They can all serve as laboratories in which different experiments are carried out. But, he adds, each nation must "experiment only with itself, so it can speedily observe whether an experiment is successful or not."

For rich nations such as the United States, Hardin contends, "the most feasible partial solution is an immediate restriction of immigration." Because immigration accounts for about half of the country's [one percent] annual population growth, he notes, "the potential for progress . . . is great."

Restricting immigration here, he argues, would also help other nations. "No nation that can foist off its extra people onto other nations," he says, "is likely to take its population problem seriously."

Controlling immigration means controlling borders, of course—and that, Hardin says, offends people who cherish the ideal of "One World, Without Borders." But while "religious prophets and secular scholars" have promoted universal loyalty, more practical individuals "have favored the limited loyalties of family, tribe, and nation." There is truth, he says, in the old adage, *Good fences make good neighbors*. Effective borders are needed to keep antagonistic ethnic groups apart. "A peaceful, borderless global village is an impossibility. But a *globe of villages* can, if we keep our fences in repair, endure and enrich our lives." And perhaps even help to control the globe's population growth.

Environmental Mystics

Gonzaga University's John P. Sisk plumbs the depths of "deep ecology" in the *Georgia Review* (Summer 1991).

Behind . . . "deep ecology," as it is now called, is the conviction . . . that "rights" must be extended beyond human beings. Once [they are], of course, people end up on a moral level with redwoods, earthworms, Cape fur seals, and the nearest alley cat . . . . [For radical environmentalists,] a range of problems—nuclear pollution, acid rain, ozone depletion, the destruction of Amazonian rain forests and coral reefs—become darling issues in a new and intransigent morality, so that the green rage of Earth First! is a holy rage, and humanity, as Earth Firster Dave Foreman has put it, "is a cancer on nature." What's more, in the Earth First! perspective, humanity is no less cancerous when its efforts to repair or reclaim the environment are motivated primarily by the selfish anthropomorphic desire to make the environment more available for human sport and comfort . . . .

Among environmentalists Earth Firsters are plainly a minority, but they are out on the cutting edge of the issue where the publicity is cheap and abundant, and where the opposition, no longer sure of its own rights, is easily shouted down . . . .

[U]neasy and guilt-stricken in our abundance, [we are] easy prey to cynical denigrations of our nurtured well-being—and to apocalyptic predictions that we are about to lose everything or to become so overheated in a greenhouse universe that everything might as well be nothing.

ARTS & LETTERS

Corrupting Rap

"The Rap on Rap" by David Samuels, in *The New Republic* (Nov. 11, 1991), 1220 19th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Hailed by many critics as authentic street music and damned by others for the same reason, rap music has taken the country by storm. Last summer, *Niggaz4life*, a celebration of gang rape and other violence by the group N.W.A., or Niggers With Attitude, was the best-selling record in America.

In the past, notes Samuels, a Mellon Fellow at Princeton, black music (such as jazz and R&B) has been modified to appeal to

Despite the rap group Public Enemy's militant style, its members grew up not on inner-city streets but in suburban Long Island towns.

white audiences. But promoters found a more noxious formula for putting rap on the map. The music's roots are in "toasting," a Jamaican style of music that was born in the mid-1960s. A decade later, lower-class blacks in New York pioneered rap, speaking whimsical lyrics over the heavy beat of "hip-hop" dance music, and it soon spread to other cities. Then, starting in the early 1980s, Samuels says, "a tightly knit group of mostly young, middle-class, black New Yorkers, in close concert with white record producers, executives, and publicists, [began] making rap music for an audience . . . primarily composed of white suburban males."

Rap's chief impresario, according to Samuels, is Rick Rubin, "a Jewish punk rocker from suburban Long Island" who masterminded rap's first million-selling album, *Licensed to Ill* (1983), by the Beastie Boys, a white punk rock band that Rubin transformed into a rap group.

But Samuels writes that Rubin and others soon found that "the more rappers were packaged as violent black criminals, the bigger their white audiences became . . . . Rap's appeal to whites rested in its evocation of an age-old image of blackness: a foreign, sexually charged, and criminal underworld against which the norms of white society are defined, and, by extension, through which they may be defied." So Rubin served up Public Enemy, one of a number of groups now offering "a highly charged theater of race in which white listeners became guilty eavesdroppers on the putative private conversation of the inner city." Putative because Public Enemy's members are actually the sons of black middle-class professionals who grew up in New York's Long Island suburbs.

"A lot of what you see in rap," says Harvard's Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "is the guilt of the black middle class about its economic success, its inability to put forth a culture of its own. Instead they do the worst possible thing, falling back on fantasies of street life. In turn, white college students . . . buy nasty sex lyrics under the cover of getting at some kind of authentic black experience."

Already, Samuels believes, rap's popularity among inner-city blacks is waning. But the hit machine grinds on, churning out vastly popular songs and videos that glorify misogyny, anti-Semitism, and racist stereotypes of black criminality—a corrupt commerce in which blacks and whites are both complicit.

Argentina's 'Southern' Writer

"The Journey to the South: Poe, Borges, and Faulkner" by John T. Irwin, in *The Virginia Quarterly Review* (Summer 1991), One West Range, Charlottesville, Va. 22903.

Jorge Luis Borges (1899–1986), whose luminous *ficciones* combine playful metaphysical musings with tight plots, considered "perhaps my best story" to be "The South." It can be read as a straightforward narrative, he said, and also "in another way"—which he did not reveal. Irwin, a professor of humanities at Johns Hopkins, suggests that the story offers a figurative account of the Argentinian's own career as a writer.

In "The South," the main character,