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enterprise. (Their biggest success: turning Las Vegas from a sleepy desert town of 20,000 in 1944 into a booming national gambling and entertainment center by the early '50s.) Meanwhile West Indian blacks introduced the numbers game—another form of lottery—into New York City in the early '20s. By 1930, West Indians such as Jose Enrique (Henry) Miro, "Big Joe" Ison, and Everett Watson had built powerful empires in the burgeoning ghettos of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Detroit.

Nothing hastened the spread of gambling as much as the telephone. By 1914, bookies such as Arnold Rothstein and Frank Erickson of New York had learned to elude police crackdowns by taking bets over the phone. The telephone also made it possible to handle more clients than ever before. By the early '20s, large, well-staffed organizations were using big telephone banks to take bets from all over the United States. The neighborhood bookie, last remnant of gambling's simpler days, had become obsolete.

Sterilization in America

"Reproduction, Ethics and Public Policy: The Federal Sterilization Regulations" by Rosalind Pollack Petchesky, in *The Hastings Center Report* (Oct. 1979), 360 Broadway, Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y. 10706.

After the Pill, surgical sterilization is the most widely used form of contraception in the United States.

In 1977, there were nearly 10 million Americans who had undergone surgical sterilization (not counting hysterectomies)—a threefold increase since 1970. As of 1976, this included 30 percent of all widowed, divorced, and separated women and single mothers age 15 to 44. Moreover, in nearly 30 percent of all married couples where the wife was of childbearing age, one partner was surgically sterile.

Women—especially black women—are more likely to be sterilized than men. (According to the private Association for Voluntary Sterilization, sterilization is most popular today among women who are 25 to 34 years old. But as recently as 1971, 80 percent of all sterilizations were performed on men. Government figures indicate that black and other minority women were twice as likely to be sterilized as white women in 1970–73.)

Several factors underlie these trends, says Petchesky, a political scientist at Ramapo College. Growing numbers of working women view sterilization simply as a foolproof method of birth control. It is also considered to be much safer than the Pill. Political and legal attacks have prompted cutbacks in federally- and state-funded abortion programs, spurring low-income women to turn to sterilization. And the willingness of health insurance companies to fully cover such operations makes them an attractive option for the middle class.

Petchesky contends that the growing acceptability of sterilization could lead to certain excesses. During the early 1970s, for example,

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press reports and court testimony disclosed that hundreds of thousands of women had agreed to government-funded sterilizations out of fear of losing welfare payments. Corrective sterilization guidelines were issued last year by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. But Petchesky asserts that many "health professionals" and family-planning advocates still encourage sterilization as a form of population control; their prime targets remain poor, uneducated women seeking protection from unwanted pregnancies.

PRESS & TELEVISION

Conflicts of Interest? "Interlocking Directorates" by Peter Dreier and Steven Weinberg, in *Columbia Journalism Review* (Nov.-Dec. 1979), 200
Alton Pl., Marion, Ohio 43302.

Avoiding conflicts of interest is one of a reporter's first rules. But on the corporate boards of the leading U.S. newspapers, a double standard is at work, contend Dreier, a Tufts sociologist, and Weinberg, director of the University of Missouri's Graduate Reporting Program.

Among the corporate directors of America's 25 largest newspaper companies (which account for more than half the circulation of U.S. dailies), there are more than 200 overlaps with the boards of *Fortune* 1,300 companies (including banks, utilities, and other service businesses); more than 100 with universities; and dozens with think tanks and chambers of commerce. Barbara Barnes Hauptfuhrer, for example, is a director both of the Knight-Ridder chain (with 33 papers) and of General Public Utilities—which owns the Three Mile Island nuclear plant. Marian Heiskell sits on the boards of both *The New York Times* and Consolidated Edison, the controversial New York City power company.

Newspaper executives argue that directors with strong business or government contacts are important to a paper's financial future—but have no effect on news content. Dreier and Weinberg claim evidence to the contrary. *Los Angeles Times* publisher Otis Chandler's position on the board of GeoTek Resources Fund, Inc., inhibited his paper's coverage of that company's run-in with the Securities and Exchange Commission, according to *Times* reporters. *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* correspondents contend that a 1977 investigation of profitable not-for-profit hospitals was blunted by publisher Duncan Bauman, who sits on the boards of two such institutions.

In the days of press barons like William Randolph Hearst and Robert McCormick, a newspaper's slant was public knowledge. But the anonymity of today's newspaper board members makes board interlocks potentially insidious. Two solutions have been proposed by pub-