sion. A lot of women who go for the notion of equal rights cannot go for the notion of opposing patriarchy, because that means a fundamental opposition to the culture as a whole."

Disagreements among feminists remain deep. "Vying for power . . . ," writes Wendy Kaminer, "are poststructural feminists (dominant in academia in recent years), political feminists (office-holders and lobbyists), different-voice feminists, separatist feminists (a small minority), pacifist feminists, lesbian feminists, careerist feminists, liberal feminists (who tend also to be political feminists), anti-porn feminists, ecofeminists, and womanists." Not to mention New Age feminists and goddess worshipers.

That the feminist movement has not achieved the ideal of equality is no surprise to Kaminer. "We haven't even defined it," she notes. "Nearly 30 years after the onset of the modern feminist movement, we still have no consensus on what nature dictates to men and women and demands of law."

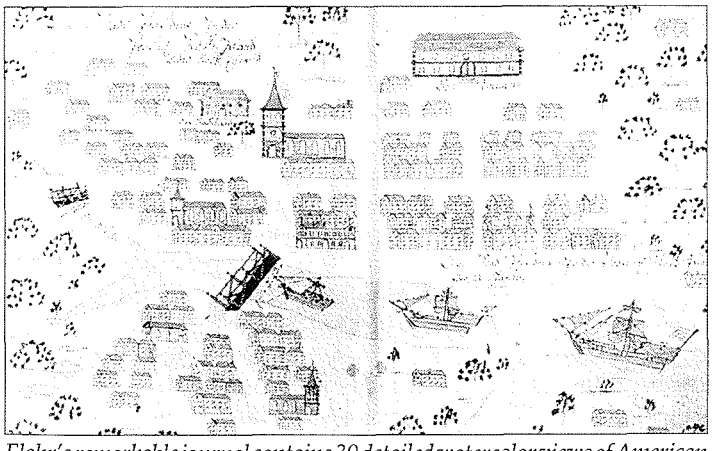
Colonial America: A View from Below

"A German Soldier in America, 1780–1783: The Journal of Georg Daniel Flohr" by Robert A. Selig, in *The William and Mary Quarterly* (July 1993), Box 8781, Williamsburg, Va. 23187–8781.

Many visiting foreigners recorded their impressions of 18th-century America, but few, if any, had quite the qualifications of Georg Daniel Flohr. "Relatively unburdened by book learning or preconceived ideas, he had fewer prejudices" than many well-born observers of American life, writes Selig, a visiting professor at Hope College, in Holland, Michigan.

Born in 1756 in southwestern Germany, the son of a butcher and small farmer, Flohr volunteered when he was nearly 20 for the Regiment Royal-Deux-Ponts, which the duke of Pfalz-Zweibrücken leased to the French crown. The regiment was part of the French force that King Louis XVI sent to America to aid the revolutionary cause. Unlike some of his fellow soldiers, Flohr went "joyfully" to the New World, arriving in Newport, Rhode Island, in July 1780 and serving until the Battle of Yorktown (1781) ended the war.

Like other visitors of higher birth, Flohr was impressed by the religious tolerance, prosperity, and egalitarian outlook that he found in America. The people, he wrote, "talk to everyone, whether he be rich or poor." While some of his officers complained of the "coldness" of the Rhode Island colonists, Flohr said that he "got along very well with them." The soldiers encamped in Newport all tried to learn some English, mainly to be able to converse with the "beautiful American maidens" who lived nearby. The freedom the girls enjoyed surprised him. "Once they are 16 years old, their father and mother must not forbid them anything anymore . . . and if they have a lover he can freely go with them."



Flohr's remarkable journal contains 30 detailed watercolor views of American and Caribbean towns, including this one of Providence, Rhode Island.

But the slavery that Flohr found in New England and the South shocked him. On wealthy plantations in the North, the slaves "are bought and sold . . .

Escaping Into Adulthood

Writing about America in the 1950s in *Commentary* (Sept. 1993), essayist Joseph Epstein notes that young people then were eager to leave youth behind.

We of the '50s were not rebels, with or without a cause (a damn poor '50s movie, Rebel Without A Cause, *by the way). To be a rebel, to be in revolt, implied being locked into youthfulness. Far from wishing to stay young, we who were young in the '50s were eager to grow up. Growing up meant growing into freedom, which was the name of our desire.*

I am reminded here of the English poet Philip Larkin's saying that his religious sympathies first began to wane when he discovered that in the Christian version of heaven one would become as a little child again. Staying a child was not what Larkin, or my friends and I in the '50s, had in mind at all. Like Larkin, we wanted "money, keys, wallet, letters, books, long-playing records, drinks, the opposite sex, and other solaces of adulthood." Everything in the culture of the '50s provoked one to grow up. ("Oh, grow up," sisters would say to troublesome younger brothers.) The ideal, in the movies and in life, was adulthood.

In the '50s, one was encouraged to be adult and yet one believed in progress and hence in the future. Since the '60s, one has been encouraged to remain young for as long as possible, and yet not many people believe in progress and the future seems terrifying. This has all the makings of a paradox, until one realizes that the difference between the two cultural injunctions is that the first comports with biological reality and the second does not. Since one cannot really hope to stay young for long, the future brings with it nothing so inexorably as the prospect of growing old, which is to say, the prospect of certain defeat.

like cattle." In Williamsburg, Virginia, the black slaves had to do "their master's work, men and women, young and old," in the cotton fields "without any clothes on." White Virginians told Flohr that clothing the slaves "would cost too much . . . and the slaves were not worth that much." Unlike many of his military superiors, Flohr did not regard the harsh treatment as necessary, nor did he echo the usual claim that the slaves were lazy, ungrateful, and given to stealing. Slavery, he declared, was unchristian and "completely against human nature."

Flohr's view of the New World's "savages" was not so very different from the views of other Europeans. He wrote sympathetically of some Indian customs and practices but also reported, inaccurately, that the Iroquois sacrificed some of their own people to their gods.

Flohr's journal says nothing about the ideals of liberty or the pursuit of happiness, but he found enough to like in America that, after bouncing around a bit—and witnessing the execution of Louis XVI in 1793—he returned. He became a Lutheran minister in Virginia and lived there until his death in 1826.

A New Paternalism?

"In Loco Parentis: Helping Children When Families Fail Them" by James Q. Wilson, in *The Brookings Review* (Fall 1993), Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Policy wonks may debate what is behind the rise of America's urban underclass, but ordinary folks think they know. The criminals and chronically poor people who occupy society's lower depths, they say, lack vital attitudes and character traits. Wilson, a political scientist at the University of California at Los Angeles, tends to agree. The problem is that individuals acquire these traits—such as self-control and the ability to delay gratification—from their families, and even policy wonks do not know what to do if, as is increasingly the case, the family falls apart or falls down on the job of inculcating them.

Government efforts to compensate have not yielded encouraging results, Wilson observes. As part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, for example, the Pentagon in 1966 launched Project 100,000 to try to improve the lives of a group of "low aptitude" recruits. Al-