

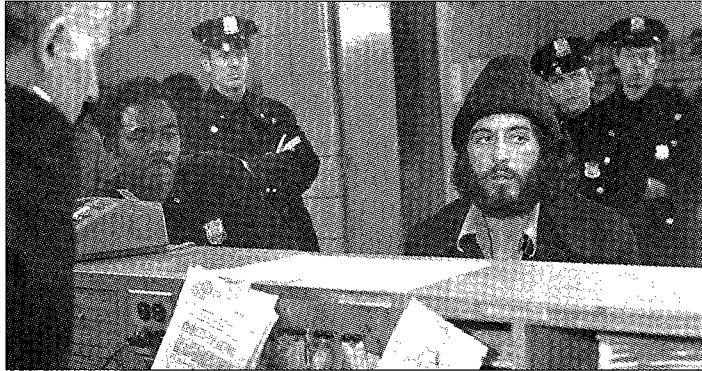
now] a more civil place.”

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.

"Patrilineal surnames," the Kasses conclude, "are, in truth, less a sign of paternal prerogative than of paternal duty and professed commitment, reinforced psychologi-

cally by gratifying the father's vanity in the perpetuation of his name and by offering this nominal incentive to do his duty both to mother and child."

PRESS & MEDIA

Race in the Newsroom

A Survey of Recent Articles

In September 1994, the *Washington Post* ran a gripping series of articles about a black Washington grandmother and her family. The daughter of North Carolina sharecroppers, Rosa Lee Cunningham along with six of her eight children had become mired in drug addiction and crime, while her other two offspring had not. In his intimately detailed articles, veteran reporter Leon Dash sought to understand how it was that these "children and grandchildren from migrant families" could take such divergent paths.

His brilliant reporting won Dash a Pulitzer Prize. But inside the *Post*, according to Ruth Shalit, an associate editor at the *New Republic* (Oct. 2, 1995), Dash's series dismayed many other black reporters, who worried that it tarnished the image of "the black community." They ostracized Dash.

Shalit's cover story about race at the *Post* created a sensation in the national news media. That was not surprising, perhaps, since, as she writes, newspapers across the nation in recent years have also embarked upon "a course of 'compensatory' or preferential minority hiring." The effort to be "inclusive" at some papers includes requirements for racial and ethnic "diversity" in the sources quoted in a story (see the *American Journalism Review*, Oct. 1995).

Shalit contends that the *Post*'s determined affirmative action efforts in hiring have fanned racial tensions in the newsroom. An internal 1993 report stated that many black reporters complain that they have to work harder than whites to get "good stories or challenging beats." Meanwhile, she says, many white staffers allege that affirmative action has resulted in the hiring of some incompetent reporters.

In her lengthy article, Shalit also contends that *Post* editors—in their search for "racially balanced news coverage"—have

compromised the traditional journalistic ideal of fearless truth-telling. "Aggressive coverage of the social pathologies at the heart of Washington's black underclass . . . has increasingly given way to human-interest puffery," she claims. And because of racial oversensitivity on the part of editors, she charges, the *Post* has pulled its punches on various stories.

Shalit also argues that the *Post*'s affirmative action effort "to mirror the 32.3 percent of blacks and Hispanics in metropolitan Washington itself seems flamboyantly unrealistic." (Eighteen percent of the staff today are minorities.) After all, she observes, blacks and Hispanics make up only 10.6 percent of "the available pool" of college graduates, and only a fraction of even that small group goes into journalism.

In a subsequent issue of the *New Republic* (Oct. 16, 1995), *Post* executive editor Leonard Downie Jr. and publisher Donald Graham emit howls of outrage. "We have not adjusted standards in any way in our hiring of dozens of talented journalists of color who do distinguished work," Downie insists. The *Post*'s goal for nine years, he says, has been to have half of its new "hires" be women, and one-fourth minorities, "consistent with filling every vacancy with the best-qualified person possible." Since that goal was set, he says, the *Post* has hired 330 journalists, of whom 46 percent were women, 29.6 percent were minorities—and 37 percent were white men.

Shalit's piece contains a good many errors, some trivial, some not (she wrongly said an aide to a local political figure had served time in prison). Downie also notes that accusations of plagiarism (honest mistakes, she says) have been lodged against her in the recent past.

"At 25, just a few years out of Princeton,