

democratic party strategists collaborate with radical or violent groups, as happened in Weimar Germany and in Colombia during the 1940s and '50s; or when institutions (e.g., the courts, the legislatures) cease to be significant forums for decision-making. In the book's most detailed case study, Arturo Valenzuela, a scholar at Duke, traces the polarization of Chilean politics during Salvador Allende's Presidency (1970-73). Radical demands within its own leftist minority coalition forced the Allende government to accelerate its Marxist economic programs (income redistribution, nationalization of key industries, land reform). Conflict between Left and Right escalated; the military felt compelled to restore order. Both sides, Valenzuela maintains, set aside chances for compromise "in favor of the short-term requirement of preserving immediate political strength."

—Gianfranco Pasquino ('79)

**BEAST AND MAN: The  
Roots of Human Nature**

by Mary Midgley  
Cornell, 1978  
377 pp. \$12.50  
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ISBN 0-8014-1032-0

"We are not just rather like animals; we *are* animals," writes Mary Midgley, lecturer in philosophy at England's University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Regarding animals as beasts, Western society has attributed its own savage propensities to "the beast within" and has seen reason as the leash that holds the beast in check. But the much-maligned wolf, for instance, is a faithful spouse, a loving parent, a loyal pack member, and a killer only from necessity. Midgley is among the first scholar-philosophers to take full advantage of the recent explosive growth in knowledge of the behavior of animals in nature. Her book has received scant attention compared to that accorded works by Edward O. Wilson, Desmond Morris, and Robert Ardrey. She criticizes Wilson's sociobiology for its "bias toward noticing inherited tendencies and ignoring causes that operate after birth." She faults the opposing "blank paper" environmental theory of human nature for its denial of all human instincts. Recent experiments

have shown that chimpanzees can acquire language, notes Midgley. And many animals display a hierarchy of motives (e.g., a wolf will feed its cubs before itself); reasoning may well enter into their choices between aggression and affection. Can it be that humans have inherited the best, not the worst, aspects of their natures from their animal ancestors?

—Peter Singer ('79)

**THE FINE ARTS IN AMERICA**

by Joshua C. Taylor  
Univ. of Chicago, 1979  
264 pp. \$17.50  
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ISBN 0-226-79150-5



The White Girl  
James McNeill Whistler  
National Gallery of Art, Washington  
Harris Whittemore Collection

A nation's art is the product not only of its creators' skill and imagination but also of their training and education, of viewers' expectations, and of institutions' support. In his account of American art history, Joshua C. Taylor, director of the Smithsonian's National Collection of Fine Arts, stresses the roles of institutions and patronage. In 1794, portraitist Charles Peale founded the first American art academy in Philadelphia; it lasted only a year. In the early 1800s, well-to-do American intellectuals, who felt that art was too important to leave only to artists, opened academies in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. They were concerned with safeguarding art's "moral stature" (casts of classical sculptures were imported from Paris) and, in the spirit of the new democracy, with making art available to the public. Artists were often frustrated because they had so little impact on early academies, and they were forced to form their own teaching and exhibiting societies. Today, American artists are more respected. After the Civil War, writes Taylor, the artist grew in status "from one who had artistic talent to one who had proper schooling under the guidance of internationally accepted masters." With the inclusion of their works in international exhibitions and, after World War II, with the advent of Jackson Pollock and the abstract expressionists, American artists established themselves as professionals. And Taylor adds, New York City has emerged as the world's art center. "America has acquired confidence in