

litical correctness put people off. But the study was at least partly redeemed by offering “a hint” of how to make progress.

The Bush commission’s “aversion to unpleasant truths,” Torrey says, was frequently on display. While calling for a campaign to “reduce the stigma” of mental illness, the commission made no mention of that stigma’s chief cause: “untreated mentally ill individuals committing acts of violence,” including 1,000 homicides annually, or more than four percent of the national total. Some 35 percent of the nation’s homeless people and 16 percent of the inmates in prisons and jails are mentally ill.

The commission likewise emphasized the need for mental health “consumers” to choose their own treatments, ignoring the fact that 50 percent of all schizophrenics and manic depressives aren’t even aware that they are sick. The commission also ignored the “proven effectiveness” of mandatory-treatment laws. Arrests of mentally ill individuals in New York state have declined by 85 percent since such legislation was enacted in 1999.

The nation’s mental health system is “frag-

mented, disconnected and often inadequate,” the commission noted, much as the first presidential commission on mental illness did in 1961. Yet in 1997 alone, the nation spent \$71 billion on treatment, about two-thirds of it through the federal Medicare and Medicaid programs whose administrators, according to Torrey, lack adequate knowledge of which local programs work well enough to deserve funding.

But almost in passing, the commission pointed the way forward, says Torrey, in urging that Washington give the states more flexibility in spending federal aid money for people with mental illness while seeking improved accountability and results. Yes, the states performed abysmally in this field in the past, but that was because federal programs beginning in the 1960s unwittingly created massive incentives to “deinstitutionalize” the mentally ill. Experimental programs in a half-dozen states could serve as a first step. That approach set the stage for welfare reform, Torrey says, and it would do the same for repair of the mental health care system.

That Enlightenment Buzz

“Caffeine and the Coming of the Enlightenment” by Roger Schmidt, in *Raritan* (Summer 2003), Rutgers University, 31 Mine St., New Brunswick, N.J. 08903.

“Short, O short then be thy reign/ And give us to the world again!” That’s the great Samuel Johnson, flinging his defiance at sleep during one of his famous nocturnal excursions, in 1753. The storied man of letters is nearly as famous for his vast capacity for late-night reading and carousing as for his literary genius. In Johnson and others of his day, those capacities owed more than a little to the arrival on the scene of a chemical substance: caffeine. And not just their capacities. Schmidt, a professor of English at Idaho State University, thinks the arrival of coffee and tea in Europe around 1650 had something to do with the birth of the Enlightenment.

Sleep in the pre-caffeine era was different in quantity and character. In 1630, a sermonizing John Donne told the king of England that sleep was “shaking hands with God,” reflecting the general view that slumber opened the door to contact with

the divine. Schmidt says that in the days before caffeine—and advances in lighting and mechanical clocks, which also came along in the mid-17th century—people slept for eight hours, often punctuated by a waking interval of an hour or so that established a more intimate connection to the world of spirits.

By Johnson’s time, however, sleep seemed almost a sin. In 1728, clergyman John Law denounced it as “the poorest, dullest refreshment of the body,” one that produced either “insensibility” or “the folly of dreams.” He excoriated the Christian who chose to “enlarge the slothful indulgence of sleep, rather than be early at his devotions to God.” A few years later, Benjamin Franklin famously reminded slugabeds that time is money. In 1798, John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, advised his followers that six

hours of sleep a night was sufficient. He also commissioned an oversized teapot from Josiah Wedgwood.

Coffee and tea permeate the Enlightenment's intellectual scene. Many of the era's leading figures can be seen reading and writing far into the night, feverishly chipping away at the old order's verities. Johnson himself was known to polish off 24 cups of tea at a sitting. Alexander Pope complained that he could not sleep ("Fools rush into my Head, and so I write"), and William Hogarth's prints are littered with sleep-deprived characters dozing at work and play. It was in 1758, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, that the word *insomnia* entered the English language.



Coffeehouses, which first appeared in London around 1650, quickly proliferated and became a center of British intellectual and political life.

What, asks Schmidt, did the new regime of caffeine, clocks, and clerics promote? Rationalism, work, productivity—and the decline of dreaming.

Goodbye to the Grind!

"The Opt-Out Revolution" by Lisa Belkin, in *The New York Times Magazine* (Oct. 26, 2003), 229 W. 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

"I don't want to be on the fast track leading to a partnership at a prestigious law firm," says Katherine Brokaw, who left that track in order to stay home with her three children. "Some people define that as success. I don't."

She is not alone. Before they ever bump up against a "glass ceiling," more and more highly educated, high-powered professional women are rejecting the workplace and the grim climb upward in favor of stay-at-home motherhood, reports Belkin, a former *New York Times* reporter who now works from home as a freelance writer and biweekly *Times* columnist.

Surveys of professional women show that, depending on the profession, between one-

fourth and one-third are out of the work force. A canvass of women from the Harvard Business School classes of 1981, 1985, and 1991 found only 38 percent working fulltime. *Fortune* magazine checked on 108 women who'd made its list of "most powerful" women over the years and found that at least 20 had left their jobs (most of them voluntarily) for a less high-powered existence.

In less than a decade, "the number of children being cared for by stay-at-home moms has increased nearly 13 percent," Belkin says, quoting census data. And in just two years, the percentage of new mothers returning to work fell by four percentage points, to 55 percent in 2000. Two-thirds of the mothers who work in