

argument upon the great bedrock of constitutional law—the separation of church and state—while they acknowledged quietly that their opposition sprang from the concerns that such statistics could be misused. With the horrors of the Holocaust never too far from memory, Jews feared that correlating wealth and education with religion would feed latent anti-Semitism in the American public. One commentator wrote that such information “might become the entering wedge for the kind of secret government files . . . that were detested features of the Nazi and Fascist regimes.”

By late November 1957, Robert W. Burgess, director of the Bureau of the Census, realized that he

EXCERPT

Pious Stress

The anguish of the believer striving for inner obedience will be clear to anyone who has been immersed in the evangelical world. There is a kind of correlation between all the promises of peace, the assertions of joy, and the reality of inner turmoil. . . . When every thought, and not just every action, must be obedient to Christ, and faith is fidelity to what you cannot actually sense, the result is a formula for zeal, to be sure, but also for pious stress, and even breakdown.”

—TODD SHY, Raleigh, N.C., writer and self-described recovering evangelical, in *Image* (Fall 2006)

could no longer let the debate fester; he risked stirring opposition to the entire census and losing respondents en masse. Upon the removal of the question from formal consideration, the American Jewish community proclaimed “a

victory for religious liberty.” The success, due in no small part to a letter-writing campaign aimed at congressional representatives, demonstrated Jews’ influence in political life.

The Census Bureau had conducted two trial surveys of the religion question. The answers had been as expected. Two of every three people over age 14 regarded themselves as Protestant, one of four as Roman Catholic, and about three of 100 as Jewish. But the full report was never

released. The Commerce Department, in consultation with the White House, said it was “not feasible” to release statistics of such nature. It was an enduring result: To this day, the census has never included a question about religion.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Smoking Your Money's Worth

THE SOURCE: “Taxes, Cigarette Consumption, and Smoking Intensity” by Jérôme Adda and Francesca Cornaglia, in *The American Economic Review*, Sept. 2006.

BOOSTING TAXES ON CIGARETTES may be hurting the health of those it doesn’t drive to quit, researchers at University College London have found. That’s because

smokers, especially the poor, react to the higher cost of cigarettes by smoking each cigarette more intensively. They take more puffs, inhale more deeply, smoke closer to the end, and block the ventilation holes on the filter.

Several studies since 2000 have found that as taxes rise, cigarette

consumption goes down. But economists Jérôme Adda and Francesca Cornaglia write that many adult smokers are compensating by extracting far more nicotine from each cigarette. They studied levels of cotinine, a byproduct of nicotine, in 20,000 Americans who participated in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey from 1988 to 1994 and 1999 to 2000. Their surprising finding: A one percent rise in taxes increased smoking intensity by 0.47 percent. And more intensive smoking is especially unhealthy. “Smoking a cigarette

more intensively, up to the filter, leads the smoker to inhale more dangerous chemicals and has been shown to cause cancer deeper into the lung,” the researchers say.

Adda and Cornaglia write that most smokers would prefer to smoke more often but less intensively because the last part of a cigarette tastes worse. Tobacco near the filter or butt has been heated up by smoke. Less frequent but more intensive smoking also produces uncomfortable nicotine highs and lows during the day.

Today, combined federal, state, and local taxes range from a high of \$4.05 a pack in Chicago to a low of 46 cents in South Carolina, and smokers are highly sensitive to price. A 10 percent increase in taxes results in an overall four percent decline in cigarette consumption—with most of the “lost” sales involving teenagers and pregnant women, specialists say. Smokers are disproportionately likely to have low or medium levels of education, and to work in unskilled

Even a one percent rise in taxes caused smokers to smoke more of the cigarette, inhaling more dangerous chemicals shown to cause lung cancer.

and manual occupations. Men and the young are more likely to smoke than women and older individuals, the authors write.

Smoking intensity also varies by race. Whites smoke about 40 percent more cigarettes per person than Hispanics and five percent more than African Americans, but blacks have the highest level of cotinine. Blacks extract 56 percent more nicotine per cigarette than Hispanics or whites, Adda and Cornaglia say. This figure helps explain the medical literature showing that even though African-American men are not the heaviest smokers, they have the highest incidence of lung cancer.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Who Killed the Wild ‘Alalā?

THE SOURCE: “Do No Harm” by Mark Jerome Walters, in *Conservation in Practice*, Oct.–Dec. 2006.

THE ‘ALALĀ HAD DECLINED TO only a few dozen birds by the early 1970s, when biologists warned that “midnight” for the traditionally sacred creatures was near. Once common in the cloud forests of Mauna Loa, the Hawaiian raven—believed to guide the dead to the afterlife—was near extinction.

Fearing the loss of the last remaining ‘alalā, biologists captured a half-dozen to breed in captivity. Housed in understaffed and underfunded state facilities, the birds failed to reproduce. More were captured. Most grew old without leaving behind a single offspring.

Why didn’t they reproduce? Were they disappearing because of loss of nesting habitat or as a result of attacks by alien predators? Were

EXCERPT

Bill Gates Meets iPod

I pulled out the iPod and put it in front of [Bill] Gates.

“Have you seen this yet?” I asked.

Gates went into a zone that recalls those science-fiction films where a space alien, confronted with a novel object, creates some sort of force tunnel between him and the object, allowing him to suck directly into his brain all possible information about it.

Gates’s fingers, racing at NASCAR speed, played over the scroll wheel and pushed every button combination while his eyes stared fixedly at the screen. I could almost hear the giant sucking sound. Finally, after he had absorbed every nuance of the device, he handed it back to me.

“It looks like a great product,” he said. Then he paused a second. Something didn’t compute.

“It’s only for Macintosh?” he asked.

Yes, it was. (Then.)

—STEVEN LEVY, *Newsweek* senior editor and author of *The Perfect Thing: How the iPod Shuffles Culture, Commerce, and Coolness*, in *Wired* (Nov. 2006)