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**PRESS & TELEVISION**


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*Steel Hour*?) By the late '60s, however, advertisers had pulled out of the TV *production* business, except for soap operas and occasional specials. Two cost factors were responsible, explains Kiechel. First was the "seemingly inexorable rise" in the price of commercial air time, which discouraged the typical advertiser from betting all his dollars on one show. Second was the increase in the cost of producing programs. Advertisers responded with "package buying"—the practice of purchasing commercial time on many different shows. Program production of shows was left to movie studios and independent producers.

By 1978, both production and commercial costs had soared. Thirty seconds on a prime-time hit show sold for \$125,000. As the networks tried and killed new series searching for instant hits, producers began demanding huge (\$400,000) fees for one or two episodes of their shows. This forced advertising rates higher still.

Enter Procter & Gamble—the company that introduced both "package buying" and soap operas in the '50s. In an attempt to slow the growth of its \$400 million yearly advertising budget, P.&G. negotiated with NBC to produce its own one-hour dramatic series, *Shirley*, starring Shirley Jones. In late 1978, P.&G. bought a half-hour of prime time from NBC, with the network selling commercial time for the remaining half-hour of each *Shirley* episode to other advertisers. In return, NBC agreed that if the show were successful, network charges to P.&G. would rise at a slower than normal rate. (Unfortunately, *Shirley* flopped in the ratings after its debut in October 1979. The show was taken off the air in January 1980.)

The experiment demonstrated enough cost-cutting potential to make P.&G. and other sponsors likely to try it again.

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**RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY**


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### *Born Again*

"Who and Where Are the Evangelicals?"  
in *Christianity Today* (Dec. 21, 1979), 465  
Gundersen Dr., Carol Stream, Ill. 60187.

The 1980s could be the "decade of the evangelicals," predicts pollster George Gallup, Jr. His surveys reveal that 20 percent of American adults 18 years or older (31 million people) profess to being evangelical Christians. And, Gallup notes, since teenagers are more apt to be evangelical than are their parents, the movement will probably keep on growing.

Gallup defines evangelicals as conservative Christians who read the Bible regularly, interpret it literally, and attend religious services at least once a month. Included are "conversionalists," who have had a powerful religious experience compelling them to ask Christ "to be-

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come their personal Savior."

According to the Gallup survey, the typical adult evangelical is a middle-aged white Southern woman from a lower- to middle-class background. She is married and less likely to be college-educated than other Americans. Sixty percent of evangelicals are women (who comprise 53 percent of the total U.S. population). The South, with 28 percent of the American people, has fully 43 percent of the evangelicals; Democrats outnumber Republicans by a 3 to 2 margin. Blacks are more apt than whites to be evangelical. They make up roughly 10 percent of the population but 15 percent of the evangelicals.

While liberal Protestant denominations such as the United Presbyterian and United Methodist churches have been losing 75,000 to 100,000 members annually during the '70s, conservative evangelical churches like the Pentecostal and the Assembly of God are growing rapidly. Gallup suggests that with their large numbers of youthful adherents (13 million under age 18) and increasingly outspoken ministers, evangelicals will be a strong political and social force in the decade ahead.

### *Narrow-Minded Philosophers*

"Never Speculate, Never Explain: The State of Contemporary Philosophy" by Kenneth R. Seeskin, in *The American Scholar* (Winter 1979/80), 1811 Q St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Many modern philosophers tend to regard the great issues—death, God, happiness—as passé. They focus solely on the technicalities of logic and language in a spirit that Seeskin, a philosopher at Northwestern University, calls one of "caution, qualification, and retreat."

English-speaking philosophers today have been overwhelmed by the breakthroughs in logic and semantics of Bertrand Russell and Alfred North Whitehead in the first half of the century. They forget that these giants explored the nature of man, mind, and religion, as well as the relation between logic, grammar, and mathematics. Now, philosophers tinker with the meanings of ordinary words and endlessly refine technical proofs of even the simplest concepts. Many believe that the great problems and dilemmas of the past can be boiled down to logical or linguistic confusions.

Seeskin argues that today's philosophers have made the fundamental mistake of viewing their discipline as a *science*. Frustrated because philosophy is no closer to a satisfactory description of the world now than it was in Aristotle's time, they attack specific questions, arrive at final answers, and hope to reach quick agreement on some basic "truths"—such as the undeniable existence of the external world. But philosophy's true value lies in its denial of final answers to any question; Seeskin agrees with Socrates that philosophers should meet accepted beliefs with doubt. And philosophy does promote progress. By increasing the range of human perceptions, philosophers help prevent rigid, dogmatic, and possibly erroneous beliefs from taking root.