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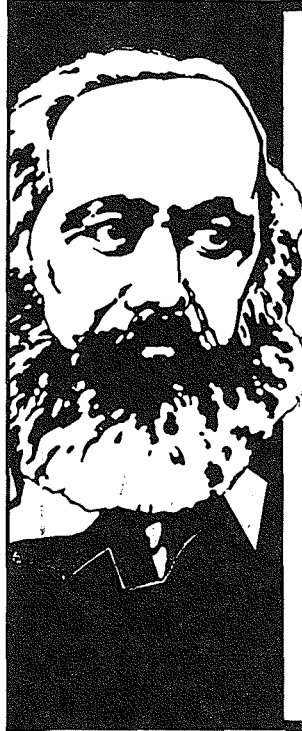
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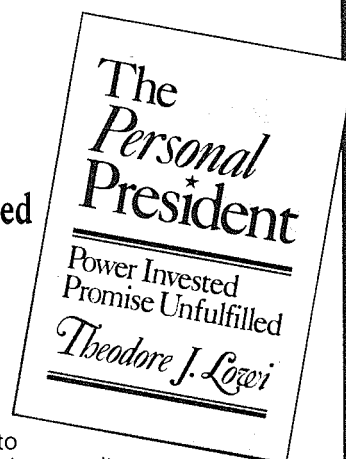
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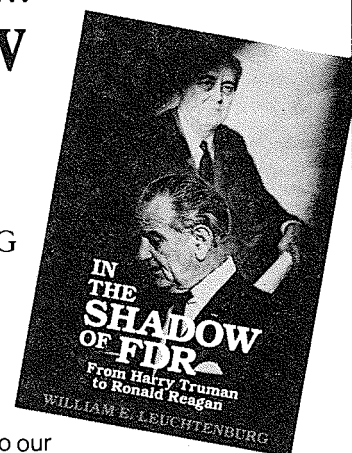
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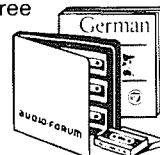
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Editor's Comment

Serious books and magazine essays, cited in newspaper columns and taken up by politicians, help to shape public debate on the issues of the day. Sometimes a book seems to touch a nerve, to create an "issue" all by itself. Think of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962), which ignited the environmental movement, or Michael Harrington's *The Other America* (1962), which led Washington to rediscover poverty and, ultimately, to try to eliminate it.

Last autumn, we published Charles Murray's "The War on Poverty: 1965-1980," a critique drawn from his *Losing Ground* (Basic Books). Mr. Murray argued, in effect, that Washington's post-1965 social policy, with the noblest of intentions, actually encouraged many of the nation's able-bodied poor, especially young adults, *not* to become self-supporting. It was time, he said, for a New Look.

The Murray thesis and its supporting data have stirred much discussion in the press, among politicians, and among academics and spokesmen for minority groups. (On its own, a Ford Foundation study group, led by Irving Shapiro, former head of DuPont, has begun a New Look at social programs for the poor and the *nonpoor*.) We have received thoughtful letters challenging Mr. Murray. In this issue (pages 170-175), we publish some of them—and Mr. Murray's reply. For yet another perspective, we suggest the welfare study by David T. Ellwood and Mary Jo Bane summarized in Research Reports (pages 44-45).

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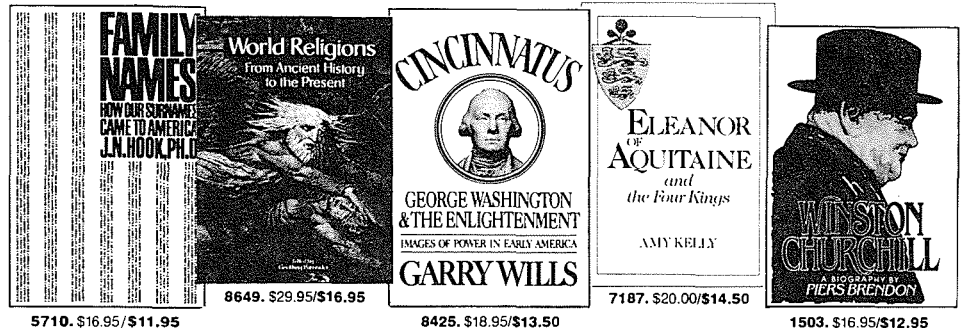
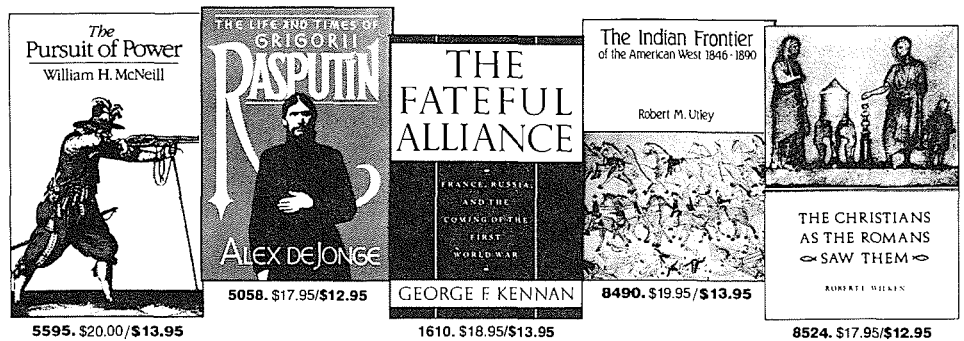
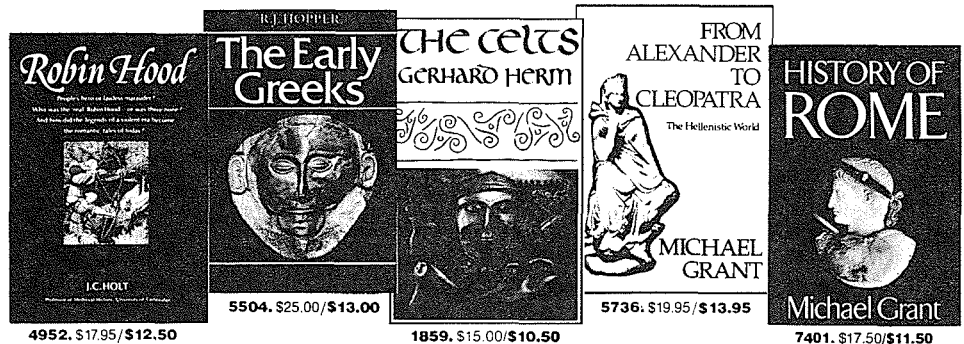
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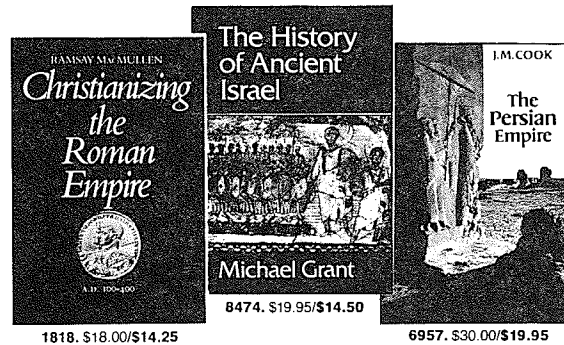
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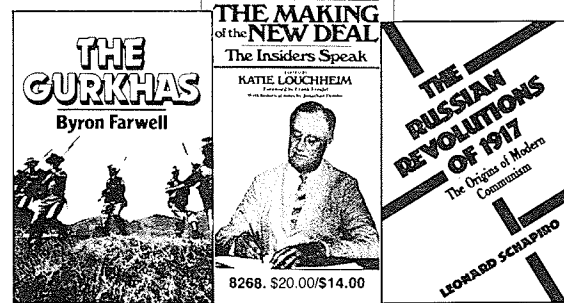
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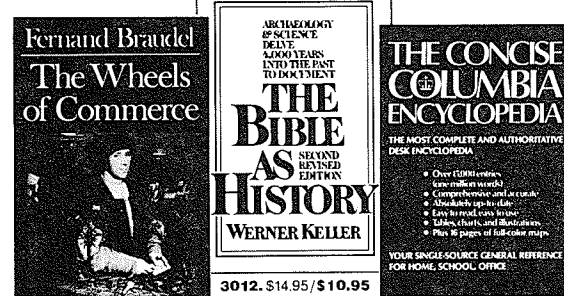
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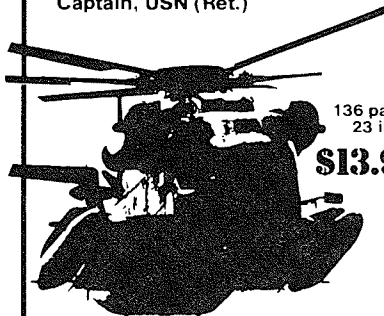


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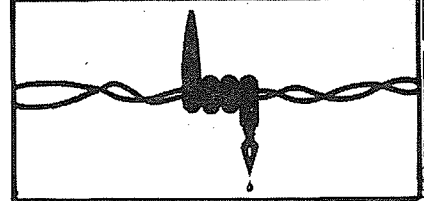
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The Elusive Founders

"The Creation of the Constitution: Scholarship at a Standstill" by James H. Hutson, in *Reviews in American History* (Dec. 1984), Johns Hopkins University Press, Whitehead Hall, 34th & Charles Sts., Baltimore, Md. 21218.

Nearly 200 years after the Founding Fathers gathered in Philadelphia for the Constitutional Convention, American historians still do not agree on what they were "really" up to.

Historians have spun conflicting theories about the founding of the Republic since the Constitution was ratified in 1789. Until recently, writes Hutson, a Library of Congress researcher, most such theories were strongly flavored by partisan politics.

Because the 55 delegates to the Constitutional Convention "scrupulously, even obsessively, observed that body's secrecy rule long after it adjourned," no early historian could easily decipher what was on their minds. As late as 1832, Noah Webster devoted only a sentence to the writing of the Constitution in his *History of the United States*.

Abolitionists put their own stamp on the founding after the landmark publication in 1840 of James Madison's notes on the Convention debates. William Lloyd Garrison used the notes to argue that the founders were evil men who had struck a "bloody compromise" with slavery. He and his followers were certain that the Constitution was "a pro-slavery compact." What began as abolitionist rhetoric quickly became conventional wisdom in history books. Horace Greeley, for example, wrote a history describing the making of the Constitution as a counter-revolution aimed at limiting the individual rights outlined in the Declaration of Independence.

The counter-revolution theory caught on with the Progressives of the late 19th century. Repeated Supreme Court decisions rejecting reforms (e.g., the income tax) had left the reformers contemptuous of the Consti-

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tution. Where the abolitionists had depicted the "counter-revolutionaries" as immoral slaveholders, the Progressives portrayed them as men of wealth, the ancestors of their own era's "robber barons." In *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution* (1913), Charles Beard argued that the founders "immediately, directly, and personally" profited from the creation of a strong national government.

During the 1950s, both Beard's evidence and his approach were attacked. Douglass Adair, for example, chided Beard and his followers for overlooking the founders' commitment to democratic philosophy. But no fresh interpretation took over. The social-reform movements of the 1960s, helped more than hindered by Supreme Court interpretations of the Constitution, begat no new breed of revisionists. The field today belongs to scholars who, having discredited "the Beard thesis," now labor in "perplexity and muddle."

A Liberal Agenda

"The Politics of Moral Vision" by Michael Lerner, in *Commonweal* (Jan. 11, 1985), 232 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10016.

Two decades ago, Governor Ronald Reagan rose to national prominence by cracking down on California's campus radicals. Last year, President Ronald Reagan won a landslide re-election, again making much of "traditional values."

In an odd way, argues Lerner, himself a one-time California student radical and a former editor of the now defunct New Left magazine *Ramparts*, the resurgent New Right is a child of the New Left. The 1960s radicals, he contends, introduced the "politics of moral vision" into contemporary American politics. They challenged "the relentless competition, elitism, bureaucratic control, racism, and sexism . . . pervading American society."

Yet, he says, the young radicals were arrogant; they mocked average Americans and dismissed traditional religious and social values. By *affirming* such values, conservatives gradually won public support.

The New Left's legacy of moral arrogance is now the property of radical feminists and a few other leftist sects, Lerner writes. But most liberal Democrats are simply indifferent to the politics of values. They believe that "economic issues are everything." During the 1984 presidential-election campaign, they hoped that enormous budget deficits "would scare the American people into the liberal camp."

Lerner believes that liberals and leftists should reject both New Deal materialism and the Democrats' emphasis on "fairness" and individual rights. Instead, he favors appealing to Americans' desire for "community and equality of respect." "Profamily" policies—expanded day care for children, support groups for troubled families, equality for women inside as well as outside the family—and "democratic planning" for the economy would top his agenda. Liberals, he contends, must commit themselves to a single, easily understood goal: creating "a society in which love prevails and moral values are predominant."

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How to Make Government Fatter

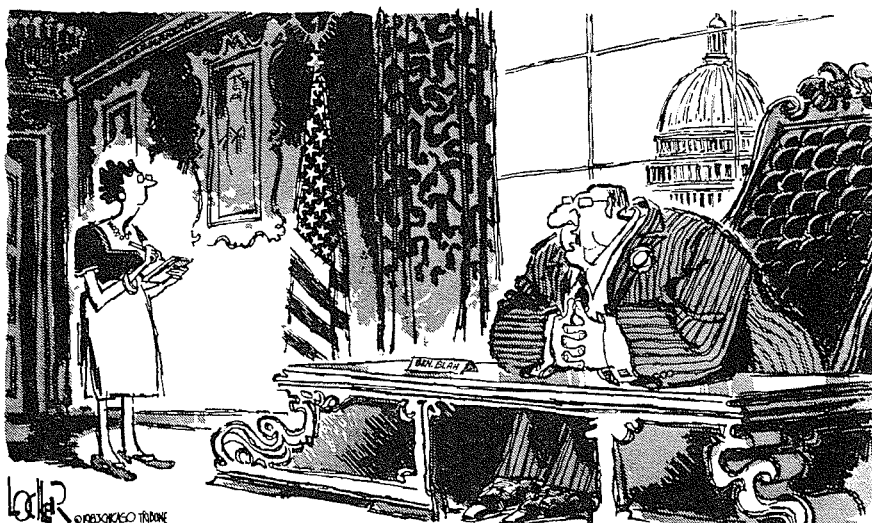
"The Grace Commission: How Much Waste in Government?" by Steven Kelman, in *The Public Interest* (Winter 1985), 20th & Northampton Sts., Easton, Pa. 18042.

In January 1984, the President's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control (a.k.a. the Grace Commission) made a big splash in the newspapers when it reported that, during the previous three years alone, Washington bureaucrats had wasted \$424 billion.

Americans love to hear this kind of "bad" news, says Kelman, who teaches at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. It confirms their conviction that deep federal spending cuts are possible without any reductions in government services: When public-opinion pollsters ask Americans how much money Washington wastes, the answer is an astounding 48 cents of every tax dollar.

But based on his examination of a dozen recommendations highlighted by the Grace Commission itself from among its 2,478, Kelman concludes that its estimates of waste are "fantasy figures." Many are the product of slipshod research. Thus, the Commission's 2,000 sharp-eyed volunteer business executives cited the Department of Justice for consistently failing to deposit cash seized from criminals in interest-bearing accounts while the cases are in the courts. The fact is, Kelman says, that government attorneys purposely hold on to the cash so that they can impress juries with the actual "wads of ill-gotten lucre."

In the category of Pentagon horror stories, the Grace Commission came up with a 3-cent screw that cost the government \$91. But careful scrutiny



How waste makes waste: "Get me an appropriation to form a committee to find out why 10 cents of every tax dollar is lost to fraud and waste!"

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shows that quirks of accounting explain most such stories. The Defense Department instructs contractors to charge separate fees for their overhead expenses. A contractor who ships 10,000 spare parts, some priced at \$25,000 and some at 3 cents, can allocate an equal share of its overhead to each item. The result: A few \$25,091 jet-engine parts that nobody notices and a bunch of \$91.03 screws that wind up on the TV news.

Finally, Kelman writes, the Grace Commission failed to acknowledge that sometimes the government has to spend more than corporations do. The Veterans Administration (VA), for example, spends about \$2 more and takes longer to process each health-benefit claim than do private insurance companies. But its public trust requires the VA to take extra steps to safeguard veterans' interests.

Kelman is far from denying that there is waste in government. But there is a difference, he notes, between programs that are a bit wasteful and those that are simply not worthwhile. The *real* savings will come from disbanding worthless programs. Chasing after supposed scandals would mean more red tape and bureaucracy—in short, more waste.

The Limits of Economic Advice

"President Johnson, The Council of Economic Advisers, and the Failure to Raise Taxes in 1966 and 1967" by John W. Sloan, in *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (Winter 1985), Center for the Study of the Presidency, 208 East 75th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

When economists try to explain what caused America's alarming outbreak of inflation during the 1970s, they point their fingers first at Arab oil sheiks, then at President Lyndon B. Johnson.

By failing to increase federal taxes soon enough during the mid-1960s to cover the growing costs of the Vietnam War, they argue, LBJ allowed the U.S. economy to overheat, setting the stage for the inflationary 1970s. Johnson, they continue, feared that if he asked Congress to boost taxes, it would cut spending for his beloved Great Society programs as well.

All partly true, writes Sloan, a University of Houston political scientist. But he believes that LBJ's Council of Economic Advisers (CEA) should also shoulder some of the blame.

The CEA "was so ideologically committed to growth," Sloan says, "that it was insensitive to the early signs of growing inflation." In a January 1964 memo to LBJ, CEA chairman Walter Heller described himself as "the guardian of growth," and Federal Reserve Board chairman William McC. Martin as "the in-fighter against inflation." The CEA did not carve out a role for itself as Johnson's counsel on inflation.

The White House had been so successful in stimulating the economy (in part through a 1964 tax cut) that by December 1965 it was approaching uncharted territory: an economy operating near full capacity. The three CEA members were unsure of what to do next. They advised LBJ to seek a tax hike from Congress, but their recommendation was lukewarm. In a 1966 "Merry Christmas" memorandum, Heller wished his chief "Divine guidance" on whether to ask for a tax increase "since economic

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guidance gives you no very firm answer at the moment."

In Sloan's view, the case illustrates how difficult it is to mix economics and politics: "What is flexibility for the [White House] economist may be ridiculed as policy flip-flops by opposition politicians." Not until August 1967 did the President's counselors become sure—or forceful—enough to convince him to request a 10 percent Vietnam War surcharge on federal income taxes. Only in June of 1968 did Congress pass it. Too little, perhaps; too late, without a doubt.

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Needs and Morals

"In the National Interest" by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in *Worldview* (Dec. 1984), P.O. Box 1935, Marion, Ohio 43305.

In most countries, pursuit of the national interest is the unchallenged goal of foreign policy. But Americans are divided. Some see U.S. foreign policy in terms of "interest," others in terms of good and evil.

Schlesinger, a City University of New York historian, counts himself a member of the former, or "realist," camp. Morality, he says, hardly figured in the foreign-policy calculations of the Founding Fathers. But after the War of 1812, as Americans turned their backs on Europe, "they stopped thinking about power as the essence of international politics." Today, many Americans of various political persuasions—including Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan—agree that morality must come first in the making of U.S. foreign policy.

Schlesinger disagrees. He objects to the moralists' argument that nations should abide by the same moral ideals (e.g., charity and self-sacrifice) as individuals. Because they are "trustees" for their people, governments have no business being sacrificial. As Alexander Hamilton wrote, "Future generations . . . are concerned in the present measures of a government; while the consequences of the private action of an individual . . . are circumscribed within a narrow compass."

Nor does international law hold out much hope of enforcing good behavior. Nations can make effective laws for their own people because their citizens share "an imperfect but nonetheless authentic moral consensus." But no such consensus exists among nations; they agree only on the barest of standards for civilized conduct. Moreover, international rules may tell nations what not to do but cannot say what *to* do.

On a practical level, Schlesinger believes, American foreign-policy moralists of both Left and Right suffer from a penchant for striking poses and often sacrifice results. And there is always the danger that moralism will give way to fanaticism.

Schlesinger favors making pursuit of the national interest the mainspring of American foreign policy. He concedes that "almost as many follies have been committed in the name of national interest as in the

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name of national righteousness." But he insists that adhering to vital national interests, properly construed, would spare us many mistakes. During the mid-1960s, for example, such "realist" thinkers as Hans Morgenthau and George F. Kennan, Jr., opposed on pragmatic grounds deeper U.S. involvement in South Vietnam.

"States that throw their weight around," Schlesinger concludes, "are generally forced to revise their notions as to where national interest truly lies. This has happened to Germany and Japan. In time it may even happen to the Soviet Union and the United States."

What U.S. Generals Are Thinking

"Generally Speaking: Surveying the Military's Top Brass" by Andrew Kohut and Nicholas Horrock, in *Public Opinion* (Oct.-Nov. 1984), American Enterprise Institute, 1150 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-9964.

If academic stereotypes were suddenly made real, the senior members of America's military would probably resemble the maniacal General Ripper of *Dr. Strangelove* fame. Just how far that caricature is from the truth is revealed by Kohut and Horrock, respectively president of the Gallup Organization and *Newsweek* correspondent.

Moderate conservatism in politics, caution on defense issues, and considerable diversity in other matters were the key attributes of the group portrait that emerged from a 1984 Gallup telephone survey of 257 generals and admirals—more than 25 percent of the flag officers stationed in the United States. All but a few of them had served in Vietnam.

By overwhelming majorities, Ronald Reagan ranked high in their esteem; Jimmy Carter, low. There was not always such near unanimity: 42 percent expressed support for the women's movement; 47 percent, criticism. Oddly, the authors report, the more stars on their shoulders, the more politically liberal the generals and admirals were likely to be. Graduates of the military academies generally stood a bit to the left of their colleagues from civilian universities.

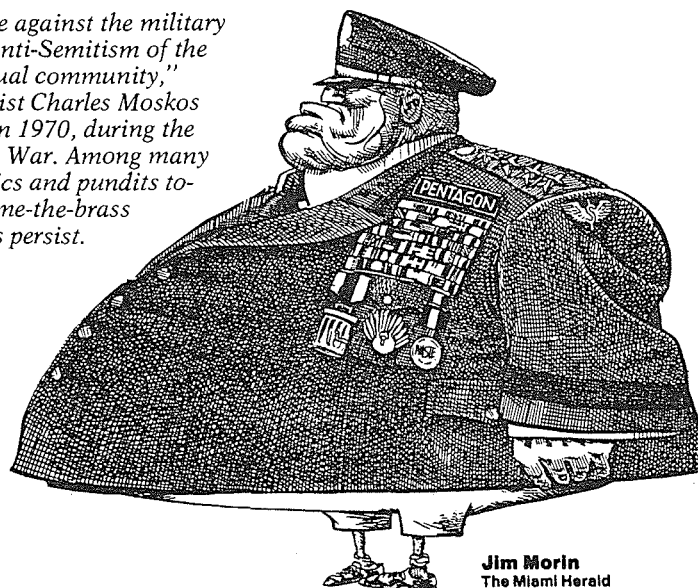
All but 16 (six percent) of those interviewed rejected the notion that armed conflict with the Soviet Union is inevitable. A majority (58 percent) subscribed to the proposition that the United States should seek military parity with the Soviets rather than superiority. Nearly three in four believed that if a Soviet-American war were to break out it could be limited to conventional weapons; 57 percent held that a nuclear exchange could be limited to smaller tactical nuclear weapons; 75 percent said that there would be no winner in an all-out nuclear war.

Among current threats, only the prospect of a Mideast conflict that sucked in the two superpowers made a majority anxious. The generals do not lust after action in the Third World: 42 percent declared that they were "concerned about U.S. forces being drawn into open conflict in Central America."

In the generals-are-people-too vein, the survey showed a high level of job satisfaction among members of the top brass (though lower among

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Prejudice against the military is "the anti-Semitism of the intellectual community," sociologist Charles Moskos argued in 1970, during the Vietnam War. Among many academics and pundits today, blame-the-brass attitudes persist.



alumni of the military academies) but widespread frustration over low pay and excessive paperwork. Nevertheless, the vast majority note that their military careers have meant upward social mobility.

Even in their leisure-time activities, the generals and admirals shatter a few stereotypes. More than half read novels, and more of them listen to Bach and Beethoven than listen to country-and-western music. Joggers outnumber golfers by nearly 2 to 1.

Reaganomics Abroad

"Where Reaganomics Works" by Henry R. Nau, in *Foreign Policy* (Winter 1984/85), P.O. Box 984, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

Free trade and protectionism are the terms usually employed in debates over U.S. foreign economic policy. More useful words might be "globalism" and "domesticism."

According to Nau, a George Washington University political scientist and former staff member of President Reagan's National Security Council, the globalist view has long been the dominant one. It was the globalists who issued the generally accepted diagnosis of the world's "stagflation" woes during the 1970s: As the world economy grew in size and complexity and America's post-World War II dominance of it faded, international economic institutions (e.g., fixed exchange rates) proved too weak to cope. The prescription: Put more muscle into the in-

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ternational agreements and agencies.

Domesticists take the opposite view. They believe that "the world economy is only as good as the national economies that compose it," Nau says. This is essentially the Reagan administration's view.

Domesticists blame the world economic turmoil of the 1970s chiefly on the Western industrial nations' pursuit of bad *domestic* policies, especially the big U.S. budget deficits beginning during the late 1960s. Washington "exported" the resulting high U.S. inflation to the rest of the world. They insist that U.S. economic power was only barely diminished during the 1970s—it accounted for 36 percent of the gross world product in 1955, 30 percent in 1970—and remains substantial.

At economic summit conferences (most recently, in London last year), the Reagan administration has not sought glamorous new international accords (e.g., establishing a second Bretton Woods agreement on exchange rates) but has concentrated on forging a consensus behind such modest national goals as trimming government outlays and battling inflation. Yet, believing that U.S. influence at the bargaining table was surpassed by its brute economic power, the domesticists reasoned that if the U.S. economy "could be revitalized and steered back to price stability, market incentives, and freer trade, the world economy might be induced to follow."

Nau maintains that this approach has worked. Worldwide, inflation is down, and long-depressed economies are beginning to bloom anew. Next, says Nau, Washington should try to capitalize on its successful trade talks with Israel and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to stir up international opinion in favor of freer trade. But above all, he says, the Reagan White House must live up to its own creed. If federal budget deficits are not reduced, he warns, the United States will drag the world into another era of high inflation and slow growth.

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*Vindication for
Supply-Siders?*

"How Supply-Side Triumphed" by Alan Reynolds, in *Challenge* (Nov.-Dec. 1984), 80 Business Park Dr., Armonk, N.Y. 10504.

Supply-side economics is one thing on which nearly everybody in political Washington seems to see eye-to-eye: They love to hate it. Reynolds, an economic consultant, maintains that he and his supply-side colleagues have been strung up by a kangaroo court.

The supply-siders are taking the rap for convincing the Reagan administration to push ahead with its mammoth tax-cut program in 1981, thus creating today's massive federal budget deficits. But Reynolds argues that the administration got into trouble only because it did not go as far as the supply-siders had urged. It rejected their plan for a three-year, 30 percent cut in federal income taxes. Instead, it

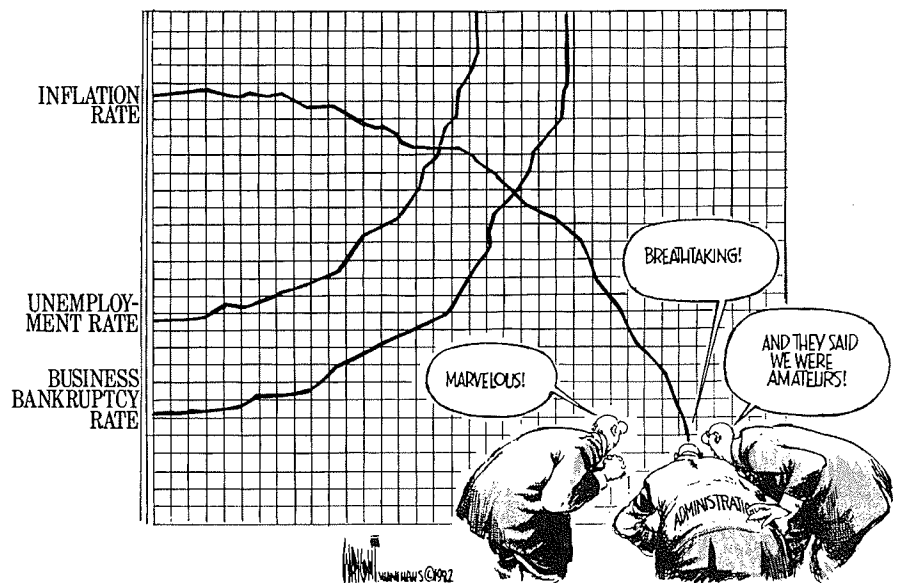
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backed a 25 percent cut, made the first phase a mere five percent reduction, and pushed back its effective date from January 1981 to October of that year. The result: The nation's economic recovery was delayed, and the "hangover" of slower economic growth shrank the tax base and created onerous deficits.

In fact, Reynolds continues, "bracket creep" and Social Security tax hikes actually pushed the *total* federal tax burden higher during 1981 and 1982. The U.S. economic comeback of 1983 coincided with the decline of Uncle Sam's take to 19.4 percent of the gross national product, the average rate of the 1970s.

But the biggest deviation from supply-side doctrine, Reynolds says, occurred in the domain of monetary policy. The supply-siders had called for relatively easy money, stable prices, and, eventually, a return to the gold standard for the nation's money supply. But the Federal Reserve Board, intent upon wringing inflation out of the economy, drove interest rates to near-record highs in 1981 and 1982. Despite the growing strength of U.S. currency in foreign exchange markets and other signs of increasing worldwide demand for dollars, it stifled money supply growth. It was the Federal Reserve's tight money policy more than anything else, in Reynolds's view, that caused the 1982 recession.

"Supply-siders have grown accustomed to being criticized for positions they never held," Reynolds writes. None of them ever claimed that an economic boom would result from the 1981 tax cuts, he main-



President Reagan's supply-side economists got the blame for creating the nation's severe economic recession in 1982.

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tains. Nor have they received credit for correct predictions. For example, the 1983 recovery, unlike others since World War II, was fueled by rising business investment rather than by consumer demand—just as promised by supply-side economists.

Reynolds is not particularly happy about today's big federal budget deficits, but he would rather see red ink than higher taxes. Indeed, ever the supply-sider, he favors even further tax cuts.

Japanese, Go Home!

"Japan Inc., U.S.A." by Robert B. Reich,
in *The New Republic* (Nov. 26, 1984), P.O.
Box 955, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737-0001.

In increasing numbers these days, Japanese corporations are either opening factories on U.S. soil or entering into joint ventures with American firms. Nissan makes trucks in Tennessee, Mitsubishi sells its cars under the Chrysler label.

Strange as it may seem, American companies have welcomed the invasion. National Steel now works hand in hand with Nippon Kokan, Japan's second biggest steel-maker. National Semiconductor sells Hitachi computers. Last year, Florida's Houdaille Industries, a robotics firm, announced a joint venture with Japan's Okuma Machinery Works. The list goes on and on. In most cases, the U.S. firms do the research and development for the product, carry out the final assembly of component parts, and handle the marketing and distribution. The Japanese handle the complex manufacturing process in between, where they have an advantage in quality and price over their American partners.

One result is that old distinctions between Japanese and U.S. goods are blurring. RCA puts its brand name on made-in-Japan articles; Hondas are made in Ohio.

An arrangement that provides American workers with jobs and U.S. consumers with inexpensive goods seems ideal. "Except for one thing," notes Reich, a Harvard public-policy analyst. As the Japanese take over more and more of the production process, "they develop the collective capacity to transform raw ideas quickly into world-class goods"—a skill that he fears American workers and managers are losing. Most of the final assembly jobs that Japanese manufacturers now consign to U.S. workers are relatively simple and likely to be largely eliminated by automation; research and development generates few jobs; domestic marketing and distribution are tasks that Americans would perform anyway. The net result, in Reich's view, is that the United States is getting the short end of the stick.

To overcome the high cost of the Made in U.S.A. label and to spur greater U.S. and Japanese corporate investment in complex production in America, Reich proposes new federal tax breaks and direct subsidies. Today, for example, corporations receive a 25 percent tax credit for research-and-development outlays, not a dime for employee training and production-line management improvements. Until we encourage businesses to put more money into such changes, Reich writes, we will continue to see "the fruits of our research . . . taking seed abroad."

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Fallen Stars

"Who's Excellent Now?" in *Business Week* (Nov. 5, 1984), P.O. Box 506, Hightstown, N.J. 08520.

In Search of Excellence hit the best-seller lists three years ago, and after sales of some three million copies, it is still going strong. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of 14 of the 43 U.S. corporations hailed by the book's authors, Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr.

The two business consultants published their book when the nation was mired in its deepest recession since the 1930s and when U.S. businessmen were desperately trying to figure out where they had gone wrong. Notes *Business Week*: "The book's basic message was U.S. companies could regain their competitive edge by paying more attention to people—customers and employees—and by sticking to the skills and values they know best. And when virtually all eyes were turned to Japan for the answer, the book showed there were worthy models of management in our own backyard."

Where did the unlucky 14 go wrong? Two companies (Revlon and Chesbrough-Pond's) violated the Peters and Waterman rule against infatuation with "number crunching"—abstract exercises with the ledgers. Several failed to "stick to the knitting," branching out into businesses where they had little experience. Fluor Corporation, Texas Instruments, and Johnson and Johnson are examples. But the most common error—and one that could not have been avoided by following the "eight commandments" of *In Search of Excellence*—was reacting poorly to broad economic and business trends. Delta Air Lines, for example, failed to meet the challenge of federal deregulation of its industry; Avon reacted sluggishly when housewives, the chief buyers of the beauty products it sells door-to-door, began taking jobs outside the home.

What is the lesson? Management guru Peter F. Drucker argues that *In Search of Excellence* was "a book for juveniles" that caught on largely because American executives were panicked by the 1982 recession. But *Business Week* takes a milder view. The book did point up some mistakes common to American business. The mixed record of the 43 "excellent" companies shows not only that corporate success may be temporary but that "good management requires much more than following any one set of rules."

Flexi-pay

"The Case for a Share Economy" by Martin L. Weitzman, in *Challenge* (Nov.-Dec. 1984), 80 Business Park Dr., Armonk, N.Y. 10504.

Gone (for now) but not at all forgotten, stagflation is one of the modern capitalist economy's most dreaded diseases. Weitzman, an MIT economist, claims to have found a cure.

Among the broad remedies economists have proposed in the past are tighter regulation of the money supply, a national industrial policy,

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and an "incomes" policy. Weitzman thinks much smaller. He notes that stagflation occurs when employees' wages begin to rise independently of their employers' output. To stay in the black in the face of growing payroll costs, companies can either boost prices or lay off workers. Frequently, they do both—and create stagflation.

Weitzman's solution is to alter the incentives to individual firms. His plan: Have employers pay workers a share of company revenues instead of a fixed wage. That would also spur corporations to boost hiring.

Consider a hypothetical example: If General Motors (GM) pays its workers a fixed wage of \$24 per hour, then, to maximize profits, GM will keep hiring workers and expanding output until the *additional* sales revenue produced by one more hour of labor declines to exactly \$24.

Now assume that GM's *average* revenue per hour of labor is \$36. Suppose, furthermore, that GM and the United Auto Workers union agree to an unorthodox new contract: Employees will be paid two-thirds of the company's average revenue per worker instead of a fixed wage.

Initially, nothing changes. Hourly pay is still \$24. But GM's incentives have changed. Where once \$24 in new revenue cost it \$24 in added payroll outlays, it now costs just two-thirds of the new revenue, or \$16. So it makes sense for GM to go on hiring new workers and increasing production.

Employees pay a price for expansion because their wages drop marginally as new hands are signed on. But they gain in job security: Because wages fall automatically—though, again, marginally—if business slows, employers will not resort to layoffs. And workers gain in the long run because the "share system," as Weitzman calls it, encourages not only stable prices but also full employment.

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Nostalgia Wars

"The Politics of Nostalgia" by Christopher Lasch, in *Harper's* (Nov. 1984), P.O. Box 1937, Marion, Ohio 43306.

The nostalgic notion that "things ain't what they used to be" is often cultivated by the political Right and criticized by the Left. Ironically, says Lasch, a University of Rochester historian, both sides share a desire to avoid taking history seriously.

Nostalgia emerged as an ideological issue during the late 1940s, when Progressive historians such as Columbia's Richard Hofstadter lamented that Americans, buffeted by two world wars and a severe economic depression, were seeking refuge from the social and economic issues of the day in a Currier and Ives vision of the past. "By the early 1960s," writes Lasch, "the denunciation of nostalgia had become a liberal ritual." Conservatives were quick to mount a defense of "the good

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Nostalgia is an American tradition. This scene of country life appeared in the Farmer's Almanac in 1820.

old days," when patriotism, rugged individualism, and the family were supposedly in full flower. A pile of books attests to nostalgia's continuing status as an obsession of contending American intellectuals.

Lost in the shuffle, Lasch asserts, is the fact that nostalgia became an issue only because of "a collapse of the belief in progress" among intellectuals on both sides, a collapse of the belief in the future as an improved version of the past. For conservatives, nostalgia endows the past not with immediacy and relevance but with "the charm of distance and inconsequence." How could such an idyllic past provide instruction about the future? So sharp is our sense of "discontinuity" with the past, Lasch adds, that even the 1950s and 1960s are now wrapped in a gentle haze.

At the same time, many liberal intellectuals attack nostalgia precisely because they hope to "discredit comparisons between the past and the present—comparisons which might raise doubts about the future our society is making for itself."

Nostalgia, Lasch observes, is not really much of an issue for ordinary Americans: In the workaday world, "the burden of the past cannot easily be shrugged off by creating new identities or inventing usable pasts." Only the "educated classes" have the luxury of believing that it can. Unfortunately, these are the very people Americans count on to come to grips with the lesson of the nation's past in charting its future.

Garbology

"The Garbage Decade" by William L. Rathje, in *American Behavioral Scientist* (Sept.-Oct. 1984), Sage Publications, 275 South Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212.

"You are what you eat," goes the old saying, and also, adds Rathje, a University of Arizona anthropologist, what you throw away.

Rathje has been studying garbage since 1974, when he devised his "*Projet du Garbage*" as a game of archaeological experimentation for

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his students. But the game turned serious; a team of trained researchers has since analyzed, weighed, and catalogued household refuse in Tucson, Milwaukee, Marin County (California), and Mexico City.

One advantage of garbage research is that it uncovers what people would rather not reveal about themselves or might not even know. There is, for example, a considerable disparity between how much alcohol people say they drink and the number of wine and liquor bottles that actually turn up in their trash. Few Americans would admit to throwing away large quantities of food, but Rathje's *Projet du Garbage* has found that roughly 10 percent of all edible food ends up in the garbage—15 percent if one includes the "Garbage Disposal Correction Factor" for kitchen sink garbage disposals. In 1977, the U.S. General Accounting Office calculated that the 10 percent throwaway rate carried an annual price tag of \$11.7 billion.

The chief theoretical product of Rathje's indefatigable garbage sleuthing is his "first principle of edible food loss." He contends that the more standardized the diet—the fewer out-of-the-ordinary items it includes—the less waste. He finds, for example, that most families wind up throwing away only five to 10 percent of the ordinary white bread they buy but 40 to 50 percent of whole wheat and other "specialty" breads. An interesting corollary is that households that use many prepackaged foods waste little canned corn and frozen pizza but tend to throw away much more fresh produce than normal.

Modern packaging accounts for a hefty portion of Americans' trash. Rathje reports that an average family in Tucson discards 1,800 plastic jars and wrappers, 850 steel and 500 aluminum cans, 500 glass bottles, and more than 13,000 pieces of paper and cardboard. That adds up to a lot of iron ore and other nonrenewable resources. But elaborate packaging (and refrigeration) has cut food losses over the years: In 1918, according to a study by the U.S. War Food Administration, 25 to 30 percent of all food wound up in the garbage can.

Indeed, Rathje finds an ironic sort of solace in today's "wastefulness." Archaeologists have found that dead civilizations leave behind very few artifacts from their last, most decadent days. It is the "classic" era of Imperial Rome's history, for example, that provides the richest lode of treasures and trash. If garbage is any clue, Rathje suggests, American civilization may not be far from its zenith.

Nowhere to Go

"Deinstitutionalization and the Homeless Mentally Ill" by H. Richard Lamb, M.D., in *Hospital and Community Psychiatry* (Sept. 1984), 1400 K St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Homeless people wander the streets of every big city in America. Many of them, probably tens of thousands, are mentally ill men and women who find themselves on the streets because federal and state policies leave them no place else to go.

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Lamb, a psychiatrist who headed an American Psychiatric Association study of the problem, traces its origins to the early 1960s, when "deinstitutionalization" began. Scandalous conditions at state mental hospitals helped to start the process. So did new theories of treatment and 1963 federal legislation that made the mentally ill eligible for disability benefits and established small community mental health centers. The number of patients in state mental institutions dropped from 559,000 in 1955 to some 132,000 today.

What went wrong? Lamb says that the authorities did a bad job of planning. They were vague about how "community treatment" would work. They failed to anticipate that states would be parsimonious in paying for community care and that mental health professionals themselves would often avoid taking on the most difficult cases. Today, the majority of discharged mental patients return to their families. About one-third move to residential hotels or to government-subsidized "board and care" homes, which provide minimal care and supervision. Others wind up homeless.

The reasons vary. Some services are available, but only to those who are able to find them in a bureaucracy that even the mentally healthy find dismaying. Often, says Lamb, patients avoid treatment because "they do not want to see themselves as ill." Some simply prefer to live in isolation from others; some want to escape prohibitions against taking drugs and drinking, or simply long for freedom.

In Lamb's view, the only solution for the worst cases is recommitment to a state mental hospital. That would require easing state restrictions on involuntary commitment. But most of today's homeless mentally ill could live in facilities outside of hospitals if they were provided with more "structure" than is available in "board and care" homes. That means strict supervision by professionals. In fact, says Lamb, such services are already available to the mentally retarded. Simple justice requires that the state and federal governments make the same benefits available to the mentally ill.

PRESS & TELEVISION

Journalists As Historians

"Journalism, History, and Journalistic History" by Theodore Draper, in *The New York Times Book Review* (Dec. 9, 1984), P.O. Box 58, Hackensack, N.J. 07602-9983.

Journalism, history, fiction. In a small but growing number of best-selling books, quite aside from TV "docudramas," these three ingredients are being mixed together into one big stew. Draper, a former Institute for Advanced Study historian, does not like the taste.

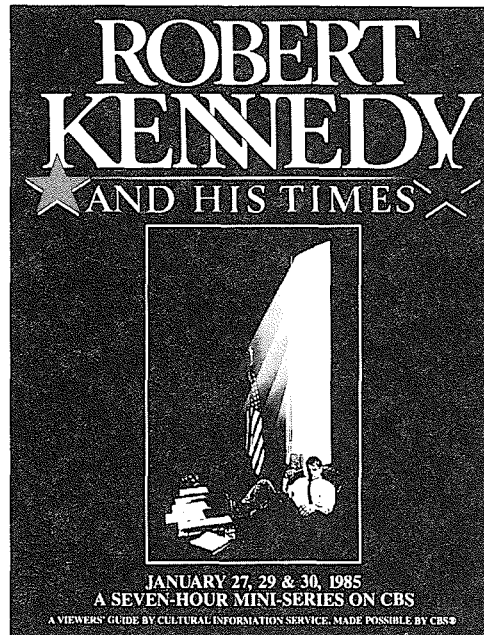
PRESS & TELEVISION

It was bad enough, he writes, when novelists got into the business of writing quasi-journalism, as did Truman Capote in *In Cold Blood* (1966) and Norman Mailer in *The Executioner's Song* (1979). But at least the public recognizes such writers as practitioners of fiction, and at least they confine themselves to the relatively narrow realm of biographical writing. What really worries Draper is what happens when journalists use novelistic techniques in writing history.

Even without indulging in "creative writing," the journalist-as-historian is suspect in Draper's eyes. Reporters work under rules different from those of historians: Newsmen are not responsible for authenticating what people say, only for reporting it accurately. By contrast, it is the essence of the historian's job to arrive at the truth of matters. Journalists frequently have to conceal their sources; historians accept nothing that cannot be verified. Adding novelistic techniques does violence to the canons of both history and journalism.

The occasion for Draper's complaint is the publication of *Deadly Gambits: The Reagan Administration and the Stalemate in Nuclear Arms Control* by a respected *Time* magazine correspondent, Strobe Talbott. Talbott not only recounts events and describes the Byzantine bureaucratic quarrels over arms control policy during the first three years of the administration, he reconstructs secret discussions, quotes from classified documents, and provides telling details of private meetings ("With the thinnest of smiles . . .").

It all makes for a better yarn but also for dubious narrative. Verification, already difficult in journalistic history, is impossible in novelistic



TV "docudramas," such as this year's *Robert Kennedy and His Times*, have paved the way for wider acceptance of "dramatized" histories in book form.

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history. And reporters who rely on government officials to re-create dialogue, tell anecdotes, and leak selected documents leave themselves open to manipulation. Packaging the results in a book, which suggests much more permanence and authority than a newspaper, compounds the problem. Draper suggests that journalists, book publishers, and complaisant book reviewers, among others, examine their consciences.

Reagan 1, Media 0

"The Media and the Presidency" by Paul Johnson, in *Encounter* (Nov. 1984), 59 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS, England.

In his 1984 memoir *Caveat*, former Secretary of State Alexander Haig complained that during the early days of the Reagan administration the nation's TV networks, newsmagazines, and top newspapers "let themselves be converted into . . . bulletin boards" for the White House.

Johnson, a British journalist, finds a certain grim justice in that.

For 20 years, American presidents and the press have been feuding over the limits of presidential power. Until the mid-1960s, Johnson observes, reporters in the nation's capital "were usually content to allow themselves to be used by the White House." So "discreet" were the Washington newspapermen of the earlier era that their readers were unaware in 1919 that a stroke had rendered President Woodrow Wilson incapable of carrying out his duties.

The press was not always pampered by Franklin D. Roosevelt—photographers who took pictures revealing the extent of his disability due to polio were likely to have their cameras smashed by Secret Service men—but he was a masterful press agent. It was during the New Deal that Washington journalists warmed to the virtues of executive power rather than congressional authority. That feeling survived FDR by more than 20 years. But by 1967, as Lyndon B. Johnson's "credibility gap" widened over Vietnam policy, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch's* James Deakin could write, "The relationship between the President and the Washington press corps has settled into a pattern of chronic disbelief."

After LBJ's downfall, Johnson says, TV and newspaper journalists took off after Richard M. Nixon. They seemed to believe "that the moral necessity to destroy Nixon was so overwhelming that all constitutional standards, all rules of decency indeed, had to be suspended." Johnson blames the *New York Times* for beginning "dirty tricks warfare" with its celebrated publication of the secret Pentagon Papers in 1971. The war between press and president soon culminated in the Watergate scandal, a story, Johnson avers, that was vastly exaggerated and that became a news media "obsession."

Nixon's successor, Gerald Ford, fared well on the front pages and the evening news only by comparison; Jimmy Carter was bludgeoned "the moment he set foot in the White House."

If the Reagan White House has now tamed many reporters, Johnson concludes, it is because the President's men understand that by selec-

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tively satisfying the journalists' hunger for leaks and spicy tidbits, they can make the press corps "hooked and dependent." Far from decrying this development, Johnson welcomes it as evidence that balance has been restored to American politics.

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

*Catholicism,
Latin-Style*

"The Case against Liberation Theology"
by Michael Novak, in *The New York Times
Magazine* (Oct. 21, 1984), 229 West 43rd
St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

Fourteen years ago, a little-known Peruvian priest named Gustavo Gutiérrez published his book, *A Theology of Liberation*. Today, the doctrine it inaugurated is controversial enough to provoke Pope John Paul II's anger and to garner front-page stories in U.S. newspapers.

Novak, a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, traces the roots of liberation theology back to the 1960s, when hundreds of young American- and European-trained priests and nuns went out to serve in local parishes throughout Latin America. Hoping to ease their parishioners' dreadful poverty, they were frustrated by Latin American Catholicism's stress on personal piety over social action. Indeed, the church's hierarchy "seemed to be part of the very establishment responsible for Latin America's social ills."

Father Gutiérrez's liberation theology wed the social conscience of many of the Catholic Church's younger recruits to the Western social-science theory of "dependency," which holds that Third World poverty is the result of exploitation by "neocolonialist" American and European capitalists. Among the clergymen who later helped elaborate liberation theology were Brazil's Leonardo Boff and Nicaragua's Ernesto Cardenal, now minister of culture in that nation's Sandinista government.

Liberation theology "gains its excitement from flirting with Marxist thought," Novak writes, though Marxism is only a thread within it. What troubles Pope John Paul II most is the contradiction between the revolutionary priests' call for "class warfare" and the Christian edict to love one's enemies. The Pope, himself a sometime critic of capitalism, believes that the Catholic Church must transcend politics.

Novak goes further. He dismisses the liberation theologians' belief that "neocolonialism" and capitalism are to blame for Latin America's poverty. In fact, he says, Latin America is "precapitalist." The "missing link" in liberation theology is a "concrete vision of political economy. It refuses to say how safeguards for human rights, economic development, and personal liberties will be instituted after the revolution." Novak agrees that a "social transformation" is long overdue in Latin America. But he insists that a truly liberating theology would call for healthy doses of democracy and free enterprise.

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

Progress and The Apocalypse

"Between Progress and Apocalypse: A Re-assessment of Millennialism in American Religious Thought, 1800-1880" by James H. Moorhead, *Journal of American History* (Dec. 1984), Ballantine Hall, Indiana University, Bloomington, Ind. 47405.

Amid the numerous religious revivals of the early 19th century, America's Protestants turned toward a new "postmillennial" theology.

Many earlier Protestants had held that the Apocalypse and Second Coming would be followed by the millennium, a 1,000-year-long earthly paradise. The postmillennialists reversed the order: The millennium would *precede* the Apocalypse. That was an important difference, writes Moorhead, of the Princeton Theological Seminary, one that must be grasped "to understand the world as it appeared to many persons only a few generations ago."

America's pastors and preachers quickly wed postmillennialism to the secular gospel of progress. "Since the Kingdom of God would not arrive by a supernatural destruction of the world," explains Moorhead, "only the labors of believers could bring it about; and if they proved laggard in their task, the millennium would be retarded."

Evangelizing would speed its coming, but Protestant ministers saw "sophisticated technology, greater prosperity, and the flourishing of the arts and sciences" as signs of its approach and worthy of church support.

By the end of the 19th century, the postmillennialist day was done. To conservative Protestants, disturbed by the direction of secular progress, "the postmillennial hope of historical advance seemed fatuous." Among liberal Protestants, millennial beliefs also withered. "What remained was rather like Lewis Carroll's Cheshire cat, [with] faith in moral and social improvement constituting the residual grin."

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Pole Vaulting

"Polar Flip-Flop" by Subir K. Banerjee, in *The Sciences* (Nov.-Dec. 1984), 2 East 63rd St. New York, N.Y. 10021.

Among the few things that human beings can count on in life besides death and taxes, one of the surest is that the sun will rise in the east and set in the west. Or will it?

According to Banerjee, a University of Minnesota geologist, the Earth's north-south magnetic field has "flipped" at least 25 times during the last five million years, or roughly once every 200,000 years. The most recent turnabout came some 730,000 years ago, so the next "flip" is already long overdue.

The evidence of past polar flip-flops has been around for hundreds of years. As early as 1538, sailors noticed that their compasses went hay-

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wire, designating north as south, when placed near certain rocks. No satisfactory explanation of the aberration was forthcoming until 1963. That year, writes Banerjee, two separate research groups, from the U.S. Geological Survey and the Australian National University, concluded that the strange rocks were "fossil magnets" that . . . recorded the intensity and direction of the global magnetic field prevailing at the time they cooled and hardened."

Scientists believe that the Earth's magnetic field is generated by the movement of molten iron—itsself magnetized billions of years ago by the sun or some other celestial body—thousands of miles beneath the planet's surface. As the liquid metal rises, it gradually cools and begins sinking back toward the Earth's core, creating "eddies" some 100 miles in diameter. There may be as many as 50 of them. The rotation of the Earth on its axis makes most (but not all) of the eddies point either north or south. "The net direction of the magnetic field," Banerjee states, "depends simply on which type of eddy is more populous."

This explains why the Earth's magnetic and geographic poles are not identical: Fluctuations in the eddies make the magnetic poles wobble.

Geologists and geophysicists do not know why there are currently more northerly eddies than southerly ones, but the evidence suggests that polar flips are not sudden. Banerjee's own work in Minnesota shows that the magnetic field there is at roughly 40 percent of the peak strength it reached 4,000 years ago.

If a switch occurred tomorrow, it would disrupt everything from missile guidance systems to the migratory habits of birds. But if Banerjee's calculations are correct, mankind will not have to worry about such imponderables for another 2,000 years.

Hairs That Hear

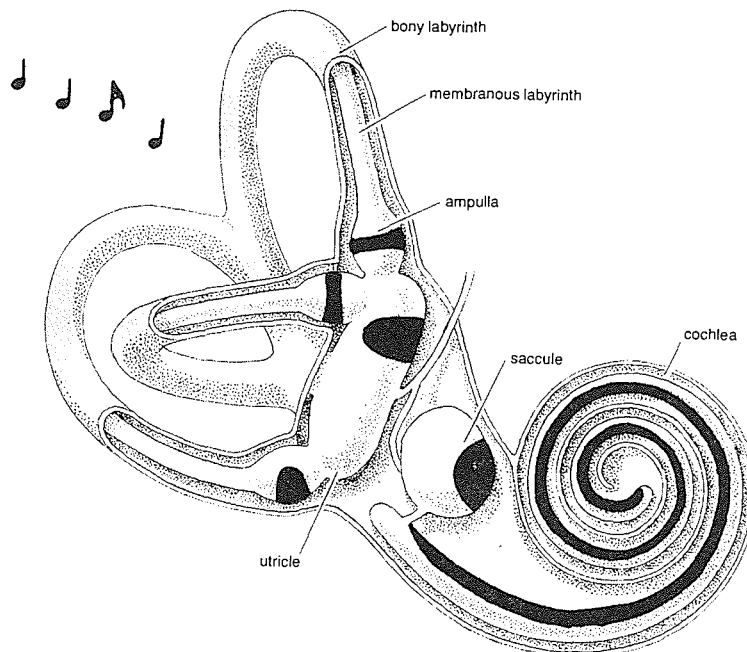
"Crafting Sound from Silence" by Deborah Franklin, in *Science News* (Oct. 20, 1984), 231 West Center St., Marion, Ohio 43306.

Scientists have long known that there is more to the ear than meets the eye, but exploring the recesses of the inner ear is a difficult business. Today, they are finally beginning to understand how mysterious "hair cells" convey sounds to the auditory nerve.

This much is known: Sounds from the outside world stimulate the eardrum, whose vibrations are picked up and converted into hydraulic pressure waves by a bone called the stapes. The waves then travel the length of the cochlea—long, spiral-shaped chambers lined in places with hair cells. They are so named because of the "thin, hairlike appendages, called stereocilia, at their tips," reports Franklin, a *Science News* correspondent. When these extraordinarily sensitive stereocilia are tweaked, they release electrical impulses that signal the hair cell to secrete a chemical that stimulates the auditory nerve.

Humans are born with some 20,000 hair cells in each ear. In a lifetime of normal wear and tear, the hairs thin out and, thus, the hearing

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Hair cells line several parts (darkest areas, above) of the inner ear. Those in the cochlea detect sound; those elsewhere govern the sense of balance.

of the elderly deteriorates. Some 200,000 other Americans suffer profound deafness due to damage to the inner ear, mostly involving the hair cells. Both groups could be helped by medical research.

One line of inquiry is the search by biochemists for ways to repair damage to the hair cells and to help disabled cells synthesize the chemical neurotransmitters that trigger the auditory nerve. Accustomed to working with millions or billions of cells, biochemists have been stymied by the fact that they must extract the elusive chemical from a paltry 20,000 cells—barely enough to analyze.

Physiologists, meanwhile, are exploring the structure of the hair cells. Lewis Tilney, of the University of Pennsylvania, has discovered that the cells are often supported by a lattice of protein molecules. A loud burst of sound, Tilney has found, can destroy the lattice, leaving the cells, which usually wave gracefully, to “flop about like wet noodles.” Tilney’s discovery may help explain episodes of temporary hearing loss.

The chief products of research up to now are experimental electronic implants that, like the hair cells, stimulate the auditory nerve and help the deaf to hear. The next goal: a biochemical fix for the one person out of 15 who suffers from seriously impaired hearing.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Curing Cancer

"Cure" by Haydn Bush, in *Science* 84 (Sept. 1984), P.O. Box 3207, Harlan, Iowa 51593-2053.

To judge by press releases and newspaper headlines, the cure rate for cancer has been improving steadily for years. Actually, writes Bush, director of the London Regional Cancer Centre in Canada, "we're not curing much more cancer than we were a generation ago."

Doctors can claim real progress in effecting cures for a few relatively rare cancers (e.g., childhood leukemia, Hodgkin's disease) but for only two of the more common types, stomach and uterine cancers. The cure rates for the biggest killers—cancer of the lung, breast, colon, and prostate—have improved very little during the last 25 years. What good news there is regarding these diseases, Bush adds, is often misinterpreted.

The survival rate for women with breast cancer, for example, climbed from 57 percent during the early 1950s to 66 percent 20 years later. Bush believes that earlier *detection*, not more effective *treatment*, was behind the change. "Most potentially fatal human cancers," he notes, "eventually kill because they have already spread to distant sites in the body before the disease is diagnosed." Moreover, cancer statistics count patients who live for five years after their diagnosis without a recurrence as "survivors," even though they are at risk for up to 30 years.

The treatment of cancer today is at a comparatively primitive stage, Bush says, and it may be years until substantial gains are made. In the meantime, he favors a diversion of some money from cancer cure studies into research on treatments that are more humane than today's radical surgery and debilitating drug and radiation therapies; these are sometimes of little use and "far worse than the early physical effects of the disease."

RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT

*Learning to Live
In a 'Greenhouse'*

"Anticipating Climate Change" by Thomas C. Schelling, in *Environment* (Oct. 1984), 4000 Albemarle St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20016.

At the rate that carbon dioxide (CO₂) is accumulating in the Earth's atmosphere today, mankind is virtually certain to suffer the results of a "greenhouse effect" within a century. But the obvious solution—to cut back on carbon dioxide output—is not as logical as it seems.

So argues Schelling, a Harvard political economist. Higher atmospheric concentrations of CO₂, chiefly the result of burning such fossil fuels as oil, coal, and gas, would trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere and raise the global temperature. That, in turn, would have two serious effects: a drop in rain and snowfall (though some areas would experi-

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ence an *increase*) and, as a result of partial melting of the polar ice caps, a rise in sea levels.

Schelling is skeptical of efforts to curb the world's CO₂ output. The level of CO₂ in the atmosphere is now growing only half as fast as scientists were predicting it would just a few years ago, but the total concentration will still double by the year 2100. Ironically, the very fact that the greenhouse effect is a global problem militates against cutbacks in fuel use simply to reduce CO₂: Individual nations would bear the costs of conservation while all would share in the benefits. And for many poorer nations, such as Bangladesh, there are a number of more pressing needs than combating the greenhouse effect.

Mankind may be only decades away from being able to engineer a kind of global countercooling, chiefly by means of releasing into the air particles that, like ordinary pollution, would partially block the sun's rays. For the present, however, Schelling believes that it makes sense to learn how to live with a warmer, drier Earth.

A drop in rainfall would hit farmers hardest, but he sees several possible responses: cloud seeding, desalinizing seawater, "mining" icebergs, and developing crop species better suited to growth in brackish water. Over the course of several centuries, the global warming trend might raise sea levels by 16 to 20 feet. Coastal residents would have plenty of time to decide whether to fall back or fight, and Schelling thinks that, at least in certain urban areas, fighting will be economical. Much of the Netherlands is below sea level today, effectively sheltered by dams, dikes, and landfill. A six-mile dike around the mouth of Boston harbor, for example, would shield that city from a higher sea level.

Two Cheers For EDB

"Give Thanks for Pesticides, Too" by Elizabeth M. Whelan, in *Across the Board* (Nov. 1984), 845 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

For 50 years, American farmers used the pesticide ethylene dibromide (EDB) to protect fruits and stored grains from insects. But after a public uproar sparked last year by the discovery of traces of EDB in some breakfast cereals and cake mixes, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) abruptly banned the chemical.

Whelan, who heads the American Council on Science and Health, thinks that the EPA was stampeded into making a mistake. EDB, she contends, was only a moderate threat and is merely being replaced by other chemicals that are "less effective in destroying pests and offer no safety advantages to humans—at an enormous cost to the consumer."

The discovery of EDB's presence in food set off so many alarms because the chemical is a carcinogen. But the fact that laboratory rats fed massive doses of EDB developed tumors does not mean that humans will. Indeed, the EPA estimates that the average American ingests between five and 10 micrograms of EDB daily, compared with 140,000 micrograms of plain old pepper. To consume proportionately as much

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EDB as the laboratory animals did, Americans would have to increase their daily intake 250,000 times. The incidence of cancer among a group of 156 EDB factory workers who were exposed to doses 5,000 to 10,000 times larger than normal "is *not* significantly different from that expected in an unexposed population."

Another perspective: The average human diet contains 10,000 times more natural carcinogens than man-made pesticides.

Why take even a small chance on EDB? Because, Whelan argues, the alternatives are probably worse. Not using any insecticide on stored grain, for example, would guarantee massive waste and dangerous spoilage. And of the four chemicals that have been pressed into service to replace EDB, one was a known carcinogen at the time of the ban, one has since been found to cause cancer, and two have never even been tested.

Most galling of all to Whelan is the fact that EPA officials knew all along that their own frightening estimate that continued use of EDB would cause three additional cases of cancer per 1,000 Americans was grossly inflated—14 times too high. Yet under pressure from environmental lobbyists and a panicked public, they withheld the revised estimate until after the ban was imposed.

ARTS & LETTERS

Genius or Fraud?

"Was Jackson Pollock Any Good?" in *Arts and Antiques* (Oct. 1984), P.O. Box 20600, Bergenfield, N.J. 07621.

Jackson Pollock's famed "drip" paintings have hung in museums across the United States for several decades now. Yet, many viewers undoubtedly still ask themselves whether a five-year-old child armed with a few cans of paint might not have done as well as the founder of abstract expressionism. So *Arts and Antiques* put the question to 23 prominent artists and intellectuals: "Was Jackson Pollock any good?"

There is no consensus. Thomas Hoving, former director of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, writes that Pollock (1912–56) was "a tyro, the primitive of a way. The failing of his work is the lack of humanism, so the paintings will be an interesting footnote in the course of art history; a high point at a low moment." But to painter Andrew Wyeth, Pollock's primitivism, his "complete freedom with paint," was a great breakthrough that paved the way for wide-ranging experimentation by other painters after the late 1940s.

Pollock's colleague and contemporary Robert Motherwell recalls that his old friend was inarticulate and temperamental—except in the studio. There he was "wholly articulate—with his body, arm, wrist, and eye dancing over the canvas on the floor."

Commentary editor Norman Podhoretz perceives Pollock's personality in his paintings, "some force of primitive energy that was unmistak-

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able and that distinguishes them from those of his contemporaries." Playwright Arthur Miller also admires the disciplined wildness of the paintings, likening them to "painted music." On the other hand, Irving Kristol, editor of the *Public Interest*, dismisses Pollock's canvases as "nice decorations." *Harper's* editor Lewis Lapham says of Pollock's pictures: "I studied them dutifully, but failed to find in them what I was instructed to find—namely, beauty or meaning."

Twenty-nine years after the artist's death, debates continue even over what to call his work. *New York Times* art critic John Russell insists that "drip" painting is a misnomer. "Poured, poured, not dripped," he says. Painter Leroy Neiman notes that whatever it is called, it is original: His own attempts to imitate Pollock failed.

Commenting on the fame that eventually overwhelmed Pollock, *Time* magazine art critic Robert Hughes notes, "Pollock was a good painter, but it's not enough to be a good painter in America; you also have to be a cultural hero. Art criticism has become impossibly riddled with hype. Not even Pablo Picasso was Pablo Picasso."



Number 3, 1949: *Tiger*, detail, by Jackson Pollock, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution.

Culture's Prison

"Scholarship versus Culture" by Jacques Barzun, in *The Atlantic Monthly* (Nov. 1984), Box 2547, Boulder, Colo. 80322.

More artifacts of culture are being created, unearthed, collected, classified, exhibited, and analyzed nowadays than at any time in human history. Yet, paradoxically, contends Columbia University's Barzun, true culture itself is in danger of being smothered.

To Barzun, the chief villain is the university, a "concentration campus" where the spontaneity and passion needed to create and appreciate culture is extinguished.

Scholarship as we know it arose during the Renaissance as a method of establishing accurate versions of Greek and Roman classics. Analysis (from the Greek *analysis*, "to break down") shows how "the little bits fit together to produce the whole." Until the mid-19th century, scholars stuck to such "hard" subjects as mathematics, physics, philosophy, and political economy; it never occurred to anybody that there ought to be university courses in literature or art.

Gradually, scholarship encroached upon these fields, and today, specialization has reached absurd heights. Academic subjects are growing ever more narrow (e.g., crime in one English county during the 17th century), and scholars seem to write only for one another. Emulating the experts, even amateurs have specialized: There are now some 300

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literary societies in the United States, each devoted to a single author. Their members indulge in "pedantic, miserlike heaping up of factual knowledge," Barzun snorts, and "inevitably publish a newsletter."

The fact is, he argues, that "culture and scholarship are natural enemies." Great works of art "are great by virtue of being syntheses of the world," says Barzun. To dissect them "scientifically," trying to pry loose their component parts, is to misunderstand them. Works of art are meant to be regarded whole and to nurture mind and spirit.

Barzun perceives a mood of futility in the academic "kingdom of analysis, criticalness, and theory." Sooner or later, he believes, the "forces of fatigue and boredom" will bring scholars' dominion over culture to an end.

Overdosing On Freud

"Freud and Literary Biography" by Richard Ellmann, in *The American Scholar* (Autumn 1984), 1811 Q St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Literary biographers once saw it as their business to create dignified portraits of eminent people. Then along came Sigmund Freud. Ever since, the hidden motives and "bedroom quirks" of famous authors have come under closer and closer scrutiny, notes Ellmann, Oxford professor and biographer of James Joyce.

Pre-Freudian biography had its pitfalls. The writers relied heavily on letters (akin to "saints' relics"), memoirs, and other written material; "unofficial" sources and embarrassing information frequently got short shrift. During the early 1880s, James A. Froude published four detailed volumes on English essayist Thomas Carlyle without even mentioning the fact, known to Froude, that Carlyle was impotent. Freud's early 20th-century psychoanalytic theories changed all that but also introduced new perils into the writing of lives.

Freud's theory of a secret, unconscious inner world provided new tools for understanding the complexities of personality. By suggesting that literature be read as an elaborate cover-up of writers' simmering neuroses, it also undercut their impeccable image.

A severe critic of traditional biography, Freud called upon his contemporaries to penetrate "the most fascinating secrets of human nature." These secrets often turned out to be sexual ones, and before long, authors were delving into all manner of other intimate mysteries. "The latest biographies of Fitzgerald and Auden," writes Ellmann, "not only discuss their mating habits but their genital sizes." Armed with Freudian theories about behavior, today's biographers often explain away their subjects' virtues as "vices in disguise."

The hazard is that some try to transform a subject's life, willy-nilly, into a Freudian case history. French philosopher Jean Paul Sartre succumbed to this temptation when he took as the premise of his biography of novelist Gustave Flaubert the (demonstrably untrue) notion that Flaubert was a "slow" student; Sartre simply imagined that the young Flaubert had been called "the idiot of the family," a phrase that Sartre

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used as the title of his book. "With certain presuppositions about family life, largely based on Freud, Sartre can prove his case over and over again," Ellmann writes. "The flimsier the documentation, the more he has to say."

Freud himself was a bit careless about the facts in his biographical speculations about such writers as Goethe and Dostoyevsky. And when it came to his own authorized biographer, he chose a psychiatrist (Ernest Jones) who avoided Freudian analysis of Freud and composed an old-fashioned paean to his subject. In so doing, Ellmann writes, he seemed to acknowledge that "the comprehension of genius was beyond man's powers."

Degas's Dancers

"Degas and the Dance" by Dale Harris, in *Ballet News* (Nov. 1984), 1865 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10023.

The "ballet boom" of recent years has made Edgar Degas's (1834–1917) paintings of ballerinas as familiar as the Mona Lisa and Whistler's Mother. But neither ballet nor the art of Degas was always viewed so favorably, recalls Harris, who teaches at Sarah Lawrence College.

In Degas's late-19th-century Paris, ballerinas stood barely a cut above dance-hall girls in the social pecking order. Ballet itself was considered little more than a "trivial entertainment" with overtones of



Edgar Degas's Dancer Adjusting Her Shoe (1885).

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cheesecake. In a famous incident during the 1861 Paris première of Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser*, a group of wealthy young men who arrived too late for the "titillating" ballet portion howled the opera down. Degas apparently shared the general low public regard for ballet: In many of his famous canvases, he lavished as much attention on the spectators and their social doings as on the dancers.

Degas's 1,500 ballet pieces earned him a reputation for misogyny in his own day. As late as 1949, the *Dance Encyclopedia* described him as a "French painter of the impressionist school who painted many unflattering pictures of ballet dancers." According to Harris, it was Degas's refusal to romanticize ballerinas, his interest in their craft and physical training and in their most mundane gestures, that shaped the Victorian image of him as unsympathetic to women.

Harris cautions that Degas, while a realist, was not merely a "documentary" painter. He altered reality to meet his artistic needs; x rays reveal that, in some of his pictures, he painted entirely new characters over old ones that did not suit him. And despite the sometimes strange perspectives and realistic subjects Degas chose, it would be a mistake not to view him as a classicist, "someone for whom the claims of life were thoroughly subordinated to the claims of art."

Indeed, Harris suggests, the backstage world of ballerinas "possessed" Degas in part because, like him, the dancers had to exercise enormous discipline to create something that appears supremely light and graceful. "No art," the painter once said, "was ever less spontaneous than mine. What I do is the result of reflection and study of the great masters; of inspiration, spontaneity, temperament, I know nothing."

OTHER NATIONS

Czechoslovakia's Jazz Rebels

"Hipness at Noon" by Josef Škvorecký, in *The New Republic* (Dec. 17, 1984), P.O. Box 955, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737-0001.

In 1971, three years after Soviet troops toppled Czechoslovakia's reformist Dubček government, a small band of jazz aficionados asked the Czech Ministry of the Interior for permission to form a jazz musicians' union. Only in a communist society could such an event give birth to new "enemies of the state," writes Škvorecký, author of *The Engineer of Human Souls* and other novels.

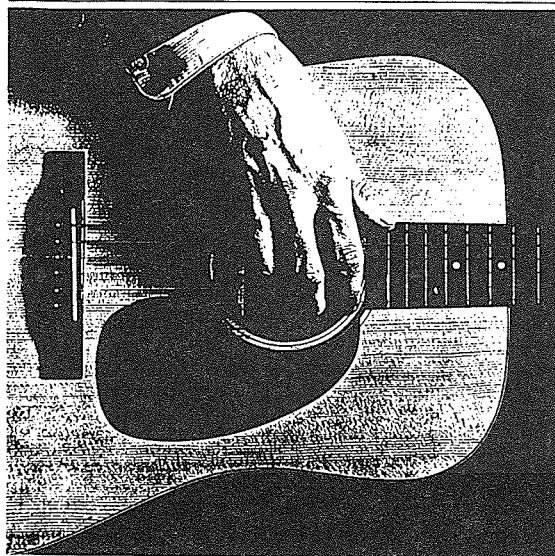
Until rock 'n' roll came along during the 1950s, jazz was strictly beyond the pale in Czechoslovakia. In totalitarian states, any demonstration of mass spontaneity signals danger, Škvorecký says. But "a smokey jazz club [filled] with nostalgic middle-aged men . . . is just a nuisance." So in 1971, a careless Czech Ministry of the Interior directed the petitioning jazz lovers to form a special Jazz Section within the existing Musicians' Union, thus fatefully removing them from its direct con-

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BLUES/TRADICE/SWING JAZZOVÁ SEKCE SH

One of the "subversive" journals published by the Jazz Section.



trol. In another bureaucratic faux pas, the Ministry allowed the Jazz Section to pick its own leaders.

Aided by the denizens of what Škvorecký calls the "Gray Zone"—that "conspiracy" of ordinary people who "sin" against the regime without actively opposing it—the Jazz Section became, during the mid-1970s, a "threat" to Czech communism.

The arrival of popular jazz-rock music from the West helped stir official anxiety. As the new music (along with New Wave rock) found its way into the Section-sponsored Prague Jazz Days, crowds at the annual music festival grew ominously large. Finally, a Prague "cultural inspector" shut down the festival to prevent "public disturbances."

Perhaps more worrisome to Czech authorities, the Jazz Section began taking full advantage of a legal loophole allowing membership organizations to publish minimally censored newsletters and pamphlets for their members. The government had restricted the Jazz Section roster to 3,000 souls, but upwards of 100,000 of their friends and associates read its publications. Under the Jazz Section imprint appeared such "dangerous" works as a history of Czech rock music and a book on New York's avant-garde theater. The Gray Zonists in the Musicians' Union, Škvorecký says, were reluctant to crack down on the Jazz Section.

In 1982, the Communist Party orchestrated a campaign of articles and letters to the editor in its weekly *Tribuna* "depicting the pop-and-

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jazz scene in Czechoslovakia as a hotbed of antisocialist conspiracies." A purge was in the making: Dozens of rock and jazz-rock bands have since been forced to break up; Jazz Section chairman Karel Srp has been fired from his job with a printing company and may face 14 years in prison; other Jazz Section leaders face uncertain futures; and the Ministry of the Interior has "curtailed" all activities of the Musicians' Union until union officials dissolve the Jazz Section.

A 'Shining Path' In Peru?

"Why Peasants Rebel: The Case of Peru's Sendero Luminoso" by Cynthia McClintock, in *World Politics* (Oct. 1984), Princeton University Press, 3175 Princeton Pike, Lawrenceville, N.J. 08648.

During the 1970s, Peru's military government carried out the second most sweeping land reform (after Cuba's) in Latin American history. In 1980, civilian rule was restored. Nevertheless, Peru has become the victim of a bizarre and bloody guerrilla movement, the Sendero Luminoso, or "Shining Path."

Founded in 1968 by Abimael Guzman, a professor at a provincial university in Ayacucho, high in the Andes, the Shining Path took up arms in 1980. Its leaders scorn both the Soviet Union and China, and receive no aid from either. The group is responsible for some 2,500 terrorist attacks nationwide—on factories, power plants, embassies—and 615 deaths. It enjoys growing popularity in the mountains around Ayacucho; the number of active terrorists has jumped from just two or three hundred in 1980 to perhaps 3,000 today.

How can the Shining Path's success be explained? No sophisticated theories are needed, says McClintock, a University of Chicago political scientist: The Andes peasants face increasingly dire poverty.

During the agrarian reforms of the 1970s, the estates of the wealthy were turned into peasant farm cooperatives. But most of the estates were located far from the Andes, where the land is dry, stony, and steep, and the potato and grain farms are very small. Overpopulation and soil exhaustion are the problems there. Government policies have also stirred peasant resentment. Fernando Belaunde Terry's administration has hiked interest rates on farm loans, slashed fertilizer subsidies, and cut protective tariffs on imported food. It has boosted public works outlays in the region, but nearly half of the money goes to showcase rural electrification projects.

Widening gaps between rich and poor are common in Latin America, McClintock notes, but in most cases, inequality grows because the gains of the well-off outpace those of the poor. Only in Nicaragua, Panama, and the Peruvian highlands did the poor get poorer during the 1970s. In the Andes, food consumption per capita dropped below 63 percent of the average daily requirement; income now averages \$50 per person annually.

McClintock thinks that Peru's experience contradicts conventional theories about "why peasants rebel." The Andes peasants treading the

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Shining Path are isolated from the world capitalist economy; no wealthy landowners or oligarchs exploit them; their expectations were never unrealistically inflated. They are just losing ground in the struggle to survive. Because most of their countrymen are better off, McClintock gives the guerrillas little chance of winning wider support.

The Philippines's New Communists

"Communism in the Philippines" by David A. Rosenberg, in *Problems of Communism* (Sept.-Oct. 1984), Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

In 1981, President Ferdinand Marcos ended 10 years of martial law in the Philippines. During that decade, argues Rosenberg, a Middlebury College political scientist, Marcos managed through incompetence and bad judgment to rub old scars raw.

Marcos's iron-handed rule (he retains extraordinary powers) has strengthened the political extremes at the expense of the center. Only two Philippine groups have prospered since 1972: the armed forces, which swelled from 60,000 to 155,000 men, and the Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its New People's Army guerrillas. According to Rosenberg, a repressive domestic political climate, a deteriorating economy, and blatant official corruption are bolstering the Communists' cause. They will probably have a strong, though not decisive, say in what happens in this nation of 7,100 islands after the 68-year-old president departs the scene.

This is not the first time that Filipinos have confronted a Communist insurgency. Between 1946 and 1954, the fledgling post-World War II democracy was plagued by some 10,000 "Huk" guerrillas directed by the Philippine Communist Party (PKP). The Huks were defeated by Defense Secretary (later President) Ramon Magsaysay, with the help of American advisers. Emasculated by government crackdowns, infighting, and its own bad strategic decisions, the PKP by 1971 supported the imposition of martial law.

The CPP will not be so easy to beat, Rosenberg fears. Founded in 1968 by a group of young, well-educated Maoists who had been expelled from the PKP, its New People's Army now claims some 20,000 men under arms. These rebels are shrewder than the Huks, in Rosenberg's estimation. They are waging a classic guerrilla hit-and-run campaign in the countryside, avoiding the big pitched battles that decimated the Huks.

There is no evidence that the CPP receives outside aid, Rosenberg adds. Its Maoism is out of favor even in mainland China. Beijing enjoys growing trade with the Philippines and supports U.S. bases there; the CPP opposes both.

Already, the Philippines' Communist insurgents' forays occasionally make the front pages of U.S. newspapers, Rosenberg notes. Once Marcos leaves the stage, the vacuum that he has created at the center of Philippine politics will become even more obvious, and the CPP's power will grow.

RESEARCH REPORTS

Reviews of new research by public agencies and private institutions

"Accounting for the Decline in Union Membership."

National Bureau of Economic Research, 1050 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass. 02138. 26 pp. \$1.50.

Authors: William T. Dickens and Jonathan S. Leonard

Many theories have been advanced to explain the steady decline of American labor unions since the mid-1950s. And according to Dickens and Leonard, researchers at the University of California, Berkeley, most of them contain at least a germ of truth.

Statistics tell a simple tale: While 39.2 percent of the nation's nonfarm workers belonged to labor unions in 1954, only 23.6 percent did by 1980.

Dickens and Leonard take issue with the popular notion that hard times in heavily unionized "smoke-stack" industries such as steel and autos are the main cause of Big Labor's woes. The plant closures and layoffs of the early 1960s took a proportionally greater toll of union rosters than did similar dislocations during the 1970s.

If the U.S. economy had kept growing at its 1950-54 average real rate (three percent), the authors estimate, the unions' slide would have been less steep: About 28 percent of American workers would have carried union cards in 1980. Economic conditions, they conclude, account for about one-

third of organized labor's losses.

But really to understand the present state of American labor unions, the authors say, one must consider "not only how [they] have declined, but also how . . . they have ceased to grow."

During the early 1950s, unions prospered mainly because union organizers were both active and successful. Between 1950 and 1954, they tried to recruit 2.6 percent of the work force every year and boasted a 76 percent success rate in union certification elections. Between 1975 and 1979, however, organizers made their case to just one out of every 100 American workers and won only 37 percent of the certification contests.

Those two changes account for nearly two-thirds of organized labor's decline, as the authors see it.

If present trends continue, Dickens and Leonard conclude, only 15 percent of the work force will be unionized in 1995. Only more aggressive organizing and an economic turnaround in unionized industries will shore up Big Labor.

"Books in Our Future."

Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. 49 pp. \$2.50.

Author: Daniel J. Boorstin

Two years ago, President Reagan's National Commission on Excellence in Education reported that some 23 million American adults were functionally illiterate. Another 78 million—44 percent of the adult population—are *aliterate*; able to

read, they rarely open books.

Despite such grim tidings, Boorstin, the Librarian of Congress, is optimistic about the future of what he calls "the Culture of the Book."

Far from undermining Americans' reading habits, he insists, TV, comput-

ers, and other technological developments have been a net plus. Computerized typesetting and other techniques are making it less expensive to reproduce books. Television has helped to promote and popularize them. For example, TV dramatizations of Alex Haley's *Roots* and Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited* sent sales of both books soaring.

Support for Boorstin's view comes from a 1977 follow-up to Robert and Helen Lynd's classic 1929 study of average Americans in *Middletown* (Muncie, Indiana) [see *WQ*, Autumn 1982, p. 40]. In 1977, Middletowners complained to sociologist Theodore Caplow and his colleagues that TV had driven books from their living rooms. Indeed, Caplow found that they spent an average of 28 hours per week in front of the tube. Yet, Middletowners' reading seemed undiminished. Circu-

lation of books per capita from the local library was unchanged since 1929, and 13 new bookstores had sprung up.

Many Middletowners keep the TV on as "background" while they read.

The surprising vitality of the publishing industry is another indicator of the book culture's health. The nation's readers bought \$11 billion worth of books in 1983. Between 1972 and 1983, the annual number of new titles published increased from 38,000 to 53,000. During the same period, the number of bookstores (now 19,580) and of book publishers (now 2,128) nearly doubled.

Then why are there so many illiterate and illiterate Americans? Most of the blame rightly falls on the U.S. educational system and its "widely noted decline in emphasis on reading and writing," Boorstin says.

"Trends in International Terrorism, 1982 and 1983."

Rand Corporation, 1700 Main St., P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, Calif. 90406-2138. 54 pp. \$7.50.

Authors: Bonnie Cordes, Bruce Hoffman, Brian M. Jenkins, Konrad Kellen, Sue Moran, William Sater

Killings and other crimes by terrorists have become such common news that the U.S. public almost takes them for granted.

That may be one reason that terrorist attacks are becoming bloodier and more frequent than before, suggest these Rand Corporation researchers. For the first time since 1979, they note, the number of terrorist incidents worldwide declined during 1983 (from 440 the year before to 400). But 1983 was "the deadliest year in the annals of terrorism."

Terrorists took 720 lives in 1983 and injured another 963 people. One-third of those who died perished in the October 1983 truck bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut. But even

without those deaths, the 1983 toll represented a substantial increase over the 221 fatalities and 840 injuries inflicted during 1982.

The United States remains the terrorists' "number one target" worldwide, the authors report. But terrorist incidents *inside* the United States are few. They numbered 29 in 1980, 42 in 1981, 51 in 1982, and 31 in 1983. Puerto Rican *independentistas* top the list of domestic offenders, followed by the Jewish Defense League and the anti-Castro Cubans of Omega-7.

International terrorism—where terrorists go abroad to strike their targets—is another matter. America's allies have achieved major victories over terrorist groups, yet violence con-

tinues. Israel smashed the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) during its 1982 invasion of Lebanon; most of Italy's Red Brigades members are in jail; and West Germany has subdued most of its violent subversives.

Yet, despite the slight dip in the number of terrorist attacks, terrorism is an omnipresent threat. Most worrisome is the continuing increase in indiscriminate bombings that result in multiple deaths. The biggest offenders are Armenian extremists, who since 1975 have been attacking Turkish dip-

lomats and other Turks to force the Turkish government to acknowledge guilt for a 1915 massacre of Armenians. Some of the Armenian groups may be "instruments of the Soviet Union" in destabilizing Turkey. Other active terrorist units include the PLO and Iranian-backed Islamic radicals.

What concerns the Rand researchers most is that such groups seem to have little difficulty finding new members, despite the fact that 15 years of increasing violence have brought them few real victories.

"The Impact of AFDC on Family Structure and Living Arrangements."

John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 79 Kennedy St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138. 76 pp.

Authors: David T. Ellwood and Mary Jo Bane

During the past two decades, poverty in America has become increasingly concentrated in single-parent families headed by women. There were 3.1 million such poor families in 1983.

Critics often blame high levels of state and federal welfare benefits for this "feminization of poverty." The availability of big monthly welfare checks, it is said, encourages married women to leave their husbands and single women to have children out of wedlock.

After surveying data from all 50 states, however, Harvard's Ellwood and Bane find the evidence only partly supports this argument.

In 1975, for example, a mother and three children living in Mississippi could have counted on a monthly Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) check of only \$60. A family of the same size in Minnesota would have received \$385 monthly. And yet single women in Mississippi were still more than three times more likely to have a child out of wedlock than were

their northern counterparts.

The authors also found that, within individual states, there was virtually no correlation over the years between changes in benefit levels and changes in the number of illegitimate children on the welfare rolls.

The size of AFDC checks has a greater impact on the incidence of divorce and separation. One obvious reason: Whether to dissolve a marriage is a less momentous decision than whether to have a child and is thus more susceptible to outside influence. Overall, the authors found, every \$100 increase in monthly AFDC benefits is likely to produce a five to 10 percent increase in marital breakups among women eligible for welfare.

The level of welfare benefits *does* have a strong effect in one area, previously undetected: In low-benefit states, young single mothers receiving welfare "are very likely to live in the home of a parent. In high-benefit states, these women are much more likely to live independently."

Nationwide, the authors estimate, about 25 percent of all single welfare mothers (and more than half of those under age 24) live with their parents or other relatives. If monthly AFDC checks were \$100 fatter, they calculate, between 25 and 30 percent of these women would set up housekeeping on their own.

Overall, a \$100 benefit increase in an average state would push up the number of female-headed households

by 15 percent. Three-quarters of that change would reflect a simple change in living arrangements by single mothers; one-quarter, an increase in divorce and separations.

Ellwood and Bane hazard no opinions as to whether single mothers ought to be encouraged to strike out on their own. Policy-makers first need to know "what difference living arrangements make to both mother and children."

"Potatoes for the Developing World."

International Potato Center, P.O. Box 5969, Lima, Peru. 148 pp.

Wheat, rice, and other grains get all the attention when discussions turn to feeding the world's hungry. But potato production worldwide grew by 147 percent between 1965 and 1981, outpacing the gains of all other major food crops. Potatoes (excluding sweet potatoes) are now the world's fourth most valuable crop after wheat, maize, and rice.

The increasing availability of *Solanum tuberosum* is good news for malnourished people in the Third World, reports the staff of the International Potato Center, a United Nations-backed research organization. The modest tuber is rich in vitamins B and C as well as minerals. It is an excellent source of protein: On a protein "index" on which eggs top the scale at 100, potatoes come in at 70, while wheat, maize, beans, and peas all stand between 40 and 60.

The potato's passage to the Third World, however, has not been easy. Developing nations account for only 91 million of the 290 million tons of potatoes grown worldwide. (China, Turkey, and India are the chief Third World producers.) In some areas, notably Central America and Southeast Asia, potatoes are so rare that farmers

sell their entire harvests at good prices to buy cheaper food for themselves. In most of the Third World, potatoes are regarded the way many Westerners view asparagus, as a costly and vaguely exotic food. "Many households," the Potato Center researchers say, "limit their potato consumption to special, festive occasions."

Traditionally grown on small highland plots, potatoes thrive in moderate temperatures and well-drained soil. In the tropics, most varieties of the plant are easy prey for pests and diseases; storage of the bulky seed tubers between plantings also drives up farmers' costs. Yet, because potato cultivation can be a small-scale proposition, sparing the farmer vast investments in land, machinery, and fertilizer, the tubers offer a local solution to Third World food shortages.

The chief mission of researchers at the International Potato Center and elsewhere is to develop new pest- and disease-resistant varieties of the plant. The aim is to make potatoes a staple in the diets of people living in the coastal valleys of Peru, the plains of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, and the oases of North Africa.

WILSON CENTER PAPERS

Summaries of key reports given at recent Wilson Center meetings

"From Plantations to Peasantries in the Caribbean."

A paper by Sidney W. Mintz, one of 11 pamphlets in the Focus Caribbean series, published by the Wilson Center's Latin American Program.

Beyond the beaches and modern hotels that beckon American tourists to the 15 island-nations and 17 dependent territories of the Caribbean lie endangered rural peasant societies.

On their reinvigoration, says Mintz, a Johns Hopkins anthropologist, may depend the political health of the islands themselves.

In an unusual way, the Caribbean's peasants are products of European colonialism. European settlers began arriving "within a year of Columbus's arrival" and maintained their rule for an extraordinarily long time. The Dominican Republic won its freedom from Spain in 1821; Barbados did not gain independence from Britain until 1966; French Guyana, Martinique, and Guadeloupe remain to this day *départements* of France.

The aboriginal inhabitants of the islands (and their culture) were long ago swallowed up by disease, war, and intermarriage. But Europeans never settled in great numbers. Today's peasants are descendants of the Central American Indian and African slaves imported by the Europeans and of the Asians and others who later came as contract workers to the vast plantations.

By the middle of the 16th century, all the colonial powers in the Caribbean—Britain, France, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain—had established plantation economies based on slave labor. Sugar, tobacco, and coffee were the chief crops. The strength of those economies varied greatly over time and from island to island. For example, the Spanish sugar colonies (Cuba,

Puerto Rico, and Santo Domingo) declined after the end of the 16th century; only in the late 18th century did they revive.

Mintz likens the Caribbean's peasants to "blades of grass pushing up between bricks." Descended from runaway slaves and freedmen, they took root in the crevices of their societies, surviving with the sufferance of the European rulers.

Frequently, "proto-peasantries" developed alongside slavery. In Jamaica, for example, black slaves were allowed to cultivate small plots of land for themselves. Gradually, they began supplying much of the island's food out of their surpluses. After emancipation in 1838, the ex-slaves were well prepared to run their own small farms. Later, contract laborers, mostly from India, made similar adaptations.

Although peasant farmers developed the islands' social and cultural life through most of the 19th century, plantations dominated most local economies. Neither European rulers nor the islands' postindependence elite saw much point in aiding the small farms. Years of neglect have left them in poor shape. Yet, with plantation agriculture on the wane today, the small farms are more important than ever before. Apart from the tourist industry, jobs in the cities of the Caribbean are scarce. Emigration is the chief safety valve. Revitalizing the small farms through government aid and peasant education, Mintz suggests, may be the best way to avoid bloody revolution in the Caribbean.

"Retreat from Power: Europe and Military Intervention in the Third World."

A paper presented by Christopher Coker at a seminar sponsored by the Wilson Center's International Security Studies Program on December 6, 1984.

"The Korean War was probably the last time the Europeans were prepared to fight . . . under American leadership in a theatre of operations outside Europe," notes Coker, editor of the *Atlantic Quarterly* and a political scientist at the London School of Economics.

Since 1973, when Washington backed Israel in the Yom Kippur War and the Europeans favored the Arabs, U.S. and European interests around the world have diverged sharply. Indeed, thanks to increased U.S. military activism in the Third World—the Mideast, Grenada, Central America—Americans and Europeans are bound to find themselves at odds.

Why? Most West European governments are now reluctant to endorse the use of military force in foreign affairs, believing that "diplomacy, development and trade policies will usually have a greater contribution to make," as a 1980 British Defense white paper put it. Such policies do not always win friends. Thus, Botswana's foreign minister recently complained that the Europeans failed to back their "pious" pledges of support with military grants to aid in his nation's struggles with South Africa.

American activism abroad also frequently undermines European diplomacy. Thus, the Europeans are often "stuck with American policies and America's allies." Against their will, the Europeans are often identified by the Third World with both Israel and South Africa.

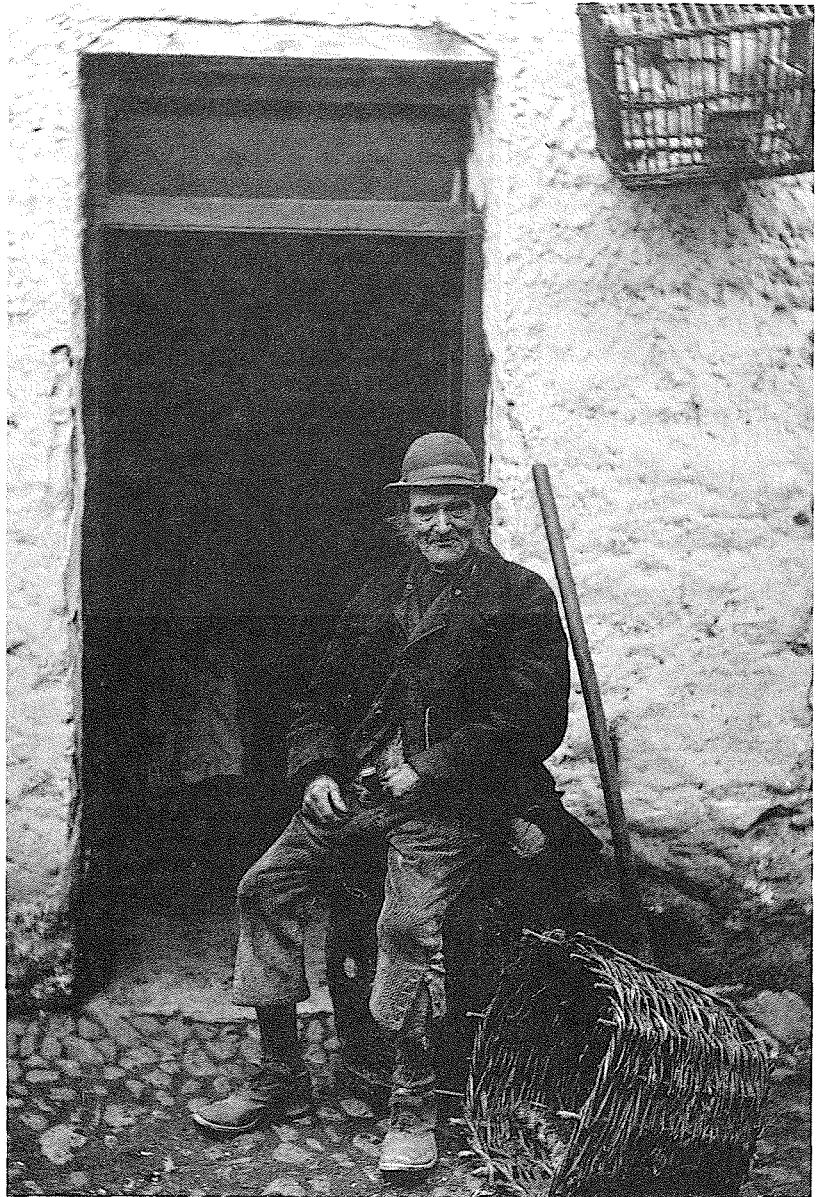
Former French president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing has proposed creating a joint European rapid deployment force to intervene independently of the United States in the Third World. But the smaller nations, such

as Denmark, are unlikely to go along. Apart from its conviction that it can best defend its interests "by its example, not its exertions," Denmark believes that its influence overseas is enhanced precisely because it rattles no sabers.

If the European nations cannot really go it alone, Coker says, neither can they do much to help out the United States. The only powers with pretensions to worldwide influence are Great Britain and France. But budget cuts are forcing the British to pull back. Since formally abandoning commitments "east of Suez" in 1968, London has quietly withdrawn forces from the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, and the Near East.

France has been more assertive overseas, notably in West Africa. Paris maintains an 18-nation trading bloc, the French African Community, and 200,000 French civilians work in Francophone Africa. In recent years, French forces have been dispatched to prop up governments in Zaire and Chad. To some observers, this French activism seems a boon to the United States. But Coker believes that Washington could pay a high price. Paris could become overcommitted on the turbulent continent, or its forces could come into conflict with Libyan, Cuban, or East German troops. In either case, U.S. help might be required. Meanwhile, more French troops in Africa mean fewer in Europe, where they are badly needed.

Because some lack political will and others military power, Coker says, the nations of Western Europe are poorly suited to joining Washington in protecting Western interests in the Third World. Often, he concludes, the United States will have to act alone.



"We are the young Europeans," boasts Ireland's Industrial Development Authority. When this Kerryman was photographed a century ago, continuing emigration threatened to make Ireland a country populated chiefly by old people and children. Today's young Irish adults are staying home.

The Irish

Mention Bolivia or Belgium to the average American adult, and the conversation will soon flag. Bring up Ireland, and the talk will always find a focus. Yeats? Killarney? Guinness? Associations generously tumble forth. Some 40 million Americans have Irish blood in their veins; five times that many, it seems, believe they can imitate an Irish brogue. Often overlooked—veiled, perhaps, by an assumed familiarity—is how *unfamiliar* to most Americans the Republic of Ireland really is. The Republic is, today, a Common Market member with some 20th-century problems, some 21st-century industries, and some abiding (if eroding) 19th-century attitudes. As Britain's Prime Minister William Gladstone noted a century ago, the behavior of the English toward the Irish constituted the darkest stain upon the history of a splendid people. As continued strife in Northern Ireland attests, old passions remain. Our contributors here focus on the Republic of Ireland—on its past and its present—and on the peculiar Irish immigrant experience in America.

TROUBLES

by Thomas C. Garvin

Nature placed Ireland exactly the wrong distance from Great Britain.

Had the island been somewhat closer to its larger sister, the Irish people might well have become more fully assimilated into the British family, much as the Scots and Welsh have been. Had Ireland been placed farther out in the Atlantic, it might have been allowed to develop in relative peace, as Iceland was, without the incessant interference of a powerful neighbor.

As it happened, Ireland was just close enough to keep London obsessed with the island's potential in wartime as a back door to the British Isles, a door that the Spanish, French, and Germans, in succession, sought to open. On the other hand, Ire-

land was always remote enough to sustain its people's sense of separation, just far enough away to ensure that strong nationalist sentiment, once rooted, would survive. As Dominic Behan put it:

The Sea, oh the sea, *is a gradh geal mo chrot**
Long may it stay between England and me;
It's a sure guarantee that some hour we'll be free,
Oh! thank God we're surrounded by water!

This may be bad poetry, but it is fairly decent political science.

For eight centuries, Ireland has been half in and half out of British affairs, much as England has always been half in and half out of Europe. While the Irish may sometimes be loath to admit it, the fact is that the British, from Tudor times forward, created modern Ireland. If Northern Ireland's peculiar status and sectarian violence are both legacies of British rule, so too is the political unity among the 26 counties that today constitute the Republic of Ireland.

Ireland was originally settled by various peoples who sailed over from Britain (the place of origin emphasized by anglophile archaeologists) and the European mainland (according to Irish scholars of a more nationalist bent) beginning around 7,000 B.C. They found a green, heavily forested island ringed by coastal mountains of spectacular beauty. The climate, though undeniably wet, was nevertheless mild, warmed by the tail of the Gulf Stream.

During the first millennium B.C., the arrival of the aggressive, inventive, Gaelic-speaking Celts, warriors and skilled craftsmen, gave the island a new set of masters. From the mixing of peoples ensued Ireland's first golden age, which survives in the form of powerful epic poetry and intricate, abstract designs wrought in stone and precious metals.

While Rome extended its sway over the rest of Europe, the Irish remained on the periphery. Unlike the Franks, the Goths, and even the Huns, they were never tutored by the Romans in the arts of government. It was an important lesson to have

*Roughly translated from the Irish, "bright love of my heart."

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missed. Ireland for centuries remained the domain of dozens of petty local kings, each presiding over a *tuath*, or tribe. Because kingship was elective, Ireland's tribal monarchies were continually rent by factional strife. They also warred among themselves, frequently over the possession of cows, the basic unit of wealth. The greatest epic of the so-called Heroic Age is the anonymous *Táin Bó Cúailnge*—in English, *The Cattle Raid of Cooley*—which recounts a protracted dispute between the rival courts of Ulster and Connaught.

Ireland was Christianized during the fifth century A.D., mainly by missionaries from Britain, one of whom may have been named Patrick. As barbarian hordes overran the Roman Empire, Irish Christianity was left on Europe's edge to develop in its own peculiar way, with strong pagan undertones.

The conversion of Ireland turned out to have been a decisive event in the history of the West. In that unlikely haven, safe from the depredations visited on Italy and Gaul, Irish monks tended the embers of civilization. When relative peace returned to Europe, during the sixth and seventh centuries, Irish monks such as Columcille and Columban fanned out across Britain and the Continent, spurring the revival of both Christianity and learning. Back home, the Catholic Church continued to foster the arts: This is the age that produced the silver Ardagh chalice, the carved high cross at Ahenny, the brilliantly illuminated *Book of Kells*.

Invaders

The Irish monasteries, virtually sovereign within their vast domains, became quite wealthy. They were also quite defenseless and, hence, an irresistible target. Sailing their dragon ships out of the fjords of Scandinavia, the pagan Northmen plundered and burned their first Irish monastery in A.D. 795. The sporadic Viking raids of the early years would grow by the mid-ninth century into a savage, sustained assault. Wrote a ninth-century monk with relief at the prospect of a reprieve: "Bitter is the wind tonight, / White the tresses of the sea; / I have no fear the Viking hordes / Will sail the seas on such a night."

Even in the face of Viking invasion, the Gaelic chieftains rarely put aside their differences. Once, late in the 10th century, a Munster tribal king, Brian Boru (the surname means "tribute of cows"), managed to array most of the other Irish kings behind him. He engaged the Northmen and defeated them decisively at Clontarf, north of the Viking city-state of Dublin, on Good Friday, 1014. Even then, it was a less-than-pure victory: Two-thirds of the Viking force consisted of disgruntled Irish Leinstermen.



Nor did Brian's achievement endure. He was slain at Clontarf and his jerrybuilt Kingdom of Ireland died with him. Thereafter, Ireland remained fragmented, with the most powerful families—such as the O'Briens of Munster, the O'Neills of Ulster, the O'Connors of Connaught—vying for possession of the mainly symbolic title *árd ri* (high king).

In retrospect, the most fateful invasion of the island was not that of the Vikings, who eventually settled down, but that of their cousins, the Normans. The Vikings had their good points: They founded most of Ireland's major cities, introduced coinage,

and turned the island's eastern ports into key junctions in the web of West European trade. What the Normans did was to bind Ireland, for the first time in history, to Britain. It was an ill-fated relationship.

From France, the Normans—Gallicized Norsemen—had steadily worked their way across England and Wales during the century after William the Conqueror's victory at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. In 1169, a small Anglo-Norman expedition landed in County Wexford, in response to an invitation from the King of Leinster, Dermot MacMurrough, to take his side in a local, factional squabble. Led by an adventurer named Richard FitzGilbert de Clare—better known as Strongbow—the Normans with their longbows and their steel body armor soon conquered large areas of Ireland.

Today, outside of Ulster (where distance and native Gaelic resolve proved too formidable), the conquest is marked by the hundreds of square stone castles built by Norman earls to consolidate their rule—picturesque redoubts atop grassy hills, now awaiting capture by Ireland's latest invader, the American tourist, on film.

Beyond the Pale

Ireland became an Anglo-Norman dominion. England's King Henry II spent Christmas in Dublin in 1171, asserting his right, and that of his English successors, to the "lordship of Ireland." The principle, at least, was established. But Ireland was separated from England by a turbulent sea. Many Gaelic chieftains refused to submit. Copying Norman weaponry and tactics, they retained considerable autonomy. Aristocratic Normans, for their part, displayed a tendency to "go native." They adopted the Irish language and often married the daughters of prominent Gaelic nobles. The area effectively controlled by London's viceroys shrank over the centuries to a small, semicircular region around Dublin, called "the Pale." In a broad swath "beyond the Pale" lay the estates of the Gaelicized Norman lords, many having little real allegiance to the king of England. Beyond that, especially in the provinces of Connaught and Ulster, the Normanized Gaelic chieftains held sway. Late-medieval Ireland was a confusing amalgam of dozens of jurisdictions, languages, laws, and loyalties.

All of that was to change, abruptly, with the consolidation of the Tudor state in England during the 16th century. Henry VIII and his heirs launched a vigorous "reconquest" of Ireland. By the end of Elizabeth I's reign, Ireland had been vanquished

militarily after a long series of ferocious campaigns. Ulster was the last to succumb, in 1603. London systematically set out to "de-Gaelicize" Ireland—to impose English law, an English landlord system, and (this being the era of the Reformation) English Protestantism. Henry VIII had broken with the Church of Rome in 1534. Because both the Gaels and the "Old English" aristocrats resisted the Reformation, they shared a common disaster as Ireland's farmland was transferred gradually during the 17th century from mostly Catholic to mostly Protestant hands. In Ulster, reliable colonists from England and Scotland settled on confiscated acreage. Across the country, empty Catholic churches and monasteries slowly collapsed into rubble.

The 'Ascendancy'

During the next four centuries, the Irish attempted repeatedly to reverse the verdict of history. Plagued by disunity and indiscipline they failed every time, often at horrific cost.

A protracted rebellion during the 1640s was put down in 1649 by Oliver Cromwell, who ravaged the island for nine months. He began his campaign with the massacre of more than 2,000 civilians in Drogheda's Saint Peter's Church. "I am persuaded," he wrote, "that this is a righteous judgement of God upon those barbarous wretches." From Drogheda, Cromwell marched around the island, putting towns to the torch and Catholics to the sword. Between the outbreak of the uprising and Cromwell's departure, one-third of Ireland's population fell victim to bloodshed, disease, or starvation.

The English renewed their resettlement efforts. Thousands of new colonists from Scotland were transported to Ireland's northern province. These Ulster Protestants put down permanent roots, and their descendants today dominate the modern substate of Northern Ireland, a latter-day British Pale on the island. The Cromwellian settlements in the rest of Ireland never achieved such permanence.

The elevation of James II to the throne of England in 1685 offered Irish Catholics a last glimmer of hope. But the unpopular James, an avowed Catholic, was driven from England three years later. His attempted return, via Ireland, was thwarted by his Protestant son-in-law, William of Orange, who had been installed in Britain as King William III. In the hearts of Irish Catholics, the defeat of James's cause at the Battle of the Boyne, in 1690, would symbolize for centuries the final collapse of Irish medieval society, the political and cultural impotence of Catholic Ireland, and the domination by a new, landed Protestant "as-



The Famine's aftermath: Death and emigration emptied whole villages. "It is my opinion," concluded Sir Charles Trevelyan, head of Britain's Treasury, in 1847, "that too much has been done for the [Irish] people."

cendancy" backed by British power.

Yet, between 1690 and 1800, Ireland experienced a second great cultural renaissance. It stemmed from the island's new elite—the few hundred thousand English-speaking Protestants and their dependents who now owned virtually all of Ireland's land. By the early 19th century, this ascendancy presided over an Irish-speaking, Catholic rural proletariat of four to five million, which lived in a virtual state of serfdom. A battery of Penal Laws was enacted by an Irish Parliament (subsidiary to Westminster's) between 1695 and 1727, creating, in effect, a system of ethnic-sectarian apartheid. Catholics were stripped of most civil rights. They were barred from elective office, the military, the civil service, and the legal profession. A Catholic could not acquire land from a Protestant, nor dispose of it as he wished at death. "Popish priests," ordained abroad, faced intermittent persecution.

The 18th century was a Protestant century in Ireland. Dublin, the old Viking trading center, became a great Georgian city, the second largest in the British Isles. The Anglo-Irish community produced an extraordinary group of writers and thinkers, including Bishop Berkeley, Edmund Burke, Oliver Goldsmith,

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and Jonathan Swift. In the countryside, Palladian villas rose amid acres of formal gardens. Irish craftsmen became adept at blowing glass, weaving linen, hammering silver—still important industries in Ireland. The privileged few were cultured, content, all-powerful. In 1776, English visitor Arthur Young wrote that an Irish landlord “can scarcely invent an order which a servant, labourer, or cottier dares to refuse to execute.”

Many Protestants came to feel they could run Ireland on their own, without England's support. A new kind of Irish nationalism—a Protestant nationalism—evolved during the 18th century. By 1782, in the wake of Britain's vain attempt to keep her American colonies, the Irish Parliament in Dublin had won more leeway from Westminster than it had ever before enjoyed. Inspired by the French Revolution, the United Irishmen society made its appearance during the 1790s, led by Protestants but supported by many (Catholic) agrarian secret societies and committed to breaking the connection with England.

Courting Disaster

In 1798, a series of fierce but badly coordinated uprisings briefly shook the foundations of British rule. The upheaval was especially bloody in County Wexford, where a Catholic peasant army briefly overran Ireland's southeastern corner. Several hundred local Protestants were murdered before the rebels were themselves slaughtered by government troops. By the time order was restored, perhaps 50,000 people had perished, the bulk of them innocent civilians. Also gone was any hope that Protestants and Catholics in Ireland would ever again make common cause.

London, meanwhile, had by now had enough of Irish autonomy. In 1801, under the Westminster Parliament's Act of Union, Ireland became part of a British unitary state, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. The Irish Parliament was abolished. Henceforward, Ireland would send about 100 members of Parliament to the House of Commons in London. London would govern Ireland directly. The Catholic clergy and the small Catholic middle class of the period, horrified by the revolutionary excesses of the Catholic peasantry a few years earlier, acceded to the Act of Union. They hoped that Westminster would treat their religion more tolerantly than the propertied Protestants at home, galvanized into antipapist extremism by the terrors of 1798, were ever likely to do.

The Union endured from 1801 until 1922 and represented

the last and longest attempt by Britain to assimilate Ireland to itself. But Ireland never developed into a peaceful province of the United Kingdom.

For one thing, most of Ireland experienced no industrial revolution.* British businessmen were loath to invest money in the troubled isle. Much of Ireland was given over instead to grazing, producing beef and lamb for export to Britain. Most Irish people continued to live off the land. Many roamed the countryside, as itinerant laborers. The luckier ones farmed small plots leased from (often absentee) Protestant landlords. Meanwhile, the island's population grew and grew, doubling every generation, becoming ever more reliant for sustenance on a single crop, the potato. As population increased, rents rose, and the size of the average farm plot shrank. A tragedy was in the making, as one royal commission after another pointed out. But remedial steps were not taken.

The 'Great Hunger'

Religion remained a divisive issue; that is a second reason why Union did not "take." Despite Westminster's promises, civil rights for Catholics did not follow from the Act of Union. Once Ireland had been subdued, London essentially forgot about the country. It required extended, nonviolent political campaigns by Daniel O'Connell and the Catholic clergy to pry even minor concessions out of Westminster.

A Catholic member of the Irish gentry, and a gifted orator, O'Connell led his countrymen in a Gandhi-esque crusade against the Penal Laws. Supported financially by the "Catholic rent"—a penny-a-month levy collected by priests from parishioners—O'Connell organized mass meetings in the countryside, terrifying landowners and mobilizing public opinion on behalf of Catholic emancipation. Britain's home secretary (later prime minister), Sir Robert Peel, commented on the "fearful exhibition of sobered and desperate enthusiasm" that O'Connell's followers displayed. In 1829, London gave O'Connell what he wanted. Henceforth, Catholics could be elected to Parliament; increasingly they were, as O'Connell taught the peasants how electoral politics was played. It was an extraordinary achievement.

O'Connell died in 1847, as Ireland was suffering a calamity that suddenly made politics seem irrelevant. The Great Famine is a third reason why Ireland never became another Scotland or

*Only in Protestant Ulster did industrialization occur, mainly around the growing city of Belfast. The fact that it did helped to make most of the province's people, then as now, firm proponents of Union.

Wales. Beginning in 1845, and continuing for five years, the Irish potato crop failed, owing to a blight—*Phytophthora infestans*—that Victorian science was powerless to overcome. Eyewitness accounts of the Famine's horrors can be compared only to those of Hitler's Final Solution. At least 1.5 million Irish peasants died. Another million emigrated, mostly to the United States. In short order, between 1845 and 1855, Ireland lost about one-quarter of its population. Ireland's demographic history during the 19th century is truly catastrophic. In 1800, the population of the island was about 4.5 million. By 1845, it was nearly nine million. But by 1900, it was down to 4.7 million, and it declined further—to about 4.4 million—during the next half century.

While landlords and local authorities tried desperately to alleviate "the great hunger," the British government dragged its heels. The government of Lord John Russell failed to appreciate the magnitude of the disaster on what seemed still a remote and ever-troubled island. Wedded to laissez-faire economic policies, the British were, in any event, reluctant to tamper with the free operation of market forces. "It is not the intention at all to import food for the use of the people of Ireland," asserted the chancellor of the Exchequer in 1846. Ironically, despite the failure of the potato crop, there was always plenty of food in Ireland. The peasants simply could not afford to buy it. Ireland remained a net *exporter* of foodstuffs—mostly grain—throughout the Famine years.

An Irish Nation?

The Holocaust was indirectly responsible for the creation of Israel; the Famine made possible an independent Irish state. It kindled a new and deeper form of Irish nationalism. It revived the ancient hatred of Great Britain. Finally, it transformed the character of Irish society. Post-Famine Ireland was very different from pre-Famine Ireland. The huge rural proletariat was gone. It was replaced by a peasantry that, thanks to the severe shortage of labor, soon acquired control of much of the land. Under the leadership of Paul Cardinal Cullen, Catholicism became a more highly bureaucratized, pietistic institution than ever before: The beads and scapulars, the holy pictures and statues, the pilgrimages—the whole public display of Irish Catholicism was introduced at this time.

The mainstay of the Catholic Church was now an expanding class of conservative, politically able, literate, and English-speaking independent farmers. Led by Charles Stewart Parnell (who fought in Parliament for Home Rule) and Michael Davitt

(whose Land League successfully agitated for fair rents and a curb on evictions), the Irish Catholics broke the Protestant ascendancy's monopoly on power and shattered many of its legal supports. One tactic employed by Davitt was passive resistance; tenants would refuse, en masse, to pay landlords their rent or provide essential services. (This approach was tried, successfully, on a certain Captain Charles Boycott, in County Mayo in 1880, enriching the English language in the process.) Irish-Americans generously supported such efforts—and others, including attempts by the clandestine Irish Republican Brotherhood to foment violent revolution.

In London's view, Irish-American involvement spelled trouble. Observed Sir William Harcourt, Britain's home secretary during the 1880s: "In former Irish rebellions the Irish were in Ireland. . . . We could reach their forces, cut off their reserves in men and money and then to subjugate was comparatively easy. Now there is an Irish nation in the United States, equally hostile, with plenty of money, absolutely beyond our reach and yet within ten days' sail of our shores."

By the turn of the century, Irish Catholics in Ireland had achieved substantial political and economic control of the island, excepting eastern Ulster. For the first time, the country



The 1921 settlement between Dublin and London left much unresolved. Fifty years later, sectarian strife would flare in Northern Ireland. Above: Bloody Sunday, in Derry, January 1972. It ended with 13 civilians dead.

possessed a cadre of politicians, clergy, labor leaders, and intellectuals capable of leading Ireland to independence. A literary revival was under way (see Background Books, pages 94–97). In 1912, the House of Commons passed a Home Rule Bill for Ireland, subject to approval by the House of Lords by the end of 1914 and bitterly opposed by Ulster Protestants. “Home Rule,” they argued, was tantamount to “Rome Rule.”

Divisions and Resentments

The accident of World War I accelerated the pace of events. Home Rule was put off indefinitely, angering the more extreme Irish nationalists. In 1916, during Easter week, a paramilitary nationalist group, the Irish Volunteers, staged a dramatic uprising in Dublin and proclaimed a provisional government. British troops restored order after a week of fierce fighting that left 450 dead, 2,600 wounded, and downtown Dublin badly battered. The rebellion enjoyed relatively little popular support.

But Major General Sir John Maxwell’s decision to execute 15 of the rebel leaders, over a period of nine days and after secret trials, radically altered Irish opinion. Even as the victorious Allies met at Versailles in 1919 to redraw the map of Europe, the British found themselves fighting a nasty guerrilla war in Ireland against the resurgent Irish Volunteers, now known popularly as the Irish Republican Army (IRA). With deadly effectiveness, IRA gunmen and “flying columns” targeted British soldiers, police agents, and detectives. London responded by bolstering its forces with the notorious “Black and Tans”—mercenaries culled from the ranks of British Army veterans—whose behavior the authorities in London found it impossible to restrain.

“The troubles” dragged on until 1921, when London finally agreed to partition. The provinces of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught, and three of the Ulster province’s nine counties—26 counties in all—became the effectively sovereign, and overwhelmingly Catholic, Irish Free State, later renamed the Republic of Ireland. The rest of Ulster, its population predominantly Protestant, remained part of the United Kingdom but acquired its own Parliament.

A short but bitter civil war ensued, in which the forces of Arthur Griffith’s Free State government defeated the “fundamentalist” elements of the IRA, led by Eamon De Valera, who opposed partition and any lingering constitutional association with Britain. The Free State arrangement was ratified, in effect, in 1923, when Irish voters gave Free State proponents a majority of seats in the Dáil (Parliament).

The first truly independent government of Ireland, the first attempt ever on the island to forge something like a nation-state, was off to a very shaky start. On the plus side, owing to Britain's efforts during the preceding century, Irish leaders inherited a ready-made, well-developed administrative system. And the Irish people were highly literate, thanks both to the church and to a system of national schools that, 100 years earlier, Daniel O'Connell had pressed the British to create. But the population was also poor and deeply divided politically. The people's energies had been drained by a decade of war, reprisals, and executions that left few families untouched; the IRA continued to perpetrate occasional acts of terrorism.

"When all the shooting was finished, and all the dead were buried, and the politicians took over, what had you got left? A lost cause!" So reflected an old IRA partisan in 1980. Perhaps in one sense he was right. Ireland remains a divided isle; sectarian violence continues to flare; and in Ulster, Britain's long retreat from Ireland continues. At the same time, however, an independent, democratic Irish state in the rest of Ireland has managed to survive, even to prosper.

The Republic of Ireland today is not the kind of country most Americans think it is. Neither is it the kind of country its founders hoped it would be. It is English, not Irish, in language. Culturally and economically, its citizens still look to England in many ways. Ireland is an urbanized country; the society and values of the countryside, long a source of cohesion and strength, are unfamiliar to large numbers of Irish young people. Ireland is even somewhat less Catholic than it used to be.

Irish unity has never been achieved and can never be achieved on the basis of a Gaelic or Catholic national identity. The increasingly permanent look of the partition of Ireland raises the question of whether there is *any* Irish identity that can encompass both Irish Catholic and Ulster Protestant. Some Irishmen insist loudly in words, and occasionally assert violently in deeds, that there is. Others quietly believe that there is not.



A MATTER OF CHARACTER

by William V. Shannon and Cullen Murphy

The Republic of Ireland is a small place. Its economic output is dwarfed by that of Connecticut. There are more Irish missionary priests abroad than policemen at home, and in all of Ireland, there are fewer than 2,000 lawyers. The members of the Irish Army, Navy, and Air Force, together with their spouses, could sit comfortably inside Dublin's 50,000-seat Croke Park, where the national hurling and Gaelic football matches are played every autumn. There are more sheep in Ireland than people, and twice as many cows, and both enjoy the right of way on rural Irish roads. Life in Ireland is played on a very small stage—one reason, perhaps, why Irish newspapers feature no gossip columns, and why journalists have no tradition of investigative reporting. No one wants to pry too deeply into another fellow's affairs, lest the other fellow turn out to be the son-in-law of one's closest friend.

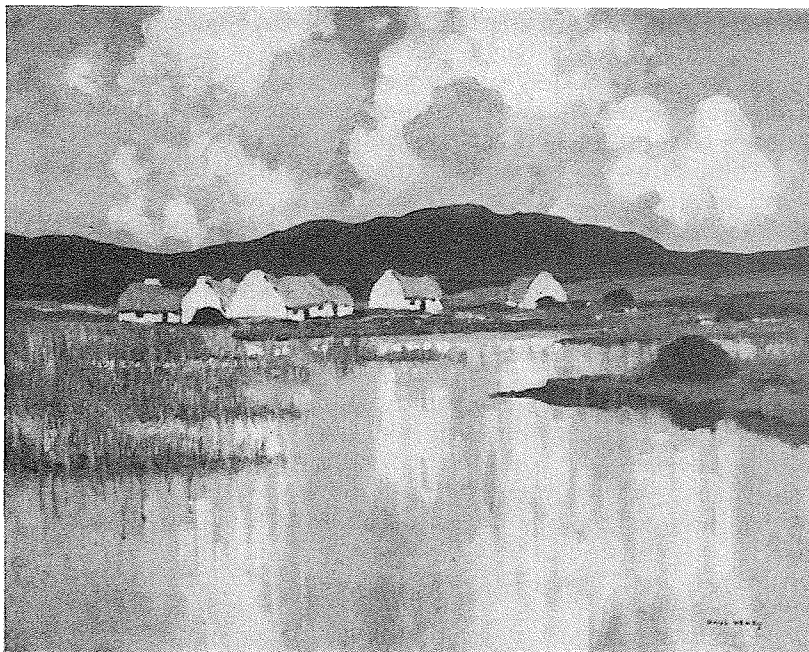
But if Ireland is small in size, it looms large in the chronicles of Britain and America. Here, on the outermost edge of Europe, the Celtic people made their last stand. They wrested a living from an ungenerous land and a history out of a long, bitter struggle against a powerful neighbor. Time and again, it looked as if that struggle would be a losing one.

When Ireland was partitioned in 1922 and the British departed from the five-sixths of the country that had opted for independence, they left behind a nation that was an odd mixture of Western Europe and what we now call the Third World.

The new Irish Free State had inherited a first-rate railroad system, adequate roads, a distinguished legal profession, an honest and efficient civil service, and several good universities (including Trinity College, Dublin, founded by Queen Elizabeth I in 1591) and teaching hospitals.

But Ireland at independence also suffered from the low standard of living, high birthrate, and meager industrial base that one associates with the underdeveloped world. Most of the houses in the countryside lacked plumbing and electricity, and Dublin's slums rivaled those of Naples as the worst in Europe. Tuberculosis was endemic. So great was emigration that Ireland's population showed a net decline, year after year.

Beginning in these mixed circumstances, the Irish slowly—and then with a rush during the 1960s and '70s—sought to over-



Irish painter Paul Henry depicted the Ireland of the tourist—also, as it happens, the Ireland of the poor. Conservative, inward-looking, familial, the Republic at birth was deemed the Sicily of Western Europe.

come their country's many deficiencies.

The early administrations focused their efforts on a few basic economic and social objectives. Thus, during the 1920s Irish engineers began throwing dams across the Shannon, harnessing the longest river in the British Isles. Hydroelectricity was soon powering new steel and textile mills, shoe and fertilizer factories, sugar beet processing plants. All of these industries, protected by high tariff walls, were encouraged by Eamon De Valera's government during the 1930s, in a drive toward economic self-sufficiency.

Successive Irish governments, meanwhile, invested heavily in providing shelter for the needy. Whole slums were razed and their inhabitants resettled, sometimes in ugly apartment blocks, more often in modest, two-story row houses that government subsidies eventually enabled the occupants to buy.* One big government success came in the field of public health. Shortly

*Today, an astonishing 70 percent of all housing units in Ireland are owned by the household head (versus 64.7 percent in the United States).

after World War II, the minister of health, Dr. Noel Browne, persuaded his cabinet colleagues to underwrite a major campaign against the scourge of tuberculosis. With new drugs such as streptomycin and isoniazid just becoming available, the investment in hospitals and clinics paid off quickly.

The achievements of the Free State's first three decades were substantial. But they were by no means sufficient. The legendary De Valera, onetime mathematics teacher and hero of the 1916 Easter Rising, who held the post of *taoiseach* ("chieftain," or prime minister) for most of the period between 1932 and 1959, was almost grateful that the Industrial Revolution had passed Ireland by. He cherished a static, bucolic, romantic vision of the kind of nation Ireland should become. It would be, he declared in a famous speech in 1943, "a land whose countryside would be bright with cozy homesteads, . . . with the romping of sturdy children, the contests of athletic youths, the laughter of comely maidens, whose firesides would be forums for the wisdom of serene old age."

Stanching the Hemorrhage

This was not, to say the least, a recipe for robust economic growth. Unable to find work, an average of 40,000 people—most of them young—left the country *every year* during the 1950s for Britain and the United States. Few would return. As postwar Britain constructed a welfare state, Ireland became known as the "farewell state."

Sean Lemass, who succeeded De Valera in 1959, did much to turn the situation around. Lemass had for two decades been De Valera's principal deputy in domestic affairs. As a Number Two man, he had shown himself to be canny, discreet, loyal, reserved, and forceful. He was an executive who followed orders. But when he stepped up to the Number One job, Lemass, no sentimentalist, scrapped many of De Valera's policies.

Lemass saw industrialization as the only way to stanch the hemorrhage of emigration. Those athletic Irish youths and comely maidens would have to find well-paying jobs in the factories of what Lemass, in businessman's terms, conceived of as "Ireland, Inc." The Lemass government launched a concerted campaign to

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attract foreign investment. Overseen by an Industrial Development Authority, it offered a wide range of subsidies, including factories built to specification, free training of workers, and a "tax holiday" on profits from all products sold abroad.

The first big catch, in 1962, was General Electric (GE), which now operates four plants in Ireland. Lemass welcomed the new facility, which was built in a special industrial park near Shannon Airport, but not GE's proposed name for it: Emerald Isle Electric. "Emerald Isle!" he protested, "That is precisely the image I am trying to get away from." A compromise was reached, and the plant today is known simply as E. I. Electric.

Sorry, Wrong Number

During the 1960s and '70s, corporations from around the world responded favorably to the Irish sales pitch. Why? Apart from subsidies, it turned out that Ireland has a lot to offer. It is one of the few places left in Europe with undeveloped land. It has abundant water. Its climate is mild. Its government is aggressively sympathetic to capitalism, while its Communist Party is minuscule and politically irrelevant. Wage scales in manufacturing are relatively low—about \$5.48 per hour in 1983 (versus \$10.41 in West Germany, \$12.26 in the United States).

For American and British investors, moreover, Ireland has the added attractions of a familiar culture and a work force that is universally literate in English. Businessmen also foresaw that Ireland, while remaining aloof from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, would one day join the European Economic Community (which the Republic did in 1973). Ireland now offers duty-free access to nine other Common Market nations, with a combined population of some 270 million.

Of course, Ireland has its drawbacks, too. Irish trade unions share the worst attributes—including arrogance, selfishness, and insatiability—of their British counterparts. (In 1979, sanitation workers in Dublin went on strike because the raincoats they were given to wear on wet days made them perspire.) There are few American-style industrial unions, such as the United Steel Workers, that can speak for all employees in a single industry. Instead, most Irish workers are organized into small craft unions. Factory managers may have to deal with a dozen unions under a single roof, a strike by any one of which may shut down the whole place. In Ireland in 1982, for every 1,000 non-agricultural workers, 526 man-days were lost to strikes (compared with 254 in Britain, 102 in the United States). So far, however, labor actions against foreign manufacturers have been

few—perhaps out of fear of frightening away the goose that lays the golden eggs.

"Infrastructure" is perhaps a more serious problem. Especially in the impoverished west, where Dublin has been anxious to establish new industries, many country roads, narrow and pitted with potholes, are virtually impassable by truck. Gue-mael Trahan, French owner of a fish-processing plant in Rossaveal, County Galway, recently refused to pay the annual road tax until the local Connemara roads were improved. (When a judge slapped him with a £100 fine, he refused to pay that, too, and went to jail to publicize his cause.) The telephone system in Ireland is notorious. Households must wait for up to two years to have a phone installed. Every day in the back-page "Personals" columns of the *Irish Times*, the frantic managers of companies whose telephones have inexplicably ceased to function seek to alert clients and customers that they have not, appearances to the contrary, gone out of business.

Youth Culture

Despite such nuisances, Ireland today is home to more than 300 American-owned factories. U.S. investment in plant and machinery on the island now totals more than \$4 billion. Fully half of all manufacturing jobs in Ireland depend on American dollars. The chief industries: computers (Digital, Amdahl, Prime, Documatics), electronics (GE, Westinghouse), and pharmaceuticals and other medical supplies (Pfizer, Abbott, Trav-nol). Sherwin Williams paint products are manufactured in Ireland, as are Hallmark greeting cards and Nike running shoes. In addition, there are more than 100 West German plants on the island and a significant number of British, Dutch, and Japanese factories. In 1978, for the first time in Irish history, the number of persons engaged in making their living from industry surpassed the number of those working in agriculture.

The beginnings of the Irish industrial boom coincided with a sharp tightening of U.S. immigration law (1965). Emigration, as a result, has declined dramatically. By 1980, the Republic's population had climbed to 3.5 million (up from 2.8 million two decades earlier); the populations of all but one of the 26 counties had grown over the previous decade. While the worldwide 1981-83 recession hit Ireland severely—unemployment almost doubled, reaching about 16 percent—the quiet despair of the "hungry '50s" has not reappeared. With the majority of its young folk staying home despite the recession, the Republic of Ireland has become the most youthful country in Europe. Fully

half of the population today is under the age of 25 (versus 35 percent in Britain, 39 percent in the United States).

Downtown Dublin shows evidence of a youth culture in full bloom. "Punk rockers," their hair dyed purple or bleached white with peroxide, roam the shopping districts, where McDonald's and Burger King have gradually displaced many of the old tea shops. Rock and country-and-western music blares from the record stores. Dublin has its "yuppies" too, the smartly dressed young professionals who jog at lunchtime through Saint Stephen's Green, eat quiche, wear designer underwear, and follow the cartoon "Doonesbury" in the *Irish Times*.

Even so, much of the flavor of an older Dublin has remained. Victualers have survived as an urban adornment, the display windows of their shops filled with the muted red hues of butchered meat. Turf accountants (bookies) have their traditional offices scattered across the city. Workmen laying pipes or digging ditches toil in well-worn jackets and ties, as they always have, and the rains still come often enough to dispel, if only for a while, the pall of smoke from turf (peat) fires on a hundred thousand hearths. Dublin is still, essentially, a smallish city (population 525,000) of churches and private residences on the River Liffey, with a low skyline, little industry, and some handsome



PEOPLE ARE TO IRELAND
AS OIL IS TO TEXAS.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

IDA Ireland

The IDA
Ireland's advanced and fast-growing public sector. Efficient, energetic,
flexible, responsive.
Ireland
A member of the European Community. Noted for its favorable
government incentives to foreign investors. The most progressive financial
location in Europe for U.S. multinationals.
Ireland: Home of the Irish. The young Europeans.

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18th-century Georgian architecture.

But relative prosperity has made Dublin noisier than it used to be. As recently as 1960, bicycles dominated the capital's streets. Horses pulled the milk wagons. Now, the auto is the reigning status symbol, and Dublin and Cork endure Manhattan-style traffic jams. Because Ireland levies stiff excise and "value-added" taxes, a four-cylinder automobile costs the Irish roughly twice what a comparable car costs Americans. Gas is priced at about \$3 per gallon. With Ireland's income per capita of only \$5,000 in 1984—down there with that of Greece and Spain—it is a bit mysterious how so many people can afford a car. Yet two-thirds of all households own at least one. Even the "tinkers," who generally beg on the streets or sell cheap rugs from door to door for a living, now have motor vehicles. Descendants of the landless itinerant laborers of pre-Famine times, the tinkers once roamed the country in colorful, barrel-shaped wagons, stopping in slovenly camps on the outskirts of towns. Now most of them have trailers.

Thirty Acres, a Dozen Cows

Ireland is not as affluent as other Common Market countries. But the key fact is that it is more affluent than it ever has been. Real income has doubled during the last two decades, and Irish horizons have correspondingly widened. Middle-class Irish families now vacation not only in West Cork or Donegal but also in Spain, the Canary Islands, and even Florida's Walt Disney World. The Irish punt, or pound, is now linked to the West German mark rather than (as it was for so many years) to the British pound. Ambitious parents encourage their children to learn French and German, recognizing that the successful Irish entrepreneur of the future must feel at home not only in Ennis or Carlow but in Paris and Frankfurt as well. To be a computer programmer or designer of software is to ply a chic trade in Ireland today. Magazines such as *Computer Weekly* and *Computer News* can be found in the magazine racks of newsagents and tobacconists everywhere.

Perhaps nowhere has the transformation of "traditional" Ireland been so profound as it has been on the farm. Early in this century, in a vain effort to defuse Irish nationalist feeling, the British government bought out most of the English landlords and divided the great estates into a patchwork of small family farms. Deeply cherished though these farms were, they were often incompetently managed and suffered from fragmentation and lack of capital investment. A farmer owning as few as 30 acres would

often have his small holding in several scattered parcels, grazing a dozen cows in one field, raising hay in another, and cutting turf (for fuel) from a bog in a third. Outside the wealthier midland counties, such as Tipperary, with its "golden vale," where the land is more fertile than scenic, it was rare until the 1960s to see a tractor in a field, or a car on a country road.

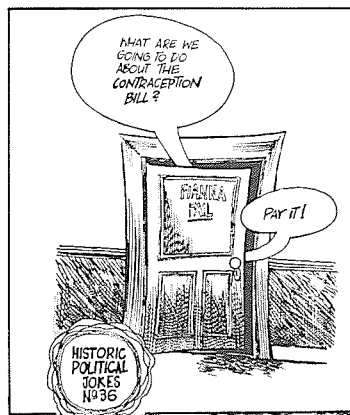
Lakes of Milk

Change has come slowly to the countryside, but it has come. Rural electrification was virtually completed by 1960. During the years since then, the ramshackle thatched cottage has either largely disappeared or, as in the picturesque village of Adare, been preserved primarily to please the two million tourists who visit Ireland every year (leaving \$524.3 million behind in 1983). Thanks to government subsidies, many farm families have been able to replace their old, look-alike cottages with look-alike modern homes of cinder block and plaster, snug and comfortable, boasting picture windows, indoor plumbing, and modern stoves. Grandfather's old home, usually moldering a few yards beyond the back door, now shelters the cows.

While Ireland remained neutral during World War II—a stance that finally convinced many skeptical Irishmen that their country truly was independent from Great Britain—the powerful Irish-American contingent in the U.S. Congress saw to it that Ireland received some Marshall Plan aid (about \$147 million) between 1949 and 1952. Dublin wisely invested much of the money in a series of agricultural research stations, of which there now are eight. Almost all of the senior staff members at these centers have done their graduate work at U.S. land-grant universities. The influence of the stations' demonstration classes and model farms has been enormous. Milking machines, for example, are common today on all but the smallest of dairy farms. Across the country, agricultural productivity has increased dramatically during the past 20 years.

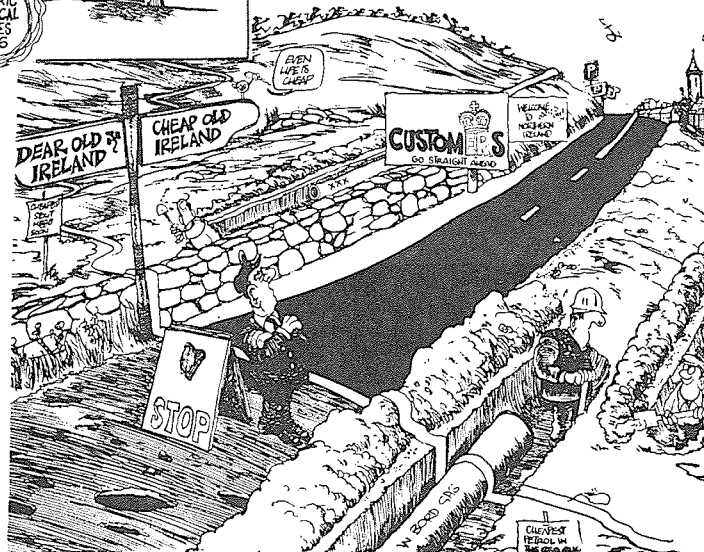
Irish farmers, like those in France and Denmark, produce the "lakes of milk and mountains of butter" that bedevil the European Community's so-called Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). They are vulnerable to any shift in that policy of high prices and unrestrained production. But Irish agriculture will never revert to the practices of the bad old days, even if CAP is somehow "reformed." Irish farmers are better educated and more progressive than their fathers were. The current trend to larger and better capitalized farms is irreversible.

Looking back on the past quarter century, the Irish realize



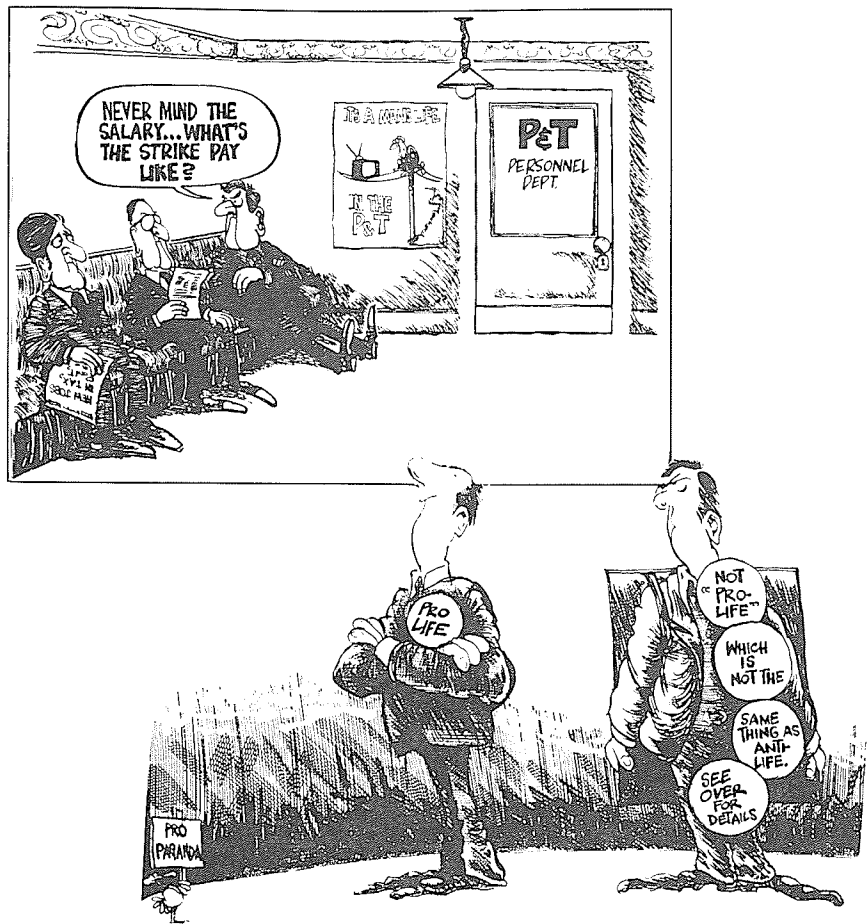
IRISH PERSPECTIVES:

The work of Martyn Turner, Ireland's premier editorial cartoonist, appears in the Irish Times. In these drawings, he comments on (clock-wise from upper right) labor relations, the 1983 abortion referendum, south and north, and birth-control legislation.



that, in economic terms, they have survived a painful transition, which is still incomplete. Ireland remains vulnerable. The recent recession has certainly stifled the buoyant optimism of the 1970s. Unemployment runs high among youths just out of school. While the dole provides minimum subsistence, television, available in nine out of 10 Irish households and top-heavy with glittery American shows such as "Dallas," offers a picture of how much better life could be. In Dublin, muggings, robberies, and car thefts have become increasingly common—particularly on the north side of the city, where growing numbers of young heroin addicts inhabit what remain of the capital's once densely congested slums.

The Republic, in short, is far from paradise. Even so, the



Irish recognize how far they have come. Having long been one of Europe's poorest, most backward societies, Ireland has at last taken its place, in social terms, alongside such prosperous developed countries as Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands—countries still reliant on what the soil will yield but dependent even more on their ability to sell high-quality manufactured goods in a world market.

At the same time, the *character* of Ireland diverges markedly from that of any Scandinavian or Benelux country. The Irish have always been regarded as an imaginative people, fond of music and storytelling, and brave, even reckless, in battle. To these qualities centuries of servitude added not dourness but a feckless, devil-may-care attitude toward life. To be sure, after

the catastrophe of the Famine, most of the survivors turned inward, became hard, calculating, thrifty people, conservative, suspicious of outsiders. Yet, their manners remained soft, their speech infected still by what Sean O'Faolain called "that most Kerryish form of silence: an excess of volubility."

The easy charm that makes the Irish personality so attractive has a flip side. For one thing, it saps the capacity of the Irish people for sustained public indignation. Every week, it seems, there occurs a major fire or train wreck or industrial explosion. The death rate on highways is appallingly high. The Dublin newspapers are so full of reports of minor freak accidents—a Raheny man, for example, was injured last October when a toilet cistern fell on him in the restroom of his local pub—as to keep a wary visitor continually on his guard.

An Irish Solution

The Irish take a relaxed attitude toward such mishaps. They are prone to say of "poor Tom" or "good old Mike" that he is, after all, a nice fellow, even though Tom may have been driving while drunk (and killed four children) and Mike may have been off having a smoke when the track signals needed switching (to the detriment of oncoming trains). Arrests for speeding or reckless driving are few. Rare is the school that holds a fire drill. In all of these respects, Ireland is not likely to be mistaken for Norway or West Germany.

Irish complacency in the face of misfortune may be due in part to religious fatalism, the idea, instilled over the centuries, that one's arms are too short to box with God. For better or worse, the pervasive influence of the Roman Catholic Church also sets Ireland apart from the rest of the Common Market crowd. After Poland and Lithuania, Ireland is the most Catholic country in Europe (94 percent of its people profess the faith). And, as in Poland and Lithuania, where the church always provided a psychological bulwark against an occupier's overweening power, Catholicism has long enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with nationalism.

Inevitably, with creation of an Irish Free State in 1922, church doctrine and church preference were enshrined in civil law. The new government moved quickly to ban divorce, outlaw birth control and abortion, and enforce vigorous censorship of books and movies. Pubs could be open only during certain hours, dance halls had to be licensed (and obtain a permit from a local magistrate before holding *any* dance). The Irish constitution, promulgated in 1937, acknowledged not "We the People"

but "the most Holy Trinity" as the ultimate source of all governmental authority.

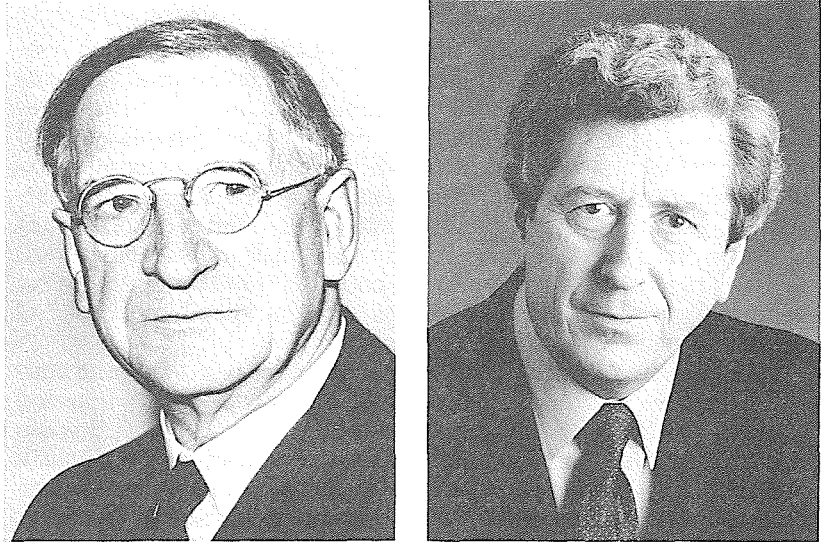
Not until the 1960s did the fabric of church-sanctioned controls begin to fray. The intellectual and institutional ferment provoked by Vatican II shook the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland as much as it did elsewhere. Fewer young people entered the convent or seminary. Meanwhile, violent and sexually explicit programs on British television, easily received by the eastern third of Ireland, made a farce of government censorship, of which everyone from James Joyce to James Bond had run afoul. In 1973, the electorate approved a constitutional amendment repealing a provision that had recognized "the special position" of the Roman Catholic Church.

That same year, the Irish Supreme Court ruled that the constitution does *not* prohibit the use of contraceptives by married women. The Irish government reluctantly complied with this decision, legalizing contraception for *wives* who obtain a doctor's prescription. Charles Haughey, later prime minister but at the time the minister of health, described the legislation as "an Irish solution to an Irish problem." (The phrase quickly entered the popular vocabulary and is used ironically to describe the bizarre approach of public policy to the management of any aspect of Irish life.) As it happens, even *unmarried* women have no trouble obtaining "the pill." Last February the Dáil (Parliament), by a narrow margin, approved legislation that may soon make contraceptives legally available to anyone over the age of 18.

'We Are Not Swedes'

But divorce is still illegal, and an estimated 70,000 Irish married men and women—about five percent of all husbands and wives—are living apart from their spouses. A recent *Irish Times* poll indicated that two-thirds of those surveyed felt that divorce should be permitted in certain circumstances. In the Dáil, a Joint Committee on Marriage Breakdown has taken up the matter—very, very gingerly.

For despite its somewhat diminished prestige and the weakening of its authority in some spheres of conduct, the Roman Catholic Church, headed by Tomas Cardinal O Fiaich, remains the single most powerful institution in Ireland. Seven people out of 10 attend mass regularly. It is still common for mothers in Ireland to check with their parish priests before making any major family decisions. At noon and at 6:00 P.M. each day, the government-run radio station, Radio Éireann, pauses for 30 seconds and sounds the 12 bells of the Angelus. Saint Patrick's Day



Generations apart: Eamon De Valera (left), who guided the Free State in its formative years; and Garret FitzGerald, the current prime minister.

is both a church holiday and a national holiday and until three years ago was the only day of the year on which the pubs were forbidden to open their doors. One unintended effect was to swell attendance at the National Dog Show, held on Saint Patrick's Day on the grounds of the Royal Dublin Society, a venerable Anglo-Irish enclave where the liquor always flowed freely.

The most profound influence of the church remains in education. There are no public schools in Ireland in the American sense. With a few exceptions, the nation's 3,412 state-aided primary schools are run either by the Roman Catholic Church or by various Protestant denominations. Normally, these local "national schools" are administered by a board of management, often chaired by the local parish priest. Of the 282,000 students at the *secondary* level in 1981, more than two-thirds were in church-run institutions.

Yet, even the character of the national schools is changing. For one thing, the government announced last fall that a concerted effort would be made to introduce sex education into the schools—something that would not have been dreamt of 30 years ago. (The Department of Education's decision was spurred by the widely publicized March 1984 case of a 15-year-old country girl, in Granard, County Longford, who went to a grotto out-

side her parish church one night to give birth to a baby no one even suspected her of carrying; both mother and child died of exposure.) While the advent of sex education is denounced by some as an invitation to moral license, Prime Minister Garret FitzGerald has expressed his confidence in the Irish national character. "We are not Swedes," he pointed out recently, "We are not Danes."

FitzGerald has proved to be one of the few major Irish politicians willing to risk the displeasure of the church hierarchy. During the early 1980s, when Ireland's right-to-life movement began pressing for an amendment to the constitution explicitly forbidding abortion—it is already forbidden by statute, and the courts have held that the constitution prohibits it implicitly—the leaders of Ireland's two major political parties, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, initially endorsed the idea. But FitzGerald, the Fine Gael chief and prime minister, later expressed reservations, on various technical grounds, about the specific wording of the amendment. When his substitute language failed to win church approval, the *taoiseach* decided to oppose the antiabortion amendment. It was approved, nonetheless, in a 1983 referendum. The outcome has no real effect. Irish women who want abortions will do what they have usually done: take the Aer Lingus shuttle to London. It is noteworthy, however, that FitzGerald, whose party holds only a slim majority in the 166-member Dáil, suffered no apparent loss in popularity by breaking with the church hierarchy on the abortion issue.

Lip Service

Ireland's two chief political parties derive their identities from the civil war of 1922–23. The issue that divides members of Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael is, literally, the answer to this question: On which side was your father (or grandfather)? Fianna Fáil (Soldiers of Destiny), organized by Eamon De Valera, is the more nationalist party, which means in practice that it takes a harder, "greener" line toward Northern Ireland, demanding total unification. Fine Gael (Family of the Irish) does not disavow reunification as an ultimate goal but displays more interest in promoting "peace and stability" between the two Irelands as the only attainable objectives for the foreseeable future.

The two parties have been vying for top nationalist credentials for 60 years. It was De Valera's Fianna Fáil that, during the 1930s, unilaterally abolished the British post of governor general and the oath of allegiance to the English king. But it was a coalition government (1948–51) led by Fine Gael that took Ire-

land out of the British Commonwealth altogether and declared the country a republic (again, without London's prior consent).

That same coalition government created the cabinet-level ministry of the Gaeltacht (that is, of the Irish-speaking areas), once more in a bid to shine its nationalist credentials, and subsequent Fianna Fáil governments have felt constrained to keep this ministry in existence. Nevertheless, it has proved impossible to revive the Irish language in everyday usage.

Rival Visions

The fate of the Irish language, which was decisively overtaken by English a century ago, has political resonance even now because it goes to the heart of the question, What does it mean to be Irish? Through centuries of oppression, their unique language was one thing the Irish could always call their own. The revolutionaries who brought Ireland to independence were Irish-speakers—self-taught. Their sort of nationalism had begun not as a political movement but as a cultural and linguistic one. Eamon De Valera once allowed that “if I had to make a choice between political freedom without the language, and the language without political freedom, I would choose the latter.” The constitution established Irish as Ireland's “first” official language, and Irish today is used (along with English) on most government documents and on all street signs. Certain television programs, including one edition of the news, are broadcast in Irish. Courses in Irish are compulsory for students in every grade, from kindergarten through high school. Candidates for civil service jobs and admission to the national universities must demonstrate proficiency in Irish.

Despite such measures, Irish has not caught on; the cultural and economic pull of England, on the one side, and of the United States, on the other, has simply been too great. The Gaeltacht areas, where native Irish-speakers receive generous government subsidies to use Irish in their daily lives, are steadily shrinking in size. Today, they are home to no more than 50,000 people, clustered in remote fishing villages and isolated farmlands along the windswept coastal fringes of western Ireland. In Donegal and Mayo, in Clare and Kerry, and in the Connemara region of Galway, it is still possible to hear Irish spoken by schoolchildren buying sweets in a shop or by farmers chatting in a pub about the price of lambs. But even in these areas, everyone understands English.

If men such as De Valera had hoped to keep Ireland a nation of Catholic, Irish-speaking farmers, there was all along a rival

conception of Ireland's destiny, one first articulated by Daniel O'Connell, the masterful 19th-century Kerry politician who led the campaign for Catholic emancipation. O'Connell had no interest in rescuing the Irish language (knowledge of which, he once pointed out, "will not sell the pig"). He hoped that Ireland would become English-speaking, secular, democratic, and politically mature, a nation of both farmers and businessmen. The Republic of Ireland today is more nearly O'Connell's country than De Valera's, and the trend away from the old nationalist, confessional creed seems to be accelerating.

Membership in the Common Market is one reason for this, but just as important is the situation in Protestant-dominated Northern Ireland. Briefly, it is clear to most in the south that the peaceful unification of the two Irelands can be achieved only if the character of the Republic's constitution—especially as it affects religion—is profoundly altered (and reunification may not be achieved even then). The New Ireland Forum, a blue-ribbon panel consisting of representatives from the major political parties in both the Republic and Northern Ireland, made this point explicitly in a widely read 1984 report.

Prime Minister FitzGerald symbolizes the Republic's current period of transition. On the one hand, he seeks no radical break with the past. He has written a book about the Irish language and is a devout Roman Catholic. But he is also a veteran "technocrat," fluent in French, European in outlook. He has broad appeal to women and younger voters. His willingness to disagree with the bishops on abortion suggests that he is the most likely politician to take on "untouchable" subjects, such as divorce and constitutional revision (though he has not yet done so).

But he is under no illusions about how far or how quickly he can lead. There are deep emotions at play. "Over a period of half-a-century," he observed not long ago, "we have created for ourselves in this part of Ireland a comfortable state, now quite an old garment, which has come to fit our present shape and which many are, subconsciously at least, reluctant to throw off for fear that the new one might pinch at some delicate points or be inconveniently loose at others, requiring a lengthy process of adjustment and adaptation before we could once again feel as comfortable as we have come to feel with our Twenty-Six county suit."



IRISH AMERICA

by Lawrence J. McCaffrey

The roughly one million peasants who fled to the United States from Ireland's Great Famine of 1845-49 were not the first Irishmen to leave their homeland behind, nor even the first to seek refuge in America. But the Great Famine induced an exodus of unprecedented proportions.

The Famine was a decisive event in modern Irish history. It claimed an estimated 1.5 million lives and established emigration as Ireland's safety valve, relieving the demographic pressures on a primitive agrarian economy. In the Famine's wake, for three-quarters of a century, many Irish families raised most of their children for export. During those 75 years, three million Irish immigrants crossed the Atlantic to the New World.

The Famine also created the northern United States's first major ethnic problem. Not only did the Irish immigrants represent the most miserable, backward class of peasantry in northern Europe; they were also Roman Catholics in an obdurately Protestant land. Perhaps as many as one-third were not fluent in English. Virtually all of them were destitute.

Unlike many Germans and most Scandinavians, the new immigrants shunned the countryside. While the vast majority of them had been farmers, they had also been ignorant farmers. The oppressive Anglo-Irish landlord system back home, under which the Irish worked essentially as serfs, had robbed them of ability and ambition. Psychologically, too, the American farm was uninviting. "If I had [in Ireland] but a sore head I could have a neighbor within every hundred yards of me that would run to see me," one Irishman reflected in a letter home from rural Missouri. "But here everyone gets so much land, and generally has so much, that they calls them neighbors that live two or three miles off."

While some bishops in Ireland and the United States tried to steer immigrants away from the "wicked" cities, it was nevertheless to Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, New Orleans, and other cities that the Irish tended to gravitate. They became pioneers not of the open frontier but of the urban ghetto, blazing a trail that would later be followed, with varying degrees of success, by Italians, Jews, and Eastern Europeans, by blacks migrating to the North from the cottonfields, by Hispanics from Puerto Rico and Mexico.

The transition from the thatched-roof cottages of the Irish



Shanty Irish: squatters in mid-Manhattan. "The Atlantic works no miracles on them," wrote Thomas D'Arcy McGee. Yet between 1848 and 1861, Irish immigrants sent an estimated \$60 million "home" to relatives.

countryside to the tenements and tarpaper shacks of 19th-century urban America was traumatic. The immigrants were typically exploited first by countrymen who had come earlier. In New York, Irish "runners" would meet the 30 to 40 immigrant ships that arrived every day. They seized the luggage and rushed the newcomers to run-down, Irish-owned boarding houses. What little money the new arrivals had was soon spent on lodging, drink, and counterfeit railway tickets to the interior. Penniless, the immigrants were on their own.

In the crime-ridden Irish neighborhoods, where open sewers drained the streets, tuberculosis, cholera, and alcoholism took their toll. In Boston during the 1840s, the life expectancy after arrival of the typical Irish immigrant was 14 years. In New York, in 1857, a state-government report warned of a new blight on the urban landscape—the corrosive inner-city slum.

Many immigrants turned to crime. Prisons and asylums bulged with Irish occupants. Between 1856 and 1863, according to historian Oscar Handlin, at least half of the inmates in the Boston House of Correction were Irish. Many Irish women drank and brawled like the men. Their children roamed the streets engaging in mischief and petty crime. "Scratch a convict or a pau-

per and the chances are that you tickle the skin of an Irish Catholic at the same time," commented an editorial writer for the *Chicago Evening Post* in 1868.

Native Americans had never before experienced a foreign influx so big and of such distressing quality. To be called "Irish" was not much better than to be called "nigger"; racist commentary made little distinction. In some respects, descriptions of the 19th-century Irish ghetto anticipated those of today's black ghetto. But there was no palliative welfare state, no sense among other Americans of collective responsibility for the plight of the underclass.

To many Anglo-Americans, the antisocial, frequently violent behavior of the Irish was less offensive than their religion. Anti-Catholicism was an essential ingredient in American nativism. Deeming the swarming mass of Irish-Catholic immigrants to be an unassimilable menace to Anglo-Protestant culture and institutions, the American (Know-Nothing) Party during the 1850s pressed for curbs on immigration and exclusion of the foreign-born from political office. Periodically during the 1840s and '50s, mobs attacked and burned Catholic churches and convents.

Managing Money

Nativist efforts notwithstanding, continued Irish immigration had by 1860 made Roman Catholicism the largest single religious denomination in the United States. Some three million Catholics, in highly visible urban concentrations, were being served by 2,235 priests and many more nuns and brothers. Many members of the clergy were Irish and imported. In short order, Irish clerics wrested control of the hierarchy from the handful of Anglo-Americans and French missionaries who had guided the Catholic Church during the Republic's first half century.

The church aroused Protestant antipathy, but it also served as a bulwark in slum communities that could boast few others. In the Irish ghetto of the 19th century, as in many black neighborhoods today, the local church became the basic social and political unit. Confronted with ethnic and religious prejudice outside their own neighborhoods, Irish Catholics erected an alternative system of schools, hospitals, asylums, and orphanages. They paid

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for it in America the way that they had paid for it in Ireland—with small sums contributed regularly by millions of the faithful. Because the brightest Catholic lads in America became priests, the money was managed well and put to work quickly. (Construction of Saint Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan was begun in 1858, within a decade of the Famine's end.) In cities such as New York, Boston, and Chicago, the archdiocese eventually became a wealthy property owner, sometimes scandalously so.

'Ten Thousand Micks'

As Irish America congregated socially around Saint Mary's, Saint Patrick's, and Saint Bridget's, Irish men and women sought to penetrate the fringes of the U.S. economy. It took time. Lacking marketable skills, Irish men during the mid-19th century had no choice but to take work as menial laborers. In one sense, they were lucky: They arrived in the American metropolis at a time when most jobs required a strong back, not a skilled hand or nimble brain. This was no longer the case a century later, as rural black migrants to northern cities learned to their dismay.

The ravages of alcohol—an imported problem with complex origins—did to Irish men what drugs and alcohol have done to many blacks: first made them unemployable, then killed them. But the able-bodied Irish could at least clean stables, drive horses as draymen or cabbies, load and unload riverboats, and work in construction. Irish men mined coal in Pennsylvania, gold in California, copper in Montana. Because slaves represented a costly capital investment, Irish wage workers were hired to drain the deadly malarial swamps of Louisiana. They dug canals and laid miles of railroad track, their graves edging westward as the country reached for the Pacific. In the words of one southern folk song: "Ten thousand Micks, they swung their picks, / To dig the New Canal. / But the cholera was stronger 'n they, / An' twice it killed them awl."

Professionally, the first big breakthrough made by the Irish was in the military. As it already had done in Great Britain, the lure of adventure, glory, smart uniforms, three square meals a day, and some loose change jingling in the pocket attracted many Irish men into the armed forces. They rose quickly in the ranks. Eventually, the same contradictory combination of physical challenge and economic security that had drawn the Irish into the armed services would draw them into big-city police and fire departments as well. As early as 1854, 98 of the 150 police officers in New Orleans's First District were born in Ireland.

During the Civil War, almost 40 exclusively Irish regiments

saw action on the side of the Union. At Antietam, on October 6, 1862, the Irish Brigade, which included New York's "Fighting Sixty-Ninth," lost 196 of its 317 men. The brigade was reconstituted and then, in December of the same year, decimated again—by the Confederate Irish Brigade—as it sought to scale Marye's Heights at Fredericksburg. After the war, Irish officers and enlisted men helped keep order on the western frontier. The performance of Irish soldiers (and Irish nursing nuns) on the Civil War battlefield had an important secondary consequence: It helped to take the steam out of anti-Irish nativism.

So did the growing demand for cheap labor, as America moved into the Industrial Age. The arrival of increasing numbers of non-English-speaking Italians and Eastern Europeans also helped push the Irish up from the bottom rung, socially and economically.

The progress of Irish-Americans was highly uneven. As the century wore on, Irish men did begin to make some gains, moving into the ranks of skilled labor. They were heavily concentrated in the building trades and dominated plumbing and plastering. The Civil Service, especially the Post Office, became an Irish redoubt. Irish men, along with Jews, claimed a leadership role in the trade-union movement, and union jobs were typically passed from father to son. All of this occurred,



The pretensions of "lace-curtain" Irish-Americans were ridiculed in the press and on the stage. "There's an organ in the parlor, to give the house a tone / And you're welcome every evening at Maggie Murphy's home."

however, fully two generations after the initial, famine-induced, wave of immigration.

As historian Hasia Diner makes plain in *Erin's Daughters in America* (1983), Irish women as a group made a better, faster adjustment to American urban life than did their husbands, sons, and brothers. Like the southern black women who migrated to northern cities during the 1950s and '60s, Irish women during the 19th century simply had more to offer the local economy. Like southern black women, too, Irish immigrant women seemed relatively "nonthreatening" to Anglo-Americans.

Women As Civilizers

In the annals of European emigration, the Irish exodus was unique in that women, most of them single, always outnumbered men. (This anomaly was due in part to the fact that daughters could not expect to inherit the family farm.) Coming from a society with sharp gender segregation and a new, church-encouraged tradition of late marriage or no marriage, Irish women aggressively pursued economic independence.

Not all of them, of course, "made it." Many single Irish women drifted perforce to the ill-paying mills and factories of New England and the Midwest. When American textile and shoe manufacturing shifted from hand to factory production, it was often Biddy who operated the machines. (Not surprisingly, Irish women, like Irish men, became ardent unionists.) But many Irish women enjoyed a happier existence. While women from other ethnic groups scorned domestic service as degrading, the Irish flocked to such jobs, which offered food, shelter, clothing, and a taste of genteel living. Above all, they earned money that was theirs to spend as they pleased. Cartoons from the mid-19th century typically depict Irish maids ostentatiously "wearing their paychecks"—adorning themselves in finery.

Irish women moved more quickly than men into white-collar work. For the intelligent, ambitious Irish female, nursing and teaching were for decades the professions of choice. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, second-generation Irish women constituted the largest single ethnic group in the teaching profession. In 1900, according to the *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*, their numbers exceeded the "combined total of all female teachers with English and German parents."

A key point should be noted: Working, single Irish women were, for the most part, not working, single Irish *mothers*. This made them a prime economic asset. Married Irish males spent most of their income supporting families, Irish wives tended to

stay at home, and single men squandered substantial sums on drink; single Irish women, on the other hand, typically sent part of their paychecks "home" to Ireland. They paid the way to America for their brothers and sisters and faithfully contributed their tithe to the church. Often they lived with relatives, their wages boosting the household into middle-class, "lace-curtain" comfort.

Irish women looked out for one another. While Irish priests and bishops tended to ignore the problems many Irish women faced—out-of-wedlock births, abusive husbands, the loneliness of spinsterhood—Irish nuns sheltered the poor and afflicted. Three large orders of nuns—the Sisters of Mercy, the Presentation Sisters, and the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary—had originated in Ireland; these and other orders, which recruited heavily among the Irish in the United States, deliberately focused their educational efforts on women. "Many orders were expressly forbidden by their charters to teach boys or at least boys above a certain age," writes Diner. In 1873, there were 209 Catholic schools for girls in America's cities but only 87 for boys.

There was another important role for Irish women—as mothers. To be sure, marriage was no more attractive an option in America than it had been in Ireland. On both sides of the ocean, many couples were miserable. Male pride suffered when women but not men could find work. In both Ireland and the United States, an emotional coldness existed between the sexes; sexual puritanism without a doubt took much of the zip out of wedlock. However, once wed, and if not deserted or widowed, Irish women in America were *less* likely than those of other nationalities to be in the workplace. As the dominant force in Irish homes, Irish mothers complemented the efforts of their single sisters, leading a slow but tenacious drive toward middle-class respectability.

The Boston Ghetto

By the turn of the century, humorist Finley Peter Dunne's Mr. Dooley could ridicule the social-climbing pretensions of a Mrs. Donahue, who bought a piano so that her daughter Molly could learn to play "Bootoven and Choochooski" and not "The Rambler from Clare."

If gender was long one of the fault lines in Irish America, another was geography. Just as Hispanics today have found more opportunity in the Sun Belt than in the Frost Belt, so did Irish men and women on the "urban frontier"—in the booming, free-

wheeling cities of the Midwest, where *everyone* was a newcomer—enjoy better prospects than their cousins in the older cities of the Eastern Seaboard. The Heartland's burgeoning factories, mills, stockyards, and railroads were starved for labor. In Detroit between 1850 and 1880, as historian JoEllen McNergney Vinyard points out in *The Irish on the Urban Frontier* (1976), Irish immigrants lived in far less crowded conditions than they did in eastern cities. Proportionately more of the Irish found work as skilled laborers and entered the middle class.

In New England, by contrast, the situation was never encouraging. There, the Irish encountered a highly structured society dominated by Yankee yeomen and an elite Brahmin aristocracy. Physically and psychologically, the Irish in Boston, Newburyport, and Providence were captives of the ghetto. As historians Stephan Thernstrom and David Noel Doyle have noted, the situation in Boston was by far the most dismal. Doyle estimates that, during the late 19th century, an Irishman right off the boat who headed for the Midwest was more likely to blaze a trail from the peasantry into the lower middle class than was a fourth-generation Irish Bostonian. Not only had the Irish in "Southie," Charlestown, and Brighton settled amid an old and stratified society; they remained for decades the only foreign ethnic group of any size in Boston.

Whites vs. Blacks

It is ironic that America's first Irish-Catholic President, John F. Kennedy, should have been a Boston native. But, tellingly, his father's fortune, which made possible JFK's achievement, came largely from ventures *outside* the city. Despite his Harvard degree, Joseph P. Kennedy was never accepted socially by Boston's Anglo-Protestant elite.

The sense of being left out and left behind has surfaced among Boston Irish in a politics of revenge rather than of purpose. More than other Irish-Americans, those in Boston supported the fascist preachings of Father Charles Coughlin during the 1930s and the Communist-chasing of Senator Joseph McCarthy during the 1950s. During the 1970s, racial violence flared in South Boston over the busing of black children from Roxbury to local white schools. While relations between the two ethnic groups have never been overly warm—the Irish long competed with blacks for housing and jobs, and worked hard to keep blacks out of the American Federation of Labor—the strife in Roxbury reflected more than simple animosity. It represented a clash of two "cultures of poverty," existing side by side, both of

them alienated from America's mainstream.

Except in New England, the acquisition of political power by certain Irish-Americans hastened the social and economic progress of the larger Irish-American community. A knack for politics was the one thing that many Irish, pugnacious yet gregarious by nature, had brought with them from their native land. During the early decades of the 19th century, Daniel O'Connell trained his people in the techniques of mass agitation and the principles of liberal democracy. O'Connell's Catholic and Repeal Associations were sophisticated political machines; no other immigrant group had participated in anything like them. In the United States, the vast majority of Irish immigrants joined the Democratic Party, which was far less nativist than its rivals, controlled the governments of most major cities, welcomed the immigrant vote (especially if the immigrants voted more than once), and rewarded the Irish with patronage jobs. Saloonkeepers and morticians became key Irish political leaders; both had ample opportunity to meet (and

THE POL

How did a 19th-century Irish ward boss make his appointed rounds? George Washington Plunkitt (1842–1924), a New York State Senator and Tammany Hall stalwart, left in his diary this description of a typical day:

2 A.M. Wakened by a boy with message from bartender to bail him out of jail. 3 A.M. Back to bed. 6 A.M. Fire engines, up and off to the scene to see my election district captains tending the burnt-out tenants. Got names for new homes. 8:30 to police court. Six drunken constituents on hand. Got four released by a timely word to the judge. Paid the other's [sic] fines. Nine o'clock to Municipal court. Told an election district captain to act as lawyer for a widow threatened with dispossession. 11 to 3 P.M. Found jobs for four constituents. 3 P.M. an Italian funeral, sat conspicuously up front. 4 P.M. A Jewish funeral—up front again, in the synagogue. 7 P.M. Meeting of district captains and reviewed the list of all voters, who's for us, who's agin. 8 P.M. Church fair. Bought ice cream for the girls; took fathers for a little something around the corner. 9 P.M. Back in the club-house. Heard complaints of a dozen push cart pedlars. 10:30 A Jewish wedding. Had sent handsome present to the bride. Midnight—to bed.



console) their constituents.

Politics gave the Irish opportunities for status and wealth often denied them in business. Building a multi-ethnic coalition of Irish (the largest bloc), Italians, and Eastern Europeans, with Catholic solidarity as the glue, the Irish gradually took command of the urban wing of the Democratic Party. In 1880, William Grace, a shipping magnate, became the first Irish-Catholic mayor of New York. Hugh O'Brien followed suit in Boston in 1885, John Patrick Hopkins in Chicago in 1893. By April 1894, nativist John Paul Bocock was lamenting in the pages of *Forum* magazine that an "Irish Oligarchy controls America's leading cities."

Machine Politics

What did the Irish do with their power? Sociologist (now Senator) Daniel Patrick Moynihan argued in *Beyond the Melting Pot* (1963) that "the very parochialism and bureaucracy that enabled them to succeed in politics prevented [the Irish] from doing much with government. In a sense, the Irish did not know what to do with power once they got it."

Moynihan was off the mark. No, the Irish did not think of politics as an instrument of social change, not in so many words; with a view of the world tempered by the concept of Original Sin, Irish politicians entertained few illusions about the natural goodness or perfectibility of man. At the same time, however, the Irish scorned the fashionable Yankee notion of laissez-faire "social Darwinism." Irish political machines were short on ideology; but they mitigated poverty by dispensing food, clothing, coal, and city jobs, and not only to the Irish but also to Italians, Poles, Jews, and other constituents.

Johnny Powers, alderman boss of Chicago's Nineteenth Ward at the turn of the century, routinely provided bail for his constituents, fixed court cases, paid the back rent, and attended weddings and funerals. One Christmas he personally distributed six tons of turkey and four tons of duck and goose. Inadvertently, by example rather than precept, Irish "machine politics" advanced the notion of welfare-state liberalism.

Of course, men such as Powers in Chicago and George Washington Plunkitt in New York City, not to mention the numerous subalterns in their organizations, were less than fastidious about lining their own pockets. Corruption was rife. Yet to their constituents, such men often appeared as Robin Hoods, taking from the rich and giving to the poor. Joseph F. Dinneen made the same point in his 1936 novel, *Ward Eight*, when Boss Hughie Donnelly explains to a protégé why grafters run a more prosperous, happy

may have cost him the Presidency in 1928, the religion of Irish America came to appear less alien during the 1930s and '40s. On the screen, movie stars such as Spencer Tracy and Bing Crosby portrayed priests less as spiritual leaders than as social workers in Roman collars.

But the GI Bill proved to be the real springboard. Millions of Americans of Irish ancestry had served their country in World War II. By 1950, for the first time in history, more Irish men than women were enrolled in college. Among American ethnic groups, including English Protestants, only Jews as the 1950s began were sending a higher proportion (59 percent) of their children on to college than the Irish (43 percent). By the 1960s, the evidence was clear that Irish America was now a solid, middle-class community, with its fair share of millionaires, civic leaders, academics, and entries in *Who's Who in America*.

Shifting Gears

A 1963 survey by the National Opinion Research Center showed that not only were the Irish the most successful Catholic ethnic group in the country (in terms of education, occupation, and income); they also scored highest on questions of general knowledge, were least prejudiced against blacks and Jews, and were most likely to consider themselves "very happy." That is not to say that all Irish-Americans were confident, content, and open-minded. Irish-American literature during the 1960s and '70s would expose a distasteful underside. Jimmy Breslin's Dermot Davey and other hard-drinking New York cops abuse blacks, are on the take, and have perverse sexual relationships with wives and lovers. Tom McHale's wealthy Philadelphia Faragans hate "niggers," "fags," and "pinko draft dodgers." The best of the family, Arthur, turns holy pictures to the wall when making love with his wife. The paranoids, drunks, wife beaters, bigots, and sexual neurotics who inhabit the novels of Breslin, McHale, Thomas J. Fleming, John Gregory Dunne, Pete Hamill, Joe Flaherty, and James Carroll all have real-life counterparts. Many Irish-Americans, meanwhile, continue to inhabit bleak Irish ghettos in dying industrial towns; these communities are seldom publicized, but they are still there.

Yet the real story of the Irish in modern America is not that some of them nurse private tragedies or, as in South Boston, aggravate public ones. It is what success has done to the Irish as ethnics, and what it has done to the two institutions—the political machine, the Catholic Church—that long sustained them as a group.

COUNTING FOR SOMETHING

From the beginning, Irish-Americans followed events in their homeland with special interest. They also spent considerable amounts of time and money trying to influence those events—to improve the lot of the Irish peasant and, if possible, to bring about Ireland's independence from Great Britain.

Irish-American nationalism had no single source. For some in the 19th-century American ghetto, it was rooted in an exile mentality that romanticized Ireland as a paradise lost, a land of green fields and soft rain, purple mountains and blue lakes. It was a country of honorable men and chaste women, where ties of family and friendship were strong.

Another source was hatred. All that was wrong with the land the immigrants left behind—the poverty, the hunger, the disease, the evictions—all of this was cruel England's fault. And now the oppressor had forced millions of Irish to "cross the raging main" and, especially in New England, suffer a new and different form of Anglo-Protestant ascendancy. In his poem "Remorse for Intemperate Speech," William Butler Yeats described how the Irish had left their country with maimed personalities, carrying from their "mother's womb a fanatic heart."

Finally, there was the yearning for respect. Many Irish linked their low status in the United States with Ireland's colonial collar and leash; with independence would come dignity. Promised Michael Davitt, founder of the Land League in 1879: "Aid us in Ireland to remove the stain of degradation from your birth, and the Irish race here in America will get the respect you deserve."

Dedicated Irish-American nationalists—always a minority—could usually count on the moral and financial support of the broader Irish community. Through societies such as the Fenians and Clan na Gael, and by bankrolling the efforts of politicians and reformers in Ireland, Irish-American nationalists during the 19th century variously sought to curb evictions and stabilize rents, promote ill will between Britain and the United States, and, above all, pry Ireland loose from the British Empire, by force if necessary.

The Fenians, a 50,000-member (at its peak) conspiratorial brotherhood dedicated to Ireland's independence, received \$228,000 in contributions from Irish-Americans in 1865; the next year, donations swelled to almost \$500,000. The Fenians hoped to use the United States as an arsenal, providing arms and ammunition to freedom fighters across the sea. At the same time, brandishing Irish America's new political clout, the Fenians sought to shape American foreign policy to their own purposes. Ultimately, factional squabbling dimmed Fenian hopes of fomenting armed insurrection; sporadic, Fenian-sponsored acts of terrorism in Ireland ended not with Britain's hasty retreat from the island but with "martyrs to the cause"

dangling from a hangman's rope.

The Irish nationalists had little impact on U.S. foreign policy. After the American Civil War, while the United States was haggling with Great Britain over the settlement of war-related claims, Washington successfully intimidated London with friendly overtures toward the Fenians, 600 of whom in 1866 had launched a quixotic invasion of British Canada. (The Fenians had hoped to trade a "hostage" Canada for a free Ireland.) By the mid-1870s, however, President Ulysses S. Grant let it be known that the United States would not tolerate an Irish nationalist government-in-exile using America as a base to attack British territory. After World War I, amid an Anglo-Irish war (1919-21), President Woodrow Wilson resisted pressure from Irish-Americans to recognize the embattled Irish Republic, notwithstanding the "self-determination" principle enunciated in his Fourteen Points. Wilson's stand cost the Democratic Party many Irish votes in the 1920 presidential election.

Creation in 1922 of an Irish Free State, consisting of all but six of the island's 32 counties, did not entirely quell nationalist fervor in the United States. With Northern Ireland still an integral part of the United Kingdom, and Catholics there an oppressed minority, nationalist efforts focused henceforth on Irish unification. Although no one has produced any credible figures on the amount of money Irish-Americans today contribute to the terrorist Irish Republican Army (IRA) through front organizations, such as the New York-based Irish Northern Aid Committee (Noraid), the sum is certainly substantial. However, only a small number of Irish-Americans are involved in aiding the IRA. When, in 1983, Noraid director Michael Flannery (above) was named grand marshal of New York's Saint Patrick's Day parade, prominent Irish-Americans, including Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D.-N.Y.) declined to march. New York's Terence Cardinal Cooke, breaking tradition, refused to receive Flannery on the steps of Saint Patrick's Cathedral. Many American IRA supporters are recent immigrants who left Ireland during the 1950s, bitter at their government's failure to provide jobs, only to discover an upwardly mobile Irish America into which they did not fit.

The current efforts of these people on behalf of a united Ireland recall Sir Isaiah Berlin's definition of nationalism as "the inflamed desire of the insufficiently regarded to count for something among the cultures of the world."



*Noraid's
Michael Flannery.*

The election of John F. Kennedy to the Presidency in 1960 marked the arrival of Irish-Americans as politicians on the *national* scene. Ironically, at the same time, Irish pols were losing their grip on City Hall. Why? In Edwin O'Connor's *The Last Hurrah* (1956), one politician attributes the defeat of Mayor Frank Skeffington, loosely modeled on Boston's James Michael Curley, to the New Deal. "The old boss," he explains, "was strong simply because he held all the cards. If anybody wanted anything—jobs, favors, cash—he could only go to the boss, the local leader. What Roosevelt did was to take the handouts out of local hands. A few things like Social Security, Unemployment Insurance, and the like—that's what shifted the gears, sport."

A Costly Success

That may have been part of the reason, but the flight by increasingly prosperous Irish families from the central cities to the suburbs was surely a bigger factor. Sociologist Marjorie Fallows has documented how working- and lower-middle-class Irish families tended to forsake the old neighborhoods for ethnically "mixed" communities ringing downtown. Middle- and upper-middle-class Irish families found homes even farther out. In Chicago, for example, Southsiders typically migrated to Oak Lawn, Evergreen Park, and Burbank; Westsiders to Oak Park, River Forest, and Lombard; and Northsiders to Evanston and Wilmette.

The refugees from the ghetto parish left much of their Irishness behind; by the early 1970s, according to one study, only 43 percent of the Irish were marrying "within the tribe." The 1970s also witnessed an accelerating defection of Irish Catholics from the Democratic Party. (Ronald Reagan in 1980 received an estimated 53 percent of the Irish vote.) Increasingly, Irish Americans are voting along *class* rather than ethnic lines.

Weakening, too, in recent years has been Irish America's reflexive allegiance to the Catholic Church. Most well-educated Irish-Americans welcomed the theological renewal promised by the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), and most came away believing that the church had either gone too far or not gone far enough. On the one hand, the council scrapped many of the ritual and theological landmarks—the Latin mass, for example—that Irish Catholics had held dear. Gone, now, was what writer Mary McCarthy once called the "history and mystery" of the Roman Catholic Church. On the other hand, the Vatican remained adamant in its condemnation of birth control, a stricture that many American Irish-Catholics studiously ignore. Since Vatican

II, attendance at mass has fallen, as has use of the confessional. The sharpest Irish-Catholic youths now go not to Saint Joseph's Seminary but to the Harvard Business School.

What does it mean in 1985 to be an Irish-American? Americans of Irish ancestry are beginning to wonder about that themselves, now that the answers their grandparents accepted no longer seem to suffice. Many, of course, do not care. Others identify with the cause of Irish unification and naively send money to support the depredations of Irish Republican Army (IRA) gunmen in Northern Ireland (see box, pages 90-91).

But quite a few Irish-Americans, aware that "ethnicity" offers a psychological bulwark against the nation's chronic cultural turmoil, have reacted more sensibly. The field of Irish studies, for example, has blossomed during the past quarter century. Founded in 1959, the American Committee for Irish Studies now counts some 600 scholars as members; respected journals such as *Eire-Ireland*, the *James Joyce Quarterly*, and the *Irish Literary Supplement* have commenced publication in the United States. All over the country, college students flock to courses on Irish literature, history, music, and dance.

Is such enthusiasm merely for the moment? Perhaps. But it may also be that a new generation is prepared to help Irish America survive in a reduced but still vital context. No longer self-consciously Catholic, unsatisfied by the material affluence of suburban life, many younger Irish-Americans seem to find a certain solace in the historical and cultural aspects of their ethnicity.

Meanwhile, the long drama of the Irish in America may offer others some timely reminders. To blacks and Hispanics, the Irish experience promises hope but also cautions patience. It underlines the crucial roles that family, school, church, and politics variously can (and do) play in promoting social progress in America. But "success" also came to the Irish after heavy casualties—in terms of lives ended prematurely, in terms of lives misspent or spent in incredibly harsh circumstances. And it took 100 years.



BACKGROUND BOOKS

THE IRISH

The early settlers of Ireland, sailing across strange seas to a strange and hidden land, are said to have taken poets along. The "Children of Mil," whose voyage from Spain is chronicled in the seventh-century *Book of Invasions*, believed the songs of their bards to be magical, to provide protection from the unfriendly spirits of the universe.

It is somehow fitting that even these early travelers sought solace in the capacity of words to vanquish and sustain. Ireland's most enduring victories have been won not by the sword, but by the pen.

"I care not if my life has only the span of a day and a night if my deeds be spoken of by the men of Ireland." So proclaimed Cúchulainn, mythic hero of the Gaelic epic *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (The Cattle Raid of Cooley). **The Tain** (Univ. of Pa., 1962, 1982), poet Thomas Kinsella's elegant translation from the Irish, is enhanced on nearly every page by Louis le Brocquy's equally elegant abstract drawings.

Thanks to Christian missionaries, who arrived in Ireland during the fifth century A.D., the spoken verse of the Heroic Age was preserved for posterity on parchment. The missionaries and later monks also penned poems, hymns, and tracts of their own. For these, see Douglas Hyde's **Literary History of Ireland** (Scribner's, 1892; St. Martin's, 1980).

"From Clonmacnois I come; / My course of studies done / I am off to Swords again." Ireland's hothouse humanism withered in the wake of Viking raids, beginning in 795. The ensuing centuries were punctuated by wars of conquest. Native aristocrats—the "wild geese"—fled the Emerald Isle. Many bards, lacking

noble Gaelic patrons, no longer plied their trade.

A moving testament to Gaelic culture is **An Duanaire** (Univ. of Pa., 1981, paper), an anthology of poems edited by Seán Ó Tuama. Written between 1600 and 1900, and still bearing the imprint of bardic verse, many of the poems, given here both in Irish and in English translations by Kinsella, are poignant: "Tonight the walls are lonely / where we once heard harps and poets. . ."

Gaelic Ireland's plight remained largely hidden—not only from English eyes but also from the sight of Ireland's own Protestant "ascendancy." During the 18th century, it was entirely possible to be Irish—to have been born or even educated in Ireland—and to write without any apparent consciousness of the fact. Fashionable Irish playwrights such as William Congreve (author of *The Way of the World*, 1700), Oliver Goldsmith (*She Stoops to Conquer*, 1773), and Richard Brinsley Sheridan (*The Rivals*, 1775) wrote elaborate drawing-room comedies—primarily for sophisticated London audiences.

The miseries across the Channel were not ignored by everyone. The Crown's draconian Irish policies appalled the conservative political philosopher Edmund Burke, who warned that British oppression was "not only very grievous to [the Irish Roman Catholics] but very impolitic with regard to the State."

In 1729, Jonathan Swift published his scathing **Modest Proposal to the Public for Preventing the Children of Poor People in Ireland from Being a Burden to Their Parents or Country, and for Making Them Beneficial to the Public**. His solution to the problem of overpopulation: to cook and

eat Irish babies who, upon reaching the age of one, would make "a most delicious nourishing and wholesome Food, whether *Stewed, Roasted, Baked, or Boiled.*"

The mindless cruelty of the great Anglo-Irish landowners is a central theme in the 19th-century novels of Maria Edgeworth and in the more recent work of Walter Macken. The title of Edgeworth's **Castle Rackrent** (1800), the best of her efforts, refers to the devious methods by which Irish landlords "racked" the rent—driving it up beyond its fair level.

Macken's **The Silent People** (1962) spans the decades leading up to the Great Famine. In one passage, a weary Irish schoolmaster explains life's realities to his nephew: "I own nothing. I built this house but it isn't mine. I grow potatoes in a two-rood field but it isn't mine. . . . We have no weapons, except patience and sufferance, and talk about tomorrow."

The Famine left a legacy of bitterness. It fed nationalist passions that stunned and wearied the greatest of all Irish poets: "Dear shadows, now you know it all, / All the folly of a fight." Many of **The Collected Poems of William Butler Yeats** (Macmillan, 1933) reflect the artist's disaffection from the world of politics.

From the dizzying currents of public life, Yeats found temporary refuge at Coole Park, the Galway estate of his mentor, Augusta Gregory. Lady Gregory was an innovative folklorist and vigorous supporter of Irish drama, whose history she traces in **Our Irish Theatre** (Putnam's, 1913; Oxford, 1972). As she put it: "We went on giving what we thought good until it became popular."

That took time. Riots attended the 1907 opening of J. M. Synge's **Playboy of the Western World**. The plot: A young peasant who claims to have

killed his father is welcomed into a neighboring community, enjoying the inhabitants' worshipful admiration until the truth comes out—he has not, in fact, "destroyed his da." Devotion turns to contempt, and in a sudden frenzy, his former friends move to hang him.

The stark brutality characteristic of much of Synge's work repelled Dublin audiences. They would get more of the same from Sean O'Casey (1884–1964), author of such Abbey Theatre classics as **The Plough and the Stars** (1926) and **Juno and the Paycock** (1928).

While "that enquiring man John Synge" fell easily into the rhythms of the Celtic revival, Yeats, at the forefront of the movement, was not always successful in his search for converts. Failures included such a major figure as James Joyce (1882–1941), who wrote about Ireland but refused to place his talents in its service.

Joyce remains, of course, a towering figure in the Irish literary pantheon. His **Ulysses** (1922)—a modern-day epic tracing the journeys of two Dublin men, Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus, on June 16, 1904 ("Bloomsday")—recently appeared in a new "corrected" version (Garland, 1984). Some 5,000 errors, detected by scholars over the years, have been eliminated in this three-volume critical tour de force (undertaken, as it happens, by a team of West German professors).

Another writer who disdained what poet Paddy Kavanagh once called Ireland as "invented and patented by Yeats, Lady Gregory, and Synge" was Brendan Behan (1923–64), one of the most perversely congenial talents Ireland has produced. Behan preferred the seamier side of Irish life; alcoholism ("I'm very fond of decanters, hav-

IRELAND: HISTORIES

The titles below were recommended by James S. Donnelly, Jr., a University of Wisconsin, Madison, historian and former Wilson Center Fellow, and Thomas Hachey, a Marquette University historian and president of the American Committee for Irish Studies.

ANCIENT IRELAND: **Ireland before the Vikings**, by Gearóid MacNiocaill (Gill & MacMillan, 1972). The standard work on the period. See also **Early Christian Ireland**, by Máire and Liam de Paor (Praeger, 1958, cloth; Thames & Hudson, 1979, paper). Subsequent centuries are treated in **Ireland before the Normans**, by Donncha Ó Corráin (Gill & Macmillan, 1972).

FROM CONQUEST TO UNION: **The Lordship of Ireland in the Middle Ages**, by J. F. Lydon (Univ. of Toronto, 1972). A vivid account of the rise and decline of Anglo-Norman society. **Irish Life in the Seventeenth Century: After Cromwell**, by Edward MacLysaght (Longmans, 1939, cloth; Irish Academic Press, 1979, paper). Especially valuable for its analysis of the Plantation of Ulster. W.E.H. Lecky's **A History of Ireland in the Eighteenth Century** (Longmans, 1892; Univ. of Chicago, abridged, 1972) is dated but still a classic. **Partners in Revolution: The United Irishmen and France**, by Marianne Elliott (Yale, 1982). A prize-winning, gracefully written study of Irish revolutionary republicanism.

THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE: **The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845–1849**, by Cecil Woodham-Smith (Harper, 1922, cloth; Dutton, 1980, paper). Graphic and moving account of the Famine. **Ireland since the Famine**, by F.S.L. Lyons (Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1971). The most authoritative political and cultural survey. On nationalist movements, Robert Kee's **The Green Flag** (Weidenfield & Nicolson, 1972) may be familiar to public-television viewers who saw the 1982 series based on this book. George Dangerfield's **The Damnable Question** (Little, Brown, 1976; Peter Smith, 1983) focuses on the 1916 Easter Rising.

MODERN IRELAND: **Ireland: A Social and Cultural History, 1922–79**, by Terence Brown (Fontana, 1981). Covers the nation's evolution since independence. A complementary volume is Basil Chubb's **The Government and Politics of Ireland** (Stanford, 1970, 1982). For a lucid account of the contemporary crisis in Northern Ireland see **The Uncivil Wars: Ireland Today** (Houghton, 1983, cloth; 1984, paper), by Padraig O'Malley.

ing a slight weakness for what goes into them") led to an early death at the age of 41.

In **Brendan Behan's Ireland** (Hutchinson, 1962), a diary-sketchbook-literary grab bag, the ramblings of the spinner of tales are cover for the well-aimed blows of the myth-basher.

Hapless victims include an American student whom Behan gleefully remembers having seen jotting "Parsnips—attitude of Yeats to." Behan is best remembered as a writer of plays, notably **The Quare Fellow** (1956) and **The Hostage** (1958).

As for verse, Seamus Heaney has

been called (by Robert Lowell) the finest Irish poet since Yeats. He has published six volumes of poetry, including the best-selling **Field Work** (Farrar, 1979, cloth & paper). **Sweeney Astray** (Farrar, 1983) is Heaney's recent translation of a medieval Irish legend whose hero, Mad Sweeney, has been cursed and turned into a bird after killing an innocent psalmist.

The short story has been an exceptionally rich Irish genre during the second half of the 20th century. In many of the **Collected Stories** of Frank O'Connor (Knopf, 1981, paper), the banal blossoms suddenly into the eternal; daily life becomes a window on something larger. In "My Oedipus Complex," one of O'Connor's most popular stories, a precocious child vies with his father—recently returned from war—for his mother's time and attention, and for a place in her bed.

Where O'Connor is tender, the **Finest Stories** of Sean O'Faolain (Little, Brown, 1957) evoke a bleak world of constricted possibilities. In "The End of the Record," a biting satire of the Celtic revival, a young radio personality comes to town offering cash for authentic Irish lore. Aged residents, sunk in lethargy, do not themselves remember—or much care about—the old tales but are drawn by the money: "One time I had a grand story about Finn Mac-Cool and the Scotch giant. But it is gone from me. And I'd be getting my fine five-shilling piece into my fist

this minute if I could only announce it to him."

At the heart of much Irish writing is a grand refusal to embroider reality, to portray the world other than as it *is*. But there is also a companion tendency not to take the world—and writing—too seriously. Irish writers like to break mirrors as well as hold them up to life.

One of the more outrageous—and most lucid—of Irish iconoclasts is Brian O'Nolan, alias Flann O'Brien, alias Myles na gCopaleen. The author of **At Swim-Two-Birds** (1939) and **The Dalkey Archive** (1964), O'Nolan was at his most exuberant in the freewheeling columns he wrote for Dublin's *Irish Times*, many of which appear in **A Flann O'Brien Reader** (Viking, 1978).

What "Myles" engaged in here was nothing less than a giant send-up of the "best" Irish literary life: "Poor Jimmy Joyce abolished the King's English . . . and I . . . I? As far as I remember, I founded the Rathmines branch of the Gaelic League. Having nothing to say, I thought at the time that it was important to revive a distant language in which absolutely nothing could be said."

And yet, behind the jibe is an abiding Irish faith in the power of words to draw meaning from the world. "Out of the quarrel with others, we make rhetoric," Yeats once observed. "Out of the quarrel with ourselves, we make poetry."

—Amy R. Gutman

EDITOR'S NOTE: Amy R. Gutman is an assistant editor of *The Wilson Quarterly*.

EMILY DICKINSON ON HER OWN TERMS

Few American poets, wrote biographer Jay Leyda, have been the "subject of so much distorting gossip" as has Emily Dickinson. The myths that came to enshroud the 19th-century poet—depicting her variously as hermit-recluse, village eccentric, or victim of unrequited love—have often had the effect of trivializing both her life and work. Here, Betsy Erkkila argues that behind Dickinson's unorthodox behavior and her strikingly original poetry was a shrewd strategy for survival, a means by which she gained at least partial freedom from the close restrictions of Puritan New England society.



by Betsy Erkkila

"Emily was my patron saint," said William Carlos Williams in a 1962 interview. More recently, another prominent American poet, Adrienne Rich, described Dickinson as "the genius of the 19th-century female mind in America." Rich went on to praise Dickinson for inventing "a language more varied, more compressed, more dense with implications, more complex of syntax, than any American poetic language to date."

Despite the accolades of the poets and the probing of biographers, Emily Dickinson remains obscured by many of the same myths and legends that grew up around her while she was alive. Dickinson herself did little to help future investigators separate fact from fiction. Having asked that her personal papers be destroyed after her death, she left only a few traces to mark the path of her external life.

Born in 1830 in rural Amherst, Massachusetts, she spent her entire life in the household of her parents, Emily and Edward Dickinson. Her father, a successful lawyer, was active in local affairs and served in the state legislature and the U.S. House of Representatives. Her older brother, Austin, also a lawyer in

*Emily Dickinson
(1830–1886) in a daguerreo-
type taken while she was a
student at Mount Holyoke.*



Amherst, was her lifelong intellectual companion, sharing her interest in literature and music. Lavinia, the youngest of the three children, shared with her sister the curious distinction of never leaving home.* It was Lavinia who once described the roles of the various members of the Dickinson family. Emily, she wrote, “had to think—she was the only one of us who had that to do; . . . Father believed; and mother loved; and Austin had Amherst; and I had the family to keep track of.”

As a child, Dickinson attended the First Church of Christ, the local Congregational church, but she, alone among her family, never underwent the experience of conversion—the necessary prelude to full membership in this Calvinist sect. By the late 1850s, she had stopped attending church altogether.

Dickinson’s formal schooling was similarly truncated. At age 10, she was enrolled in the “English Course” at Amherst

*The family had two houses, the imposing “Homestead” on Main Street and an equally capacious house on Prince Street, where they lived from 1840 to 1855.

Academy, where for seven years she studied language, literature, politics, natural science, morals, and society. She was also a student for one year, 1847–48, at nearby Mount Holyoke Female Seminary, which had been founded in 1837 as the nation's first college of higher education for women.

"I went to school," Dickinson later wrote, "but . . . had no education." Her real education took place in the family library, where in addition to the Bible and Shakespeare, to which she often returned, she read and admired the work of Sir Thomas Browne, John Keats, Robert Browning, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and John Ruskin. She felt a particular affinity for contemporary women writers, including the Brontë sisters, George Eliot, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Helen Hunt Jackson. Dickinson hung portraits of Eliot and Browning in her upstairs bedroom and acknowledged Browning, Charlotte Brontë, and Jackson as the inspirations for several of her poems.



The Dickinson household was not merely the site of her education; it became, increasingly, the center and circumference of her world. Aside from a trip to Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., in 1854, Dickinson rarely left the town of Amherst. After 1868, she was never seen off the Homestead premises. Besides helping with chores around the house, she spent most of her time reading, "thinking," and writing. Dickinson's mother considered her a "mystery and a constant surprise," and her father was equally baffled by his daughter's peculiar behavior. No one in the family had any idea how much she was writing.

Between 1858 and 1862, it was later discovered, she wrote like a person possessed, often producing a poem a day. It was also during this period that her life was transformed into the myth of Amherst. Withdrawing more and more, keeping to her room, sometimes even refusing to see visitors who called, she began to dress only in white—a sartorial habit that added to her reputation as an eccentric.

The main elements of the myth were described in a private journal by Mabel Loomis Todd, the wife of an Amherst profes-

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sor, who carried on a secret 13-year love affair with the poet's brother, Austin, and who was instrumental in editing and publishing the first volume of Dickinson's *Poems* in 1890.

"Emily is called in Amherst 'the myth,'" Todd wrote in 1882. "She has not been out of the house for fifteen years. . . . She writes the strangest poems, and very remarkable ones. She is in many respects a genius. She wears always white, & has her hair arranged as was the fashion fifteen years ago when she went into retirement."

Lavinia described Emily's retirement as "only a happen," and Austin said she withdrew because she found society "thin and unsatisfying in the face of the Great realities of Life." Perhaps the best explanation was offered by Dickinson herself, in a poem composed sometime around 1862:

The Soul selects her own Society—
Then—shuts the Door—
To her divine Majority—
Present no more—

Renunciation of society, these lines suggest, was Dickinson's form of artistic self-preservation, her way of practicing what Adrienne Rich labeled "necessary economies."

Even during Dickinson's lifetime, however, rumors began to develop that the cause of her seclusion and the source of her poems was a failed romance. The rumor was given more substance when in *The Life and Letters of Emily Dickinson* (1924), Martha Dickinson Bianchi, Dickinson's niece, claimed that Dickinson fell hopelessly in love with the Reverend Charles Wadsworth during her trip to Philadelphia in 1854. The romance assumed yet another dimension when in *Emily Dickinson's Home* (1955), Millicent Todd Bingham published the rough drafts of three love letters addressed by Dickinson to an unidentified "Master." Presenting herself under the name of Daisy to an all-powerful Master, Dickinson confesses in anguished and densely metaphoric language "a love so big it scares her, rushing among her small heart—pushing aside the blood and leaving her faint and white in the gust's arm."

Although there is no evidence that these letters were ever mailed, or indeed that the Master was any more than a figure of Dickinson's imagination, studies of Dickinson have tended to center on the Master as the key to the riddle of her life and art. Not surprisingly, much scholarly ink has flowed in defense of various figures, male and female, who might best qualify for the role of Master.

"Wadsworth as muse made her a poet," wrote Thomas Johnson in his 1955 biography. Another biographer, Richard Sewall, proposed Samuel Bowles, a Springfield, Massachusetts, newspaper editor who began visiting Dickinson in 1858. More recent critics, many of them feminists, have noted the trivializing effect of the Master myth: Masking the element of self-conscious choice in her life, it reduces her work to the scratchings of a sufferer of unrequited love.

The identity of the Master, whether real or figurative, is, in fact, less important than the role that Dickinson makes him play in her life and art. At about the same time that she wrote her Master letters, she composed a series of bridal poems in which she enacts a fantasy marriage with a powerful male figure. While Dickinson makes use of the language of love and redemption, the male figure in these poems acts as a poetic muse, the inspiration for and projection of her own creative power. Their marriage thus becomes a sign of her artistic dedication:

I'm ceded—I've stopped being Theirs—
The name They dropped upon my face
With water, in the country church
Is finished using, now,

Baptized, before, without the choice,
But this time, consciously, of Grace—
Unto supremest name—
Called to my Full—the Crescent dropped—
Existence's whole Arc, filled up,
With one small Diadem.

My second Rank—too small the first—
Crowned—Crowing—on my Father's breast—
A half unconscious Queen—
But this time—Adequate—Erect,
With Will to choose, or to reject,
And I choose, just a Crown—

The poem is a good example of the ambiguity of Dickinson's use of language and metaphor—the interchangeability of terms within her work. Drawing upon biblical language and religious ritual, the poem suggests an earthly or heavenly marriage, not to man or God but to her poetic muse. Through this marriage, Dickinson—"Adequate—Erect"—assumes sovereignty over herself.

In their determination to read Dickinson's life in terms of a traditional romantic plot, biographers have missed the unique

pattern of her life—her struggle to create a female life not yet imagined by the culture in which she lived. Dickinson was not the innocent, lovelorn, and emotionally fragile girl sentimentalized by the Dickinson myth and popularized by William Luce's 1976 play, *The Belle of Amherst*. Her decision to shut the door on Amherst society in the late '50s transformed her house into a kind of magical realm in which she was free to engage her poetic genius. Her seclusion was not the result of a failed love affair but rather a part of a more general pattern of renunciation through which she, in her quest for self-sovereignty, carried on an argument with the Puritan fathers, attacking with wit and irony their cheerless Calvinist doctrine, their stern patriarchal God, and their rigid notions of "true womanhood."

"When much in the Woods as a little Girl," Dickinson said in 1862, "I was told that the Snake would bite me, that I might pick a poisonous flower, or Goblins kidnap me, but I went along and met no one but Angels, who were far shyer of me, than I could be of them, so I havn't that confidence in fraud which many exercise." Dickinson's anecdote is a kind of allegory of her life and work, suggesting the self-reliant spirit in which she, like Nathaniel Hawthorne's Hester Prynne in the forest, tested the wisdom of the Puritan Fathers. At age 15, she already had begun to conceive of herself as part of a female universe of blooming gardens and singing birds, continually threatened by a tyrannical, all-powerful masculine force. "I have heard some sweet little birds sing," she wrote her friend Abiah Root in 1845, "but I fear we shall have more cold weather and their little bills will be frozen up before their songs are finished. My plants look beautifully. Old King Frost has not had the pleasure of snatching any of them in his cold embrace as yet, and I hope will not." The same struggle between female fecundity and a potentially destructive male force is the subject of several of her poems:

Apparently with no surprise
To any happy Flower
The Frost beheads it at its play—
In accidental power—
The blonde Assassin passes on—
The Sun proceeds unmoved
To measure off another Day
For an Approving God.

Written only a few years before her death in 1886, the poem suggests the fear and awe that Dickinson continued to experience in the face of the "blonde Assassin" and the seemingly arbitrary

and impersonal power of the Puritan God.

Between 1840 and 1862, there were no fewer than eight Calvinist religious revivals in Amherst. Although her mother and father, sister and brother, and most of her companions received the call to God, Dickinson resisted. "Christ is calling everyone here," she wrote her friend Jane Humphrey. "I am standing alone in rebellion, and growing very careless." Wavering between belief and doubt, Dickinson was, like the figure in Wallace Stevens's "Sunday Morning," reluctant to exchange the rich, changing variety of the world for the promise of permanent heavenly bliss: "It was then my greatest pleasure to commune alone with the great God," she wrote of her momentary experience of religious grace. "But the world allured me & in an unguarded moment I listened to her syren voice."

During her year at Mount Holyoke, Dickinson resisted the religious instruction of the founder, Mary Lyon; she was one of the few students found to be "without hope." "I regret that last term, when that golden opportunity was mine, that I did not give up and become a Christian," she wrote Abiah Root in 1848; "but it is hard for me to give up the world." Associating religious conversion with the act of giving herself up to an all-powerful God, Dickinson resisted the call of revival. Later, in her poems, she celebrated her refusal:

Some keep the Sabbath going to Church—
I keep it, staying at Home—
With a Bobolink for a Chorister—
And an Orchard, for a Dome—

Here, Dickinson reinvents the religion of the fathers in the image of her own and nature's "syren voice." As in many of her poems, her unorthodox use of the hymnal form of Isaac Watts's *Christian Psalmody* to express unconventional views provides an occasion for subtle irony.

Dickinson's refusal to assume the passive role required of a proper Christian woman became part of her more general refusal to play a traditional female role. As a woman poet seeking to create a place for herself in a predominantly male literary tradition—represented in America by such figures as Emerson, Edgar Allan Poe, and Walt Whitman—Dickinson was split between her sense of herself as an independent artist and the demands of domesticity, piety, and submissiveness expected of "true womanhood."

Dickinson described in explicit and humorous detail this split between her writer self and her domestic self in an 1850 let-

ter to Jane Humphrey: "So *many* wants—and me so *very* handy—and my time of so *little* account—and my writing so *very* needless—and really I came to the conclusion that I should be a villain unparalleled if I took but an inch of time for so unholy a purpose as writing a friendly letter."

Unable to be the Victorian Angel in the House, Dickinson associated her refusal with the satanic: "Somehow or other I incline to other things—and Satan covers them up with flowers, and I reach out to pick them. The path of duty looks very ugly indeed—and the place where I want to go more amiable—a great deal—it is so much easier to do wrong than right—so much pleasanter to be evil than good, I don't wonder that good angels weep—and bad ones sing songs."

Dickinson's association of her writing with the songs of bad angels betrays the inescapable influence of the Puritan culture in which she was raised. Within Puritan New England, as Hawthorne suggests in his Custom House preface to *The Scarlet Letter*, art and the imagination had always been associated with the seductions of Satan. Although the culture could accommodate those art forms that were tightly bound by a moral and religious perspective, most of Dickinson's contemporaries still looked upon the unfettered imagination as seditious and satanic.

At a time when unprecedented numbers of female poets were entering the literary marketplace, writing poems that confirmed rather than challenged conventional views of womanhood, Dickinson once again stood alone in rebellion. No poet was more popular than Lydia Sigourney, who wrote poems voicing traditional sentiments about mothers, children, and home in a completely standardized form. In one of her more popular poems, "The Connecticut River," Sigourney describes the domestic economy of the female:

Her pastime when the daily task is o'er,
With apron clean, to seek her neighbour's door,
Partake the friendly feast, with social glow,
Exchange the news, and make the stocking grow;
Then hale and cheerful to her home repair,
When Sol's slant ray renews her evening care,
Press the full udder for her children's meal,
Rock the tired babe—or wake the tuneful wheel.

Dickinson could no more reproduce such stock sentiments than she could the predictable rhymes in which they were packaged. Indeed, in many of her poems, she mocked the "Dimity Convictions" of the Angel in the House:

What Soft—Cherubic Creatures—
These Gentlewomen Are—
One would as soon assault a Plush—
Or violate a Star—

Such Dimity Convictions—
A Horror so refined
Of freckled Human Nature—
Of Deity—ashamed—

What set Dickinson apart from the gentlewoman and the lady poet was her desire to use the power of the “word made flesh” to become herself a sort of god, creating an imaginary universe in which the values of America—political, moral, religious—were reversed and, in many cases, reinvented. She knew, if others did not, that in the eyes of her culture she was one of the bad angels. And had she been born at an earlier time, she, like the free-thinking Anne Hutchinson of Boston, might have been banished as a witch.

As Dickinson began during the 1850s to develop her poetic resources, she came to look upon marriage as a potential threat to her art. “You and I have been strangely silent upon this subject, Susie,” she wrote her future sister-in-law in 1853. “How dull our lives must seem to the bride, and the plighted maiden, whose days are fed with gold, and who gathers pearls every evening; but to the *wife*, Susie, sometimes the *wife forgotten*, our lives perhaps seem dearer than all others in the world; you have seen flowers at morning, *satisfied* with the dew, and those same sweet flowers at noon with their heads bowed in anguish before the mighty sun. . . . they know that the man of noon is *mightier* than the morning, and their life is henceforth to him. Oh, Susie, it is dangerous. . . . It does so rend me, Susie, the thought of it when it comes, that I tremble lest at sometime I, too, am yielded up.” Moving toward her own creative flowering, Dickinson feared yielding herself up to marriage and “the man of noon,” just as she feared giving herself up to the power of God.

Dickinson’s poems, only seven of which were published during her lifetime, became a counterworld in which she, rather than the “blonde Assassin” or the “man of noon,” was the sovereign power:

I reckon—when I count at all—
First—Poets—Then the Sun—
Then Summer—Then the Heaven of God—
And then—the List is done—

But, looking back—the First so seems
 To Comprehend the Whole—
 The Others look a needless Show—
 So I write—Poets—All—

Their Summer—lasts a Solid Year—

The art of writing was Dickinson's means of entering a world of endless summer, releasing her from the world of time, change, and female powerlessness. Unlike Whitman and Emerson, whose moments of vision became the base of an affirmative ethics and poetics, Dickinson's moments of vision were transient and provisional. Her poems are characterized by radical shifts in subject and mood: She swings between moments of transport, when she is "Rowing in Eden" and "Reeling—thro endless summer days," and moments of loss, guilt, and despair, when she is the "Queen of Calvary."

She was, in fact, primarily a poet of the end of life, whose principal subject was death. At times she played even with death, as in "I Heard a Fly buzz—when I died—," where, characteristically, the homey (fly) jostles with the cosmic (death), giving the subject a humorous, albeit grotesque, dimension; or in her much anthologized "Because I could not stop for Death—," where she treats death as a lover who comes to court her. At other times, however, she was more solemn:

There's a certain Slant of light,
 Winter afternoons—
 That oppresses, like the Heft
 Of Cathedral Tunes—

Heavenly Hurt, it gives us—
 We can find no scar,
 But internal difference,
 Where the Meanings, are—

None may teach it—Any
 'Tis the Seal Despair—
 An imperial affliction
 Sent us of the Air

Dickinson made riddle and paradox her means of expression—as exemplified by the "Heft" of cathedral tunes, the "Heavenly Hurt," and the "imperial affliction" in the above passage. The drama of her poems is created not by logical development

and narrative line, but by verbal compression and the dynamic tension created by the splitting of syntax, image, line, and unit. Like the slant light in the above passage, Dickinson's slant style—her use of dashes and off-rhymes and her fracture of image and syntax—is an emblem of her fragmented way of being and seeing in a world split by the polarities of life and death, faith and doubt, masculine and feminine, being and nothingness.



In April 1862, the *Atlantic Monthly* published a piece entitled "Letter to a Young Contributor" by the well-known abolitionist minister and supporter of women's rights Thomas Higginson. Dickinson read the letter and, encouraged by his words on the art of writing and publication, wrote him for advice about her own creative work: "Are you too deeply occupied to say if my Verse is alive," she asked him in a letter written only a few weeks after his article had appeared. The letter was the first in a correspondence that lasted until Dickinson's death in 1886.

By writing to Higginson at the height of her artistic power, Dickinson was obviously seeking, in her circumspect way, a larger audience for her work. Although Higginson later helped Mabel Loomis Todd in the posthumous publication of Dickinson's poems, he was, during the poet's lifetime, a key figure in influencing her *not* to publish. Attuned to the lilting rhythms and conventional poetic taste of the day, Higginson was unable to appreciate Dickinson's linguistic and artistic innovation. Referring to her as his "half-cracked poetess," he apparently encouraged her to standardize her meter and regularize or eliminate entirely her rhyme. Dickinson said of his first letter to her: "I thanked you for your justice—but could not drop the Bells whose jingling cooled my Tramp." And then, she added: "You think my gait 'spasmodic'—I am in danger—Sir—You think me 'uncontrolled'—I have no Tribunal." Dickinson's words are at once coy and ironic, suggesting that her unorthodox metrics, like her unorthodox life, are endangered by the culture in which she lives.

It was the popular 19th-century American poet Helen Hunt Jackson, and not Higginson, who was the first to recognize Dickinson's unique poetic genius. While Higginson was still complaining about Dickinson's "spasmodic" and "uncontrolled" style, Jackson was unrelenting in her effort to get Dickinson published. "You are a great poet," she wrote Dickinson in 1876, "and it is a wrong to the day you live in, that you will not sing aloud." But Dickinson, who had already experi-

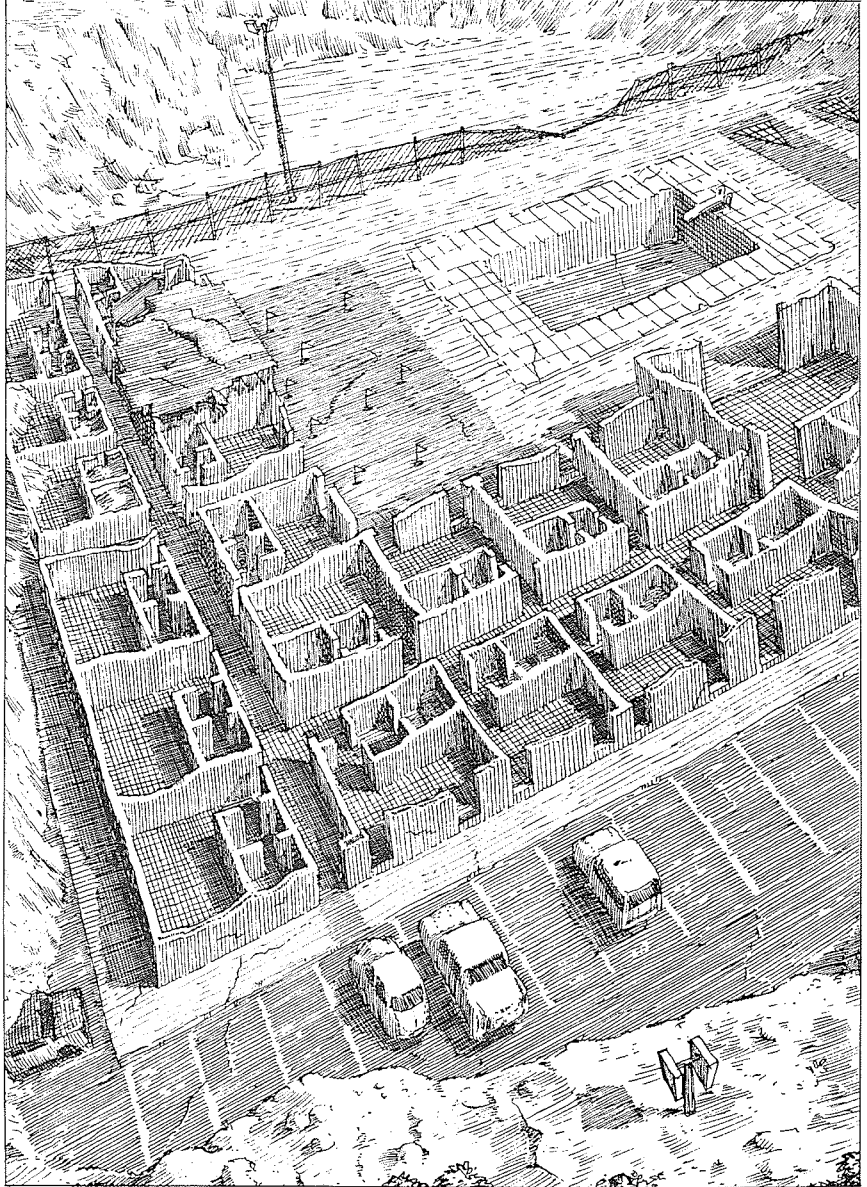
enced what she called the "surgery" of Higginson's advice and the corrections of editors eager to straighten her slant style, had already determined not to publish.

"Perhaps you laugh at me!" Dickinson wrote her good friends Dr. and Mrs. Josiah Gilbert Holland in 1862 at the time of her most intense creative activity. "Perhaps the whole United States are laughing at me too! I can't stop for that! . . . I found a bird, this morning, down—down—on a little bush at the foot of the garden, and wherefore sing, I said, since nobody *hears*? One sob in the throat, one flutter of the bosom—'My business is to *sing*'—and away she rose!"

When Dickinson died of Bright's disease on May 15, 1886, no one, not even her family, had any idea of the extent of her poetic "business." Among Dickinson's belongings, her sister Lavinia found 1,775 poems, some in several drafts, some scribbled in fragments on scraps of papers, and some sewn neatly into fascicles of 18 to 20 poems each.

The fact that these poems remained unpublished is itself a sign of the plight of female genius in 19th-century America. But Dickinson's refusal to publish was also one final antinomian gesture, her last rebellious act in her argument with America. Dickinson's silence was not powerless but potent in its ability to protect the purity of a new female being and a new poetic idiom, both of which came to be appreciated in the next century. By choosing not to publish her poems, Dickinson freed herself from the potential violations of editorial or public taste. "'No,'" she said toward the close of her life, "is the wildest word we consign to Language."





"Slowly, a vast funerary complex began to emerge from the soil." In Motel of the Mysteries (1979), artist David Macaulay, describing an excavation undertaken in A.D. 4022, gently poked fun at archaeological speculation: "Specially marked funerary game areas intended to occupy the spirits of the dead during eternal life were located around the sacred pool."

Archaeology

The quest for truth in history is an old one. "How difficult it is," Plutarch once complained, "to trace and find out the truth of anything by history." History, wrote Matthew Arnold, is a "huge Mississippi of falsehood." "Merely gossip," added Oscar Wilde. Such critics might have felt more hopeful had they seen the emergence of archaeology as a scholarly discipline. Known mostly for uncovering old tombs, old bones, and ancient cities, archaeologists occupy a peculiar place in academe: They are "social scientists," with strong links to anthropology and history, but their techniques are often those of natural science, borrowed from the physicist, chemist, and biologist. Archaeology has corrected many pages of history, given us new insights, and shown that much of our past can be accurately described. Here, Bea Riemschneider looks at archaeology's rapid development during the past two centuries. Don S. Rice reports on the advocates of a controversial "new archaeology," who are pursuing the *hows* and the *whys* of man's cultural evolution.

KNOWING THE UNKNOWNABLE

by Bea Riemschneider

The stuff of archaeology is the debris of yesterday.

Archaeology is the science of what has remained, for any reason at all, anyplace in the world, from any period of the past. The breadth of its concerns is virtually limitless, its raw material correspondingly wide-ranging: From stone tools, held in the strata at Olduvai Gorge, to a Roman villa in England, its buried foundation appearing as a pattern of "crop marks" in a wheat field; from butchered bones, found at the site of Plymouth Colony, to the lava at Pompeii, whose ghostly hollows, when injected with plaster of Paris, reveal the shapes of human remains—a mother, say, shielding her child. The physical remains are by turns monolithic and

microscopic, solid and evanescent. They are discovered through diligence and through good luck.

And they possess a significance greater than themselves. The purpose of archaeology is to find and analyze such static material things and, as archaeologist Lewis Binford has written, "translate them into statements about the dynamics of past ways of life."

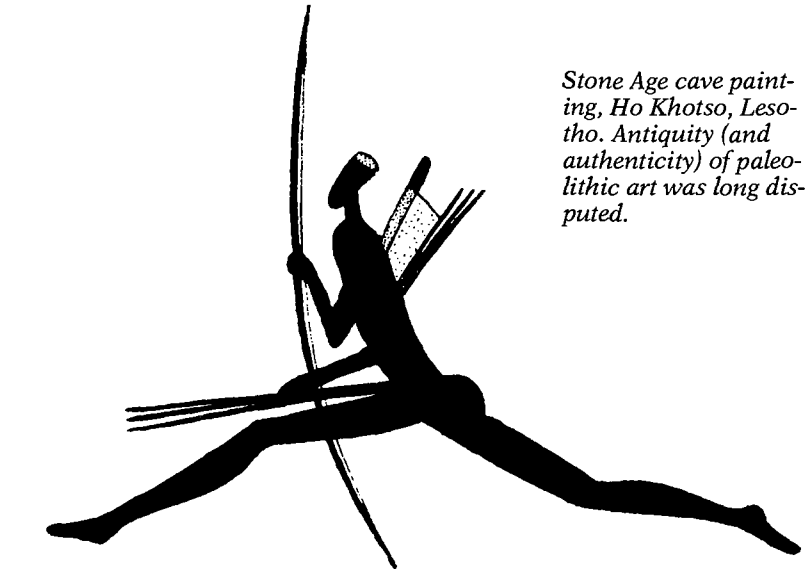
Thank You, King Charles

Needless to say, there is an important *contemporary* dimension to this endeavor. In complex ways, the past inheres in the present and anticipates the future. Archaeology can touch our daily lives, can affect politics, religion, economics; these factors, in turn, may advance or retard the progress of archaeology.

Mexico, for example, pours vast sums into archaeological excavation—in part to attract tourists who pour some \$2 billion into the country's economy every year; but economic progress, in the form of new construction, also *destroys* many archaeological sites every year in Mexico, as elsewhere. Germans, Swedes, and white Rhodesians at various times used archaeology to support racist theories, the Rhodesians arguing, for example, that the ruins at Great Zimbabwe were the work not of black Africans but of Phoenicians; when white-ruled Rhodesia became a black-ruled state in 1979, the new government turned the tables and renamed the country . . . Zimbabwe. The government of Israel has long promoted archaeology as a way of demonstrating the great antiquity of Jewish claims in Palestine; but some Orthodox Jews have impeded digging in Jerusalem, fearing the desecration of their forefathers' graves. American Indians likewise object to violation of burial sites, and state archaeologists on both coasts have now agreed to rebury any excavated Indian remains.

In the United States today, there are roughly 1,700 active archaeologists, most of them affiliated with universities or museums. They represent an extraordinarily diverse array of men and women, highly specialized by technique and with varied geographical and chronological interests. One may be an ethnoarchaeologist, studying the Nunamiut Eskimos of Alaska, another an experimental archaeologist, concerned with agriculture in pre-Roman Britain. An archaeological chemist may devote his energies to the analysis of Shang dynasty fabrics; an

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archaeoastronomer, to Anasazi petroglyphs in New Mexico. There are industrial archaeologists, urban archaeologists, historical archaeologists, underwater archaeologists, conservation archaeologists, and salvage archaeologists. The job of the latter is to keep one step ahead of the bulldozer, quickly excavating construction sites when artifacts are found or when local law demands.

The one thing most archaeologists around the world have in common, apart from advanced degrees, is a heavy dependence on the good will of others—private societies, philanthropists, foundations, governments—for money to finance their explorations. Fortunately for them, a goodly number of institutions seem to have concluded, with England's King Charles I, that "the study of antiquities [is] very serviceable and useful to the general good of the State and Commonwealth."

As a modern *academic* discipline, archaeology is relatively young—vastly younger than history, younger by decades than anthropology and sociology. But it boasts a long pedigree.

The history of what we might call "proto-archaeology" begins with banditry. The very first people to lay their hands on the undisturbed graves of antiquity, and the treasures they often contained, were the looters and grave robbers of Egypt. (As archaeologist W. B. Emery once noted, the ancient Egyptians believed that "you could take it with you.") Many plundered the tombs of their country's own deceased pharaohs soon after the

rulers were laid to rest, a distressing fact discovered thousands of years later by early 20th-century Egyptologists.

Looting, unfortunately, has persisted to this day. It is a serious problem worldwide, especially in the Mideast, Central America, and the American Southwest, because of the high prices many artifacts can fetch from dealers and collectors. In 1984, for example, one looter (later apprehended) in Utah received \$70,000 for 30 Indian baskets, about 1,200 years old, that he found in a cave on U.S. Forest Service land. Many ancient pueblo sites in the Southwest, their terrain scored by hundreds of looters' shafts, are now virtually worthless from an archaeological perspective.

Antiquarians and Dilettantes

The mantle of "first archaeologist" is commonly bestowed on Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon (556–539 B.C.). Nabonidus dug at Ur and displayed the artifacts he found. The first museum was born. There are only a few examples of any passion for collecting during Greek and Roman times. Not until the Renaissance, when humanists such as Petrarch awakened a new interest in antiquity, did any kind of deliberate excavations get under way. Cyriacus of Ancona (circa 1391–1452), a merchant and humanist, traveled throughout the Mediterranean studying ancient monuments and deciphering inscriptions. His business, he liked to say, was "restoring the dead to life."

Collecting classical antiquities became the pastime first of Roman Catholic prelates, then of lay dilettantes all over Europe. Some collectors, such as England's Thomas Howard, the earl of Arundel (1561–1626), amassed vast holdings of curios from Italy, Greece, even parts of Asia. Howard's collection formed the basis of Oxford University's Ashmolean Museum. One thing led to another: Like collectors of plant and animal specimens, collectors of antiquities eventually sought to organize and classify their artifacts. They became "antiquarians," and the *science* of archaeology, primitive though it was, began with their early efforts at taxonomy.

Most European antiquarians focused on the remains of the classical world, a world already known to them through written records. In England, however, local historians were as much concerned with the remnants of *prehistory*—with the conspicuous and mysterious ring forts and dolmens and stone circles in which Britain abounded—as they were with the relics of a transient Roman occupier. Not a little chauvinism was involved here as a mighty people, on the eve of empire, looked to the

mythic origins of their race. William Camden (1551–1623), a schoolmaster, traveled the length and breadth of England taking notes on Hadrian's Wall, Stonehenge, and other visible antiquities. The result, in 1586, was his *Britannia*, the first general guide to the archaeology of the sceptered isle. Later investigators sent out questionnaires: "Are there any ancient sepulchres hereabout of Men of Gigantic Stature, Roman Generals, and others of ancient times?"

During the 18th century, published accounts by European travelers in the Mediterranean and the Near East whetted interest in the lost civilizations of the region, particularly that of ancient Egypt. When Napoleon Bonaparte led a French military expedition to the banks of the Nile in 1798, he brought a corps of 175 "learned civilians" with him to make a careful study of archaeological remains. Within a year, one of his officers had unearthed the Rosetta Stone, with its trilingual inscription in Greek, demotic, and Egyptian hieroglyphs. The British seized the Stone when they occupied Egypt in 1801, but the French took away tracings. It was a brilliant French linguist, Jean-François Champollion, who in 1822 correctly deduced that the hieroglyphs were phonetic characters, not "picture-writing" as in Chinese, and finally deciphered the Egyptian script. By then, it was clear to many scholars that the unveiling of ancient languages—in effect, letting the Assyrians and Persians and Egyptians speak for themselves—would be the key to all future archaeological work in the Near East and elsewhere.*

Bulldozing Nimrūd

What Champollion did for Egypt, Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson did for Persia. Rawlinson spent years in what is now Iran, copying pictographic cuneiform inscriptions. By 1846, he had succeeded in translating the wedge-shaped Old Persian script, making possible the first intimate glimpse of ancient Persian society. Rawlinson and others soon mastered the Babylonian and Assyrian scripts as well—just in time, as it happened. For even as they toiled, whole libraries of clay tablets—grammars, dictionaries, histories, ledgers, works of literature—were being retrieved from the sands of Mesopotamia.

The large-scale European excavation of the ancient city of Nimrūd—mistakenly believed to be Biblical Nineveh—in what

*Linguistic mysteries remain. "Linear B," one of the scripts of Crete's Bronze Age Minoan civilization, was successfully decoded by Michael Ventris in 1952, but "Linear A," another Minoan script, still baffles archaeologists. So does the Mohenjo-daro script of the great Indus Valley civilization, which flourished around 2,300 B.C.

ARCHAEOLOGY AROUND THE WORLD

WQ asked a score of prominent archaeologists (see page 176) to list what they considered to be the most important current excavations in their area of geographical interest. The map here represents a summary of their views. NOTE: Sites may be important not only for "spectacular" finds but also for their historical significance or for their contribution to archaeological theory and methodology.



1. **Malhada** (Brazil)
Itaipu culture settlement, c. 1500 B.C.
2. **Pacatnamu** (Peru)
Large administrative center, c. A.D. 800–1500
3. **Batan Grande** (Peru)
Sican ceremonial-political center, c. A.D. 850–1050
4. **Rio Azul** (Guatemala)
Mayan center, unlooted tomb, c. A.D. 350–830
5. **Teotihuacán** (Mexico)
Ceremonial, industrial center, c. A.D. 100–700
6. **Las Colinas, La Ciudad** (Arizona)
Hohokam pueblos, c. A.D. 900–1450
7. **Chaco Canyon** (New Mexico)
Anasazi pueblos, c. A.D. 900–1150
8. **Blackwater Draw** (New Mexico)
Paleo-Indian and Archaic settlements, c. 9000–3000 B.C.
9. **Tellico** (Tennessee)
Early Archaic campsites, c. 8500 B.C. and forward
10. **American Bottom** (Illinois)
Organized village settlements, c. A.D. 800–1000

11. **L'Anse aux Meadows** (Canada)
Leif Eriksson's Norse settlement, c. A.D. 1000
12. **Nulliak** (Canada)
Maritime Archaic Indian site, long houses, burial mounds, c. 1500 B.C.
13. **Point Barrow** (Alaska)
Eskimo dwelling, mummies, c. A.D. 1500–1700
14. **Bache Peninsula** (Canada)
Eskimo, Norse settlements, c. 2000 B.C.–A.D. 1500
15. **Pincevent** (France)
Reindeer hunter settlement, c. 12,000 B.C.
16. **Stobi** (Yugoslavia)
Roman city, c. 300 B.C.–A.D. 600
17. **Vergina Cemetery** (Greece)
Necropolis, possible Philip of Macedon tomb, 336 B.C.
18. **Varna** (Bulgaria)
Cemetery, gold ornaments, c. 4500 B.C.
19. **Franchthi Cave** (Greece)
Evidence of agriculture, c. 12,000–5000 B.C.
20. **Kommos** (Crete)
Minoan harbor town, Greek sanctuary, c. 2000



B.C.—A.D. 300

21. **Cayönü** (Turkey)

Farm village, c. 7000 B.C.

22. **Ebla** (Syria)

Cuneiform archives, 15,000 tablets, c. 2300 B.C.

23. **'Ain el Ghazal** (Jordan)

Settlement series, c. 7500–5500 B.C.

24. **Jerusalem** (Israel)

Canaanite, Israelite, Roman series, c. 3000 B.C.—A.D. 400

25. **Tell Jemmeh** (Israel)

Canaanite, Philistine sites, c. 3100–200 B.C.

26. **Tell el Da'aba** (Egypt)

Hyksos's capital, c. 1900–1550 B.C.

27. **Qasr Ibrim** (Egypt)

Hill fortress city, c. 1000 B.C.

28. **Igbo Ukwu** (Nigeria)

Ceremonial center, bronze artwork, c. A.D. 850

29. **Klasies River** (South Africa)

Cave dwelling, oldest shellfish midden, c. 140,000 B.C. and forward

30. **Great Zimbabwe** (Zimbabwe)

Ceremonial site of Shona speakers, c. A.D. 1250–1500

31. **Olduvai Gorge** (Tanzania)

Proto-human fossils, stone tools, c. 2 million B.C. and forward

32. **Hadar** (Ethiopia)

Proto-human fossils (e.g., Lucy), c. 3.25 million B.C. and forward

33. **Mehrgarh** (Pakistan)

Pre-Indus village series, c. 6000–1000 B.C.

34. **Khok Phanom Di** (Thailand)

Shellfish midden, rice fields, c. 3000 B.C.

35. **Lintong** (China)

Emperor Shihuangdi tomb, terra-cotta army, c. 210 B.C.

36. **Zhoukoudian** (China)

Peking Man cave, c. 350,000 B.C. and forward

37. **Yanshi** (China)

Shang dynasty city, c. 1500 B.C.

38. **Diring Yuryakh** (USSR)

Chipstone tool site, c. 1 million B.C. and forward

is now Iraq, had gotten under way in 1845, quickly capturing public attention in Britain and France. The *Illustrated London News* devoted some of its earliest reporting to the English excavations, led by the young Austen Henry Layard, and to a rival French effort nearby, led by Paul-Émile Botta. Layard unearthed massive stone sculptures, thousands of cuneiform tablets, and a large assortment of weapons, pottery, carved ivories, and other artifacts. The digging was not very sophisticated. Layard essentially “bulldozed” through site after site, aiming to retrieve as many well-preserved objects as possible for the smallest outlay of time and money. He eventually recognized the destructive nature of his work at Nimrūd. “It seemed almost a sacrilege,” he once reflected, thinking of two human-headed lions about to be shipped to the British Museum, “to tear them from their old haunts to make them a mere wonder-stock to the busy crowd of a new world.” Many artifacts, exposed to the air, literally crumbled before his eyes. Famous at the age of 35, Layard abandoned archaeology and returned to London.

Grappling with Prehistory

The great discoveries in Mesopotamia were hailed by many for what they suggested about the “historicity” of some aspects of the Bible. There had hitherto been no firm proof that an Assyrian empire had ever existed, no proof that a flesh-and-blood Sennacherib had occupied its throne; now there *was* proof—in writing. But discoveries of a different kind, interpreted with the aid of stratigraphic techniques, called other aspects of the Biblical account into question.

Stratigraphy is the ordering of “depositional strata,” or layers of earth, into a chronological sequence, thereby establishing the relative age of objects found at various levels. Thomas Jefferson employed stratigraphy in excavating an ancient burial mound near Monticello—“I proceeded then to make a perpendicular cut through the body of the barrow that I might examine its internal structure”—recording his observations in *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1784); this is one of the earliest known references to the technique. Jefferson concluded from his dig that such mounds had been constructed by ancestors of the indigenous Indian population—a controversial conclusion at a time when most scholars believed that a more advanced but now extinct race of “Mound Builders” had once inhabited the continent.

Of course, stratigraphy is useful only if one can assume that layers of earth are laid down sequentially, with layers at the bot-

tom being older than those at the top. This principle, called "uniformitarianism," was not widely accepted until after publication during 1830–33 of Sir Charles Lyell's three-volume *Principles of Geology*, a best seller. Thereafter, scholars doing stratigraphic and other studies began producing evidence that the world was far older than the Bible implied. The commonly held view that the world had been created on October 23, 4004 B.C., at 9:00 A.M.—the calculation of Dr. John Lightfoot, based on Biblical evidence—came under increasing attack.

Grappling with prehistory proved to be a challenge. Antiquarians in England and on the Continent had long been familiar with distinctly pre-Roman pottery, stone tools, even gold ornaments, recovered from burial mounds or turned up by a farmer's plowshare. How old were these artifacts? Would they someday enable scholars to write "text-free" history, to learn more about the distant past than ancient writers had told them? Slowly, researchers began imposing order on what had once been deemed unknowable. One important breakthrough occurred in Denmark, where archaeology as a systematic enterprise got off to a precocious start: Christian J. Thomsen (1788–1865) began classifying prehistoric implements according to a "three-age" theory. Thomsen argued that primitive man had risen through successive epochs marked by the successive use of stone, bronze, and iron.

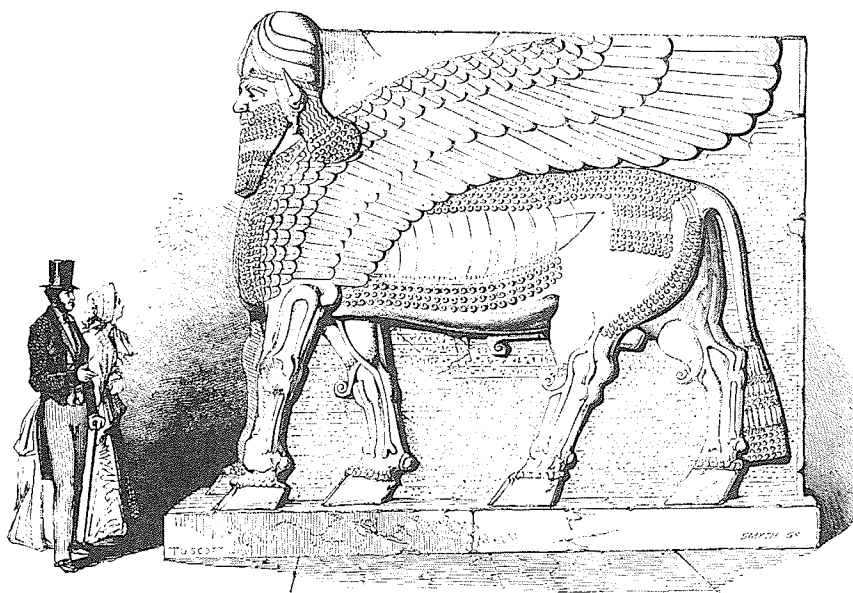
Pushing Back Time

The "three-age" theory dealt with relative rather than absolute time. How far back the Stone Age actually went remained an open question. In 1797, in what has been called the first "true" archaeological site report, a British antiquarian named John Frere had written a letter to the Society of Antiquaries in which he posited the extreme age of flint implements found at Hoxne, Suffolk. Frere presented stratigraphic evidence linking the flints, which he correctly deemed weapons, to the bones of extinct animals. "The situation in which these weapons were found may tempt us to refer them to a very remote period indeed; even beyond that of the present world." Frere's findings were largely ignored. Jacques Boucher de Perthes, a French customs officer, met a similar reception four decades later, in 1837, after discovering stone hand axes among fossil bones, both in substantial quantities, on the banks of the Somme River.

No one was quite ready to listen until 1859, when two eminent British scientists, Sir John Evans and Joseph Prestwich, at a meeting of the Royal Society, pronounced Boucher de

Perthes's finds authentic. Fortuitously, Charles Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* was published that same year. Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection, which revolutionized scientific thinking, disturbed many people at the time (as it still does). Nevertheless, in tandem with the stratigraphic record, evolution undermined the creationists' insistence on the chronological accuracy of Scripture. As scientist Thomas Huxley predicted, Darwin's ideas extended "by long epochs the most liberal estimate that has yet been made of the Antiquity of Man." During the century and a quarter since Darwin wrote, paleoanthropologists have set the approximate date of modern man's emergence at 100,000 B.C.; man's oldest hominid ancestor, the ape-like *Ramapithecus* can be traced back 12 million years. It is both ironic and fitting that one of the most prominent of those paleoanthropologists, Mary Leakey, is a direct descendant of John Frere.

The Industrial Revolution created new wealth and, together with Darwin's ideas, fostered confidence among scholars and their patrons in the continuing ascent of man. France, Germany, Britain, and the United States carved new empires out of Asia, Africa, and North America—new empires often harboring the



Archaeological displays have long appealed to a broad public. The Nimrud sculptures (above, an eagle-winged man-bull) created a sensation when first exhibited at the British Museum in 1848.

relics of older ones. It was a perfect climate for the expansion of the archaeological enterprise. The ancient city of Angkor Wat in Cambodia, capital of the Khmer empire, was discovered in 1868 by photographer J. Thomson. Luxor in Egypt, the site of ancient Thebes, was excavated by Sir Gaston Maspero throughout the 1880s, even as Adolph Bandelier roamed the southwestern United States (sometimes dressed as a priest, it is said, to curry favor with Catholic missionaries). In Central America, the Mayan sites described by John L. Stephens and Frederick Catherwood in their *Incidents of Travel in Central America, Chiapas, and Yucatán* (1841) were picked over for the rest of the century by a variety of Americans, Germans, and Frenchmen. During the 1890s, the great Max Uhle conducted important excavations, with typical Teutonic thoroughness, at locations in Bolivia and Peru. By the turn of the century, Sir Arthur Evans, at his own expense, was unearthing the great palace at Knossos—and with it the first glimpse of Minoan civilization.

The Quest for Troy

One of the greatest names of the period is that of Heinrich Schliemann (1822–90), the minister's-son-turned-wealthy-merchant who was determined to “prove the truth of Homer.” Digging into a tell—the massive mound that gradually forms beneath mud brick villages as they are built and rebuilt over thousands of years—at Hissarlik, in Turkey, beginning in 1871, Schliemann discovered nine superimposed cities, one of them Troy of the *Iliad*. (He went to his death, however, not knowing which city it was.) Between digs at Hissarlik, Schliemann excavated Mycenae, the Greek kingdom ruled by Homer's Agamemnon. At both places, he found sizable hoards of gold ornaments. Some of the Trojan jewelry he displayed on his young Greek wife: “Helen!” he breathed, taking in the sight. In all, Schliemann excavated some 20 Aegean sites, in the process creating the field of prehistoric Greek archaeology. Literate Europeans and Americans avidly followed his exploits; Prime Minister William Gladstone of Britain wrote the introduction to Schliemann's *Mycenae* (1877).

Schliemann today does not enjoy an unsullied reputation—in large measure because his methods, like those of many of his contemporaries, sometimes smacked more of treasure hunting than of scholarship. At Troy, Schliemann employed 150 laborers to move a massive volume of dirt (325,000 cubic yards during the first two years alone), destroying much of the stratigraphic record in the process. Younger archaeologists, many of them drawn to the pro-

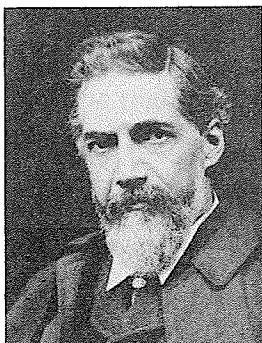
fession by the achievements of men whose methods they openly abhorred, labored to make excavation a more exacting process. Archaeologists such as Germany's Uhle and Britain's Sir Flinders Petrie (1853–1942) realized that the accurate interpretation of what was removed from the ground (and, therefore, of the past itself) depended heavily on *how* it was removed. Method and technique became increasingly important.

'Can You See Anything?'

Petrie, who supervised the annual expeditions of the Egypt Exploration Society and was the first to measure accurately the Great Pyramid at Giza, made several key contributions to archaeological method. Petrie was, above all, fastidious about excavating. He regarded many previously excavated sites in the Middle East as little more than "ghastly charnel houses of murdered evidence." In the field, Petrie took pains to record and describe minor everyday objects—pottery fragments, for example—not valued by treasure hunters. He pioneered the art of "typology," the classification and comparative study of objects according to their style and form; this led, in turn, to the technique of "sequence dating," which Petrie employed to clarify the chronology of Egyptian history. Petrie's work was complemented by that of George A. Reisner, an American archaeologist, who developed a meticulous system (later known as the Reisner-Fisher system) for both digging out a site and recording its contents.

Another American at the turn of the century, Harriet Boyd Hawes, was responsible for a breakthrough of a very different kind. A Smith College graduate and proper Bostonian, Hawes became the first woman of any nationality to direct an archaeological dig. During her excavation of the Bronze Age town of Gournia in Crete (1901–04), she supervised more than 100 laborers. A compatriot, Hetty Goldman, followed in Hawes's footsteps in 1916. It was not until the 1950s, however, that women entered the archaeological profession in any numbers. Today, they are well represented. What was advertised as the first ever all-female excavation, the American Women's Archaeological Research Expedition (AWARE), got under way last January at the Temple of Karnak in Egypt.

By the end of World War I, the days of romantic exploration were numbered as archaeology crossed the threshold from gentleman's hobby to scholarly vocation. In both the Old World and the New, archaeology as a discipline possessed full-time professional practitioners. Its character reflected the influence of anti-



Heinrich Schliemann, excavator of Troy (top left); Sir Flinders Petrie; and Harriet Boyd Hawes, "one of the very few ladies," wrote the Illustrated London News in 1910, "who have organised and conducted archaeological expeditions."

quarianism, geology, history, and the young field of anthropology. Most Western nations now boasted a full range of mature archaeological institutions—schools, museums, professional guilds. In the United States, for example, both the Smithsonian Institution and Harvard's Peabody Museum were sponsoring several expeditions every year. The prestigious Archaeological Institute of America had been set up in 1879 to promote research and publication. An American School of Classical Studies was thriving in Athens.

Yet, not surprisingly, it was still the spectacular project or find that caught the public imagination. Mohenjo-daro and Taxila in what is now Pakistan, Ras Shamra in Syria, Persepolis in Iran, Ur of the Chaldees in Iraq, Teotihuacán in Mexico—

these and many other sites were excavated between the wars. Perhaps the most famous moment in archaeological history occurred in November 1922, when Howard Carter and Lord George Edward Carnarvon first entered the unlooted tomb of the boy-king Tutankhamen in the Valley of the Kings at Luxor. "Can you see anything?" Carnarvon asked as Carter thrust a candle into the antechamber. "Yes," Carter replied slowly, "wonderful things."

The public fixation on such episodes sometimes frustrated even its beneficiaries. "There is a romance in digging," conceded Sir Leonard Woolley, excavator of Ur, "but for all that it is a trade wherein long periods of steady work are only occasionally broken by a sensational discovery, and even then the real success of the season depends, as a rule, not on the rare 'find' that loomed so large for the moment, but on the information drawn with time and patience out of a mass of petty detail which the days' routine little by little brought to light and set in due perspective."

A. V. Kidder and Pecos Pueblo

The find by Carter and Carnarvon did not really advance archaeology as a discipline. The contemporaneous work of people such as Alfred Vincent Kidder, who in 1914 earned the first Ph.D. in North American archaeology bestowed by a U.S. university (Harvard), unquestionably did. In 1915, he began excavating a large pueblo in New Mexico's Pecos Valley—a difficult but rewarding site that, Kidder would learn, had been continuously occupied for 600 years, until 1839. He turned up more than 1,000 skeletons, hundreds of thousands of pottery shards, and no fewer than six different towns built one atop the other. With the help of a young aviator, Charles Lindbergh, Kidder conducted aerial surveys of the site, demonstrating the usefulness of this new technology.

Ultimately, from ceramic and stratigraphic evidence, Kidder proposed a cultural chronology of the prehistoric American Southwest; not entirely satisfied with it, he called together his fellow archaeologists of the Southwest for the first Pecos Conference in 1927. (A Pecos Conference has been held every year since then.) One result was the so-called Pecos Classification System, since modified, defining eight successive stages of cultural development in the region, from Basket Maker I to Pueblo V.

Later in his career, turning his attention to Mayan civilization at the behest of the Carnegie Institution, Kidder brought together a team of specialists—geologists, geographers, ethnographers, bota-

nists, zoologists, meteorologists, anthropologists—for a systematic, “pan-scientific” assault on the ruins of Chichén Itzá, in Mexico’s Yucatán. Interdisciplinary studies are nowadays commonplace; 50 years ago, they were virtually unheard of.

Kidder was ahead of his time in one other respect—in his insistence that the purpose of archaeology was not simply to describe the past but also to understand the process of change. The “proper business” of the archaeologist, he observed, “is the study of the long, slow growth of human culture.”

Lifting the Veil

One obstacle that hampered the conduct of that “proper business” was the difficulty in establishing the precise age of artifacts and sites. While it was usually possible to gauge the *relative* age of various objects, the absolute age more often than not proved elusive. At least for North America, the problem was partially solved by astronomer Andrew E. Douglass (who, as it happens, had attended the first Pecos Conference). Douglass conceived of the “tree-ring” dating (dendrochronology) method in 1913 and by 1929 had made it possible to determine the exact age—down to the very year—of any wooden object made from trees felled in the American Southwest after A.D. 700. The range has since been extended back many thousands of years.

In 1949, physicist Willard F. Libby announced his discovery of a method of radiocarbon dating, making it possible in theory to determine the approximate age of *any* object composed of organic matter. Radiocarbon dating works because all living things take in small amounts of radioactive Carbon-14. Upon a plant’s or animal’s death, the C-14 begins to decay at a fixed rate. Determining the level of radioactivity in the organism’s remains will therefore indicate the amount of time elapsed since death, be it 500 years or three million. Sensitive instruments to do exactly this were soon developed.

As much as any science, archaeology has advanced during the postwar era on the wings of technology. The invention of the aqualung by Jacques Cousteau and Émile Gagnan in 1943 opened up underwater exploration. Aerial photography emerged from World War II in a state of high readiness. During the 1950s, development of the proton magnetometer made it possible to detect underground magnetic anomalies—often an indication that objects of interest lie below. As the archaeologist’s tools improved—both in the field and in the laboratory—he could devote more time to interpretation, less (though still a lot) to tedious chores.

At the same time, there were more archaeologists to share the work. In the United States during the 1930s, many young people had gravitated to the profession as a result of depression-era "make-work" excavations sponsored by the Works Projects Administration. James A. Ford, noted for his work on the Indian cultures of the southeastern United States, was one of literally hundreds of archaeologists who received their training courtesy of the New Deal.

It was this generation and the one that followed that, during the 1950s and '60s, led the intellectual revolution that brought forth the "new archaeology." Moving away from the *description* of cultural history, they focused increasingly on studying the *process* of cultural adaptation. Traditional field techniques were refined, new methodologies introduced. When and how did farming begin, the new archaeologists wanted to know. How and why did settlements, villages, and cities develop?

These are important questions, and it may be decades before we have solid answers. In the meantime, we should not forget what an achievement the (still unfinished) task of "mere" description has been. Scarcely two centuries ago, mankind had little idea of history before the Greeks or beyond the Mediterranean world. "All that is really known of the ancient state of Britain is contained in a few pages," Samuel Johnson once contended. "We know no more than what old writers have told us." Of the 21 great civilizations identified by Arnold Toynbee in his *Study of History* (1934-61), most were totally unknown in Dr. Johnson's time. Today, they are all known in considerable, sometimes intimate, detail. At least in general outline, and for a period of several million years, the course of man's history on the planet is now plain. Mysteries and imponderables remain, but gone is the myth that what is unknown about the past must be forever unknowable.



THE 'NEW' ARCHAEOLOGY

by Don S. Rice

Archaeology as a scientific discipline has undergone a series of radical changes during the past 30 years in both its intellectual orientation and its methods—giving us the “new archaeology.”

What is the new archaeology? It is not, really, a coherent intellectual movement, but at its heart lies the desire of archaeologists to contribute to the general body of social-science *theory* regarding the nature of human behavior and the processes of cultural evolution. When and how did man evolve and become “human”? What led to the development of agriculture and sedentary settlements? How do social inequality and social complexity come about? What accounts for civilization?

Above all, “new” archaeologists wish to explain *why* past events took place rather than simply demonstrate that they did.

Critics of the new archaeology (“that precious and prissy phrase,” in the words of Cambridge University’s Glyn Daniel, perhaps the doyen of the “old” archaeology) have argued that archaeologists should remain primarily the handmaidens of historical inquiry and cultural chronology. Daniel has complained—with justice—that the new archaeology is “bedevilled by jargon and by people who, apparently unable to speak and write in clear English, use such phrases as the ‘logico-deductive-evolutionary systems paradigm.’” Proponents of the new archaeology, most of whom have training in anthropology, counter that the traditional approach amounts to little more than the narrow, unscientific reconstruction of the past.

There exists, of course, a middle ground in this debate. Six years ago, David Hurst Thomas, of the American Museum of Natural History, conducted an informal poll of 640 archaeologists across the country. His question was simple: Are you a new archaeologist, a traditional archaeologist, or something else? The response to the survey was illuminating. Roughly 20 percent of those polled called themselves “new,” another 20 percent called themselves “traditional,” and the remainder, a large majority, called themselves something else entirely. The “something else” ranged from the whimsical (“new fogey”) to the deadly serious (“diachronic anthropologist”).

Such results suggest that most “mainstream” archaeologists

regard the distinction between new and old archaeology as either irrelevant or an oversimplification. At the same time, many of the methods and ideas subsumed under the imprecise rubric "new archaeology" have entered the mainstream. One may argue over terminology, but the transformation is real enough.

Lewis R. Binford, now at the University of New Mexico, is widely acknowledged to be the father of the new archaeology. With "Archaeology as Anthropology," an essay published in 1962, Binford emerged as the angry young man of his field, challenging colleagues to rethink their methods and their aims. He argued that the way in which archaeologists thought about data, method, and theory—their devotion in particular to "culture history" and the chronicling of its sequences—actually *prevented* them from developing a truly scientific understanding of the cultural processes that operated in past societies.

"Interpretive literature," Binford wrote, "abounds in such phrases as 'cultural stream' and in references to the 'flowing' of new cultural elements into a region." He questioned whether this "aquatic" view of cultural change really contributed anything to our understanding of human social dynamics.

Looking for 'Laws'

Binford urged a new approach. Instead of viewing culture as simply a collection of shared values, which regulate behavior within a society, why not look at culture as a means of human adaptation to both the natural and social environment? To be sure, typological differences among artifacts may—sometimes—help us to distinguish one culture from another. But too much effort had been lavished on making such distinctions. Culture, he pointed out, is itself an artifact of sorts, and its physical remains must be placed in context. Tools and figurines, for example, are not mere carriers of stylistic information: They tell us something about the physical environment (in the former case) and the social environment (in the latter). The collected technological, social, and ideological contexts of a society make up a cultural "system." Binford believed that, examined scientifically, the archaeological record would yield up nothing less than laws that governed cultural change, laws that could be tested and

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*Archaeologist Indiana Jones prepares to make off with a priceless artifact in the film *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981). Scholarly efforts today are focused less on retrieving antiquities, more on tracing cultural processes.*

proved with the evidence at hand, laws that (this being the 1960s) might even be relevant to contemporary society.

Binford was not the first to make some of these points. Walter W. Taylor, a young archaeologist educated at Harvard and Yale, had gone over much of the same ground in his controversial *Study of Archaeology* (1948), taking on the leading archaeologists of his day, most notably A. V. Kidder, who specialized in the Mayans and the Indians of the American Southwest. Kidder, Taylor charged, did not practice what he preached: He talked anthropology, but his archaeology remained descriptive cultural history. Taylor proceeded to lay out some of the essentials of what would become the new archaeology.

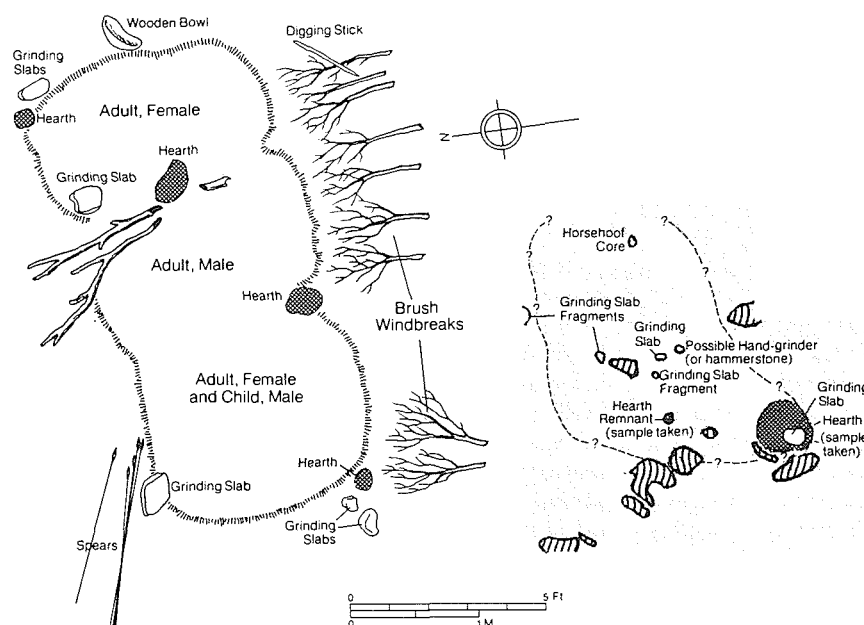
Taylor's arguments created a stir but not a revolution. Why? One reason was his polemical style—he needlessly irritated his colleagues. There was also a matter of status. Taylor was barely out of graduate school and had no body of published work to his name. But just as important was the timing. Taylor's study appeared before the advent of certain key innovations in archaeological method and technique, innovations that, once accepted, would pave the way for Binford's work.

One of these was the development of "settlement archaeology." Even as Taylor began putting pen to paper, another young archaeologist, Gordon R. Willey, was conducting the first settlement survey in Peru's coastal Virú Valley—looking, as he put it, at "the way in which man disposed himself over the landscape on which he lived." Prior to the 1940s, archaeologists had focused primarily on large individual sites such as Chichén Itzá, in Mexico, and Mohenjo-daro, in Pakistan. Willey shifted his attention not only to smaller, more poorly preserved sites but also to a whole group of them—more than 300 altogether. Classifying the sites functionally (e.g., as cemeteries, pyramids, fields, fortifications, dwellings, dumps), he sought to establish how, over a period of 1,500 years, they related both to one another and to the natural environment. It is now difficult to believe that this sort of thing had not been done before, but it had not.

Ecofacts

Settlement archaeology stimulated new interest in ecological studies—a field pioneered during the 1920s and '30s by cultural anthropologist Julian Steward, who studied the seasonal movements of the aboriginal Shoshoni among four ecological zones in the North American Great Basin. From an ecological perspective, culture is seen as the way in which humans adapt to an environment. Cultural change results from alterations in the adaptive relationship—as it did, for example, in pre-Columbian Mexico when, to compensate for the deleterious consequences of slash-and-burn agriculture, the Mayans began tilling fields they built up from the swampland. To understand how the environment is both used and influenced by humans, ecological archaeologists began to gather "ecofacts," analyzing soil and water chemistry, taking inventories of the remains of microfauna and microflora, looking at climate, geology, topography, and other aspects of the ecosystem.

A third key innovation was the introduction of radiocarbon dating, giving archaeologists at last a means of gauging (roughly) the *absolute*, rather than merely the relative, age of artifacts. Radiocarbon dating solved some long-standing enigmas but led as well to surprising reversals in archaeological thinking. For example, from the days of V. Gordon Childe (1892–1957), the brilliant British prehistorian, archaeologists had believed that the skills of metallurgy and megalithic architecture were spread to Europe from a "cradle" of civilization in the Near East. In fact, as Southampton University's Colin Renfrew now made clear, the megalithic structures of Spain,



Diagrams compare distribution of material remains at modern Australian aborigine campsite (left) and prehistoric site. By analogy with living societies, ethnoarchaeologists infer past patterns of human behavior.

France, and Britain were older than their supposed prototypes in the eastern Mediterranean. Stonehenge, to take one instance, was older than the citadel at Mycenae. Western Europe, it appeared, had developed independently.

Radiocarbon dating and even newer chronometric methods have finally given archaeologists control over time, transforming chronology from an end in itself into a tool of research. "It can no longer be the archaeologist's ultimate ambition to make chronological charts of cultures," observed social anthropologist Frederik Barth in 1950. "The only way the archaeologist can contribute to the general field of anthropology is by asking questions of *why*, for which a general framework is needed."

Lewis Binford provided that framework in a series of papers published throughout the 1960s. He built on many of the methodological advances of the previous decades. Binford's most important message was that archaeologists must look at culture as the behavior of people doing things within a cultural system. This behavior left behind artifacts. The task of the archaeologist

was to infer the dynamics of human behavior from the distribution of static artifacts—tools, dwellings, bones—in time and space. Taking a lesson from the natural sciences, Binford urged the use of new techniques, including statistical analysis and computer modeling, to evaluate data and test hypotheses.

He put his methods on the line, choosing to tackle a thorny problem in archaeology—what he called the “challenge of the Mousterian.” The main premise of traditional archaeology was that a variation in types of artifacts found at a site reflected a variation in cultures. If one looked at a stratigraphic sequence of, say, stone hand axes and observed that the upper strata contained types of hand axes different from those of the middle strata, and the middle different types from the lower, then it followed that several different cultures had occupied the same site at different times. The late François Bordes, one of the most eminent prehistorians of his day, believed this very situation to have been the case in Europe and the Near East during the so-called Mousterian period, which began roughly 130,000 years ago and ended around 30,000 B.C.

Bordes classified four basic types of Mousterian artifact assemblages, or “tool kits,” each characterized by a distinctive variety of stone implements mixed in distinctive proportions. He discovered that, over many thousands of years, the various types of tool kits on a given site kept alternating with one another in layers of strata and that the patterns of alternation differed from one site to another. What could this mean? Bordes reasonably inferred the existence of various “tribes” of Mousterian folk who occupied (and reoccupied) common sites at different times.

Feedback Loops

Binford was not satisfied with this explanation. Using factor analysis, a statistical method long employed by psychologists to study human behavior, and an IBM 7090 computer, Binford demonstrated that the variation in assemblage types found by Bordes at different levels or at different sites reflected not ethnic differences but *functional* differences. Had the site been a “base camp”? Had it later been used for butchering? For preparing food? At the same time, Binford sought to relate tool kit variability to “adaptive readjustments” occasioned by changes in climate (as revealed by pollen) and in the availability of game (as revealed by animal bones). Binford saw the archaeological record as the product of a whole ecosystem, of which man was merely one component—“a culture-bearing component, to be sure, but one whose behavior is rationally deter-

mined." To understand the behavior, one had to understand the system. The system was the solution.

This simple, but powerful, concept was avidly seized upon by archaeologists. It was given its most expansive treatment by the late David Clarke in his monumental *Analytical Archaeology* (1968), which drew on disciplines as diverse as geography, cybernetics, and general systems theory. Hoping to introduce "powerful new methods into our analytical armoury," Clarke described cultural systems as aggregates of distinct subsystems (e.g., social, political, economic, environmental) that are integrated by positive and negative feedback loops. By creating models and analyzing how changes in any one subsystem might ultimately affect all of the others, archaeologists, Clarke argued, could gain insight into the stability and resilience (or lack of it) of any cultural system.

Coping with Debris

One classic example of the systems perspective in use comes from the work of the University of Michigan's Kent Flannery. In an important study published a decade and a half ago, Flannery demonstrated how genetic changes in wild maize (*Zea mays*) and beans, beginning roughly 7,000 years ago in Mexico's Tehuacán Valley, could have made sedentary agriculture more attractive than hunting and gathering. Based on archaeological evidence, Flannery described five nomadic "procurement systems"—for maguey, cactus fruit, mesquite, wild grass, white-tailed deer, cottontail, and water fowl—each of which was "regulated" by the seasons and the need to schedule competing activities. Flannery then factored in the effect of a sudden "kick" to this system when, thanks to accidental hybridization, the size of a corn cob and the number of kernels it held began steadily to increase. Gathering—and then cultivating—maize gradually crowded out other activities, becoming "the most profitable single subsistence activity in Mesoamerica."

Given the nature of systems analysis, and the work of Binford on the Mousterian, it was not long before computers began to play a major role in archaeology. Archaeologists had been using simple statistics for years; only after computers became widely available could they routinely exploit sophisticated methods such as multi-dimensional scaling, cluster analysis, discriminant analysis, and a plethora of other techniques. The computer gave researchers, for the first time, the capacity to explore problems with many variables and large amounts of data. In a 1978 review of the uses of statistical methods in archaeology, published in *American Antiquity*,

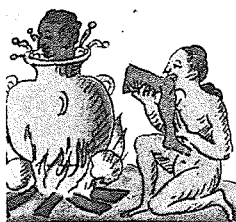
THE CANNIBAL DEBATE

In scholarship as in journalism, perhaps the most common sins are those of omission. In archaeology, they usually take one of two forms. The first is classic and direct: failure to see what is in front of one's eyes. The other is more subtle: failure to give sufficient thought to what is *not* in front of one's eyes. I was recently reminded of the second when I set the thesis of cultural anthropologist William Arens's controversial *The Man-Eating Myth* (1979) against the archaeological evidence on cannibalism.

Arens's position is simple: Despite a massive literature on the topic, cannibalism has actually occurred infrequently in human history, and almost never does it appear to have been customary. This rather startling conclusion is based on two findings. One is that there are few credible eyewitness accounts. The other is that people, as Arens demonstrates, have often called other people "cannibals" in order to make themselves look more civilized and their actions more righteous.

Have there really been so few cannibals in man's past as Arens claims? As far as archaeology is concerned, the answer is to be found not in sifting unreliable testimony for contradictions but in "kitchen middens," in the scraps left behind from meals.

For example, at the base and back of the human skull lies the occipital bone. In the fossil skulls of our earliest ancestors—*Australopithecus* and *Homo erectus*—the occipital bones are often badly damaged or missing. In fact, almost no intact hominid occipitals are found until the late Pleistocene, just over 100,000 years ago. Is this evidence that people commonly ate human brains? For some archaeologists it is. Others point out that the occipital is a rather fragile bone and is likely to be broken by natural causes—by the pressures of soil creep, by roof falls, by the jaws of large carnivores.



Since there are no detailed descriptions of cannibal feasts, it is not easy for archaeologists to decide what plate scrapings should look like. There are, of course, a few characteristic traces for which archaeologists watch on human bones—burning, cutting, cracking, splintering—but these traces can also be caused by cremation, weathering, and so on. Archaeologists usually assume that the larger the number of these traces in a single set of bones, the more valid the inference of cannibalism. If a case of cannibalism can be established in a society, a second more important question arises: Does the material at hand represent only an isolated case or was the practice common?

Both aspects of cannibalism—presence and frequency—can sometimes be established. During the 1970s, Arizona State University archaeologist Christy Turner and some colleagues reported on two sets of bones from different sites in the southwestern United States, one

set involving some 30 men, women, and children taken prisoner in a legendary raid by one group of Hopi Indians against another in about A.D. 1700, the other involving 11 individuals killed 800 years earlier. He determined that cannibalism had occurred in both instances. Skeletons had been dismembered, brains had been exposed, the bones were fresh when broken. A great many were charred. Both cases, Turner also concluded, seem to have been isolated events.

The most notorious of ancient "cannibals" are the Aztecs (opposite). Spanish eyewitnesses, notably Bernal Diaz, who accompanied Hernando Cortés, made no bones about it: The Aztecs sacrificed a slew of people. But were the victims eaten? The *conquistadors* usually mentioned cannibalism in their memoirs, although none claimed to have witnessed the practice. Some anthropologists believe that sacrificial victims were a protein source that tided the Aztecs over crop failures and other hard times. If this was the case, Tenochtitlán, the Aztec capital, must have been built on mounds of mutilated human bones. Mexican archaeologist Eduardo Matos Moctezuma has been digging into Tenochtitlán's Great Temple and finding stacks of intact skulls, monstrous carvings of fantastic creatures, and stone implements of sacrifice. What he has *not* found are bones marked by cannibalism.

Currently, the only evidence for customary cannibalism of which I am aware comes from four Algonquin Indian sites (A.D. 1300–1650) excavated by the University of Toledo's David Stothers in northern Ohio and southern Michigan. It is interesting that the Algonquins, like the Aztecs, were newcomers to already occupied territory. In such cases, the eating of captives could have been seen by the locals as a powerful argument for giving the interlopers plenty of breathing room.

These pieces of the cannibal controversy lead me to two conclusions. First, the debate underlines the value of physical evidence. Archaeologists such as Turner and Stothers provide Arens with the only evidence of cannibalism in a past society that he cannot refute or call into question. More importantly, there are very few cases, such as Stothers's, where customary cannibalism can be documented. Even cases for the *isolated* occurrence of cannibalism are rare.

Second, there is a lesson in the fact that archaeologists did not arrive at Arens's conclusion long ago. Arens had to expend considerable effort probing unsubstantiated rumors and questionable sources to find the naked truth. For archaeologists, it should have been so much easier. But with all their hard evidence (or in this case, lack of it), we failed to suspect the possibility that accusations of cannibalism were fraudulent. The reason may well be that we do not normally see what is not there.

The penance for this sin is to keep one eye on what is there and the other eye on what is missing—it takes both to learn lessons from the objects we excavate.

—William L. Rathje

Professor Rathje, 39, teaches at the University of Arizona.

archaeologist David H. Thomas noted that "archaeology's single greatest problem is coping with the magnitude of debris that has accumulated as a result of human occupation over the last couple of million years." Statistical methods and the computer have helped archaeologists to cope.

Yet on this score, as on others, the picture is not unrelievedly rosy. With one key exception—the shift in emphasis from cultural *history* to cultural *process*—the changes that have overtaken archaeology in recent decades have been methodological; they are fundamentally new ways of obtaining important kinds of data. But they also display certain drawbacks.

Telling a Better Story

An environmental perspective, for example, is important, indeed necessary, in archaeology—but it may overemphasize the material world, deflecting attention from social, religious, economic, political, even psychological factors. As for systems analysis, some critics believe that because it must focus on *aggregate* behavior, human decision-making at the group or even individual level is given short shrift. Other critics argue that systems analysis places too much emphasis on cultural equilibrium, too little on the processes of cultural change. Rather than looking at societies over time, the temptation is to see how sub-systems interact at a given instant. Such manipulations may be elaborate, even fun. But do they really tell us anything?

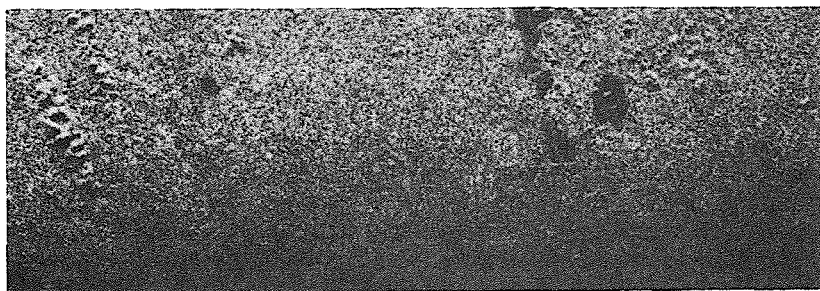
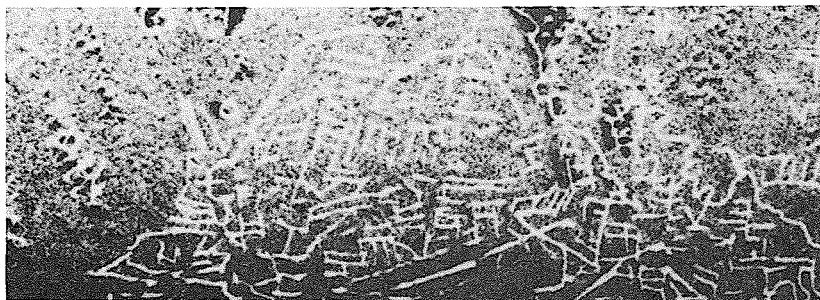
The problems with statistics are even more pervasive. Many archaeologists, unfamiliar with quantitative analysis, were ill-prepared to deal with the new mathematical techniques being pressed into service—but felt compelled to jump on the bandwagon anyway. In his 1978 study, Thomas classified recently published archaeological research papers according to how well the authors had used statistical methods. He came up with three categories: "the good" (designating proper use), "the bad" (misuse), and "the ugly" (outright abuse). The "bad" and the "ugly" constituted a majority of the published papers. While the situation is improving, there are still some lingering questions about what role statistics should play in archaeology. Some scholars worry that what archaeologist James Deetz once called "sterile methodological virtuosity" has become an end in itself.

Increasingly, archaeologists are coming to realize that, in fact, better methods alone will not answer every question, that major new breakthroughs in our understanding of the past await a rethinking of our *concepts*. Gordon R. Willey and Jeremy A. Sabloff pointed out in 1980 that, yes, after almost two

decades of the new archaeology, the material evidence "could be made to tell a better story than it had done previously—better in a behavioral sense and in the sense of providing a richer context of past life." That is, archaeologists have become more adept at describing—at reconstructing—the past; more adept, in a word, at the "old" archaeology. But they have not done very well in formulating what Binford called "laws of cultural dynamics," in contributing a body of theory to social science. What *kinds* of conditions cause what *kinds* of cultural change?

The gap between our data, on the one hand, and answers to some big questions, on the other, remains vast.

Binford has drawn attention to the problem—and to a possible solution: lowering our sights. He has called for the development of a body of "middle-range" or "bridging" theory—a set of basic, building-block propositions that link the static archaeological record that exists in the present with the dynamic behavior of the past that created it, propositions that can be tested empirically and that might eventually be incorporated into broader theory. Before asking Why did it happen? Binford cautioned, we need to know What does it mean? and What was it



Archaeology has been revolutionized in part by new technology. In Guatemala, radar survey (top) revealed what aerial photo (bottom) could not: a network of Mayan irrigation canals, dug between A.D. 250 and 900.

like? Examples of middle-range theory would include the answers to questions such as: What determines the form of a house? What patterns of hunter-gatherer social organization lead to the patterning of camp activities we find in the archaeological record?

The quest for such middle-range propositions has only just begun. They may come through "actualistic" research—by actually observing how material objects find their way into the archaeological record, through breakage, loss, and discard. Two types of actualistic research have become important to contemporary archaeology: ethnoarchaeology and experimental archaeology.

Moving toward Realism

Ethnoarchaeology is the ethnographic study, from an archaeological perspective, of a living cultural system. Ethnographers, of course, have been studying human societies for some time, but in general, they have failed to observe the dynamics of material culture in a manner informative to an archaeologist. Archaeologists such as Richard Gould of Brown University have thus found themselves in the wilds of the Australian outback watching today's aborigines making wooden spears or bowls.

In the Australian case, spears are made in batches, when suitable trees are found. The act of making a spear often takes place at the source of the wood and not back at the camp. What tool is used to make the spear depends on a complex set of circumstances. Sometimes a man may have left his hafted stone ax behind and will make a scraping tool from whatever is at hand. He may be lucky and scavenge a lost adz from a habitation site. In other circumstances, he may be forced to use stone of inferior quality; the tool that results will bear little resemblance to the preferred stone adz. Each of these acts has an effect on the archaeological record, sometimes additive, sometimes subtractive. Information like this is important. One cannot properly interpret the archaeological record until one knows how it was formed.

Experimental studies involve attempts to *replicate* aspects of past behavior. Some archaeologists have taught themselves the art of "flintknapping" both to determine how tools were made and what kinds of debris various tool-making technologies leave behind. Others, beginning with Sergei Semenov, a Soviet, have focused less on how tools were manufactured than on how they were employed. Lawrence Keeley, of the University of Illinois, has demonstrated that, under the right conditions, it is possible to distinguish the traces of wear left on stone tools that have been used, variously, on bone, hide, wood, and meat. His

experimental studies have stimulated large numbers of young archaeologists to take up "wear analysis," butchering sheep, goats, cattle, and even elephants with Stone Age tools. In Denmark, experimental archaeologists have built replicas of Iron Age villages—and then burned them down to observe patterns of collapse and attrition.

The chief drawback of both experimental archaeology and ethnoarchaeology is that analogy is a fragile form of proof. There may be more than one way to make an arrowhead; the technique chosen by the archaeologist may not be the one employed by a Neanderthal flintknapper. For reasons that may not even be guessed, the behavior of primitive peoples in the 20th century may differ significantly from that of their distant ancestors. Still, archaeologists have to start somewhere.

Archaeology in 1985 has not really come full circle, but the "revolution" in archaeology was a revolution in more senses than one. Having modified their research orientations and methods, archaeologists have come to realize—once again—that what really needs work is something more basic. How does one conceptualize human behavior in archaeological terms? Developing middle-range theory is going to take time; it will involve false starts and dead ends. It may itself be a dead end. In the main, archaeologists today remain ambitious for their profession, confident that someday it will reveal important truths about how the world works. But they have acquired a more realistic notion of how quickly that knowledge can be had. And they understand that the *means* to that end are still subject to debate.

This is a healthy turn of events. Let us hope that it is not also irrelevant. The fact is, archaeology faces challenges of a more fundamental variety. Looting and construction destroy thousands of archaeological sites every year. More and more countries around the world have declared themselves off limits to foreign archaeologists—or are simply unsafe. And money for archaeological research is drying up, a victim of recession and government cutbacks.

These are serious, crippling problems of which the general public is almost entirely unaware. Yet they can gravely diminish what all of us come to know about man's evolution and his long struggle to survive and prosper.



BACKGROUND BOOKS

ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeology has been blessed with a wealth of fine reference works and general surveys—perhaps in part because the field is so diverse, its tools so varied. One of the best of these books is the **Cambridge Encyclopedia of Archaeology** (Crown, 1980), edited by Andrew Sherratt of Oxford University. The 55 contributors to this comprehensive, superbly illustrated volume cover everything from “the handaxe makers” to “early states in Africa” to “dating and dating methods.” The encyclopedia represents, in Sherratt’s words, “an attempt to summarize the present state of knowledge over the whole field of archaeological inquiry.”

Two especially useful adjuncts to the Cambridge encyclopedia are **The Penguin Dictionary of Archaeology** (Penguin, 1972), by Warwick Bray and David Trump, with some 1,600 entries, and the colorful **Atlas of Archaeology** (St. Martin’s, 1982), edited by Keith Branigan. Standard introductory textbooks include Brian M. Fagan’s **In the Beginning** (Little, Brown, 1972) and David H. Thomas’s **Archaeology** (Holt, 1979), both of which rely heavily on case studies.

From the beginning, archaeologists included in their ranks an unusually large share of doughty eccentrics and free spirits. Why? For one thing, the work itself was distinctly out of the ordinary. Giovanni Belzoni, a former circus strong man, who during the early 19th century ransacked the underground necropolis at Thebes, recalled that “I could not pass [through the hallways] without putting my face in contact with some decayed Egyptian.”

Archaeology’s combination of romance and the macabre also attracted widespread public interest

and financial support in Western countries. Sir Austen Henry Layard’s *Nineveh and Its Remains* became a best seller in Britain in 1849, its only serious competition in the bookstalls coming from *Mrs. Rundell’s Cookery*. Four decades later, in 1891, the funeral in Athens of Heinrich Schliemann, excavator of Troy, was attended by a crowd of thousands, including King George I of Greece.

The discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen in 1922 decisively established archaeology as a source of “pop culture.” In the aftermath of the find, writes Edward Bacon in **The Great Archaeologists** (Seeker & Warburg, 1976), “debased Egyptian motifs appeared on every suburban lampshade.” Bacon’s book is an anthology of dispatches (1842–1971) from the *Illustrated London News*, which week after week helped to satisfy a peculiarly British hunger for archaeological reporting. More on Britain and its leading role in archaeology during the discipline’s formative years, during the 19th and early 20th centuries, can be found in Kenneth Hudson’s **Social History of Archaeology** (Macmillan, 1981) and Jacquetta Hawkes’s **Adventurer in Archaeology** (St. Martin’s, 1982). The latter is an engaging biography of Sir Mortimer Wheeler (1890–1976), soldier, scholar, and showman, excavator of Verulamium and Maiden Castle, and, in the words of one mistress, “an insatiable Moloch where women were concerned.”

Wheeler was certain of one thing: The public loves a skeleton. At Maiden Castle, he drew attention to his work by displaying in their graves the remains of 38 Britons who had died fighting Roman invaders

during the first century A.D. But human remains are good for more than publicity. They can also tell a story. Several such stories are related in **Mummies: Death and Life in Ancient Egypt** (Collins, 1978, cloth; Penguin, 1979, paper), by James Hamilton-Paterson and Carol Andrews; in **The Bog People: Iron-Age Man Preserved** (Cornell, 1969), by P. V. Glob; and in R. S. Solecki's **Shanidar: The Humanity of Neanderthal Man** (Knopf, 1971), an account of the discovery and analysis of ritualized Neanderthal burials in Iraq.

Fossilized bones are central to the study of man's origins. Among paleoanthropologists, the members of the Leakey family—the late Louis B. Leakey, his wife, Mary, and their son, Richard—stand pre-eminent. In **Origins** (Dutton, 1977, cloth & paper), Richard E. Leakey and Roger Lewin describe the remarkable fossil discoveries in Africa's Olduvai Gorge, where “a quirk of nature, in the form of a seasonal river, has [sliced] through the deposits of sediment so that now you can stand on the bedrock and gaze at millennium after millennium stacked neatly as a layer cake of time.” Leakey and Lewin are the authors as well of **People of the Lake** (Anchor/Doubleday, 1978, cloth; Avon, 1983, paper).

In her autobiography, **Disclosing the Past** (Doubleday, 1984), Mary Leakey describes the 1978 discovery at Laetoli, Tanzania, of a trail of an-

cient hominid footprints in a bed of volcanic tuff. It was clear at once, she writes, “that we had before us unique evidence, of an unimpeachable nature, to establish that our hominid ancestors were fully bipedal a little before 3.5 million years ago—the kind of thing anthropologists had argued over for many decades.”

Archaeologists argue a great deal, but on one thing they tend to agree: Popular archaeology, which is good, faces a considerable challenge from “cult” archaeology, which is not. Legitimate archaeology is an increasingly rigorous *science*. Cultists, by contrast, take fanciful shortcuts into science fiction. Prominent among the cultists is Erich Von Däniken, a Swiss, whose *Chariots of the Gods?* (1970) and other books have sold a total of some 40 million copies. Among other notions, Von Däniken has advanced the theory that “ancient astronauts” endowed primitive man with the rudiments of technological expertise.

Addressing the issue in the 1981 edition of **Advances in Archaeological Method and Theory** (Academic Press), the discipline's annual report, John R. Cole of the University of Massachusetts noted that “archaeologists have the disadvantage of dealing with a subject many people feel they understand already or believe to be simpler than it actually is.”

In this respect, archaeology may be a victim of its own popularity.



EDITOR'S NOTE: Most of the books in this essay were suggested by anthropologist John W. Olsen of the University of Arizona.

CURRENT BOOKS

SCHOLARS' CHOICE

Recent titles selected and reviewed by Fellows and staff of the Wilson Center

**ADVERTISING, THE
UNEASY PERSUASION:
Its Dubious Impact on
American Society**
by Michael Schudson
Basic, 1984
288 pp. \$17.95

Academic criticism of advertising often verges on the shrill. Sounding a characteristic note of doom, economist Robert Heilbroner once described Madison Avenue's efforts as "the single most value-destroying activity of a business civilization."

Since most critics of advertising usually focus on flagrant examples of malpractice—e.g., the use of marbles to make "home-made" soup appear chunkier in TV commercials—advertisers have easily gotten off the hook by acknowledging specific abuses

and promising more zealous self-regulation. All in all, they argue, occasional peccadilloes are to be expected in a free capitalist society; advertising, moreover, is not an influence on American culture but a reflection of it. Faced with such arguments, critics end up sounding like paranoid Marxists or puritanical wet blankets.

Michael Schudson, a University of California sociologist, will not be so easy to dismiss. He is, for one thing, sharply critical of the simple-minded antiadvertising arguments. One of his targets is the shopworn view that ad-makers constitute an all-knowing cabal of "hidden persuaders" who manipulate a mass of helpless consumers.

National media advertising, Schudson explains, is but a small part of a "marketing mix." Other elements include the sale of goods to dealers by factory representatives, assistance to dealers in coordinating local merchandising campaigns, the distribution of coupons and other promotional devices. No one can predict the effectiveness of any of these strategies. The most that marketers of Rinso or Gillette can hope for is an increase in "market share." They can almost never expect an increase in aggregate consumption of detergent or razor blades. Advertising, in other words, preaches to the already converted. It does not create "false needs." Furthermore, as Schudson shrewdly observes, critics who imagine a pristine society of "true needs" forget that even the most basic biological needs—for food, for shelter—are nearly always affected by some form of cultural conditioning.

Schudson also understands the workings of the advertising industry. He explains how ad-makers grope blindly for the right sales pitch amid a welter of statistical surveys and motivational theories. Aside from yielding a few predictable patterns (that, for instance, frequent airline travelers have high incomes), the entire apparatus of "information" mainly serves to reassure advertising executives and their clients. Campaigns are shaped less by research than by the "culture of advertising"—agency traditions, client whims, fads in popular culture.

The consumer, Schudson emphasizes, is no easy mark. An advertisement always competes with information that the potential buyer derives

from various sources: family and friends, the media, consumer education, and other ads. In general, Schudson finds, consumers are a good deal sturdier—and less greedily acquisitive—than radical critics have acknowledged. Following the lead of anthropologist Mary Douglas, he notes the importance of material goods, especially food and drink, in sustaining ties of kinship and friendship—even in modern America, where a huge proportion of goods are bought as gifts each year. Consumption patterns often express a cementing of social bonds rather than a withdrawal into self-absorption. It is a crucial point, well made.

With consumers so strong and advertising so weak, what cultural influence can the great “dream machine” have? Schudson’s answer is that national advertising is “capitalist realism,” the American version of the Soviet tractor aesthetic, socialist realism. The creed of capitalist realism is brazenly fantastic, yet it succeeds “in creating attitudes because it does not make the mistake of *asking* for belief.” It merely “brings some images and expressions quickly to mind and makes others relatively unavailable.” Ads do not make people believe in capitalist institutions or consumer values; they *do* make alternatives difficult to articulate and to imagine. To the extent that advertising misrepresents and flattens experience, it does “entrap people in exploitative and self-defeating activity.” Yet, as Schudson makes clear, there is enough resistance to this misrepresentation among members of its audience to make advertising seem almost a “foreign power,” importing alien values into our homes.

This is a remarkably sane and balanced discussion, but it has weaknesses, some historical. For example, Schudson exaggerates the distinction between turn-of-the-century patent medicine ads and later “legitimate” advertising. In fact, both came from the same New York City agencies, used the same strategies, and perfected a therapeutic appeal (of health and personal fulfillment through the acquisition of goods) that would be a critical component of the emerging consumer culture. There is also a flaw in Schudson’s portrait of consumers. He allows that certain groups *are* vulnerable: very young children, adolescents, the highly mobile (who are socially isolated because always “new in town”), the highly immobile (the old, the poor), and virtually the entire Third World. This might well be a case of the exceptions burying the rule. If so, it vitiates one of Schudson’s points.

Finally, Schudson never adequately considers the diffuse but corrosive effect of commercial advertising on the quality of political discourse in this country. At one point, he notes the advertisers’ practice during the 1920s of associating women’s smoking with freedom and equality, but he fails to examine the way such political ideals were trivialized by being redefined in the idiom of consumption. The point is not that the consumer accepts such silly redefinitions literally but that they contribute to the general buzz of “quasi-information” that pervades our society.

These flaws, by no means major, are worth mentioning only because this is such a provocative book. With it, Schudson has set an agenda for all future study of consumer culture.

—T. J. Jackson Lears '83

DISTANT NEIGHBORS:

**A Portrait of
the Mexicans**
by Alan Riding
Knopf, 1984
385 pp. \$18.95

This book about the Mexican people is intended specifically for *Yanqui* eyes. The stated aim of author Alan Riding—for 12 years a journalist in Mexico, the last six as bureau chief of the *New York Times*—is to help Americans understand their “distant neighbor” for reasons of U.S. self-interest and even of national security. Riding thus joins a growing number of journalists and scholars in the United States and Europe worried about the future of the nation possessing the

longest history of political stability in Latin America but today afflicted by its most severe economic crisis in half a century.

Mexico's current difficulties would be of marginal interest to Americans were it not for a number of important links between the two neighbors. For instance, if Mexico defaults on its \$100-billion foreign debt, several important U.S. banks will be in trouble. If Mexico's economy does not recover, American exports to its third largest trading partner will sharply decline. If Mexican unemployment remains at its present level (12 percent, with some 40 percent “underemployed”), the number of young Mexican workers crossing the Rio Grande into the United States will rise. And finally, if Mexico's semidemocratic political system collapses, the domestic pressure on U.S. policy-makers to intervene will be great, perhaps even irresistible.

Riding looks in many directions. He presents an overview of Mexican history. He plumbs the individual and collective mind of Mexicans. He exposes political ills. He describes failed attempts at agricultural and industrial modernization. He recounts the unhappy record of U.S.-Mexican relations (beginning with the U.S. seizure of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California in 1848).

Riding does a particularly good job of demolishing the last remnants of the myth of Mexican democracy. As he makes clear, the state is run by powerful bureaucrats who, every six years, through the machinery of the dominant Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), select a president for endorsement by popular vote. Whether claiming to be conservative or liberal, the president serves mainly to balance contending bureaucratic interests. Corruption, Riding explains, provides the “oil” that makes the wheels of the bureaucratic machine turn and the “glue” that seals political alliances.” And corruption largely accounts for the ills—including the mismanagement of the nationalized oil industry and a land reform program that leaves the poorest land to the peasants—besetting this society of 77 million people. Corruption, irresponsibility, deception, and authoritarianism are the central features of Riding's portrait of Mexican leadership.

If description is the strong side of this book, the weak side is the explanation. To Riding, “In its soul, Mexico is not—and perhaps never will be—a western nation.” Moreover, Mexicans are “oriental”: that is, “conformist, communitarian and traditional.” This explanation, similar to those formulated by 19th-century British travelers, would be harmless enough if the conclusion were not so misleading: Mexicans feel comfort-

able only with an undemocratic system, a "mixture of authoritarianism and paternalism, of cynicism and idealism, of conciliation and negotiation." In Riding's view, the basic error of the country's present-day leaders, an "Americanized minority," is not their support of the authoritarian tradition but their effort to "make the country more superficially democratic, . . . more 'presentable' abroad."

Such a conclusion obscures the fact that Mexico has been, for four and a half centuries, an integral part of the West's political, economic, and cultural system. Mexico is no more "oriental" than, say, southern Italy. The roots of authoritarianism run deep, to be sure, but that does not mean that "by nature" Mexico cannot evolve, peacefully or otherwise, into a more just and democratic society.

—Lorenzo Meyer '85

**AMERICA'S
WORKING MAN:
Work, Home,
and Politics
among Blue-Collar
Property Owners**
by David Halle
Chicago, 1984
360 pp. \$24.95

The gulf dividing those who are engaged in physical labor from those who are not seems nearly as great today as it was in ancient Babylon. Sociologist David Halle reports the proud lament of one of his subjects, a worker in a highly automated New Jersey chemical plant: "Am I a working man? You bet! I'm standing here freezing and breathing in all these fumes. . . . You're not a working man if you work in an office."

As timeless as those words might sound, the tacit argument of Halle's book is that this great gulf, while still socially resonant, no longer accurately defines the behavior or con-

sciousness of America's industrial working class.

To see the lives of his subjects whole, Halle spent seven years interviewing some 200 New Jersey chemical workers at the plant and at home, in local taverns and on fishing trips. He talked to them about their work, families, and religious beliefs, explored their attitudes toward corporate power and political corruption, their views on adultery and abortion, and their feelings about relations between the sexes and races.

At work, Halle finds, there is a lively awareness of class division. It is compounded not only of anger and resentment but also of an abiding sense of pride and power that comes from mastery of the sophisticated technology at the factory. On the shop floor, where workers wage daily guerrilla warfare against management for control over time and production procedures, the self-identity of the American "working man" is most pronounced.

Away from work, Halle reports, there "are no 'working-class' cars,

washing machines, video recorders, or even, with some exceptions concentrated on the young, styles of dress." Furthermore, there are no peculiarly "working-class" suburbs—except those that are predominantly black or Hispanic, and they are perceived by workers along racial rather than socioeconomic lines. Far from the noxious vapors of the chemical plants, these men (and they are all men and nearly all white) are absorbed in local politics—taxes, property values, public schools—that all but obliterate class lines.

When Halle steps back to look at these men as part of the national political arena, a third identity appears: the worker as American. Patriotic but cynical, these New Jersey chemical workers firmly believe in the principles of democracy yet consider almost all politicians to be dishonest, corrupt, and subservient to Big Business and the rich. Yet even this does not add up to a politicized class consciousness. Instead, "nationalism," combined with a distrust of "the interests," produces a sort of populist mentality that is also susceptible to racism and chauvinism. While many workers believe the system to be stacked against them, few consider alternatives.

Do these three identities come together as an integrated portrait of the American working man? Halle says they do; furthermore, he argues, unsuccessfully I think, that his portrait shows the inadequacy of a range of social theories (Marxist and non-Marxist) explaining the *embourgeoisement* or, alternatively, the alienation of the American working man. I am left with the impression of a rather schizoid individual, possessing three different characters and sets of beliefs. Nevertheless, Halle's book is filled with valuable observations, mercifully free of sociological jargon: Blue-collar marriages are not the special "worlds of pain" described in much recent sociological literature; they are pretty much like other marriages. Ethnicity is a greatly over-rated factor in working-class politics and social relations, amounting to little more than a form of nostalgia. Flimsy, too, is the conventional wisdom about the central role of religion. These workers, at least, are quite skeptical about organized religion, the clergy, and religious ritual.

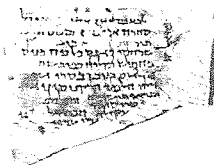
Halle's chosen subject group is, to be sure, far from representative of the entire working class. How different his findings might have been had he looked at workers in one of the dying industries, or at nonunionized laborers in the Sun Belt, or even at women. Nevertheless, his close scrutiny of one community of workers will add significantly to scholarly efforts to peer across the great divide.

—Steven Fraser '85

NEW TITLES

*History***THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS
AND THE CHRISTIAN
MYTH**

by John M. Allegro
Prometheus, 1984
252 pp. \$18.95



Toward the end of the second century B.C., some 4,000 members of a messianic Judaic sect, the Essenes, withdrew from the Orthodox Jewish community in Jerusalem. At Qumran, on the sun-scorched cliffs above the Dead Sea's western shore, they engaged in ascetic communal living and awaited the advent of a messiah to usher in the Kingdom of God. In 88 B.C., their beloved Teacher of Righteousness was crucified. Still, until A.D. 68, when Roman forces crushed the Qumran community, its members continued to expect their Teacher to return in triumph. Their sacred writings (Old Testament books and commentaries) remained hidden in caves until 1947, when a Bedouin lad chasing a goat chanced upon them. Related discoveries ensued over the next several years. Onto this scene, as a member of an international team of editors formed in 1953, came British religious historian Allegro; his present book points out similarities between the Qumran faith and "that even more unorthodox Jewish faith we call Christianity." Allegro's bias is evident in his choice of a title—and in his charge that the editing team's slowness in publishing the documents stems from their perception of the scrolls' "potentiality for undermining the uniqueness of Christianity."

**THE MEMORY PALACE
OF MATTEO RICCI**

by Jonathan D. Spence
Viking, 1984
350 pp. \$19.95

"The biographer truly succeeds," wrote Leon Edel, himself a master of the genre, "if a distinct literary form can be found for a particular life." By this standard, Spence has succeeded. Eschewing a straightforward chronology, he reconstructs the remarkable life of Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), an Italian-born Jesuit missionary who spent close to 30 years in China, around eight evocative images. Four are wood engravings of Biblical scenes used by Ricci to describe his faith to the Chinese; the other four are images from Ricci's "memory palace"—a pictorial mnemonic system used by European scholars

since antiquity for organizing and retaining vast stores of information. (Ricci hoped his memory palace would so impress the Chinese that they would be tempted by its religious furnishings.) Using each image as a frame for anecdotes about Ricci and his times, Spence, a Yale historian and prize-winning China scholar, guides readers through the rigors of Jesuit education, the dangers and discomforts of 16th-century sea travel, the intricacies of the Far East silk trade, and, above all, Ricci's spiritual and intellectual labors. The heart of the story is the conflict between Western ideas (specifically, Ricci's Christian humanism) and the Buddhist, Confucian, and Taoist doctrines of the Chinese scholar-gentry. Many of the Chinese scholars were impressed by Ricci's mental power—on one occasion, he recalled a list of some 400 Chinese ideograms after looking at it only once—but few were convinced that Christianity was preferable to their own beliefs. The Buddhist Zhuhong dismissed the Jesuit's arguments: "[His] kind of sophistry is a clever play on words. How can it harm the clear teaching of the Great Truth?"

**THE LOST SOUL OF
AMERICAN POLITICS:
Virtue, Self-Interest, and
the Foundations
of Liberalism**
by John P. Diggins
Basic, 1984
409 pp. \$23.95

"How can America understand itself?" To answer his own question, Diggins, a University of California historian, turns to early 19th-century American thought—and, specifically, to what he perceives as a fundamental dilemma within the "liberalist" tradition. There he sees "two incompatible value systems struggling for the soul of America: the liberal idea of labor, competition and self-help and the Christian idea of sin, atonement and redemption." Incompatible though they were, liberalism, the child of John Locke and others who preached the primacy of self-interest, existed in tension with Calvinist notions of moral responsibility. That tension, Diggins holds, was most palpable during the mid-19th century. Its most dramatic embodiment in politics was Abraham Lincoln; in literature, Herman Melville. During the post-Civil War era, however, when commerce

was no longer seen as inimical to (or at least incompatible with) virtue and character, "ambition and self-interest became as American as apple pie." Turn-of-the-century social Darwinism was but the first of many ready-made ideologies used to justify unbridled greed; George Gilder's effort (*Wealth and Poverty*, 1981) to relax the tension between virtue and the pursuit of wealth is, according to the author, a more recent example of the same impulse. Diggins challenges the classical "republican" emphasis many historians give to early American civic ideals, reminding readers of a more complex spiritual heritage.

Contemporary Affairs

**THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL DIVIDE:
Possibilities for Prosperity**
by Michael J. Piore and
Charles F. Sabel
Basic, 1984
368 pp. \$21.95

The first industrial divide, according to the authors, came during the 19th century. Mass production eliminated the "flexible-production" methods of the craft system, which had, since the Middle Ages, employed skilled workers and general-purpose machinery to produce a variety of goods for an ever-changing market. The widespread economic slowdown that the industrialized world has been experiencing since the early 1970s is, the authors believe, a prelude to the second divide; it is also an opportune moment for restoring the best features of the flexible-production system. Much of their persuasive book is an attack on various aspects of our current mass-production arrangement—"the technologies and operating procedures of most modern corporations; the forms of labor-market control defended by many labor movements; the instruments of macroeconomic control developed by bureaucrats and economists in the welfare states." Piore and Sabel, both of MIT, point to the Italian garment industry and some Japanese toolmaking firms as successful contemporary instances of flexible specialization. In addition to more democratic shop-floor relations, the authors' "strategy of permanent innovation" calls for

stronger organizational ties between corporations and local governments and associations; "communitarian institutions," such as the workers' syndicates in northern Italy, would be charged with regulating and protecting industries within their regions. Though it has romantic elements, Piore and Sabel's visionary scheme will certainly figure in future economic debates.

**BLOODS: An Oral History
of the Vietnam War by
Black Veterans**
by Wallace Terry
Random, 1984
311 pp. \$17.95



After a decade of silence, the veterans of the Vietnam conflict have begun to speak out. In this book, Terry, a former *Time* reporter in Saigon, has skillfully edited the taped recollections of 20 black survivors. These veterans run the gamut—ordinary lads, semiliterate dropouts, a Marine sergeant major, an Air Force colonel who refused to knuckle under during seven years as a prisoner of war in Hanoi. Several reminiscences of ground combat seem to verge on fantasy; many evoke the brutality, comradeship, and bravery of whites and blacks alike. The younger veterans bitterly recall the racial tensions of the 1960s and '70s, the neglect (and worse) shown by the homefolks toward the men returning from the unpopular war America had sent them to fight. Angry or proud (or both), most of Terry's "bloods" are superb storytellers.

Arts & Letters

**THE COLLECTED
STORIES**
by Dylan Thomas
New Directions, 1984
362 pp. \$16.95

Known primarily for his poetry, the Welshman Dylan Thomas (1914–53) was also an accomplished spinner of tales, as these 40 stories vividly attest. The earliest ones, initially rejected by his publisher because of their "obscurity," are haunting, somber fantasies, surreal accounts of death, spirits, and strange happenings. In "The Orchards," for instance, an apple farmer goes mad with unnatural love for "flesh-and-ghost" scarecrows. Thomas's turn from the macabre to

more conventional narrative, as in his autobiographical *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog*, is signaled most clearly by the introduction of humor: "What's the weapons, Mr. O'Brien?" "Brandies at dawn, I should think, Mrs. Franklin." The poet's hand is evident throughout these tales, as striking similes—a drunkard is described "carrying his dignity as a man might carry a full glass around a quaking ship"—punctuate the narrative flow. Most of the later prose was written for broadcast, including his widely acclaimed "A Child's Christmas in Wales."

**ENCOUNTERS
WITH VERDI**

edited, introduced,
and annotated
by Marcello Conati
translated by
Richard Stokes
Cornell, 1984
417 pp. \$25

The reclusive Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901), leading Italian composer of the 19th century and creator of *Rigoletto*, *La traviata*, *Aida*, and other great operas, comes to life in these 50 firsthand encounters. Recalling their meetings with the master are singers, composers, writers, critics, journalists; they take note of everything from Verdi's personal manner ("unaffected and affable") to his second occupation, agriculture. The selections by editor Conati, a composer and pianist, also treat readers to the maestro's opinions on music and musicians. Though he thought that all great music "must be thoroughly national" and wanted, himself, "to be nothing but Italian," he was unenthusiastic about that most German of German composers, Richard Wagner: "He seems to be overstepping the bounds of what can be expressed in music." Wagner's "philosophical music" was incomprehensible to the composer who believed that "simplicity in art is everything." That simplicity marked Verdi's art and life. Wrote one admirer: "Verdi was a genius with the soul of a child."

**FROST: A Literary Life
Reconsidered**

by William H. Pritchard
Oxford, 1984
286 pp. \$15.95

Few literary reputations have been so drastically revised as Robert Frost's (1874–1963). Lawrance Thompson's three-volume biography, completed in 1976, showed that behind the prevailing popular image of Frost as a



genial New England sage was a coldly ambitious egotist, a "monstrous" individual who was cruel even to his own family. Though Thompson's view has since acquired wide currency, Pritchard, an Amherst professor of English, finds it simplistic and untrue to the "playful, complicated, devious Frost." The problem, says Pritchard, was Thompson's facile psychologizing—a tendency to reduce the poet's character to that of an overgrown "spoiled child." Pritchard's approach is to emphasize Frost's poetry, to show how the humor, irony, and playfulness of the poems were as much a part of the man as his less beguiling traits. What emerges is a credible picture of Frost as a man who, in a kind of exemplary drama, transformed his struggle with internal demons into exceptional poetry. Frost's cruel streak is not obscured in this lively portrait. He may well have contributed to the despondency that drove his son, Carol, to suicide in 1940. And he could be petty: He once started a small but distracting ashtray fire during a reading by his rival Archibald MacLeish. Nevertheless, Pritchard argues persuasively that there was a gentle side to Frost's rough play—"play," as the poet once put it, "for mortal stakes."

Science & Technology

**THREE DEGREES
ABOVE ZERO:
Bell Labs in the
Information Age**
by Jeremy Bernstein
Scribner's, 1984
241 pp. \$17.95

Founded in 1925 by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company (AT&T) and Western Electric, Bell Telephone Laboratories has produced eight Nobel laureates in physics and chemistry. Bell Lab's impressive leadership in basic research grew out of the phone company's search for greater efficiency and profits. Bernstein, a physicist and science writer for the *New Yorker*, looks at four areas of Bell research—artificial intelligence, solid state transistors, telephone transmissions, and astrophysics. The ingredients of the lab's success, he discovers, are its leaders' breadth of interest, their knack for bringing together the

right people at the right time, and their achievement of a balance between "applied" and "pure" research. Twenty or more years may pass between the discovery of a basic principle and its practical application. (The photovoltaic effect in certain compounds was noticed in 1939, but the first solar battery was not produced until 1954.) The question that troubles Bell scientists and top managers is whether last year's breakup of AT&T will lead to reduced support for the lab's wide-ranging research: no small question considering that the lab has customarily absorbed almost 10 percent of AT&T's annual budget.

**TURING'S MAN:
Western Culture in
the Computer Age**
by J. David Bolter
Univ. of N.C., 1984
264 pp. \$19.95

**THE SECOND SELF:
Computers and
the Human Spirit**
by Sherry Turkle
Simon & Schuster, 1984
362 pp. \$17.95

Taking a look at the broad social and cultural effects of the computer, Bolter, a University of North Carolina classicist, and Turkle, an MIT sociologist, explore the extent to which the computer has shaped both our lives and our perceptions of them. Bolter takes the long view, reminding readers how various technologies shaped the world views of past Western cultures: The potter's wheel and drop spindle reinforced the animistic world picture of the ancient Greeks, while the clock symbolized medieval man's sense of an orderly, mechanical universe. What the steam engine was to the last century's notion of a thermodynamic universe gradually depleting its energy, the computer is to the current view that man and nature, mind and matter, are finite and quantifiable—the "information processor" and the "information to be processed." Bolter sketches the mind-set of the "computer man," predicted some 20 years ago by logician Alan Turing: a sense, derived from the binary number system, that things must be either true or false; a "rejection of depth for considerations of surface and form . . . throughout our intellectual life"; an assumption of the finiteness of time and space.

Where Bolter offers the blueprint of Turing's man, Turkle calls hundreds of witnesses—professors, scientists, college students, children, hackers—to show specifically how the computer has entered into "the con-

struction of the psychological." At the academic level, philosophers busy themselves with the question of whether there is an essential "I" beyond a programmed self. Children educated on "smart machines" develop new definitions of what it means to be human: We who used to be "rational animals" are now "emotional machines." To the computer wizard, or hacker, the computer is not a tool but a way of life—and such an all-consuming one that, as one aficionado put it, "once you're in it's hard to get out again." The same might be said of most of Turkle's subjects.

BIOPHILIA
by Edward O. Wilson
Harvard, 1984
157 pp. \$15

"Wonder, astonishment & sublime devotion, fill & elevate the mind," wrote Charles Darwin in 1832 upon first sighting the tropical forests of Brazil. Wilson, a Harvard scientist and dean of the controversial sociobiology movement, has experienced that same sense of awe before the natural world. He names it biophilia, and, in this richly textured essay, argues that it is nothing less than an inherent human trait. Nature, says Wilson, inspires both the artist and the scientist, only to different ends—the latter to showing "how or why an effect is produced," the former to reproducing it. Nature, it appears, brings out the artist in scientist Wilson. Recalling water moccasins encountered in his Florida Gulf Coast youth, he writes: "Although no emotion can be read in the frozen half-smile and staring yellow cat's eyes, their reactions and posture make them seem insolent, as if they see their power reflected in the caution of human beings and other sizable enemies." Amid descriptions of the microcosms swarming in a handful of dirt or of the "ornithological paradise" of tropical Surinam, Wilson contends that biophilia, much more than middle-class trendiness, informs man's "conservation ethic." Indeed, biophilia is tied to man's evolutionary nature. Other organisms, says Wilson, "are the matrix in which the human mind originated and is permanently rooted"—the field within which "the developing mind most comfortably moves."

PAPERBOUNDS

MAN AND THE NATURAL WORLD: A History of the Modern Sensibility. By Keith Thomas. Pantheon, 1984. 426 pp. \$10.95

"Man," wrote the 17th-century essayist and philosopher Francis Bacon, "if we look to final causes, may be regarded as the centre of the world." His view was almost commonplace at the time: Europeans routinely invoked classical and Christian thought to justify their belief in a man-centered world. But as technology and science began extending Western man's sway over his environment during the 16th century, many people began to worry about the harmful consequences of unchecked and often thoughtless dominion. Oxford historian Thomas, focusing on Britain between 1500 and 1800, charts the rise of concern for nature and "brute creation." His vivid account pulls together the testimonies of all sorts of Englishmen—prelates and poets, aristocrats and urban bourgeoisie. Many of their attitudes clearly presage the environmental and "animal rights" movements of today.

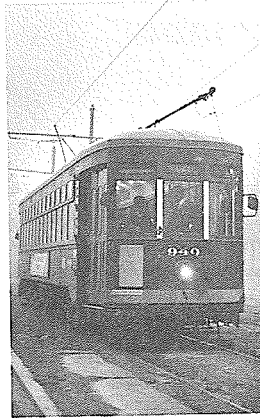
FRANZ KAFKA: Pictures of a Life. By Klaus Wagenbach. Translated by Arthur S. Wensinger. Pantheon, 1984. 221 pp. \$17.95

Until recently, writes Wagenbach, "Kafka was a writer who seemed to come from some no man's land." It seemed as though the great Central European author (1883–1924) had inhabited those spare, abstract worlds that he created in his fiction. Wagenbach's visual record of Kafka's life not only situates the author in a specific time and place (turn-of-the-century Prague) among family, friends, and lovers; it also traces many of Kafka's

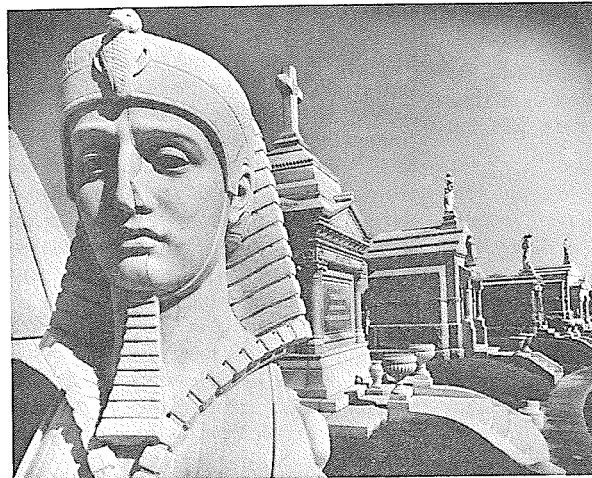
most haunting images to their sources. In portraits of Kafka's father, a smug, insensitive businessman, one sees the prototype of the author's images of indifferent, if not cruel, authority. His portrayal of the world as a bewildering maze may have had its roots in the labyrinthine office building of the insurance company where he worked as a lawyer. To complement the illustrations, Wagenbach, a German publisher and editor, provides both a biographical essay and selections from Kafka's work.

A HISTORY OF THE SIKHS. By Khushwant Singh. Princeton, 1984. 419 pp. (vol. 1), 395 pp. (vol. 2). \$25 set

The assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her own Sikh bodyguards last year brought attention of the most dangerous sort to one of India's proudest, most prosperous minorities: Thousands of Sikhs were harassed on the streets, and many were beaten or killed. Who are these mysterious people? Khushwant Singh, a historian and novelist, completed this two-volume history in 1963, but it remains the definitive answer. Among the landmarks of Sikh history treated by Singh: the founding of the Sikh faith (the issue of a "wedlock between Hinduism and Islam") by Guru Nanak during the 15th century; the transformation of a pacifist sect into a militant nationalist group fighting Afghans and Moghuls and seeking an independent state; the creation of the autonomous Kingdom of Punjab under Ranjit Singh in 1799 A.D.; the British conquest in 1839 and the subsequent struggles of the Sikhs to preserve their identity amid both Muslim and Hindu adversaries.



City images. Clockwise, from upper left: streetcar at Lee Circle; Jackson Square; jazz funeral; Mardi Gras reveler; Metairie Cemetery.



New Orleans

New Orleans (pronounced NuWALnz by most natives) lies at 29°59' north latitude and 90°2' west longitude, an old cotton port on the great crescent of the Mississippi River, now a headquarters for oil and gas prospectors in the Gulf of Mexico. Since the city's inception, blacks have made up at least 25 percent of the population (now one-half million). Roughly one-quarter of New Orleans's inhabitants claim French ancestry, one in 10 can speak French. Every year, on average, the city's saucer-shaped fundament is drenched with 57 inches of rain, and every year the city is sprayed six times to control mosquitoes. Such data do not convey the spirit of the town as succinctly as John James Audubon did when he wrote in 1821 of the sounds of Sunday in New Orleans, with "church bells ringing and billiard balls knocking." In the sketches below, historian S. Frederick Starr renders his own impressions of a unique American city, one whose personality "has been carefully aged, like a big old cheese." Oil wealth, air conditioning, and a rash of modern hotels and office buildings have affected the Crescent City's character, Starr writes. They have proved incapable of destroying it.

by S. Frederick Starr

Is New Orleans really The City That Care Forgot? Is it truly The Big Easy, as the travel posters proclaim? Or could these labels be applied just as accurately to Newark, San Jose, or Toledo?

Lawsuits over false advertising can be messy, so it is high time these

questions are answered, soberly and scientifically. Health statistics are called for—computerized print-outs covering every man, woman, and child from Chalmette to River Ridge. Reams of them. Such data should be readily at hand since Louisiana has virtually free medical care for anyone

needing it, a legacy of Huey Long.

"What, if anything, is really different about New Orleanians, physiologically and mentally?" Presented with this query, a respected local epidemiologist instantly shot back, "Diabetes and pancreatic cancer." And so they are. But upon closer inspection, these diseases turn out to be problems throughout southern Louisiana, not just in The Big Easy. We are no closer to an answer.

A psychiatrist who has worked with the statistics for 20 years had a depressing response. "Hysteria," he coolly replied, "just like in rural Mexico or Guatemala." More good news for the Chamber of Commerce.

Perhaps such data are too general, too lacking in real-life detail. Fortunately, the state of Louisiana maintains a series of neighborhood mental health clinics throughout the Crescent City. (The nickname comes from the curve of the Mississippi River at New Orleans.) Hundreds of clergymen are also in daily touch with their parishioners and hear their problems. Together, the clinicians and clergymen probably have the most down-to-earth practical knowledge of mental and spiritual health in The Big Easy.

Visits to mental health clinics and churches have produced only such subjective impressions as the following, from the director of a clinic: "Sure, there are differences, but they're only what you would expect. People here drink a lot. Hypertension is low because folks tend to act out

their problems." Big deal.

These various impressions were tantalizing for one thing, however—their utter inconsistency. "New Orleanians have absolutely the same mental health problems as people in any other large American city," one priest claimed. "No better, no worse." "This place is an asylum without walls," declared a staffer from a clinic.

Obviously, then, multiple opinions must be sought, and from all the leading authorities. So our advisers drew up a long list of bona fide experts, people who are said to spend their days immersed in the diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders. A questionnaire was prepared; forms were duplicated. At last, science would either uphold or debunk The Big Easy theory.

But expert Number One was out fishing in Terrebonne Parish with expert Number Three when our interviewer called. Expert Number Two was not back from her weekend, while experts Four through Eight were all still at lunch when our interviewer showed up for his three o'clock meeting. Expert Number Nine was involved with an office party, which the interviewer joined, thus missing his scheduled meetings with experts Numbers Ten and Eleven, both of whom, meanwhile, had left messages saying that they left work early that day. Expert Number Twelve was at an emergency meeting of the Saint Joseph's Day parade committee in his neigh-

S. Frederick Starr, 45, a former secretary of the Wilson Center's Kennan Institute, is president of Oberlin College. During 1979-83, he was a resident scholar at the Historic New Orleans Collection and vice-president of Tulane University in New Orleans, where he helped found the Louisiana Repertory Jazz Ensemble. Born in New York City, he received a B.A. from Yale (1962) and a Ph.D. in history from Princeton (1968). These sketches are drawn from New Orleans UnMasqued, copyright © 1984 by Dedeaux Publishing, Inc.

borhood, an urgent session that had been called to decide whether the band should precede or follow the children with flowers.

Perhaps one day it will be possible to get a more definitive answer on whether New Orleans is really The City That Care Forgot.

• Clubs •

Who's Who is certainly not meant for New Orleanians. The questionnaire it sends to the eminent leaves plenty of room for them to list their Nobel Prizes, published books, and membership on corporate boards. Significantly, the form provides only one scant line for "clubs." To adapt the form for Crescent City usage, the clubs category should be followed by at least a half page of blank space.

New Orleans is a club town. Not Diners Club or Playboy Club but the real thing—clubby clubs. They exist by the hundreds. There are elite clubs for men or women, not-so-elite clubs for either sex, political clubs, athletic clubs, breakfast clubs, dinner clubs, religious clubs, firemen's clubs, marching clubs, walking clubs, professional clubs, benevolent clubs, joke-telling clubs, bridge clubs, poker clubs. They are called lodges, associations, sodalities, fellowships, and even clubs.

There is scarcely a human activity around which New Orleanians have not organized a club or association. In the old days, there were burial clubs, not to mention dozens of other mutual-aid societies. Nowadays, one can find the Wild Lunch Bunch, the Phunny Phorty Phellows, and the Irish Channel Geographical, Geophysical, Geological, Historical Social Aid and Pleasure Club, which meets annually at Parasol's Bar and Restaurant. There is even a flourishing nonclub club, the bylaws of

which require it to be in a state of permanent recess: The Recess Club meets monthly.

The lion's share of public attention has been accorded to the elite clubs. The building housing the Boston Club may not compare with that of Boodle's on Saint James's Street in London or the Pacific Union in San Francisco, but it is handsome nonetheless. And its habitués are rightfully proud of their venerable institution, the oldest extant men's club in the country. Similarly, the Southern Yacht Club is a proud elder statesman in its league, outranking in protocol all but the New York Yacht Club. It should not be confused with the Southern Yacht Club, at 526 Saint Louis Street, which takes its name not from the nautical group out at the lake but from the old Mid-City salutation "Wher Y'at?"

The dispensing of prestige is at best a by-product of New Orleans clubs, not their *raison d'être*. Ask a member of the Mecca Benevolent Association why she joined, and she will tell you it was to see friends, have fun, and maybe do some good along the way. You will get the same response from members of the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club. The actual proportions vary from club to club and from member to member, but the basic ingredients are constant: pleasure and service.

In order to maximize both, it is advisable to join not one club but sev-

eral; four or five is not exceptional.

What causes this clubbiness? The very question carries a bias unacceptable to many New Orleanians, who would ask instead why so few clubs exist elsewhere. Yet it is a curious fact that the Creoles of old did not feel the need for clubs beyond a few masonic lodges. It was the Anglo-Saxon newcomers who grew addicted to them. Through their clubs, these unwelcome immigrants from the North attained a locus of stability in a society they found alien, confusing, and, in the early days, well beyond their control. From the Anglo-Saxon immigrants, the ideal of clubbiness spread quickly to other ethnic groups, whose members handily mastered the art of association building.

And build they did. Even the Creoles' informal revelries at the time of Mardi Gras were taken over and re-

organized into clubs, or "krewes." Clubs begat clubs with Malthusian swiftness, and the process continues to this day. Thus, members of the Jugs Social and Pleasure Club in 1970 formed an offshoot, the NOMTOC (Jugs), which tries to live up to its name as "New Orleans's Most Talked of Club."

The very name of the NOMTOC group implies that it is no easy matter to become the most talked about club in the Crescent City. Actually, the reverse is true. It's a cinch, for most of the clubs are not talked about at all and prefer not to be. This laudable trait, so rare in a world of institutional self-promotion, requires a correction of our initial observation about *Who's Who*. Since New Orleans clubs would not wish their members to list them, *Who's Who* can leave its questionnaire as it is.

• Brave New World •

New Orleans is built on mush, literally. The recipe calls for 200 feet of the best alluvial soil washed in from Minnesota, Nebraska, and Pennsylvania. Then soak the soil in water from the same sources to form a smooth, stratified pudding. No bed of granite lies beneath this, either. Instead, there is a layer of compacted sand just hard enough, with luck, to support a building.

These formidable obstacles have, until recently, imposed a welcome modesty on New Orleans architects. Until the past decade, the boldest attempt to tackle the mush problem was made during the 1850s, when the U.S. Custom House was planted on the bank of the Mississippi River

on submerged bales of cotton. Such bales were appealingly organic and indigenous, and marked the outer limit of *grandomania* in architecture—until now.

The pudding problem has finally been conquered with a 100-ton American crane equipped with a Vulcan 80 C pile driving hammer. Cotton bales now give way to 190-foot-long prestressed concrete pilings, each capable of bearing a 400-ton design load. Enough of these concrete fingers driven into the earth can support the 53-story Place Saint Charles, New Orleans's answer to the World Trade Center and the Sears Tower.

The sound is deafening and relent-

less. On any day, the Binnings Construction Company and S. K. Whitty and Company post an arsenal of half a dozen drivers up and down the length of Poydras Street. Like Prometheus, who stole fire from the gods, these machines have transformed the city's relationship to nature. The old limits are gone. And yet New Orleans is a city that was defined by the limits that nature imposed upon it.

Nature prescribed certain building types, certain clothes, certain foods, a certain way of life. Human be-

ings—at least those who wished to survive—accommodated themselves to these demands the way ancient Greek playwrights accommodated to the demand that only three actors occupy the stage at once. By recognizing the limits and working creatively within them, New Orleanians built something unique.

The limits do not exist now. Much to the relief of megalomaniac architects, nature no longer calls the tune. But, one might wonder, is the music of the new Poydras Street really worth singing?

. Craps .

As early as the 1830s, there was a gambling house on Orleans Street that was open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. By the time of the Civil War, New Orleans claimed hundreds of such houses, employing an estimated 4,000 cappers and croupiers. The numbers grew thereafter and continued to grow down to our own century.

Gambling in America, real gambling, is inseparably linked with the Crescent City. Everyone knows the jazz tune "Tiger Rag," which began life as a New Orleans quadrille. Less well-known is the fact that its name is derived from the card game of faro, which is similar to blackjack and known in New Orleans as "the tiger." To gamble at faro was "to buck the tiger." The term was also used in New Orleans barrelhouse lingo for the lowest hand you could draw in a poker game. It took nerves of steel to "hold the tiger."

Similarly, everyone knows that in baseball a home run with the bases loaded is a grand slam. This phrase

came originally from a game of chance called Boston—invented by British officers besieging Boston during the American Revolution and soon thereafter imported to New Orleans. The proudest and most ancient men's club in New Orleans today is the Boston Club, founded in 1841 to court the "grand slam."

The ultimate game of chance was and is crap shooting, which also bears the seal of New Orleans. A game similar to craps was being played in Paris at the time of the French Revolution. Visitors from New Orleans discovered it there and brought it back with them to wow the good ol' boys on Rue Royale. Americans in the Crescent City were fascinated by the new game, which they associated with the town's French playboys. The Americans' slang name for the Creole Frenchman was Johnny Crapaud, or Johnny the Frog. The game of the "Crapauds" soon became known as "craps."

Faro, Boston, and craps are fine games for betting, but they have one

disadvantage: They are not good to play in large groups, and in a real gambling town, scale eventually becomes important. Bingo has obvious advantages, and vast halls in nearby Jefferson Parish are regularly turned over to it, *ad majoram Dei gloriam*. But bingo is dull.

There are only two other ways to engage large numbers of people in gambling: horse racing and the lottery. New Orleans loves the horses. Back before the Civil War, the course in nearby Metairie was the capital of American turf racing. Today, the local track has the honor of being one of the few places in America where races are run on Sunday.

Unfortunately, most of the fun in horse racing is in being out at the track. Not so for the lottery, which you can enjoy from your living room or the corner bar. And a lottery lends itself to prodigious scale. Indeed, the nearest America ever came to a national lottery was the annual \$500 million New Orleans-based monster known as the Louisiana lottery. Un-

til the U.S. Congress finally killed it in 1890, this lottery was so big and so lucrative to its sponsors that it didn't have to be rigged. A variant of the Louisiana lottery lived on in the game of keno, which even during the 1940s employed some 1,000 people in the Crescent City. Everyone played.

Today, public gambling is outlawed in New Orleans. It thrives nonetheless. Police claim that \$2 million in bets are placed with local bookmakers each week during the football season. The *Times-Picayune* conveniently advises its readers which teams have the best odds.

Even though private gambling is alive, well, and virtually public, the Crescent City has lost its pre-eminent position in the world of chance. Since it is obvious that New Orleanians today are no less entranced than they were in the past by the power of blind luck in human affairs, this must indicate that the rest of America is finally catching up with Johnny Crapaud's old town.



Riverboats and the Crescent City, 1851.

• Death •

Genealogy is hot stuff in New Orleans. If genealogical researchers were to extend their inquiry beyond the human family, however, they would quickly discover that the prize of ancient lineage in the Crescent City would have to go to *Aedes aegypti*, the urban mosquito. This pioneer settler arrived on the shores of the Mississippi with *Homo sapiens*, and its progeny thrived there until our own century. Only the collateral lines of the family continue today, but at its height, the mosquito clan took on the entire human community and nearly won. Its weapon was yellow fever, Yellow Jack in local lore. New Orleanians by the thousands perished in yellow fever epidemics. Indeed, yellow fever made its last North American stand in New Orleans as late as 1905.

The statistics are staggering. Yellow fever and cholera devastated the city during 1832–33, sending more than 5,000 citizens to their deaths. In 1866, some 1,000 citizens died of cholera, and in 1878, *Aedes aegypti* killed off almost 4,000 more. The deadly mosquito's final assault on New Orleans dispatched about 500

more people to their graves, and stories of the gruesome deaths are still a part of the living memory of many New Orleans families and neighborhoods.

Between these major epidemics, the city was punished by constant fluxes, fevers, and consumption, not to mention smallpox and leprosy, the latter being the subject of a particularly macabre story, "Jean-ah Poque-lin," in George Washington Cable's *Old Creole Days*. The only leper hospital on the continent was founded and still exists on an old plantation upriver from the city.

The epidemics are safely in the past, of course. But they left their mark everywhere. Cultural life in New Orleans was created by survivors, by people haunted by death. Perhaps more than other Americans, they lived in dread of it.

Death was not merely a private drama, occurring in the intimate circle of one's family, but also a civic event, experienced by the entire community. The survivors' mourning, as well as their efforts to escape from death's presence, took place in public . . . and in surprising ways.

• Habits •

Some practices from the past live on in New Orleans because they have been labeled as traditions. Such are the reeling steps performed by the flambeaux carriers in the nocturnal carnival parades. The floats themselves are now pulled not by mules but by tractors, which foul the air rather than the street. And they are not, well, mulish. But the way is still lit by sputtering flambeaux, carried

proudly aloft by black sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons of those who carried them in the past. And the dance step that these sweating flambeaux carriers perform is nothing less than the cakewalk, frozen in tradition since the 1890s.

Many other local practices persist through unconscious habit. Thus, on Mondays, New Orleanians eat red beans and rice. They have done so for

centuries. Professors of nutrition have written dissertations in praise of this simple dish. And well they might. Alone, each element is hardly worth discussing. In tandem, they shoot vitamins and proteins into your body like grandma's cod-liver oil. *Chaurice*, the hot local sausage introduced by the Spaniards, just adds flavor.

The one-two punch of beans and rice entered the local cuisine because of the summer heat. Both the beans and the rice could be dried and safely stored. The ham bone and sausage were smoked. As a result, this was one of the few dishes that one could eat in the steamy summer without fear of poisoning. Beans and rice are also easily prepared, the perfect dish for wash day, which was Monday.

There are no longer any such reasons for eating red beans and rice. Refrigerators enable us to eat safely any dish in any season.

Home washing machines destroyed the Monday work ritual and wiped out the National Washboard Company in the process. There is no practical necessity for eating red beans and rice anymore, unless you're hooked on them.

Many New Orleanians are addicted, and so they continue to boil up their beans and rice out of sheer habit. To meet the demand, even the most impersonal supermarket chains are forced to stock whole aisles of beans and rice. The Winn-Dixie store in Saint Bernard finds it virtually impossible to move Boston lettuce, broccoli, and artichokes. But it sells beans and rice by the ton. And Tabasco sauce. And *chaurice*. An expert on the local food industry estimates that 350,000 servings of beans and rice were being offered up each week in the early 1980s. That's four times as many as in Boston, which pretends to the title of Beantown.

• Dress Code •

"Clothes make the man," it is said, but the reverse is nearer to the truth. The shape of society is reflected in the clothing people wear.

Up to our own century, for example, it was possible to discover a person's profession or place of origin simply by examining his or her clothing. Such an inspection would also reveal that person's standing in the great pecking order of society.

Now all this has changed. Farmers on holiday wear Dior suits, and their wives carry Gucci bags. Stockbrokers sport Levis, while salesgirls invest in Ungaro dresses. It's all very confusing.

Until recently, the steamy summers

in New Orleans defined local dress, which consisted of washable cottons for men and women alike. The hometown firm of Haspel provided loosely cut washable suits for men at such low prices that even a junior clerk could afford a closetful. Even today, 20 years after the advent of air conditioning, the comfortable, rumpled look is still favored by many older and more proper New Orleans males. To be sure, there are the blow-dried young upstarts with huge class rings on their fingers and tasseled loafers of soft leather on their feet, silky sleek fellows who wear three-piece suits the year 'round. But they are viewed—correctly—as aliens, Tex-

ans in spirit if not genealogy.

Two other aspects of local dress, attributable solely to the tenacity of custom rather than to climate, are striking. First, New Orleans clothing stores concentrate heavily on the fancy and the very inexpensive, with rather little for those whose tastes and resources are in between. This is especially noticeable in women's wear. New Orleans shops offer a relatively greater selection in satin pumps than in the practical business shoes that fill the shop windows in Washington, D.C. The Big Easy is no middle-class town.

The chief buyer at the Brooks Brothers shop on Canal Street reports a second difference: "We sell more formal wear here than in any other city and more tails than in New York and Washington combined." New Orleanians purchase such garb for dancing and partying. Even people of modest means indulge their passion for fancy dress, for it is deemed essential to good partying, which in turn is felt to be essential to survival.

Women's shops present the same

picture. Gloria Steinem might have to look hard to find a charcoal gray business suit in the Crescent City, but she would have an awesome array of designer gowns from which to choose. And by no means are all the buyers of such wares affluent.

English writer Harriet Martineau, that tireless critic of all things American, observed during her travels in 1835 that "New Orleans is the only place in the United States where I am aware of seeing a particle of rouge." The rouge is still in evidence, and it is backed up by several fine local *parfumeurs*, not to mention New Orleans's court jeweler, Mignon Faget.

Social historians and students of marketing might ponder the fact that Ms. Faget advertises her gold and silver creations on the sides of New Orleans's streetcars. It is doubtful that Tiffany's ever found it advantageous to plug its goods on New York buses, even on the Fifth Avenue line. But then New Yorkers can afford to be grave and serious, lacking a collective memory so grim as that of the deadly epidemics of New Orleans. New Orleanians can't.

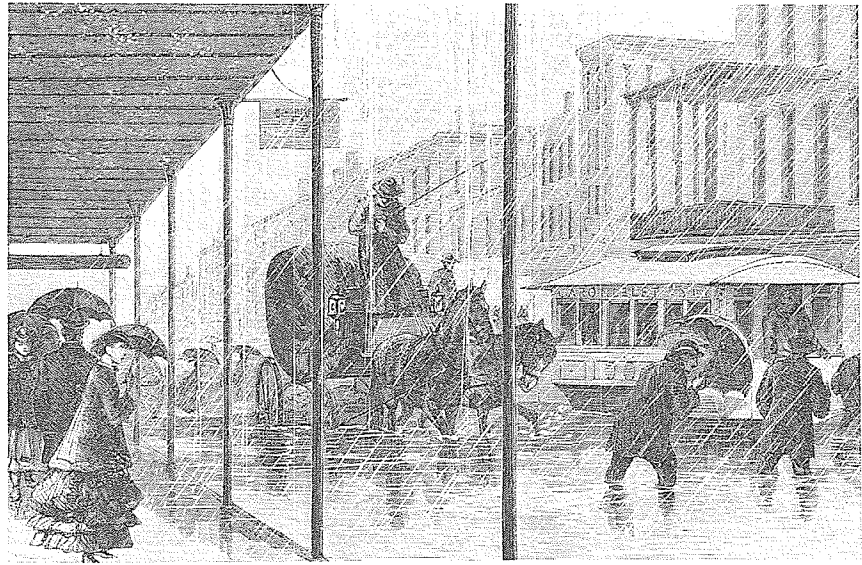
• Water •

Amidst all the frivolity, don't make the mistake of thinking that New Orleanians take nothing seriously. They do, and like the ancient Greeks, they begin with the fundamentals: earth, fire, water, and air.

Actually, earth can be dismissed, since in New Orleans it is largely mixed with, and frequently submerged under, water. Fire, however, is a constant threat in what remains largely a wooden city. Twice, in 1788 and 1794, the central district of the

city went up in smoke. Even today, neighborhood life is frequently punctuated by the roar of sirens and the acrid smell of burnt wood. Conflagrations were so common during the 19th century that a veritable army of volunteer fire departments was formed. So important were these organizations that they became pioneers in the social-service field, providing members with everything from family insurance to funerals with bands.

It is water that is most feared.



Floodwaters on Carondelet Street, 1871. The first pumps were installed in 1915 to help low-lying New Orleans keep dry. All are still in service.

First, there are the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain, both of which are held back by high earthen levees. Then there is rain, constant rain, some 57 inches of it each year: high by any standard.

Since the city lies below sea level, every drop of this rainwater must be pumped up and out. So must sewage, but through a separate system. New Orleans has four times as many canals and covered culverts as does Venice. And there is a series of somber brick pumping stations, where huge locally designed screw pumps palpitate night and day. Holland now uses similar machines, drawn from New Orleans prototypes.

And, too, there is the threat of hurricanes, for New Orleans lies directly on their most heavily frequented line of march. When Hurricane Camille crashed onto the nearby Gulf Coast in 1969, the tidal waves washed

heavy modern coffins out of the ground, just in time for low barometric pressure to pop them open and hurl the corpses into the treetops. This occurred at Pass Christian, Mississippi, New Orleanians' most favored seaside spa.

The levees along Lake Pontchartrain are being raised to discourage some future hurricane from driving the shallow waters of the lake into downtown New Orleans. But no one who watched roofs being ripped off and mighty oaks uprooted when Hurricane Betsy hit New Orleans in 1965 thinks that such measures can do more than limit the damage. In the end, the city's fate is in the hands of powers it cannot control.

That, presumably, is the reason many people threatened by Camille decided to devote their last hours to partying before the cataclysm hit. A few of these good folk even survived.

• Tackling Fate •

The realization that life is unpredictable can lead people in many directions. Some people choose to live only for the present, reveling in sybaritic pleasures. Others wallow in the uncertainty of it all by indulging in games of chance. A few hearty souls try to gain the upper hand.

The indirect method of doing so is to become a scientist, to study geology, meteorology, or epidemiology, and to use that knowledge to anticipate the next disaster before it happens. The direct method is far simpler: to propitiate the forces of evil and get them on your side.

This was Faust's approach, and it worked fairly well for a while. But Faust's Satan spoke German and would therefore be unable to understand messages from New Orleans. The best way to hook up with the powers of darkness in the city has been through voodoo.

This subject has long been usurped by guidebook writers. After all, the writhing snakes, cauldrons of frogs, unguents, and grigris make good copy. Since the topic is dead, let us

state simply that those wishing to pay their respects to the city's voodoo queens may visit the tomb of the famous Marie Laveau (there were three queens by this name) in Saint Louis Cemetery number two—if they can find it. Or they may visit the Glapion family tomb in Saint Louis Cemetery number one, which may contain the remains of Marie I, Marie Laveau's mother. Knock three times.

Organized voodoo is a thing of the past, but more than a few do-it-yourself practitioners live on. It may be pranksters who are marking crosses in brick dust on the Laveau tomb these days, but it was certainly not practical jokers who deposited broken china and packs of pins and needles on several graves in Carrollton Cemetery number one not long ago. And who was it who left potatoes that had been scooped out and filled with salt on several tombs in the same cemetery last year? Who has been regularly placing coconuts and even small hand-made dolls on several tombs in Saint Louis number two?

• Communications •

It is said that New Orleans is not a news town. In one sense it's not, for it supports only one daily paper, the nobly titled *Times-Picayune*. Actually, the name of the paper is far grander even than this. When the English Crown swallowed Wales and Scotland, it added the royal titles of those provinces to its own; for the same reason, New Orleans's one newspaper bears the full title of *The Times-Picayune / The States-Item*. As

in so many other American cities, the paper's masthead reads like a list of martyrs on a memorial.

The death of all but one city-wide daily paper does not alone prove that New Orleans is a bad town for news, nor does the fact that New Orleans imports fewer copies of highbrow news publications per capita than do most sizable American cities. Rather, such facts remind us that in New Orleans newsprint can scarcely

compete with the proverbial backyard fence or the more modern telephone line for sheer speed and depth of local coverage. "We don't have to read the paper to find out *what* happened," a local savant explains. "We read the paper to find out who got caught doing it."

Whether or not the Big Story is in the news, it is carried instantly over the lines of South Central Bell. In connection with the planning of a new ballet company a few years ago, a large and particularly important meeting was held. Somehow the newspaper managed not to cover it. But never mind. Within a few days, *Times-Picayune* columnists were alluding to the "well-known" meeting without elaboration, confident that the meeting was, in fact, well-known.

The telephone in New Orleans may constitute the most sophisticated

cable news network in the entire country. It matters little that grossly erroneous stories sometimes go unchecked or that people who should know better repeat them. In the long run, the system is self-correcting.

And there is a long run. Edgar Degas, the French painter, spent time in New Orleans with his mother's family in the 1870s. So did his brother, René, who, in addition to becoming a cotton broker, made off with a neighbor's wife, America Olivier. It goes without saying that the local papers never reported this caper. But over a century later, when the name Degas came up at a local dinner party, an octogenarian present rued that it was "such a pity that René brought shame on himself and his family." *That* was still news. His brother Edgar's daubings on canvas were not.

• Dancing •

Each week the *Metroplex Want Ads* appear in Orleans and neighboring counties—"parishes" as they are known in Louisiana. Its "Lonely Hearts" announcements cover a full page, between household effects and used cars. These four-line ads are like notes in bottles tossed out on the civic waves. In these, the lonely specify all the interests they are seeking in the Perfect Mate. A careful statistical examination of the qualities specified in the ads over many months reveals a most curious phenomenon. The preferred inclinations include walking, traveling, sports, watching TV, and just plain relaxing. But heading the list, way out in front of everything else, are dancing and dining.

No local would be surprised by this. As early as 1743, a French officer wrote the folks back home that New Orleanians spend all their money on balls and feasting. When President Jefferson bought Louisiana, the first challenge that the new American government faced was to convince New Orleanians that their public balls would not be discontinued. And one of the first fights under the new regime broke out over the question of whether French or American dances would lead off the weekly assemblies.

Some 80 establishments offered public balls during the 19th century. French Creoles danced; Anglo-Saxons danced; blacks danced; new immigrants danced; "Creoles of color"

danced; everyone danced. They still do, except on Bourbon Street, New Orleans's famed honky-tonk strip, where "they" are not locals.

Even when the city is smothered by summer heat and when the humidity is at levels that would produce a downpour anywhere else, the sweaty revelers at Munster's Dance

Hall uptown on Laurel Street are jumping and gyrating. And Stella Scott, born on a plantation near Saint Martinville and now a resident of Bienville Street, loves nothing better on Saturday night than to dine in the Quarter, have several martinis, and then dance to the music of street troubadours. Mrs. Scott is 93.

• Boosterism •

Until recently, no list of the public attitudes of New Orleanians would have included boosterism. Quite the contrary. The little public bragging that occurred in the Crescent City ran to negatives: the worst weather, the most crime, the most corruption, the worst drivers, and so forth.

Now an entirely different mood has set in. Particularly among the young and upwardly mobile, boosterism is in fashion: New Orleans is on the move; New Orleans is aggressive, progressive; New Orleans will even surpass Atlanta, Dallas, Houston. Remember Sinclair Lewis's Babbitt, pounding on the big bass drum as he led the parade touting his hometown of Zenith? Babbitt has now moved South, and New Orleans is the Zenith of the Sun Belt.

It is easy to criticize the new boosterism as being somehow inappropriate to the ethos of the Crescent City. But those who make this particular claim take too short a view of things. They forget that the "new" banner waving is not new at all, that it flourished during the flush decades before

the Civil War, when the city experienced its best days. The old homes and warehouses being so lovingly restored today are monuments to the boosters and hucksters of the past. Like it or not, the men who founded family dynasties in the 1820s would feel more at home here among the new Babbitts of today than among many of their own descendants.

The pendulum will no doubt keep swinging back and forth between boosterism and *Schadenfreude*, the Germans' untranslatable word for pleasure taken in the misfortune of others. New Orleans will continue to be the greatest and the worst, depending on the fortunes of whoever is doing the evaluating. And just as surely, most people will continue to disbelieve the exaggerated claims on both sides.

Which would be a great misfortune. For New Orleans beyond all doubt possesses the most handsome neighborhoods, the sweetest citrus fruits, the best joke tellers, and the nicest people in the country, if not the world.



COMMENTARY

Charles Murray's essay, "The War on Poverty: 1965–1980," [WQ, Autumn 1984] stirred considerable comment in the press and among scholars, as did *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950–1980* (Basic, 1984), the book from which the essay was drawn. Here we publish a sampling of letters challenging Mr. Murray's critique—and Mr. Murray's reply. All have been slightly abridged for reasons of space.

Sargent Shriver, first director of the Office of Economic Opportunity (1964–68) and later the 1972 Democratic vice presidential candidate. Washington, D.C.:

Charles Murray managed to write a 39-page article on the War on Poverty without even mentioning its principal programs, many of which continue today under Reagan's administration! Not a word about Head Start, or the Job Corps, or Upward Bound, or Foster Grandparents, or VISTA, or Legal Services, or Community Action, etc. Instead, Murray devotes most of his attention to large entitlement programs, which grew exponentially under the Nixon administration after the War on Poverty had been guillotined.

None of the programs Murray condemns was created by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the agency that Richard Nixon demolished in his effort to terminate the War on Poverty. And although Nixon was successful in emasculating the War on Poverty by eliminating OEO, the headquarters for that war, most of OEO's "hand-up" programs continue, even though seriously reduced in effectiveness.

Harassment of War on Poverty programs never seems to stop, but the historical facts remain: Poverty decreased when the OEO was fully operational and has increased ever since its leadership was destroyed.

Adam Yarmolinsky, deputy director of the Anti-Poverty Task Force for the Office of Economic Opportunity (1964) and now a Washington, D.C., lawyer:

Charles Murray puts his finger on a critical dilemma of a humane welfare system: how to provide a minimally decent standard of living for those who cannot find ways to support themselves (and their children) while maintaining some margin

of material reward for those who do contribute the sweat of their brows.

But having gone so far, he turns back and would have us pay less (we are doing that already), accomplish more (he doesn't say how), and "acknowledge" that "some" (mostly children, since he would not deny aid to the old or the sick) would go unhelpt. Clearly, some features of existing antipoverty programs tend to discourage their beneficiaries from seeking productive roles in society, while they encourage various forms of social pathology. But the alternative to these programs is not a return to social Darwinism. Murray overlooks the lessons of the relatively successful European antipoverty programs, which have succeeded not by scrapping welfare benefits but by broadening them.

Murray also overlooks an even more basic dilemma: the increasing shortage of jobs—even dead-end jobs—for new entrants into the labor market. It is hard to interest young people in jobs that aren't there.

With regret, I add the observation that the value of Murray's argument is diminished by his apparent acceptance of the Moral Majoritarian cant about guilt-ridden liberals who blame the system, coddle criminals, and crown welfare queens.

Professor Frank Levy, School of Public Affairs, University of Maryland, College Park:

Charles Murray has written a provocative critique of American antipoverty policy, but in his effort to construct a convincing argument, he has mislaid half the facts. The result resembles a devastating review of a piano recital that neglects to mention that 10 minutes before curtain, a stagehand smashed the pianist's fingers in a door.

Mr. Murray's argument rests on three points: (1) Economic opportunity has ex-

panded continuously in the postwar period. (2) Since the late 1960s, misguided policies have permitted welfare benefits to expand even faster than economic opportunity. (3) The result has been to draw more people into dependence. It is the first point that is wrong.

Economic opportunity did expand continuously from 1947 to 1973, and during this period, real (inflation-adjusted) wages and family incomes rose throughout the economy. Since 1973, the economy has been in a quiet depression in which neither real wages nor family incomes have grown. It used to be that a man passing from age 40 to age 50 could expect a 35 percent increase in *real* earnings. Today, a 50-year-old man would be lucky if his wages had kept pace with inflation since 1975. Wage stagnation, more than any other factor, has kept poverty rates high.

Mr. Murray is apparently unaware of this stagnation. In his article, the poor performance of the 1970s economy receives no mention. In his other writings, he suggests that the 1970s economy was as robust as the 1950s economy (when poverty rates fell substantially) since the gross national product (GNP) per person grew at similar rates in both decades. The comparison is naive.

During the 1950s, the labor force stood constant at 39 percent of the population. Rising GNP per *person* reflected rising GNP per *worker*, which was translated into rising real wages. A wage earner could see steady progress vis-à-vis the poverty line.

Over the last 10 years, GNP per *worker* has not grown, and the rise in GNP per *person* has occurred because the proportion of the population at work grew from 40 percent in 1970 to 48 percent by the end of the decade. The growth of this ratio reflected three factors—the Baby-Boom generation's coming of age, that generation's decision to postpone having their own children, and the influx of women into the labor force. While the first of these factors was exogenous, the last two were strategies for people to maintain growing consumption in the face of stagnant wages. But neither strategy was available to a poor female household head

whose children were already born. In this context, welfare-state benefits became more attractive vis-à-vis work.

This wage stagnation had several causes: the OPEC price increases of 1973–74 and 1979–80, and the post-1973 collapse of industrial productivity growth, which remains largely unexplained.

The quiet depression of the 1970s now appears to be ending. If the economy returns to its normal pattern of real-wage growth, then Mr. Murray's interpretation of events may receive the test it deserves.

●

Robert B. Hill, senior research associate, Bureau of Social Science Research, Washington, D.C.:

Charles Murray attempts to explain a "paradox": why the rate of poverty failed to decline and even rose at the same time that government expenditures on the poor were soaring to unprecedented heights. His basic contention is that the War on Poverty was primarily responsible for inducing rises in poverty during the 1970s. According to Murray, small groups from the liberal intelligentsia persuaded the Congress, the Executive Office, and the courts to expand sharply economic benefits to the undeserving poor in accordance with the "new wisdom" of "blaming the system"—although the overwhelming majority of Americans continued to believe the "old wisdom" of "blaming the victim."

Murray's analysis suffers from several important flaws.

First, the relation between rising government spending and rising poverty is perceived by Murray to be a paradox because he adopts uncritically a premise that reverses cause and effect. Since Murray accepts as an axiom the conventional wisdom that economic deprivation did not increase significantly during the '70s, he conducts no analyses to test the hypothesis that rising unemployment and poverty may have been *partly* responsible for increasing expenditures for the jobless and poor over that decade.

Second, Mr. Murray's analysis de-emphasizes the role of recession and inflation. But he is not alone in this stance,

since most economic analysts today omit the impact of recessions in their studies of unemployment and poverty. While such an omission might be of little consequence when economic slumps are mild and occur only rarely, it seriously flaws studies of economic progress between 1970 and 1980, when this nation experienced three severe recessions.

The 1970-71 and 1974-75 recessions added 3.2 million and 3.4 million persons, respectively, to the jobless rolls, while the 1980 slump added 1.5 million. And, contrary to classical economic theory, at the same time that millions of Americans were reeling from these back-to-back recessions, they were subjected to double-digit inflation. In fact, the 1974-75 and 1980 recessions were induced by government monetary policies as strategies for reducing rampant inflation. Thus, while the nation's jobless rate doubled (from 3.4 percent to seven percent) between 1969 and 1980, consumer prices spiraled at an annual rate of 12.5 percent.

Although most Americans were affected by the twin evils of inflation and recession, blacks suffered disproportionately: Before they were able to recover from one slump, they were hit by another one. Thus, an adequate assessment of recent economic progress of blacks and low-income groups must examine not only the separate effects of each of those recessions but also their cumulative effects on poverty, family instability, child abuse, mental illness, infant mortality, etc.

Although Mr. Murray resists attributing *increases* in poverty to economic *slumps*, he does not hesitate to attribute *declines* in poverty to economic *growth*. For example, he credits economic productivity, and not the Great Society programs, for the sharp declines in unemployment and poverty during the Johnson administration. His standard is conveniently double.

Third, Mr. Murray's analysis is also flawed by its misrepresentation of major changes in Great Society programs by the Nixon administration. According to Mr. Murray, Nixon dismantled only the "symbolic" features of the War on Poverty (such as OEO and the Community Action Agencies). On the contrary, Presi-

dent Nixon revamped several major anti-poverty programs by instituting his "New Federalism"—the decentralization of social programs [e.g., Model Cities] to states and localities through revenue-sharing "block" grants.

The differences between the Johnson "categorical" grant programs and Nixon's block grants are much more than cosmetic. The former are centralized and targeted to specific "categories" of recipients, with close federal monitoring, while the latter are decentralized and diffuse, with little federal oversight. Consequently, several high-level evaluations of the Nixon block grants revealed that the poor and minorities were served less well under them than under the previous categorical programs.

While Murray makes an important contribution by focusing on noneconomic factors that were responsible for the rise in government spending on the poor during the '70s, he seriously undermines his case by failing to assess the role of recession, inflation, and Nixon's New Federalism during that period.

●
Professor John E. Schwarz, Department of Political Science, University of Arizona, Tucson:

Charles Murray argues mistakenly that welfare-spending increases between 1965 and 1980 created incentives for Americans to go on welfare rather than take jobs. As a result, Mr. Murray says, some people worked less so that programs intended to reduce poverty instead precluded further declines in poverty. One key consequence of the policies, according to Mr. Murray, was the disproportionate rise in unemployment that took place from 1965 to 1980 among Americans aged 16 to 34 (particularly among young black male adults) following the upsurge in public welfare spending of those years.

In faulting public assistance, Mr. Murray directs attention to the wrong cause. Therefore, he is unable to see the policies' real success. Most important, he underestimates the effect of the demographic circumstances of the times. Swollen by tidal waves of Baby Boomers, the number of

Americans aged 16 to 34 looking for employment between 1963 and 1980 expanded by an extraordinary 26 million: a 14-fold increase over the 1947 to 1963 period when the same age group increased in the labor force by fewer than two million. The disproportionate climb in the unemployment rate among 16-to-34-year-olds during the 1970s was not a product of social policy but rather followed directly from the mammoth increase in their numbers in the labor supply.

As a result, not even the experience of young black male adults, Mr. Murray's most vital piece of evidence, supports the case he tries to make. Consider the example of the youngest black male adults in his analysis—the 16-to-17-year-olds. Few doubt that, as compared with whites, black males have tended over the years to fare less well in the labor market. Thus, it is no surprise that the unemployment rate of this group would rise relative to its white male counterpart in times of dramatic labor surpluses.

More to the point, the relative rise of black unemployment among 16-to-17-year-olds did not begin during the years suggested by Mr. Murray's full thesis, 1968 to 1970. The documentation on unemployment found in the appendix to Mr. Murray's book instead shows that the rise began in 1963 and 1964, prior to the enactment of a single Great Society program. Those years mark precisely the years that the first crowded ranks of Baby Boomers began to move into the labor market.

Viewed against the backdrop of the Baby Boom, a conclusion opposite to Mr. Murray's merits serious consideration. Rather than precipitating unemployment, the liberal economic and social policies implemented after 1965 very likely stemmed its rise. For example, given the gargantuan 40 percent increase in the labor force between 1965 and 1980, it took effective policies indeed to contain the rise in unemployment to as little as 2.5 percent. This performance fares well even in comparison with other nations'.

Notwithstanding the fact that only America faced an abnormally large expansion of its labor force during this time, the unemployment rate rose pro-

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Edited by
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portionately less in the United States from 1965 to 1980 than it did in any other major Western nation.



Charles Murray, a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, replies:

Let me focus on a principal theme of the letters, that the economic troubles of the 1970s explain away the problems discussed in my article "The War on Poverty" and the book from which it was drawn. If the issue is why progress in reducing poverty ended, I can at least understand the logic of such arguments. But the burden of the article, and of *Losing Ground* as a whole, is that poor people, and especially young poor people—as represented in the numbers of blacks—began behaving differently during the mid-1960s. The trends shifted during the boom years of the 1960s. They predated the supposed cause. These are some of the anomalies of the 1960s that we must stop passing off as part of the economic slump of the '70s:

The contrast between the labor-force participation of white and black male teen-agers. The 1950s had been terrible years for black teen-agers in the labor force—unemployment soared as southern agricultural jobs vanished, and the Eisenhower recessions made matters worse. But despite such problems, black teen-agers stayed in the labor force at the same levels as white. Then, just as the mid-1960s began, black male teen-agers began withdrawing from the labor force in unprecedented numbers during the same years when white male teen-agers were increasing their rate of participation. By the time the economic troubles of the 1970s began, a wide (and historically unprecedented) gap between black and white labor-force participation among the young had already opened up.

The contrast between the unemployment record of white and black teen-agers. Among those who did stay in the labor force, an analogous change occurred during the very peak of the boom period (1965–68), when the national unemploy-

ment rate for males was running at 3.5 percent and Help Wanted signs were everywhere. It was then that the blacks who remained in the labor market lost ground to their white contemporaries. The black-to-white unemployment ratio among teen-agers in those years rose from 1.7 to 1, where it had been stable for several years, to 2.1 to 1. Why did it happen then, when everything—an abundance of jobs at all skill levels, new civil-rights legislation, the first flush of affirmative action, the age of black pride—"should" have been diminishing the historical gap in black and white unemployment?

The transfer of low-skill jobs from blacks to whites. Why did blacks stop acquiring low-skill jobs? The lowest job categories in the standard Department of Labor breakdown (nonfarm laborers and service workers) constituted 17.8 percent of the work force in 1965 and 17.9 percent in 1980. What changed was not the availability of such jobs but who took them.

From 1960 to 1965, whites acquired 808,000 new jobs in these low-skill categories, while blacks acquired 238,000—blacks getting more than their share of such jobs. From 1965 to 1969, whites acquired an additional 847,000 low-skill jobs, but blacks had a net of 269,000 fewer low-skill jobs in 1969 than in 1965. The good news behind this statistic is that many blacks were moving out of low-skill jobs into better ones. The bad news is that other blacks were for some reason not moving into the vacated low-skill jobs, despite continuing high unemployment rates among the black youths who were the most likely candidates for them. Why not?

There are other anomalies as well, but these serve to make my point. None has a glib explanation. They obviously cannot be explained by the economic stagnation of the 1970s. Might they be explained, as Professor Schwarz suggests, by the maturing of the Baby Boomers?

It is hard to see how. May I emphasize once more: The anomalies occurred during a full-employment economy. Jobs were there for the taking, including jobs for the unskilled. Apart from that, everything we know about the experience of

black applicants for the higher-skill and white-collar jobs during the 1960s and thereafter suggests that blacks managed to compete very successfully against the wave of white Baby Boomers—for them, racism seems to have been a diminishing, not a growing, barrier. It was young low-skill workers who got crowded out, according to the Baby-Boom hypothesis. Why? Simple racism? But why would racism be so much more powerful than before?

I fear that we have shied away from exploring these extraordinary changes in labor-market behavior because the word

“black” makes us squeamish. Let us not look too closely, I hear too often, lest we begin to dwell on job-seeking behaviors, job performance, and job-leaving behaviors among young blacks that make us sound like racists. In *Losing Ground*, I propose an alternative. It was not black people who began behaving differently in the mid-1960s; it was poor people and, specifically, poor young people, for entirely understandable reasons provided to them by a radically changed social policy. The thesis is open to all sorts of complicated objections and arguments, but events of the 1970s are not among them.

No Pluralism in Ethiopia

In “Ethiopia” [*WQ*, Winter 1984], Paul B. Henze rightly concludes that Ethiopia’s culture endures and doubts that a revolution that began as a demand for a more open and pluralistic society could be diverted toward communism by a small military clique.

Has an open and pluralistic society ever been a part of Ethiopia’s culture? How could the communist orientation be reversed?

The 1974 revolution began not with social demands but with a civil war in Eritrea, garrison mutinies, and the prompt intrusion of a nonideological military clique resolved to profit from these threats to an aging emperor. Such is Ethiopian history.

During the last 100 years, all of the heads of state, including Haile Selassie and Mengistu, have seized power by the military route. During the last five centuries, all of Ethiopia’s supreme crises have come from foreign military interventions.

An open and pluralistic society has never characterized Ethiopia. The pervasive and rigid communist mode—the Politburo, the Central Committee, the 15,000 cadres—effectively serves the designs of a military dictator. It serves as well a Soviet Union determined to use Ethiopia’s strategic posts on the Red Sea. Neither the awful famine nor frightening

economic deterioration could induce a hard-pressed dictatorship to abandon the communist model or Soviet military assistance. Nor would the Soviet Union surrender its strategic footholds. Still less could the United States hope to reverse the trend by offering food or financial assistance after having switched military aid from Ethiopia to her enemy Somalia.

A reversal can come less through social or ideological pressures than, as in the past, through the arbitration of internal and external military factors.

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Hollywood and the Bomb

Nathan Reingold’s fine account of the absurdities of Hollywood’s treatment of the makings of the first atomic bomb [“MGM Meets the Atomic Bomb,” *WQ*, Autumn 1984] recalls a quite opposite example of documentary fiction centered on the Manhattan Project and subsequent events. *The Accident* (1955), a novel by Dexter Masters, won widespread critical acclaim. Masters, a nonscientist, knew the principals in the Manhattan Project, especially those who after the war attempted to alert the public to the awesome implications of atomic weaponry. His novel accurately portrayed not only

the events of the bomb's development but also the fears of the atomic scientists.

Unlike *The Beginning or the End*, the film Reingold discusses, *The Accident* has no happy ending. The principal figure, an atomic scientist, was fatally injured in a laboratory explosion at Los Alamos after the war.

The Accident almost made it to Hollywood, only to be squelched by the same mentality that produced *The Beginning or the End*. Following publication of the novel, which sold over 10,000 copies, David Selznick bought the movie rights but dropped the project because his backers decided that the story was "not a happy one" and because the State Department was withholding an export license. (This was the McCarthy era, and Masters had some uncomplimentary things to say about the U.S. government, the military in particular.) Later, Columbia Pictures considered filming *The Accident*, but Columbia mogul Harry Cohn finally looked at the book he had optioned, screamed "He dies!" and canceled the project.

Not only did Masters manage faithfully to present (in Reingold's words) "complex, often cerebral feats of science and engineering," he did so in an engrossing manner that makes his book a powerful, stark work of literature as well as a faithful documentary.

It is a mark of the escalating menace of atomic weaponry that in the ensuing decades Hollywood finally came to learn how to deal with this issue honestly in films such as *On the Beach* and the more recent *Testament*.

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New York, New York

Correction

There was a typographical error in our periodical report on Istvan Deak's "How Guilty Were the Germans?" [*WQ*, New Year's 1985, p. 40]. The Nazi Party won 37.3, not 7.3, percent of the vote in the 1932 German elections.

—Ed.

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