

---

emphasizing those areas in which considerable progress has been achieved: modernization of a traditional rural society, the emergence of a new political culture, and what he terms "the institutionalization of multinationalism." Denitch's detailed information about the economic status and political representation in Belgrade's federal institutions of the various nationalities (Serbs, Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Slovenes, Bosnian Moslems, Hungarians, and Albanians) will interest American readers.

—Mihailo Marković ('76)

**THE FALL OF  
PUBLIC MAN**  
by Richard Sennett  
Knopf, 1977, 389 pp. \$15  
L of C 76-25131  
ISBN 0-394-48715-X

What cities do to people, particularly to their hearts and minds, has been sociologist Richard Sennett's driving interest in a succession of inventive though often willful books (*Families Against the City*, *Uses of Disorder*). Of these, *The Fall* is the most significant and comprehensive. In it, Sennett argues that the decline of vigor in big-city life cannot be corrected by current efforts to strengthen intimate local (often ethnic) ties. Our hunger for intimacy and "community" (as opposed to the wider associations of public life) is a symptom of the malaise in our culture. Championing the enduring worth of impersonality, artificiality, and civility, Sennett analyzes the breakdown of those 18th-century values in the behavior of the middle classes during the last 200 years to show how demands for personal authenticity and private happiness have led to passivity in politics and other public matters. His argument takes us through fascinating changes in modes of family life, the design of theaters and the style of performers, the uses of clothes, techniques of salesmanship and political mobilization, and the interconnections of all of these. Sennett's explanations are involuted and not always persuasive. His proposed correctives are nebulous. But his theme is momentous, and his eye for the shifting patterns of cultural change sharp and engaging.

—John Higham

---