

and 'journalist-historians.' " It is time, Rice believes, to open up that shop, and to encourage academic historians "to write for

the educated public, to become freely functioning intellectual citizens, [and] to be teachers in [an] expansive sense."

'Pro-Choicers' and the Fact of Life

"Our Bodies, Our Souls" by Naomi Wolf, in *The New Republic* (Oct. 16, 1995),
1220 19th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

In a recent *Atlantic Monthly* essay, George McKenna, a political scientist at City College of New York, urged that foes of abortion take "an unequivocally pro-life" position that is also "effectively pro-choice": namely, recognize the legal status of abortion and "grudgingly tolerate" it but at the same time seek to restrict and discourage it (see "The Periodical Observer," *WQ*, Autumn '95, pp. 115-16). Now, from the other side of the barricades, Wolf, a noted feminist writer, argues that abortion rights advocates should abandon their euphemistic rhetoric and admit, to themselves and others, that "the death of a fetus is a real death," and that "this country's high rate of abortion—which ends more than a quarter of all pregnancies—can only be rightly understood as what Dr. Henry Foster was brave enough to call it: 'a failure.'"

By clinging to the pretense that there is

no life and no death involved in abortion, Wolf contends, the pro-choice movement forfeits the backing of "the millions of Americans who want to support abortion as a legal right but still need to condemn it as a moral iniquity." More important, she says, "choice" proponents "entangle our beliefs in a series of self-delusions, fibs, and evasions. And we risk becoming precisely what our critics charge us with being: callous, selfish, and casually destructive men and women who share a cheapened view of human life."

Making an analogy to war, Wolf writes that abortion should remain legal and is sometimes necessary. "Only if we uphold abortion rights within a matrix of individual conscience, atonement, and responsibility," she says, "can we both correct the logical and ethical absurdity in our position—and consolidate the support of the center."

Gotham's Anticrime Wave

"How to Run a Police Department" by George L. Kelling, in *City Journal* (Autumn 1995),
Manhattan Institute, 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017; "Giuliani: Start
Spreading the News" by David Brooks, in *The Weekly Standard* (Nov. 13, 1995),
1150 17th St. N.W., Ste. 505, Washington, D.C. 20036-4617.

New York City's crime rate plummeted in 1994, with murder down an astonishing 32 percent and robbery down 22 percent. In the first nine months of 1995, the murder rate fell an additional 30 percent. "New York is now the safest city in America with a population over one million," declares Brooks, a senior editor at the *Weekly Standard*. The chief reason for this, he and Kelling, a criminologist at Northeastern University, contend, is the militant anticrime strategy adopted by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Police Commissioner William Bratton since they took office in early 1994.

Their approach draws on the "Broken Windows" thesis that Kelling and political scientist James Q. Wilson advanced more than a decade ago: that disorder and petty

crimes, if ignored, make decent citizens fearful and put a neighborhood on the skids, and eventually lead to an upsurge in serious crime. Hence, writes Kelling, "the best way to prevent major crimes and urban decay is to target minor crimes—panhandling, youths taking over parks, prostitution, public drinking, and public urination."

This runs counter to the traditional view that serious crime is the only proper business of the police. But the Giuliani-Bratton strategy seems to be working (even if the two men have feuded over who deserves the credit). "The streets and parks are cleaner," Brooks notes. "Aggressive panhandling has been curtailed. The homeless now tend to spend their days sitting on park benches, whereas before they were likely to be found sleeping on the sidewalk. . . . New York [is

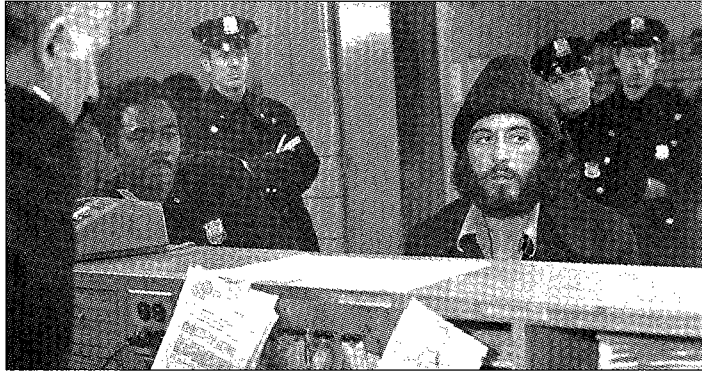
now] a more civil place.”

Bratton is also taking an unorthodox approach to controlling police corruption, Kelling notes, and his effort should be helped by the new war on crime. For decades, police and political leaders have relied on “a rigidly hierarchical command structure” to police the police. But most officers work the streets alone or in pairs. They come to believe that they are doing “society’s dirty work” with little support from the public or their self-serving superiors. They are, in other words, ripe for corruption.

Bratton believes, with Kelling, that the only effective strategy is to focus *not* on controlling police but on the main mission: preventing crime and keeping order. “Most police officers will find success so gratifying that their own self-image, their pride in being

part of a winning organization, will serve as an internal bar to misbehavior,” Kelling says.

Unfortunately, he observes, state legisla-



Efforts to prevent police corruption—a problem vividly portrayed in Serpico (1973)—have shaped the way police departments are organized.

tors and judges have failed to grasp the Giuliani-Bratton reform logic. The state legislature, prodded by the jurists, who wanted to avoid “trivial dirty work,” has made minor offenses against public order administrative rather than criminal matters, which has, Bratton told Kelling, “the potential to undermine the whole effort.”

Your Name or Mine?

“What’s Your Name?” by Amy A. Kass and Leon R. Kass, in *First Things* (Nov. 1995), Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Ave., Ste. 400, New York, N.Y. 10010.

As if modern marriage were not already sailing in troubled waters, Americans have added yet another small ripple by making it an open question whether a woman will take her husband’s name. Mr. and Mrs. Kass, who both teach at the University of Chicago, have no doubt about their own view: “If marriage is, as we believe, a new estate, in fact changing the identities of both partners, there is good reason to have this changed identity reflected in some change of surname.”

Individuals entering marriage who refuse to bear a common name, the authors contend, are, though perhaps not by intent, “symbolically holding themselves back from the full meaning of the union.” They also are creating “in advance a confused identity” for their future children. A “common name identifies the child securely within its nest of origin and rearing, and symbolically points to the ties of parental affection and responsibility that

are needed for its healthy growth and well-being,” the Kasses say.

How about a hyphenated or newly invented name? Hyphenated family names “are simply impractical beyond one or at most two generations,” the authors point out. A totally new surname sunders all ties to the past.

But why should it be the woman who surrenders the surname? Because, the Kasses maintain, “the mother is the ‘more natural’ parent, that is, the parent *by birth*,” while the father, whose role in the birth is “minuscule and invisible,” is a parent “more by choice and agreement than by nature.” In giving his surname to his bride, the husband is offering “a pledge of (among other things) loyal and responsible fatherhood for her children. A woman who refuses this gift is, whether she knows it or not, tacitly refusing the promised devotion or, worse, expressing her suspicions about her groom’s trustworthiness as a husband and prospective father.