a very Sad Day" for William Johnson of Natchez, Mississippi. "Many tears were in my Eyes . . ." he wrote in his diary on December 31, 1843, "On acct. of my Selling poor Steven," a slave whom he had bought in 1832 for \$455 and just sold for \$600. Of all Johnson's slaves—he had 15 helping him try to turn a profit on his farm when he died in 1851—only one, aided by "a white scoundrel," ever escaped to freedom. Yet, as in the case of Steven, Johnson expressed considerable compassion for his human property in his diaries. As well he should have, for Johnson once had

been a slave himself.

Black slave-owners do not fit easily into today's stereotypes of the slave master, notes Burnham, a Washington-based free-lance journalist. Yet black slave-owners were a reality in ante-bellum America, albeit "a tiny minority within a minority."

Nearly one in eight blacks, or more than 300,000, according to the 1830 census, were so-called free persons of color, having reached that status by birthright, manumission, or the purchase of their freedom. Of those, 3,775 blacks, living mostly in the South, owned a total of 12,760 slaves. The vast majority of these masters had no more than a few slaves, but some in Louisiana and South Carolina owned as many as 70 or 80.

In most cases, Burnham says, the motive for ownership appears to have been benevolent. Mosby Shepherd, for instance, manumitted by the Virginia legislature for having provided information about an insurrection in 1800, bought his own son with the intent of later freeing him. "Owning blood relatives could be a convenient legal fiction to protect them from the hostility that free blacks attracted," Burnham notes. "Often it was a way to evade stringent laws requiring newly freed slaves to leave the state within a certain period." (Sometimes, ownership added a new dimension to fam-

ily disputes. After Dilsey Pope, a free woman of color in Columbus, Georgia, quarreled with her husband, whom she owned, she sold him to a white slave-owner. Husband and wife eventually settled their differences, but the new owner refused to sell him back to her.)

Not all black slave-owners, however, were motivated by a desire to protect family members. A "significant minority," Burnham observes, owned slaves "for the same reasons that motivated white slave-owners: commercial profit and prestige." Andrew Durnford, a free man of color, bought slaves at auction for use on his sugar plantation south of New Orleans. He did not think manumission would become widespread. "Self-interest is too strongly rooted in the bosom of all that breathes the American atmosphere," he once explained. At his death in 1859, he owned 77 human beings.

As the Civil War approached, Burnham says, the position of black slave-owners grew more uneasy. In 1860, several wrote to the New Orleans *Daily Delta* that "the free colored population (native) of Louisiana . . . own slaves, and they are dearly attached to their native land . . . and they are ready to shed their blood for her defence. They have no sympathy for abolitionism; no love for the North, but they have plenty for Louisiana."

PRESS & MEDIA

The Cheerleaders on the Bus

A Survey of Recent Articles

Never before had a presidential candidate donned shades and played the saxophone on a late-night television talk show. And never before had a serious contender for the nation's highest office announced his candidacy on a television call-in show. No doubt about it: The Making of the President 1992 was different. But if TV chat shows assumed unprecedented political importance last year, most Americans, according to the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press, still got their news about the presidential contest from the traditional sources: TV news programs and daily newspapers.

Many journalists thought the press had done badly in covering the 1988 presidential contest, in

which visual images—of Willie Horton, of George Bush at a flag factory, of Michael Dukakis in a tank—seemed to predominate. "This time, there was a real determination to keep the candidates from controlling our agenda," *Newsday* campaign correspondent Susan Page comments in a survey in *The Finish Line: Covering the Campaign's Final Days* (Jan. 1993), a special report from the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center. "The best example," she says, "may be the tough coverage . . . of television ads for distortion and lack of context."

Yet if the press in 1992 succeeded in correcting its worst failures of '88, and tried hard to give thoughtful coverage to economic and other issues, it still managed to stumble badly, in the view of



some media veterans. "No one denies the press tilted toward Clinton during the campaign and was hostile to Bush," the *New Republic's* (Nov. 30, 1992) Fred Barnes writes. (Robert and Linda Lichter's *Media Monitor* [Nov. 1992] lends some statistical support: TV news' negative evaluations of Bush exceeded those of Bill Clinton by 23 percentage points.) "Egregious as that was," Barnes continues, "there was something worse. The press was unashamedly pro-Clinton. I think an important line was crossed." While journalists in previous presidential campaigns at least kept up "the pretense of fairness," Barnes says, that restraint was thrown off in 1992.

Although there was no "orchestrated, partisan press assault" on Bush and the Republicans, Christopher Hanson, Washington correspondent for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, observes in *Columbia Journalism Review* (Nov.-Dec. 1992), some of the coverage did indeed have a fan-magazine quality to it. "There was, for instance, the breezy, 1,700-word, July 22 *Washington Post* piece about Bill Clinton and Al Gore's post-convention [Midwest] bus tour, whose headline, . . . NEW HEARTTHROBS OF THE HEARTLAND, drew understandable groans of disgust from GOP operatives."

Still, readers were able to recognize "the gushing copy about Clinton" for what it was, *New Republic* (Nov. 23, 1992) Deputy Editor Jacob Weisberg asserts: "The real unfairness occurs in the stories that

aren't covered, or [aren't] covered aggressively." A case in point, he says, was an allegation made by Gennifer Flowers, whose claim to have been Clinton's mistress made its controversial way early in the year from the disreputable supermarket tabloid *Star* to the reluctant *New York Times*. Charges of infidelity may be none of the public's business, but "Flowers's charge that Clinton put her on the state payroll, at least, bore looking into." The press, however, "didn't want to spoil Clinton's party." But, then, neither did Weisberg. He complains about the absence of "a good story on Clinton's contradictory positions on the Gulf

war," then adds: "Of course, I'm guilty too. I saved this point for November 4."

Reporters have climbed on presidential bandwagons before. Hugh Sidey, *Time's* long-time Washington observer, admits in *Finish Line* that as a campaign correspondent in 1960, he promoted Democratic candidate John F. Kennedy. That year, he says, "I was one of the sinners along with Ben Bradlee and all the others who defected to Kennedy. We were propagandists, and there wasn't any question about it. We tried to skewer [Republican candidate Richard] Nixon every time we could, and we raised Kennedy up. But we had editors back in the old home office who could offer a pretty good balance. So we got a pretty fair accounting." In 1992, however, the news media's self-correcting mechanisms too often broke down, in Sidey's view.

Not so many years ago, editors had to guard against bias of a different sort. During the 1930s, '40s, and '50s, newspaper publishers, as two-time Democratic presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson once complained, were "automatically against Democrats . . . as dogs are against cats." That translated into a lot of editorial endorsements for Republicans, and the publishers' conservative views often affected news content, sometimes in heavy-handed ways. When reporters or others objected, it was usually in the name of objectivity and fairness.

Today, Richard Harwood, a former ombudsman at the *Washington Post*, observes in *Nieman Reports* (Winter 1992), owners and publishers mostly keep

hands off the news. But the old ideal of fairness seems to have lost some of its force. When they have strongly held views about, for example, abortion or environmentalism or (it seems) competing presidential contenders, some editors and reporters do not hesitate to take sides.

Yet the Clinton cheerleaders did not constitute a majority of the press, R. W. Apple Jr., a veteran *New York Times* reporter, argues in *Nieman Reports*. Clinton, after all, did take a fierce pounding from the press during the primaries. More than once his candidacy was left for dead. The general election seemed a different story. William A. Henry III, a *Time* senior writer, writes in *Media Studies Journal* (Fall 1992), that he observed in print during the campaign's waning days that the press did have a liberal bias, that hardly any "big league" journalists

intended to vote for Bush, and that most of the White House press corps openly scorned the president. Henry, a Pulitzer Prize winner, expected his assertions to make waves—but they didn't. "Journalists didn't seem shocked by these facts," he writes, "and the public didn't seem surprised."

With the election over, *Congressional Quarterly* reporter Jeffrey L. Katz notes in the *Washington Journalism Review* (Jan.-Feb. 1993), journalists themselves "are now questioning whether Clinton got better coverage than he deserved." That may presage some journalistic efforts at correction in the next presidential election. Meanwhile it will be interesting to see whether the media's apparent affection for Clinton will survive its traditional skepticism of sitting presidents, Democrats and Republicans alike.

Journalism's Worst-Kept Secret Is Out Again

Murray Kempton, who recently turned 75, writes exquisite prose and a column for *Newsday*. He has won a Pulitzer Prize, a National Book Award, two George Polk Awards, *MORE's* A. J. Liebling Award, and even a piece of a Grammy. His work has been featured prominently for decades in the *New York Review of Books* and also has appeared in numerous other national publications, from *Esquire* and *Playboy* to the *Saturday Evening Post* and *House & Garden*. Yet to some of Kempton's admirers, it seems necessary, every five or six years, to proclaim him to be unknown and undeservedly neglected, a hidden treasure known, alas, only to the fortunate few.

"He is surely among the greatest of all living newspapermen, and yet he is for the most part a secret west of the Hudson River. His columns—there have been roughly 9,600 of them since 1949—have never been very popular in nationwide syndication. Most editors outside New York consider his material too local and his language too baroque for their pages."

—David Remnick, "Prince of the City," *The New Yorker* (March 1, 1993).

"He deserves better of us. Yes, he got a long-overdue Pulitzer Prize a couple of years ago; but here he is, appearing four times a week on almost every newsstand in New York now (in New York Newsday), and the recognition and appreciation he gets [are] so incommensurate with what his astonishing achievements deserve that it constitutes a major injustice, a disgraceful city scandal."

—Ron Rosenbaum, "Connoisseur of Scoundrels," *Manhattan, Inc.* (May 1987)

"Murray Kempton is . . . one of the real heroes of his profession . . . He is an eloquent champion of the lowly and a tireless persecutor of the corrupt and unjust . . . For more than 30 years he has covered politics, labor, sports, literature, and a dozen other topics with such consummate skill and wit that in some circles he is spoken of in the same breath with H. L. Mencken. And yet, Kempton's career has been mostly an obscure one. His colleagues and readers revere him, but in the vast territory beyond the suburbs of New York he is virtually unknown. He won a National Book Award a decade ago and a handful of other prizes, but he has never had anything resembling nationwide acclaim. His columns have never been syndicated, his books are out of print, he has never won a Pulitzer Prize. Murray Kempton is the best-kept secret in American journalism."

—David Owen, "The Best-Kept Secret in American Journalism Is Murray Kempton," *Esquire* (March 1982)

Dewey and Democracy

"Salvation through Participation: John Dewey and the Religion of Democracy" by William A. Galston, in *Raritan* (Winter 1993), Rutgers Univ., 31 Mine St., New Brunswick, N.J. 08903.

John Dewey (1859–1952) is regarded by some admirers as America's uncrowned philosopher-king, the man who defined and popularized a civic religion of democracy. In his long career, Dewey struggled to liberate philosophy from metaphysics, became the fountainhead of progressive thinking about education, and emphasized what he called "the religious meaning of democracy." But, contends Galston, a research scholar at the University of Maryland's Institute for Philosophy and Public Policy before he joined the Clinton White House staff, Dewey's understanding of democracy was, to put it politely, "surprisingly idiosyncratic."

In Dewey's eyes, as he told a class in political ethics in 1898, the democratic ideal was embodied in the French Revolution's slogan, "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity." This invocation was symptomatic, Galston says, of the philosopher's lifelong failure to take any sustained interest in *American* political institutions. In the 552 pages of Robert B. Westbrook's recent biography, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (1992), Galston points out, there is no sign that Dewey ever intellectually engaged in a serious way the American founding, the Constitution, or American political history. For Dewey, Galston says, politics meant "a moral ideal at one extreme and positions on specific issues at the other." The middle ground of institutions and strategies for implementing ideals was missing. "Dewey was incapable of thinking politically," Galston asserts, and his attempts to do so resulted in "his characteristic combination of high-minded moralism and practical ineptitude." During the 1930s, the philosopher aligned himself with foes of the New Deal such as Louisiana populist Huey Long and activist Father Charles Coughlin, the "radio priest," and became involved in "increasingly marginal third-party ventures."

The "central flaw" in Dewey's thought, Galston argues, was his "uncritical embrace of the ideal of direct democracy." He saw political participation as the route to self-realization and a way of achieving fraternity, but his definition of self-realization was vague, Galston writes, and ignored the fact that

many people find fulfillment in other realms.

Looking upon politics as "the locus of human connection" is dangerous, Galston warns, "for political fraternity tends to be most completely realized in the course of shared ventures that bring groups together in opposition to others. Harmony and conflict are twinned." The search for political fraternity, he says, can easily lead to "the suppression of difference and the romanticizing of violence"—in short, to jeopardy for democratic institutions and liberties. The great philosopher of democracy failed to grasp that.

The Good News Of Secularism

"The Culture of Liberal Protestant Progressivism, 1875–1925" by Richard Wightman Fox, in *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (Winter 1993), 325 Markle Hall, Lafayette College, Easton, Pa. 18042–1768.

Historians usually cast the Progressive era as a time of growing secularization of American life. America's Protestants, inspired by a belief in scientific progress and other worldly ideals, began turning away from their churches during the last quarter of the 19th century, in this view, even as their churches turned away from traditional religious faith and embraced the era's reform causes.

Fox, author of *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Biography* (1985), believes this portrait is a bit too neat. The division between religious and secular culture was never so sharp in America, suggests the Boston University historian, and by the end of the 19th century the two cultures were thoroughly intertwined. In fact, he writes, "religious institutions and authorities played an indispensable part in promoting the secular culture." As the decades progressed, the faithful were increasingly likely to be told by liberal ministers to leave Calvinist suspicion of the world behind, "that it was their *religious* calling to immerse themselves in the world, to experience its natural and human-made delights."

After the Civil War, Fox says, liberal Protestant clergymen were instrumental in redefining the ideals of character and personality to suit a modernizing America. Character was the traditional ideal. Its Calvinist emphasis on self-sacrifice and self-control, and on individual subordination to a

higher law, was well-suited to an industrializing "producer" society. By the beginning of the 20th century, however, the rise of a "consumer" society was accompanied by a new emphasis on personality. According to the new ideal, Fox writes, "adulthood was open-ended, always still to be grown into, and ever subject to renegotiation."

According to Fox, it was not, as some historians have insisted, that personality displaced character, but that the two were merged. And the merger was carried out partly under the auspices of Protestant thinkers. Thus Henry Ward Beecher, the celebrated preacher from Brooklyn, N.Y., believed, in Fox's words, that amid the routinization of industrial America "character could be sustained . . . only by the cultivation and spread of personality"—by which Beecher meant the ability of individuals to change, to adapt, and to assert themselves. Leaders of the Social Gospel movement, such as Washington Gladden, also spoke the new language of personality. But Gladden and others believed that individualism had gone too far, and their efforts to mold "personality" sometimes amounted to little more than old-fashioned character-building. Gladden, for example, was an enthusiastic supporter of the People's Tabernacle in Cleveland, where some 4,000 working folk were brought together for evenings of lectures, orchestral music, and other forms of genteel uplift.

Liberal Protestantism paid dearly for failing to "distinguish itself forcefully from various secular



For preacher Henry Ward Beecher, the ideal of personality not only promoted individual vitality but permitted what he called "spiritual engineering."

currents that it flirted with, incorporated, and baptized," Fox says. It was repudiated by liberal "realists" of the 1920s such as theologian Reinhold Niebuhr. Then it suffered "the much more significant cross-denominational evangelicalism which over the last half of the 20th century has displaced liberal Protestantism from its position of cultural dominance."

SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & ENVIRONMENT

THE (BIO)DIVERSITY DEBATE

A Survey of Recent Articles

R*heobatrachus silus* is what biologists call a species of frog found in an Australian rain forest. Other people might simply call the animal amazing. Writer Emily Yoffe describes in

the *New York Times Magazine* (Dec. 13, 1992) the remarkable way in which it reproduces: "The *Rheobatrachus* female swallows her fertilized eggs, which then gestate in her stomach and are regurgi-

tated as tiny froglets six weeks later." Scientists hoped that since the frog somehow is able to turn off its gastric activity, research might reveal secrets that would help humans with stomach ailments. But in 1980, only six years after *Rheobatrachus silus's* extraordinary reproductive strategy was discovered by Michael J. Tyler, a zoologist at the University of Adelaide in Australia, the gastric-brooding frogs disappeared for their normal winter hibernation—and have not been seen since. The species is presumed extinct.

It is far from the only one. "Just as the importance of all life forms for human welfare becomes most clear," biologists Paul R. Ehrlich of Stanford and Edward O. Wilson of Harvard write in *Science* (Aug. 16, 1991), "the extinction of wild species and ecosystems is . . . accelerating," largely as a result of the destruction of rain forests and other natural habitats. The two scientists are an odd couple. Ehrlich is the crusading prophet who warned in a famous 1968 book that the "population bomb" was about to explode, and Wilson is the father of sociobiology, a man whom liberals have anathematized. Joining forces, they calculate that tropical deforestation alone now causes the annual loss of at least 0.2 percent of all the species of plants, animals, and microorganisms in the forests—a loss of 40,000 species per year, assuming there are 20 million in the forests. Critics, however, point out that there is virtually no empirical evidence to support such claims.

Nobody really knows just how many species there are in the forests or elsewhere on the planet, Robert M. May of Oxford University notes in *Scientific American* (Oct. 1992). "Despite more than 250 years of systematic research, estimates . . . vary widely, all the way from three million to 30 million or more." (Ehrlich and Wilson believe that there may be as many as 100 million species.) Ever since the 18th-century Swedish scientist Carolus Linnaeus recorded some 9,000 species of plants and animals in his *Systema Naturae* (1758), taxonomists have been adding to the list. "By far the most attention has been lavished on animals endowed with the charm of feathers or fur," May says. For birds (9,000 known species) and mammals (4,000), and for butterflies (17,500), which many naturalists treat as honorary birds, the record is nearly complete. For many other creatures, it is not. Although the 900,000 known species of insects make up most of the estimated total

of 1.5 to 1.8 million recorded species, May says, the true number of insect species may be two to three million.

What difference does a reduction in biodiversity make? Wilson and Ehrlich argue that biodiversity is essential to the working of natural ecosystems, that it provides precious sources of medicines, foods, and fuel, and that humans "have an absolute moral responsibility to protect what are our only known living companions in this universe." Indeed, Wilson is quoted in *U.S. News & World Report* (Nov. 30, 1992) as warning: "If we let too many species go, we face an enormous psychological and spiritual loss."

The only way to save "our fellow living creatures and ourselves in the long run," Wilson and Ehrlich claim, is "to reduce the scale of human activities," ceasing all development of "relatively undisturbed" land. "Every new shopping center built in the California chaparral, every hectare of tropical forest cut and burned, every swamp converted into a rice paddy or shrimp farm means less biodiversity."

Human beings are more than just "intruders, trampers, and destroyers," asserts Thomas Palmer, author of *Landscape with Reptile: Rattlesnakes in an Urban World* (1992). And yet biodiversity is so narrowly construed, he complains in the *Atlantic* (Jan. 1992), that its defenders fail to recognize human contributions. "The possibility that [Bach] chorales and [three-masted] schooners might represent positive contributions to biotic richness—that they might, just as much as any rain-forest orchid, embody the special genius of this planet—is never admitted."

The controversy has very practical implications. When the northern spotted owl was listed as an endangered species in 1990, the result was a series of court cases that halted logging in millions of acres of ancient forest in the Pacific Northwest, contributing to the loss of tens of thousands of jobs. Brian F. Mannix, an economic consultant who did work on the issue for the timber industry, complains in the *American Enterprise* (Nov.–Dec. 1992) that the federal Endangered Species Act has become a sort of entitlement program. "It grants to the members of officially designated species an array of absolute and inalienable rights that would be the envy of advocates for the rights of the homeless, the disabled, or any other group needing help that consists of mere humans."

"It certainly makes no sense to save all species at any cost, any more than to attempt to save all human lives at any cost," assert University of Maryland economist Julian L. Simon and Berkeley political scientist Aaron Wildavsky in *Society* (Nov.–Dec. 1992). They suggest looking backward. "What were the species extinguished when the settlers cleared the [U.S.] Middle West? Are we the poorer now for their loss? Obviously, we cannot know in any scientific way. But can we even imagine that we would be enormously better off with the persistence of any hypothetical species?"

Maybe not. But defenders of biodiversity see the future in dire terms. "We don't know how many species can be lost before the system ceases to function," biologist Richard L. Wyman of the State University of New York at Albany told the *New York Times Magazine's* Emily Yoffe. "But eliminate enough species and

sooner or later it will cease to function."

Yet change, dramatic change, is a constant in the story of life on this planet, observes Thomas Palmer in the *Atlantic*, and the imminent end of the world has frequently been proclaimed in times past. "To say that the changes [humans] have brought, and will continue to bring, are somehow alien to the world, and are within a half inch of making its 'natural' continuance impossible, displays some contempt, I think, for the forces at work, along with a large dose of inverted pride . . ."

"Few would deny that the effort to preserve and protect as many as possible of the millions of species now existing represents a fresh and heartening expansion of human ambitions," Palmer writes. "But to suppose that earthly diversity is past its prime, and that a strenuous program of self-effacement is the best contribution our species has left to offer, is neither good biology nor good history."

Fatal Glitches

"The Risks of Software" by Bev Littlewood and Lorenzo Strigini, in *Scientific American* (Nov. 1992), 415 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017-1111.

Occasional computer failure is a familiar fact of modern life. The usual result is inconvenience, a day's work lost or a file destroyed. When computers are used in critical applications, however, flaws in the software can spell disaster. During the Persian Gulf War, for example, the Patriot missile system failed to track an Iraqi Scud missile that killed 28 U.S. soldiers. The apparent problem: The Patriot computer was kept on so long that minor inaccuracies in its internal clock accumulated and threw off its timing.

As complex computer programs are used in more and more critical applications, from nuclear reactors to antilock brakes in automobiles, the danger of computer-generated catastrophe spreads. The solution might seem to be simply to search out and eliminate all the "bugs" lurking in a computer program. In theory, that can be done, but in practice, it is not always easy, warn Littlewood, a computer scientist who directs the Center for Software Reliability, in London, and Strigini, a researcher at the Institute for Information Processing of Italy's

National Research Council.

"Despite rigorous and systematic testing, most large programs contain some residual bugs when delivered," they write. "The reason for this is the complexity of the source code." A computer program with only a few hundred lines of code may permit thousands of alternative "paths" of decisions—and programs written for critical applications can have *millions* of lines of code. A "wrong" decision can result from a particular "input" not foreseen by the program's designer or not used during testing of the program. There are many other routes to error. Specifications often change during a system's development, and the changes can introduce bugs into previously designed parts. Or the system may be used in unintended ways, as in the Patriot missile case. Its designers expected that it would be turned off and restarted often enough to prevent the accumulated error in time-keeping from ever becoming dangerous.

Digital systems intrinsically make creation of reliable software difficult, the authors say. Changing only one "bit" from 0 to 1, for instance, may make a radical difference. A single incorrect character in the control program for the Atlas rocket carrying the first U.S. interplanetary spacecraft, *Mariner 1*, in 1962, caused it to veer off course soon after launch. The craft had to be destroyed.

The lesson to be drawn from the imperfections of computer software, Littlewood and Strigini conclude, is that, especially in situations where concern for safety is paramount, software should not be given "too critical" a role. Either the assigned role should be so modest that the reliability of the software can be demonstrated beforehand, or else independent backup systems using different tech-

nology or taking a different approach should be used. An industrial plant whose operations are controlled primarily by computers, for example, could be equipped "with safety systems that do not depend on any software or other complex design." In short, despite the dazzling technical achievements of the past two decades, "being skeptical is the safest course of action."

ARTS & LETTERS

Barbershop Dustup

"Play That Barber Shop Chord: A Case for the African-American Origin of Barbershop Harmony" by Lynn Abbott, in *American Music* (Fall 1992), Univ. of Ill. Press, 54 E. Gregory Dr., Champaign, Ill. 61820.

Mention *barbershop quartet*, and a Gay Nineties image of dapper white barbers and their patrons harmonizing together comes to mind. The impression that barbershopping is a white tradition was fostered for decades by the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, founded in 1938 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Abbott, an independent scholar, strikes a dissonant note. Like jazz and rock music, he says, the "barbershop" style probably originated with African-Americans.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, American black men frequently lifted their voices in harmonious song. In Kansas City during the late 1880s, recalled vaudevillian Billy McClain, "about every four dark faces you met was a quartet." Dr. Laddie Melton, who began harmonizing in schoolyard quartets in New Orleans around 1910, said that whenever "three or four Negroes [got] together," they'd say, "Let's crack up a chord! Let's hit a note!"

"The art of 'cracking up a chord,'" Abbott says, "was born in unabashed celebrations of the 'weird,' organically blended harmonies that first distinguished the group-singing traditions of plantation slavery." Although heard in many places, from lodge halls to barrooms, the unique sound came to be especially associated with black barbershops, which served as places for socializing and for rehearsing and performing music, and so it came to be known as "barbershop harmony." The father of the famous Mills Brothers—who began singing in the 1920s, made successful recordings in

the '30s, and had a spectacular national hit in 1943 with *Paper Doll*—had taught his boys harmony in his barbershop in Piqua, Ohio.

"In the days when such a thing as a white barber was unknown in the South," black lyricist James Weldon Johnson wrote in 1925, drawing on his memories of Jacksonville, Florida, in the 1880s, "every barber shop had its quartet, and the men spent their leisure time playing on the guitar . . . and 'harmonizing.'" Their style, Johnson added, "gave a tremendous vogue to male quartet singing, first on the minstrel stage, then in vaudeville; and soon white young men, where four or more gathered together, tried themselves at 'harmonizing.'"

Pablo Picasso, Classicist

"Picasso: In the Beaux Quartiers" by Michael C. Fitzgerald, in *Art in America* (Dec. 1992), 575 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012.

During the years after World War I, Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) suddenly shed the image of bohemian Cubist and assumed the role of fashionable Classicist. He even did some paintings that very much resemble society portraits. At the center of this re-creation of himself, according to Fitzgerald, an art historian at Trinity College, Hartford, is *Studies* (1920–22), a painting that looks like an intriguing puzzle picture and that until recently was little known.

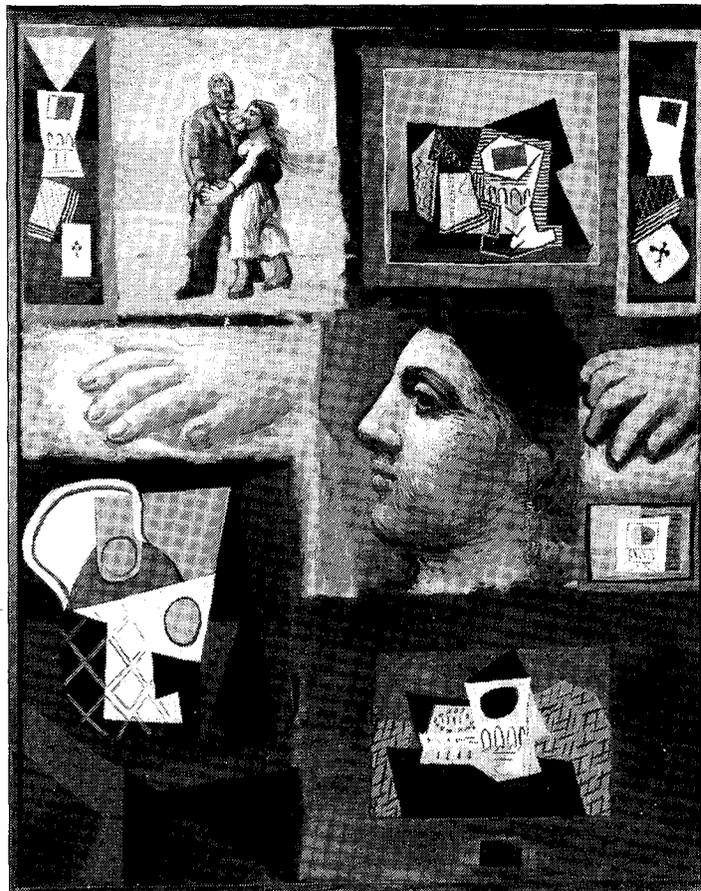
"At first glance," Fitzgerald notes, "one might dismiss *Studies* as merely a chance assemblage of unrelated sketches." But the images have a distinct order. "Highly finished miniature Cubist still lifes at the outer edges frame the canvas, while figures

rendered in a sketchily classicizing style nearly crisscross its center." The dancing couple in everyday clothes, as Brigitte Léal, a curator at the Musée Picasso in Paris, has noted, is "straight from Pierre Auguste Renoir."

The influence of Renoir (1841–1919) provides the key to *Studies*, says Fitzgerald. The Cubists reviled Impressionism, and Renoir himself was widely condemned by the early-20th-century avant-garde for having embraced academicism. Picasso, however, took a different view of the older master. "Renoir's struggle during his last decades to bridge the gap between his early work and the Western classical tradition without jettisoning his pioneering contributions to Impressionism," Fitzgerald writes, "provided a model for Picasso's own effort to broaden his art without turning his back on Cubism."

The strange pattern of Picasso's *Studies* is tied to Renoir's late style, Fitzgerald says. "During his years of searching for this new style, Renoir developed an unusual practice of sketching on canvas." As one critic explained in 1920, Renoir "multiplied his sketches, throwing numbers of them on a single canvas, here and there, heads of girls and children, flowers, fruit, fish, game—whatever he had in reach at the moment." This let him evaluate not only different subjects side by side but also different styles. In *Studies*, Picasso adopted Renoir's strategy, Fitzgerald says, and created "a painting whose coherence depends on his self-conscious inquiry into the same problem that Renoir had addressed before him—the relationship between avant-garde and traditional styles."

By the mid-1920s, Picasso was ready to move on to a new phase of his career. In search of "another path for reviving the avant-garde," Fitzgerald notes, he began to address "the budding movement of Surrealism. Picasso turned from the soothing glamour of 'things' to consider instead their capacity to shock."



In *Studies*, "a summa of Picasso's esthetic position in the years after World War I," the artist applied both realism (to figure) and Cubism (to still life).

When Hollywood Wooded the Censors

"Hollywood, Main Street, and the Church: Trying to Censor the Movies Before the Production Code" by Francis G. Couvares, in *American Quarterly* (Dec. 1992), Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2715 N. Charles St., Baltimore, Md. 21218-4319.

Today's liberal-conservative clashes over the arts and public morality are hardly the first such conflicts in American history. The Roman Catholic Church's Legion of Decency in 1934 launched a campaign of movie boycotts and edged the film industry into self-censorship. The conflict, however, was not just a case of artistic freedom versus repressive moralism, contends Couvares, an Amherst College historian. The struggle between Hol-

lywood and the Church, he says, was, to a considerable degree, "a mutual embrace."

Well before the 1930s, movie moguls, most of them Jewish, had struggled to mollify their critics, most of them Protestant. But that proved difficult. When upper-middle-class Protestant New Yorkers founded the National Board of Censorship in 1909, movie producers and distributors expected that the board would readily arrive at acceptable standards. The industry was almost eager to comply. But the "censors" could not always agree among themselves. What was worse, they often found their standards bitterly attacked as far too liberal by many middle-American Protestants.

In 1921, after several Hollywood sex scandals (including one in which comedian Fatty Arbuckle, one of the top stars of the day, was accused of rape and murder), and just after New York became the sixth state to set up a board of movie censorship, the moviemakers formed a trade association to head off further legislated censorship. Will Hays, a Presbyterian elder and prominent Republican who had run Warren Harding's successful presidential campaign in 1920, was named to head the new organization.

Hays's message to critics, Couvares says, was simple: "Oppose legislated censorship and the movie industry will allow you . . . to collaborate ac-

Secret Believers

In *New Criterion* (Jan. 1993), editor Hilton Kramer, writing about the life of Mary McCarthy (1912–89), limns the curious political odyssey of the celebrated "New York intellectuals."

*[Mary] McCarthy herself was never a leader in the intellectual and political initiatives of [her] generation [of New York intellectuals]. She took her cues from the men in her life—lovers, mentors, colleagues—who were themselves deeply divided in their attitude toward the world they wished to engage in their work. While on the one hand they tended to be rebels of the Left who were fiercely critical of American society and bourgeois life, they were also, on the other, ambitious to secure a place of preferment in the American cultural establishment they looked down upon with a good deal of intellectual scorn and political distaste. In the beginning—that is, in the 1930s, and to a lesser extent in the 1940s—the greatest obstacle to their success was their opposition to Stalinism, which in its cultural manifestations dominated the literary world that held the keys to preferment. Stalinism was, in its literary and artistic standards, philistine and middlebrow, whereas the writers in *Partisan Review*, the principal organ of the anti-Stalinist Left, were ferociously highbrow . . .*

What changed all this, oddly enough, was the Cold War. It was the Cold War that gave this generation of New York intellectuals—McCarthy included—its entrée to the larger cultural stage that

it both coveted and condescended to. Suddenly there were jobs in universities, in publishing, and in the mainstream media that had formerly been closed to writers of their persuasion. There were fellowships, subsidies, conferences, contracts, and the other emoluments of an established intellectual class. The irony was, of course, that the New York intellectuals now qualified for the mainstream because of their politics—that is, their anti-Stalinism—at the very moment when the vicissitudes of the political situation—the military threat coming from the Soviet Union—greatly diminished their radical commitment. It was discovered that in an increasingly perilous world, the United States could no longer be considered the principal enemy and might even be worth defending against the libels and slanders of the European—especially the French—Left, which placed itself in militant opposition to American interests . . .

What has to be understood about the political demeanor of the New York intellectuals in the heyday of the Cold War was that they were never entirely comfortable in the support they rendered to—and received from—the United States in its struggle with the Soviet Union. While fully availing themselves of the benefits of their new position, they could never really give up the idea that political virtue was still in some sense the preserve of the radical Left. They remained, emotionally even more than intellectually, secret believers in the radical dream . . . [The] radical movement of the Sixties . . . brought [them] back into the political limelight as avowed partisans of the Left.

tively in the great work of improving the 'democracy of entertainment.'" That meant visits to Hollywood stars and studios, and subsidized speaking tours to spread the gospel of "film betterment," i.e. to praise Hollywood's "good" movies rather than condemn its "bad" ones.

At first, many critics were co-opted. However, Couvares writes, "frustration over the failure of Prohibition . . . and the emergence of a more vocal fundamentalist dissent from the cosmopolitan attitudes of the mainstream church leadership" paved the way for new protests against Hollywood. The call for a federal censorship law grew louder. By 1927—when movie producers reluctantly approved a Hays associate's list of "Eleven Don'ts and Twenty-Six Be Carefuls" for filmmakers—reformers were also supporting legislation to ban "block booking" and thus let local exhibitors refuse

movies they found offensive. Independent exhibitors, struggling with large, studio-owned theater chains for survival, joined the reformers.

At that critical moment, Couvares writes, "a powerful ally appeared from the unlikeliest quarter—the Catholic Church." While the Church hierarchy included some bitter critics of Hollywood fare, it also strongly opposed both legislated censorship and antitrust legislation. Hays turned to the hierarchy and leading Catholic laity for support. He "allowed the Catholics to write the Production Code" in 1930, and then in 1934, after the Legion of Decency pushed for mandatory enforcement, he put a prominent Catholic layman in charge of administering it. The Production Code ruled in Hollywood until the early 1950s, and Hays, now remembered chiefly as an enemy of free speech, helped avert a federal censorship law.

OTHER NATIONS

AFTER THE VELVET DIVORCE

A Survey of Recent Articles

Václav Havel, the dissident playwright who helped bring about a "velvet" end in 1989 to decades of communist rule, is now president of the Czech Republic—but no longer of Czechoslovakia itself, which has ceased to exist. On the first day of this year, the Czechoslovak federation, which Havel had valiantly tried to hold together, split into its two constituent parts: the Czech Republic and Slovakia.

The implications of this fission could prove to be profound. Czechoslovakia was "not just another little country in Eastern Europe," historian Theodore Draper notes in the *New York Review of Books* (Jan. 14 & 28, 1993). "It [was] the only country between Germany and the former Soviet Union that has had an authentic democratic past." For 20 years after its creation in 1918 from the wreckage of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, it was a thriving democracy. If Czechoslovakia could not survive the transition from communism to multiethnic liberal democracy, how much worse must be the prospects that Romania, Bulgaria, and the other states of Eastern Europe will do so.

The return of freedom to a country that had become "morally unhinged" under communism, Václav Havel observed last spring in the *New York Review of Books* (April 9, 1992), unexpectedly produced "an enormous and blindingly visible explosion of every imaginable human vice," including "hatred among nationalities." Looking ahead then to the June 1992 elections for the Federal Assembly and the two republics' National Councils, the Czech president, while trying to remain hopeful, saw demagoguery "everywhere."

From the beginning, Czechoslovakia was a union of "two different national and cultural entities with different political and historical experience," note Martin Butora, a former adviser to Havel and cofounder of Public Against Violence, the leading movement of the democratic revolution in Slovakia in 1989, and his wife, Zora Butorova, a sociologist with the Center for Social Analysis in Bratislava. Before 1918, the Czechs had lived under Austrian rule, the Slovaks under Hungarian rule. "On one side," Butora and Butorova

write in *Freedom Review* (Nov.–Dec. 1992), “was the economically and educationally backward Slovakia, brainwashed by decades of Hungarization and made up mostly of farmers with deep [Catholic] religious convictions. On the other was the more developed Czech society.” Yet “a marked amalgamation” of the two different societies was achieved during the democratic interlude of 1918–38. Under the Communists, the differences that persisted between Czechs and Slovaks were largely suppressed or ignored, and, in the excitement of the Velvet Revolution they were temporarily forgotten.

Czechoslovak president Havel—in theory a ceremonial president above politics—came out boldly in 1991 for a common state and urged a nationwide referendum on the issue of separatism. For more than a year, he worked hard on constitutional changes to give the federal president of the proposed common state more power, including the authority to call a referendum. “He seems to have trusted that the politicians would grasp the good sense in his ideas, and accept them,” writer and translator Paul Wilson notes in the *New York Review of Books* (Aug. 13, 1992). But his proposals went down to defeat in the Federal Assembly. “The intellectual-turned-politician is by nature self-critical, and thus unable to campaign in his own favor,” Eda Kriseová, Havel’s biographer and a former adviser, remarks in *Partisan Review* (no. 4, 1992). Students and intellectuals had largely set off the Velvet Revolution. But intellectuals, Kriseová says, “shy away from the power of government. They have a permanently critical attitude to power, a lack of confidence in it. For that reason they are not very successful at practical politics.”

No referendum on dividing Czechoslovakia was held. But the winners of the June 1992 parliamentary elections were Václav Klaus and his rightist Civic Democratic Party, which won 30 percent of the vote for the Czech National Council, and Vladimír Mečiar, a former Communist, and his leftist Movement for a Demo-



Václav Havel, the hero of the Velvet Revolution, was not able to prevent the Czechoslovak Federation from splitting into separate nations.

cratic Slovakia, which won 37 percent of the vote for the Slovak National Council. Klaus and Mečiar, the new prime ministers of their respective republics, were committed, albeit for different reasons, to splitting up the Czechoslovak state—yet neither emphasized the fact during his political campaign. Klaus, a zealous follower of the American economist Milton Friedman, was intent upon rapidly transforming the Czech economy along free-market lines—and he came to believe that cutting economically backward Slovakia loose would make that easier to accomplish. In Slovakia, meanwhile, Mečiar campaigned for a mixed economy, a much slower rate of privatization, and continued state subsidies to failing industries. He said little about separatism. According to public opinion polls in mid-1992, no more than one in five Slovaks favored separatism. Economically, however, the Slovaks were badly hurting.

For 40 years, notes Paul Wilson, “the Communist regime had put large steel plants, arms factories, and chemical works into Slovakia in an effort to transform its largely rural economy. Thus while communism had meant a decline in the standard of living for most Czechs, most Slovaks had experienced steady improvement. Now their main market, the Soviet Union, had collapsed.” Unemployment in Slovakia climbed to about 12 percent—three times what it was in the Czech Re-

public. The economic disparity, as much as nationalist sentiment, fueled Slovak resentment.

"The original impetus for the split came from the Slovaks . . .," Draper observes, "yet they are undoubtedly going to pay the highest price for it." In years past, Slovakia got some \$300 million in annual subsidies from the federal government. But the split will cost more than money. Slovakia has a large Hungarian minority along its border with Hungary, which has been fixed at the middle of the Danube River. A Hungarian hydroelectric project, by diverting the Danube, has put the location of the border in question. There were 15 million

Czechoslovaks to face about 10 million Hungarians; now, there are only five million Slovaks to face twice as many Hungarians. "The Slovaks may find that it is not so comfortable to survive alone in a hostile environment," notes Draper.

"[The] Czecho-Slovak train that was optimistically speeding forward has suddenly jumped the rails," lament Martin Butora and Zora Butorova. "Despite the peacefulness of recent developments, Czechoslovakia is now viewed as a less secure area for investment, as a hazardous place with an uncertain future." That is unfortunate in itself—and it does not bode well for the rest of Eastern Europe.

India's Tilt Toward the West

"India Copes with the Kremlin's Fall" by J. Mohan Malik, in *Orbis* (Winter 1993), Foreign Policy Research Inst., 3615 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

The demise of the Soviet Union, India's main ally in recent decades, has forced the Asian nation to turn toward the West. Not only is Moscow's extensive military, economic, and diplomatic support a thing of the past, but, with the Cold War over, so is New Delhi's ability to extract advantages for itself by playing the Soviets off against the West. Even so, asserts Malik, a lecturer in defense studies at Australia's Deakin University, Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao's government now enjoys "unprecedented" strategic opportunities.

"First and foremost," Malik says, "is the opportunity to wean the United States away from its traditional ally, Pakistan, and thus effect a major strategic change in South Asia." The United States had "tilted" toward Pakistan during the Cold War. After the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, Washington channeled aid to the Afghan mujahedin resistance through Pakistan. In October 1990, however, unable to certify, as required by law, that Pakistan did not possess nuclear weapons, the Bush administration suspended all U.S. economic and military aid (\$587 million). Washington, Malik says, has begun to view India, not as the Soviet ally of yesterday, but "as an independent power in Asia and even as a source of stability there, especially in view of the withdrawal of U.S. military bases from the Philippines, the planned

reduction of U.S. forces in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, the economic dominance of Japan, and China's tendency to flex its muscles."

Prime Minister Rao, in office since June 1991, has acted boldly to deal with India's accumulated economic woes. [Inflation has dropped to 7.1 percent, the lowest level in two years.] Despite the pressure to curb spending, Rao's government remains committed to a strong military, not only to keep a step ahead of Prime Minister Mian Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan and to stay even with China, but also to hold Sikh, Kashmiri, and Assamese separatist movements in check. During the 1980s, India, with Soviet help, built up one of the largest military forces in the Third World. The Indian navy, which includes two aircraft carriers, now is able to show the flag from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca, and the nation's nuclear-weapons and ballistic-missile programs are in an advanced stage of development.

Western fears about the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, Malik points out, give New Delhi the opportunity to attract military and economic aid for what is, as one observer put it, "the region's last outpost of secular democracy."

But New Delhi and Washington "remain suspicious of each other's long-term agenda and intentions," Malik notes. Many Indian strategists and academics worry that closer ties with the West may mean having to accept the United States as unchallenged global policeman. Senior officials in Rao's government do not seem to share those fears, Malik reports. In any case, given India's tense relations with Pakistan and China and its need for aid, New Delhi now appears to have very little choice.

RESEARCH REPORTS

Reviews of new research at public agencies and private institutions

"Service Sector Productivity."

McKinsey and Co., 1101 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004. 138 pp. Privately circulated.

That the United States has not fallen behind the other advanced nations in productivity should not be news. In 1990, gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in the United States was \$21,450—16 percent greater than in West Germany, 22 percent greater than in Japan, and 23 percent greater than in France. Where the United States has been lagging, at least until lately, is in its rate of productivity growth. What is surprising, note the authors of this report from McKinsey and Co., an international management consulting firm, is that nearly a half-century after the end of World War II, a greater convergence in GDP per capita has not occurred. Technology and capital now can move freely among the advanced nations, and workers are equally healthy and well-educated, yet national differences in productivity persist.

Part of the reason is that in the United States, the two-worker family has become common, and so a larger proportion of the populace is employed. If productivity is measured by GDP per em-

ployed person, France and Germany improve their relative standing. Even so, substantial differences in productivity remain.

To get a better picture of what is going on, the authors focus on the market economy (leaving out government, health, and education). This shows the United States still the leader in GDP per employed person, with Japan, surprisingly, pulling up the rear (with productivity in 1989 only 61 percent that of the United States). The explanation? While Japanese manufacturing firms dominate certain world markets, they account for only a fraction of Japan's economy; many other Japanese firms are not very efficient or productive.

According to a 1992 study of the world's Big Three manufacturing countries by two Dutch economists, Japan's manufacturing productivity was 80 percent that of the United States, as was Germany's. It appears that the United States will retain a modest lead for some years to come. U.S. manufacturing productivity has been growing by 3.5 percent annually in recent years but

growth in Japan and Germany has slowed to 4.6 and 1.1 percent, respectively.

In all the advanced economies, the service sector dwarfs manufacturing. Productivity in services is much harder to measure. The McKinsey analysts looked closely at five service industries (airlines, telecommunications, retail banking, general merchandise retailing, and restaurants) and found that, with only one exception (restaurants), the United States had higher productivity. Poor management and archaic practices accounted for some of the productivity deficit overseas. Banks in the United Kingdom "still encode checks in branches, while [U.S.] banks... have centralized this function and gained productivity." U.S. service industries, the analysts believe, derive much of their advantage from the rigors of competition. Japanese retailing and other service industries are shielded behind protectionist walls. The chief barrier blocking convergence of the advanced nations, they conclude, is government policy and regulation in Europe and Japan.

"Post-Communist Economic Revolutions: How Big a Bang?"

Center for Strategic and International Studies, Ste. 400, 1800 K St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. 106 pp. \$9.95

Author: Anders Åslund

Is economic "shock therapy" killing the patient in Eastern Europe? Some official statistics paint a grim picture. Since Poland lifted controls on prices in January 1990, for example, its gross national product (GNP) has

plunged by more than 20 percent. Critics contend that the former communist nations should only gradually move from a command economy to a free-market one. Åslund, director of the Stockholm Institute of East Euro-

pean Economics, argues that a comparison of the economic fever charts of the various postcommunist nations indicates just the opposite: A rapid transition works best.

"The poorly elaborated, grad-

ual reform programs pursued by Bulgaria, Romania, and the Soviet Union before fundamental change of the economic system began have proved extremely costly," Åslund says. The drop in GNP since 1990 in Romania has been about 30 percent; in Bulgaria, 40 percent, and in most of the former Soviet Union, probably about 50 percent. Hungary, where the shift has been gradual and relatively successful, "seems an exception to the rule." There, as in the former Czechoslovakia, which moved relatively quickly toward a market economy, the drop in GNP was only about 16-18 percent. But Hungary, which had a large private sector to begin with, is "a very special case," Åslund says.

All of the countries, including

gradualist Hungary, suffered from high inflation, Åslund notes, but after two years of radical change, unemployment in Poland, for example, did not rise above "a West European level" (11.4 percent). In Bohemia and Moravia (now, the Czech Republic), unemployment actually fell from six percent at the start of 1992 to three percent last summer. A gradual transition does not ensure less joblessness. Hungary, Åslund says, "seems to be heading for the highest unemployment rate in Eastern Europe."

Given the extensive hardship in these postcommunist nations, Åslund says, it is remarkable how little social unrest there has been. "People clearly want a fundamental change of their soci-

eties, and they are prepared to accept quite a bit of suffering to achieve it."

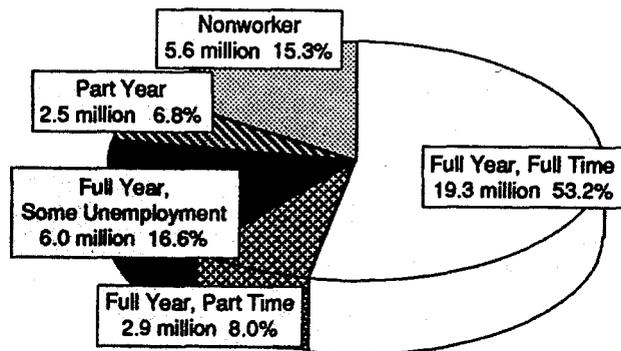
The slower the move toward democracy, Åslund says, the more difficult the economic transition has been. Hungary and Czechoslovakia had legitimate elections in March and June 1990, respectively. Poland, on the other hand, waited until late 1990 and 1991, allowing foes of reform to exploit discontent. In Romania, Bulgaria, and Albania, Åslund points out, former communists won the first elections, suggesting that only a slow democratic awakening had taken place. In Russia, too, democratization has been sluggish.

"If there is a gradual path [to capitalism]," Åslund says, "it appears very difficult to find."

Who Lacks Health Insurance?

(By Work Status of Family Head)

Some 36.3 million people—16.6 percent of Americans under the age of 65—went without health insurance, private or public, during 1991, according to the non-profit Employee Benefit Research Institute. Of these, more than half—19.3 million—were in families whose head worked full time for the entire year. Only 5.6 million people were in families whose heads were out of the work force entirely. Of all the uninsured, 9.5 million were children.



36.3 Million Uninsured under Age 65

From "Sources of Health Insurance and Characteristics of the Uninsured: Analysis of the March 1992 Current Population Survey," Employee Benefit Research Institute, January 1993.

COMMENTARY

We welcome timely letters from readers, especially those who wish to amplify or correct information published in the Quarterly and/or react to the views expressed in our essays. The writer's telephone number and address should be included. For reasons of space, letters are usually edited for publication. Some letters are received in response to the editors' requests for comment.

In Defense of Marx

George Watson's article ["Millar or Marx?," *WQ*, Winter '93] raised old controversies concerning the fundamental ideas of communism. His main point is that Marx used a very simple two-level social structure for his analysis and heavily borrowed from his predecessors.

Marx's method, not the political implications and practical realization of his theory, is worth discussing. Watson's use of "rank" makes any meaningful theoretical analysis of society virtually impossible. Marx proposed a highly schematic but useful division of society into two main classes according to their relation to the means of production.

Marx, indeed, did not invent much. The first volume of *Das Kapital* is full of extensive footnotes, which he commented on and analyzed in his text. Marx, however, refined and corrected this extensive body of critical political economy and produced the theory of surplus value. This theory stated the impossibility of achieving stability on any level of production, proclaiming the contradiction between capital and labor to be antagonistic. Strangely enough, being an adept of Hegelian theory of dialectic contradictions, Marx did not see it in a more positive way, as a stimulus to increased productivity and, consequently, to increased wealth.

Marx's approach transformed economic theory into political theory of an extremist nature. That resulted in its low practical value for economic analysis and policy. Nevertheless, none of the economic theory was tested to the extent Marx's political theory was. According to Marx, practice is the only criterion of truth. History, however, played a cruel joke on him. When asked about the appropriateness of his ideas for a Russian environment, Marx answered negatively. His theory was supposed to be implemented in Western Europe, most probably in Great Britain and Germany.

It is virtually impossible to criticize his economic theory. It is based on its own assumptions and deals with capital and labor relations in a highly theoretical manner. At the same time the theory is very logical and appealing and has a strong personal touch, which resulted in considerable borrowing of its ideas by others.

As far as its implementation is concerned, it is hard to prove that the Russian catastrophe was its direct result. Lenin used everything, including Marx's theory, that somehow was in line with his own political goals and added weight to his ideas.

Having read Marx extensively, I cannot but admire his personality, the intensity of his thoughts, his ability to persuade, and the feeling of something new, comparable only with the experience of reading Renaissance writers.

The time has come to study Marx patiently and without reference to communist regimes.

Yuri Boichuk
UN Secretariat
New York, N.Y.

Praise for Poetry

A few weeks ago I was going to drop you a note applauding your inclusion of poetry in the *WQ*. Never got around to it. But thanks—now maybe I can really understand what is in the *New Yorker*.

Wally Snow
Cherry Hill, N.J.

The Western Military Tradition

The excellent essays by Paul Rahe, Charles Townshend, and Charles Moskos ["The Military and Society," *WQ*, Winter '93] make a valuable contribution to the general study of war and society. As they recognize, they cannot cover the whole field, and inevitably they focus on the Western tradition. Of increasing relevance to our times, however, are the comparable traditions in the Muslim and Confucian societies—especially the former. Perhaps one day you will consider publishing a group of articles dealing with the difference between major world cultures in their consideration of military affairs.

Sir Michael Howard
Dept. of History
Yale University

Confronting Infrastructure

The two articles dealing with infrastructure ["The Saga of American Infrastructure," *WQ*, Winter '93] provide useful insights into the issues involved in understanding the history of infrastructure and planning for its future. Each is skeptical of the contributions of engineers to infrastructure planning and of the value of efficiency and cost-benefits methodologies, and each argues that much of the public reaction against infrastructure construction can be blamed on engineering arrogance, as reflected particularly in highway building practices. For Gifford, the answer to our infrastructure problems is to rely more upon market solutions, used in combination with new communications technologies in flexible approaches. Seely, however, like the good historian he is, notes that many of the so-called reforms and new approaches advocated today have been tried in the past. Although he believes that a "broader vision" is required for infrastructure, he cautions against a return to centralized planning and a reliance

upon experts. Politics, he warns us, will always be present in infrastructure development and to deny this is to court disaster.

Where, one might ask, does this leave us? I believe that the Gifford and Seely articles plot out a viable course that places the design of an infrastructure system using flexible technologies within a modified market context. An important role for government would be to correct imbalances and to mitigate damages where hard choices have to be made. The public reacted against infrastructure decisions in the past because it had lost confidence that fairness was involved in decision-making, and this trust needs to be restored. One method may be to create mechanisms providing for more citizen input but another may be to clarify the process at work. Infrastructure decision-making essentially revolves around what I call the five "R's." In confronting an infrastructure decision involving an existing technological structure one faces four options—to replace the existing infrastructure with a newer and more efficient technology, to remove it, to repair it, or to retrofit it with new technology and so enhance its operating capabilities. And, in order to understand which choice is the most optimal in the situation, a fifth "R," research, is mandatory. Such research could involve not only technical questions but also the attitudes of the public about a facility. And, of course, it is only the fifth "R," research, that can supply answers to the question as regards new infrastructure construction. In the process of working through this model, it is important that concerns over "expertise" and centralized decision-making don't produce excessive timidity on the part of politicians. For, regardless of the projects of the future, engineering expertise and planning will continue to be required and new projects will always produce their share of losers as well as winners.

*Joel A. Tarr
Dept. of History
Carnegie Mellon University*

Bruce Seely states in his article that an alternative to the horse-drawn coach was the horsecar which was "introduced in New York City in 1832 but not elsewhere until much later." He then goes on to chronicle the spread of this mode of transportation. Never once did he mention New Orleans, the Queen City of the South, which was the national leader in urban rail transportation.

In 1830, New Orleans opened the Pontchartrain Railroad, one of the nation's first urban horse-drawn rail car system. It followed a 5.2-mile-long route from the French Quarter out along Elysian Fields Boulevard to Lake Pontchartrain. A steam locomotive, "Smokey Mary," later replaced the horses. This route lasted continuously until 1932. In 1835, the New Orleans and Carrollton Railroad was the second New Orleans urban streetcar route, which later became the Saint Charles Avenue streetcar line. It followed a 5.2-mile route from the French Quarter, upriver along Saint Charles Avenue, to the village of

Carrollton. The Saint Charles Avenue line initially used mule drawn rail cars, steam locomotives later replaced the mules and in 1893 the line became electric powered, it still is today. In the 1880s, New Orleans had one of the most extensive urban streetcar systems in the country. The Saint Charles Avenue streetcar became the last remaining New Orleans streetcar line in 1964, and it is now the oldest continuously operating street railroad in the world.

*Louis P. Dewenter, Jr.
New Orleans, La.*

Bruce Seely evokes an era of great infrastructure leadership and growth, now sadly ended in his judgment. Noting that 19th-century urban infrastructure was largely planned, financed, and built at the local level, often with private investor funds, Seely stresses the emergent 20th-century role of the federal government in highway construction. Two questions arise. Why were 19th-century American cities more capable of financing daunting infrastructure needs than are late 20th century cities? Is the "golden age" of infrastructure development really over?

Jane Jacobs has argued that deliberately anti-urban federal finance has "robbed" the cities of the surplus their economic growth produces. Thus the difference between 19th- and early-20th-century urban self-financing of infrastructure and post-World War II federal grants-in-aid financing may bespeak both cities' loss of the tax resources and the vassaling of the urban monster.

The construction of Boston's third harbor; the new transit systems in San Diego, Portland, Buffalo, Baltimore and other cities, along with the complete reconstruction and extension of Boston's Green, Red, and Orange lines; Chicago's extension of rapid transit lines to O'Hare and Midway, along with "down-the-middle" use of expressways as transit rights-of-way; the Hartford, Connecticut rebuilding of the I-84-I-91 interchange along with the reconstruction of I-91 north to Massachusetts; Los Angeles's new transit system; Denver's new airport—all this and more suggest that it is much too early to bring down the curtain on the golden age.

To be sure, New York City for what appear to be ideological reasons has rejected necessary transit, rail, sewage, water supply, and highway improvements, letting federal money go to Boston and elsewhere. But New York is not the nation.

Seely assigns the blame for the end of the golden age to politics, implying that the federal leadership role has been stopped at the courthouse or city hall door. This, too, is hyperbole.

*Charles J. Stokes
Dept. of Economics
Andrews University*

The authors of "The Saga of American Infrastructure" overlooked some subtle points. One of particular significance is that where businesses must seek projects that

entice customers to part with their money, governments command the citizen to pay for any purpose that satisfies a political need. Rarely is the underlying intent to produce a better product or service; rather, it is to create jobs or redistribute wealth, especially nowadays. Many projects add nothing to economic growth.

True, water supplies, sewage systems, and, initially, roads are necessary to the functioning of any municipality. Eventually, however, the wealth returned on these investments dwindles. In southern California, the expansion of water distribution and storage has become an end unto itself. Efforts should be directed toward new methods and innovation in obtaining water; but such activities are, first, beyond the grasp of the civil engineers and, second, likely to topple existing bureaucratic empires.

Civil engineers are at the heart of many of our problems. They grasp for each clever idea used in science-fiction movies while ignoring limitations and costs. For example, the type 170 traffic signal controller used in California is fully electronic and is programmed like a computer, but the traffic engineers here have trouble running the system. An additional \$6.5 million is budgeted in San Diego to connect signals to a new central computer. Yet the existing computer serving the downtown area does a very poor job of moving traffic; the civil engineers have never mastered its programming.

A true folly is the vice president's enthusiasm for installing nationwide fiber-optic links. Yes, they have the necessary bandwidth for computer use. But this bandwidth is a purely local problem; existing microwave links can handle long-haul functions. And soon satellites will be able to handle broad-band transmissions directly from telephone-to-telephone, rendering a fiber-optic system obsolete. The vice president's solution is simply another political solution, poorly thought out, and guaranteeing the squandering of large sums of money.

Robert Hoffman
San Diego, Calif.

Thinking Animals?

Regarding your book review on animal consciousness [WQ, Winter '93, p. 111], it is sad to see scientists defend a point of view so at odds with observed phenomena.

We try to justify grossly inhumane exploitation of food and laboratory animals by claiming they lack consciousness, and then select behaviors that support that claim, especially when research funds can be garnered to help obfuscate the matter.

If a cockatoo I have observed closely for over two decades who can feint in her own invented game of hide-and-seek—trying to convince her "victim" that she is after him in one direction, then suddenly switching directions as soon as she has convinced him wrongly—is not aware of what she is doing, then we humans must also be unconscious and unaware when we pretend.

It is a little late in the day for thought reminiscent of

the 17th-century mechanism of Descartes to be still making the rounds. If there is no way to prove animal consciousness "scientifically," then much-vaunted human awareness and unprejudiced reasoning must be called forth and applied to our own abilities as well.

Marquita Farris Hilt
Honolulu, Hawaii

Lapsus Lingua

In "Yugoslavia, Mon Amour" [WQ, Winter '93], the Latin sentence, "*ex patris et filioque procedit*" should read, "*qui ex patre filioque procedit*." The suffix "*que*" is the equivalent of the conjunction "*et*." Therefore, using both would constitute a pleonasm. Also, "*pater*" should be in ablative ("*patre*") instead of genitive ("*patris*"), because the conjunction "*ex*" requires from "*pater*" the same ablative that it does from "*filius*" ("*filio*"). For corroboration, ask any old Catholic fogey like me to sing the "*Credo in unum Deum*" of the Gregorian Mass as he remembers it from his youth and you will hear the correct text. The "*et*" in the middle of the sentence would disrupt its cadence.

Leopoldo Lapuerta, M.D.
San Antonio, Texas

Reforming American Education

Surprised, delighted, dismayed, and moved. Surprised that my first copy of the WQ contains an article on education ("The Perpetual Reform of American Education," in "The Periodical Observer," Winter '93); delighted that it should address the number one issue, reform; dismayed that the materials reviewed all miss the central issue; and then moved to write this letter.

It is astounding to read David F. Labaree's warning that education should not be reduced to a "technical matter that must be left in the hands of certified experts." I wonder if Mr. Labaree would rather deal with doctors, engineers, and lawyers who are not certified experts.

Which brings me to the main issue that the articles you reviewed managed to elide. I'll phrase it as a question: Why is little headway being made in student achievement and graduation rates?

Here is why: We continue to rely on the manager/politician approach to educational reform as expressed in school vouchers, school-based management, curriculum redesign, and outcomes-based initiatives. These organizational/political approaches to educational reform are the equivalent of rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. We must employ educational solutions. We must change how teaching and learning actually take place in the classroom.

If educators had set out to select the most boring, intellectually bitter, least motivating way to teach and learn, then we could hardly have done worse than to choose the one-dimensional, sequentially oriented, rote-inducing, skills-defeating approach to teaching and learn-

ing we use today. We stifle and strangle the stuff of learning: subject matter and its inherent excitement.

We must stop training teachers in methods that induce rote learning. We must train all teachers at all levels to be certified experts in delivering subject matter while simultaneously developing cognitive and communication skills in students. In a learner-centered, analytical classroom students can learn how to engage the subject matter. The analytical framework leads naturally to the development of analytical/critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills.

Am I saying that simply employing this approach to the classroom will solve our education problems? Of course not. Teachers face many noninstructional challenges and the inequalities produced by lack of school funds are plainly unacceptable. Let the managers and politicians address these problems. The real challenge to reform is not primarily financial, curricular, managerial, or political.

*Victor P. Maiorana
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of New York*

Maybe Milken Was Right

I have just read the two articles devoted to "American Finance" [WQ, Autumn '92]. Both carried inaccurate and misleading statements about Michael Milken. Since I worked at Drexel Burnham Lambert for more than 20 years, directly with Mr. Milken for 12 years, I have detailed knowledge of the high-yield securities market and familiarity with Mr. Milken's career as well as his "case." I was saddened that the WQ would choose to dispatch both high-yield bonds and Mr. Milken with such carelessness. The classification of high-yield bonds as "worthless" and the appointment of Mr. Milken as a symbol of "the sins of the 1980s" reflect the ignorance and tabloid tendencies of the authors. Indeed, their reliance on material from Connie Bruck's *The Predator's Ball* reveals "research" akin to using Kitty Kelly as a primary source for a book on Nancy Reagan.

High-yield securities were supported by Mr. Milken as a means to provide capital to small and medium-sized companies and to create jobs. They have been consistently effective in both areas. As for Mr. Milken, the verdict of history will surely be more tempered than the author's vilifications.

Since the market's downturn in 1990, returns of over 40 percent have been achieved by investors in "junk bonds"—a return equivalent to approximately \$100 billion. During the mid-1980s, Drexel Burnham was the underwriter on as many equity and equity-related deals as they were on debt deals. However, Mr. Milken had nothing to do with merger and acquisition transactions or leveraged buy-outs. Such activities were handled (as is the case in all investment banking firms) by the corporate finance and capital market departments of the firm.

Unlike J. P. Morgan, Mr. Milken was empowering entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized companies. Because of his efforts, he often ran afoul of the corporate monoliths.

Now that high-yield securities are being seen as solid revenue producers and as real sources of capital, Mr. Milken will be viewed in a different light. Serious economists are already revisiting the "Milken era."

*Lorraine Spurge
President & CEO
Knowledge Exchange, Inc.
Beverly Hills, Calif.*

Bradford DeLong and Roy Smith miss important points in their thoughtful essays on American finance. DeLong demonstrates the important role of active investors in comparing Morgan and Non-Morgan companies. The paucity of active owners, entrepreneurs, and manager-owners before the restructuring wave of the 1980s clearly did limit productivity, returns, and employment asset growth. But early 20th-century finance led to economic concentration, while early 21st-century finance (heralded by the Milken era of the early 1980s) focuses on expanded economic participation, innovation, and change.

Smith's article breezily echoes every platitude the popular press proffered on Milken and high-yield innovations in finance. The lions' share of high-yield finance went to fund innovation and growth to new industries and new owners, not RJR-type acquisitions. The article fails to differentiate between the business combination activity oriented towards conglomeration or deconglomeration, between refinancing and growth finance, between job and value creation and destruction. The extraordinary return of the high-yield market after the legislated market panic introduced by the S&L bailout bill is nowhere mentioned by the author.

Without a more developed analysis, we cannot understand why we were unable to keep economic growth alive by the end of the 1980s. Much of the concern expressed about excessive credit and capital excess is connected to the political battle between those trying to protect old capital and those trying to build new capital in the 1980s. The wave of regulations, litigation, and prosecution that blocked financial access and ownership change was a case of the use of regulation to restrict economic competition and growth, not expand it.

*Glenn Yago
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Building the Proper House

Three cheers for Witold Rybczynski's "The Art of Building, or the Building of Art?" [WQ, Autumn '92]. Rybczynski says outright what is currently taboo in architectural criticism. That is, that the art of architecture is

unique to itself, and that the language of architecture differs fundamentally from that of other visual arts.

My own experience with students confirms Rybczynski's observation; they prefer to work on projects that are programmatically uncharged. A house for Shakespeare's Prospero is preferable to a school; a monument to a poet, preferable to a library. I was commiserating about this with the eminent Russian physicist Lev Okun, who reported what he thought was a parallel development among students of physics. A popular endeavor currently, he said, was the study of two-dimensional mathematics. Extremely elegant solutions can be developed to problems for physics and mathematics in this way, and many students were drawn to this pursuit. Unfortunately, Okun noted, the real world is three-dimensional.

The parallel is obvious. The programmatically charged architectural problem allows no escape from dealing with the more complex spatial, behavioral, and technical aspects of a building—in short, its purpose and the physical means of its fulfillment. In reading Rybczynski's piece it occurred to me that the current "anything goes" attitude toward architecture—reflected in Philip Johnson's proclamation, "There are no rights, no wrongs in any of the arts and architecture today, only the world of wonderful freedom"—is conditioned by two recent developments.

The first is the embrace of architecture by the mainstream of the commercial world. Developers, ranging from hard-nosed office builders to the imaginative Disney Company, have discovered the potential of architecture as a marketing device.

The second development is a shift within architecture, which once saw itself as a component of city building but now devotes itself to producing the singular object treated as a stage set. In the past, it was virtually impossible to separate the philosophy and style of an individual architect from his conception and vision of the city as a whole. Even the towers of Mies van der Rohe and the prototypes of Le Corbusier could not be separated from the designers' proposals for new urban forms. One could demonstrate how a certain building, introduced into an urban context, helped to make a whole greater than its parts. This is not the case today, when many eminent architects with strong personal and identifiable styles generally have not extended their concepts to include the broader urban consequences of their architecture.

It is this question, the kind of urban form and urban life that we ultimately have in mind, that must dominate our strategy in considering the merits of individual buildings in the future. Rybczynski, while emphasizing the pursuit of a building's intrinsic purpose as the generator of its aesthetics, never quite buys into the notion that "the response to function shall yield beauty." Nevertheless, Oscar Wilde's words seem to appropriately summarize his position: "I have found that all ugly things are made by those who strive to make something beautiful, and

that all beautiful things are made by those who strive to make something useful."

Moshe Safdie, Architect
Moshe Safdie and
Associates, Inc.
Somerville, Mass.

Bell Revisited

I write to take issue with Richard Fox's comment [WQ, Winter '93] on Daniel Bell's "America's Cultural Wars" [WQ, Summer '92]. But let me begin on a point of agreement with Fox. I too was dissatisfied with the Bell article. Richard John Neuhaus's 1992 book, *America Against Itself*, did a vastly superior job of explaining why American public discourse, especially as seen in our politics, has grown so poisonous.

I disagree with Fox's contention that "[t]he basic rift in our culture is not between Left and Right," but rather "between self and community." Bell does treat the self-community rift, only he identifies it (correctly, I believe) as the fault line separating liberals and communitarians. If Bell and I are right that the reconciling of individual and community needs is really an argument in Left versus Center politics, then Fox's taking of this as supreme automatically excludes conservatives from any meaningful role in public debate.

Second, Fox confuses cause and effect in his description of how we came to today's untenable pass. He traces the chain of causality thus: Community erodes. The sense of self disintegrates. Narcissism takes root. Derealization occurs. Fox has this precisely backward. We entered this vicious cycle when we lost a shared sense of reality. If we possessed a shared sense of reality, we could regain our sense of community.

The true great divide in our discourse is between "thinking" and "nonthinking" people. In borrowing his dichotomy from Barry Farber, I use these terms to refer only to differing fundamental assumptions and ways of experiencing the world, not to impugn "nonthinkers." Thinkers hold that *truth* exists and can be discovered. Those on the other side take subjectivity as their primary way of experiencing reality. They deny that objectivity is possible and speak of various truths. In some cases, they reject logic and language as instruments of oppression. They stress assuring access to a diversity of viewpoints. Yet as Bell writes: "One can apply a moral judgment . . . only if we see that language decidedly refers to reality, that meanings are not necessarily indeterminate, that the 'self' does exist and can be used to elucidate an author's intention, and that the truth can be established . . . And if one does deny that, then all moral discourse is meaningless."

Fox concludes by calling for "intellectual openness" in service of "a democratic sensibility in which all voices deserve to be heard." I wholeheartedly agree with that. But Fox is dead wrong in his conclusion: "Cultural diver-

sity' is the concrete path forward for those who venerate freedom." The doctrine of cultural diversity has operated only to empower a few self-appointed representatives of various approved groups; no one else is permitted participation in such debates.

If we are to cultivate true intellectual openness and a real democratic sensibility, in which all voices are heard, we must not set out with preconceived notions of who constitutes "all." If we are ever to recover a shared sense of community, we must adopt policies and practices that whosoever will, may come—and whosoever will, may speak.

B. J. Coleman
San Diego, Calif.

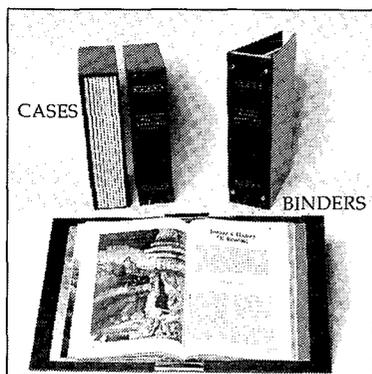
Corrections

In the review of *Breaking the Maya Code* [WQ, Winter '93], Fray Diego de Landa was described as a Jesuit. In fact, he belonged to the Franciscan order.

On page 45, the caption incorrectly stated that "bullet trains" in Japan are magnetically suspended above their tracks. They are not.

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We have received a strong response to our proposal to assist in the starting of Wilson Quarterly discussion groups. We promised to link readers living in the same geographic region so that they could meet periodically to discuss ideas and issues raised by WQ articles, and many such groups have already formed. Inevitably, however, there were some readers whom we were unable to place. The people listed below have graciously consented to act as discussion-group coordinators in their locales. Any readers interested in joining a discussion group should feel free to contact any of the people on this list. Also, any others interested in forming a group in their area should write to: Discussion Groups Coordinator, Wilson Quarterly, 901 D Street SW, Suite 704, Washington, DC 20024. We welcome comments and suggestions from readers about ways to improve our discussion-group program, or who simply wish to share information about the activities of their group.

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FROM THE CENTER

Russia has never been a country for the weak of heart. Last month's bone-crushing collision between Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin and the Russian Congress of People's Deputies is but the latest in a long series of emotional roller-coaster rides for those who try to follow Russian events.

Story after story in the American press decries the slow and muddled pace of economic reform. Read the pages of our premier newspapers or listen to discussions on leading television shows, and you will inevitably conclude that Russia is on the edge of disaster. Talk to a Russian, and your worst fears will be confirmed. The Russian penchant for the dramatic gesture, the extravagant action, and the morose explanation has always been strong. And during the past few years, it has colored our perception of what has been happening throughout the country. As my closest Russian friend recently explained, "Sure, everything is looking up. But this is Russia. It will never last."

There is much to be concerned about in Russia. Nuclear waste threatens to pollute the entire Arctic Ocean. A vocal "Red-Brown" alliance of unreconstructed Stalinists and neo-fascistic nationalists hopes to overturn democratic government. Hyperinflation has wiped out personal savings. Collapsing industrial production threatens to unleash millions of angry unemployed workers ready, if given the chance, to ravage the property of their country's new middle class.

Apocalyptic visions are the stock-in-trade of Russian writers, who for generations have produced a national literature arguably as rich as any on earth. Scornful of Western materialism, Russians have, to quote the author Tatyana Tolstaya, "mocked the English with their machines, the Germans with their order and precision, the French with their logic, and finally the Americans with their love of money. As a result, in Russia we have neither machines, nor order, nor logic, nor money." Just look at Boris Nikolaevich Yeltsin the next time his face flashes into your living room. Is this someone to whom you would want to entrust your children's future?

But there is much that is hopeful in Russia as well. During 1992, state authorities sold off 600 large and 40,000 small businesses—primarily to local investors. Twenty million families became landowners—usually buying small plots for vegetable gardens or small homes. By the end of 1992, nearly

200,000 private and cooperative farms were busy producing much-needed food.

A great deal of change has been taking place beyond the capital's Ring Road (Moscow's beltway), and this transformation poses a terrible problem for many Western analysts and Russian intellectuals who prefer never to set foot outside downtown Moscow. Regional leaders—even former communist bosses—are struggling with democracy and the marketplace. Russia beyond Moscow exudes a primal energy that is both terrifying and inspiring. Provincial governments, for example, struggle heroically to maintain a social safety net even as local entrepreneurs seize mineral and oil rights, thereby realizing huge windfall profits. World-class museums teeter on the brink of closure even as gaggles of Mercedes-Benzes glide by outside. This massive transformation has been presided over by Boris Nikolaevich, as complicated a political figure as one can find on the current world scene—but a figure who is nothing if not profoundly Russian.

Boris Grushin, a leading Russian public opinion specialist, recently told a Wilson Center audience that he can identify five clusters of public opinion in his country ranging from the most retrograde form of national fascism to libertarian democracy. Because these clusters of opinion are in pitched battle with one another, Russia's future remains very much in doubt. None of the five groupings can be readily identified with any particular social faction, Grushin concluded, because each exists to a greater or lesser degree within EACH AND EVERY RUSSIAN, including the president of the Russian Federation.

President Yeltsin's power and authority have rested on the impression that he, too, is engaged in a fierce internal struggle over what kind of individual he will become. The battle over the Russian future is the story of 150 million individual struggles to redefine identity at a time when all the old signposts have been smashed and most new ones point in conflicting directions. What's happening now is a story of epic proportions, but it doesn't have a simple story line. We should all remember this the next time someone tries to tell us how it will all turn out.

—Blair Ruble, Director,
Kennan Institute for
Advanced Russian Studies

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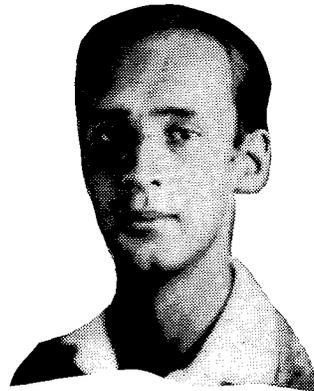
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Thousands of people are diagnosed every year for mixed angina—a medical problem of the heart that requires the attention of your doctor. Often the pain resembles simple heartburn, or shortness of breath, yet the consequences are not so simple. Do your heart, yourself, and your family a favor. See your doctor.

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A message
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of better
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