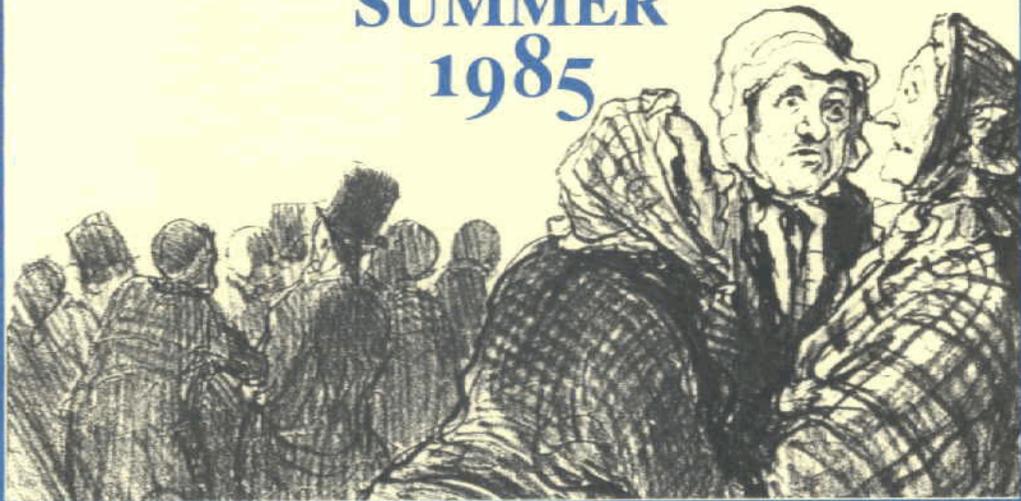


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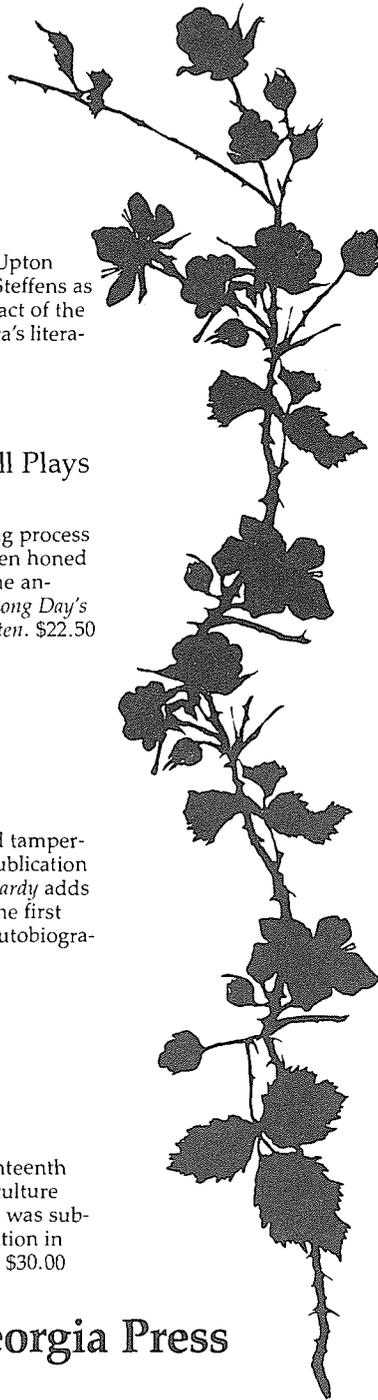
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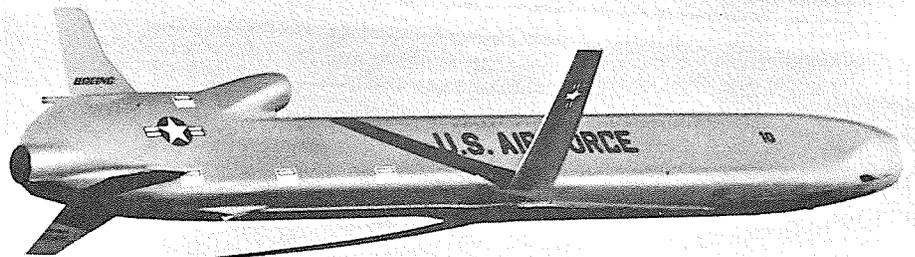
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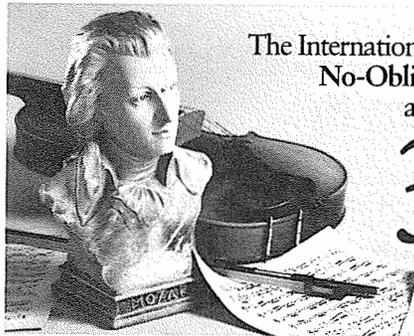
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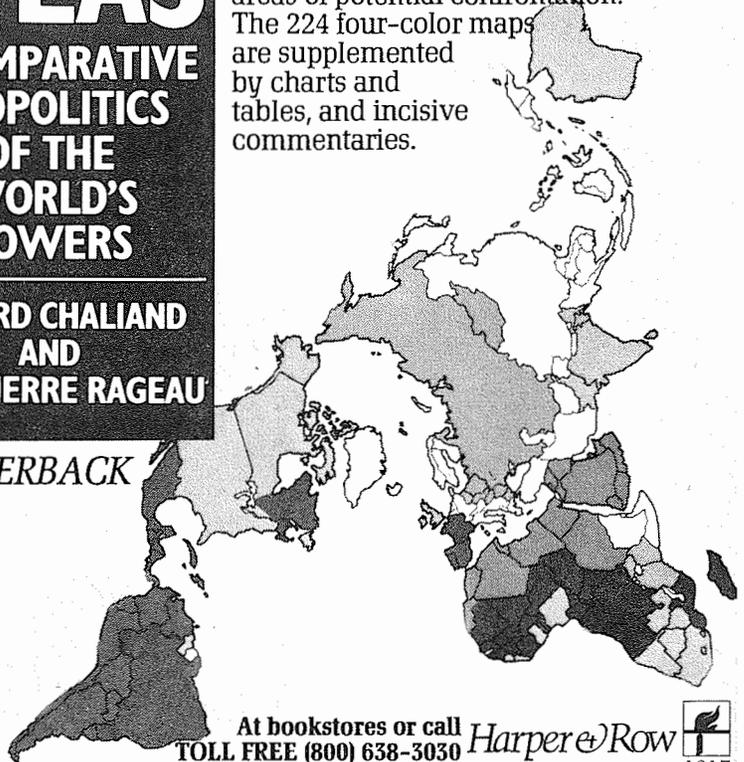
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Editor's Comment

Japan has been much in the news of late, thanks to growing unhappiness in Washington over Tokyo's long reluctance to permit foreign manufacturers the same easy access to local markets that Honda, Sony, and Mitsubishi enjoy in the West. America's deficit in trade with Japan came to \$36.8 billion last year.

In this matter, as in others, the Japanese clearly do not see the world as the West does.

We must leave the continuing trade dispute to the newspapers. In this issue of the *Quarterly*, we deal with another aspect of Japan's long-isolated island society: its "popular culture" of comics, of best-selling books, of movies (pages 47-79). Our contributors do not claim, as some academics did a decade ago, that a people's diversions reveal great truths. But they do suggest that studying the popular culture offers one of the few ways in which Westerners can begin to fathom how ordinary Japanese view themselves and the world outside.

Many Japanese (and others) may find it hard to understand a little-publicized political controversy in the United States. In no other nation has fluoridation of the public water supply (to prevent tooth decay) roused such enduring opposition. For 30 years, the "antis" have been waging war against fluoride in one locality after another, with much success. Why this is so, in a modern society that supposedly worships medical science and technology, makes an interesting study. See pages 140-153.

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VOL. IX NO. 3

Let's end pork barrels and logrolling

Imagine being told you can buy the suit or dress you need, but only if you also purchase a coat, a hat, a pair of shoes, two pair of gloves, a purple scarf, and a bright red blazer.

It sounds downright silly, but that's the dilemma faced each year by the President of the United States.

If, for example, the Congress sends the White House an appropriations bill to keep the Coast Guard afloat, that bill may also contain funds for a highway extension in one state or a drainage project in another. If the President vetoes the bill, the Coast Guard goes out of business. If he signs it, taxpayers' money may be spent on pork-barrel projects which serve little purpose save to enhance some legislator's standing among his constituents.

Many presidents, including President Reagan, have sought more discretion—the "line-item veto"—which is the legal right to veto or approve individual appropriations presented in the same bill. In recent days, Mr. Reagan reiterated his need for such power. Speaking of his desire to trim the federal budget, he said: "We're asking Congress to have the political courage to cut \$50 billion by Easter. If there isn't enough courage to approve these cuts, then at least give me the authority to veto line items in the federal budget. I'll take the political responsibility, I'll make the cuts and I'll take the heat."

A number of attempts were made by the last Congress to give presidents such authority, but none succeeded. Now, Senator Mack Mattingly of Georgia has introduced similar legislation in the new Congress, and

he has some 46 co-sponsors. This proves that there is substantial sentiment for facing up to the issue this time. Moreover, to be on the safe side, Senator Mattingly, with three co-sponsors, has introduced a Senate resolution calling for a line-item veto amendment to the Constitution, just in case it's determined that mere legislation is not enough.

One of the virtues of the Mattingly bill is the provision of a "sunset" clause. It would mandate the expiration of the line-item veto after two years unless Congress specifically renews it. In other words, it gives the line-item veto a two-year test-run to make sure it works as intended. Actual experience indicates it should. The governors of 43 states already have line-item veto authority, and they seem to be using it effectively.

Instituting the line-item veto on the federal level could go a long way to reducing the federal deficit. Many of the roughly 2,500 economy measures proposed by the Grace Commission last year eliminate just the type of spending items that tend to crop up in appropriations bills. If the President cannot veto them separately without also dooming vital programs by the same stroke of the pen, waste will continue to perpetuate itself.

This is why it's timely and important for Congress to act expeditiously on Senator Mattingly's bill. Currently before the Senate Rules Committee, it should be called up for hearings without delay and sent for passage to both houses of Congress.

There's little point in urging the President to cut spending unless he's given the tools to do it.

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POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

How to Achieve Tax Reform

"The Limits of Incrementalism: Carter's Efforts at Tax Reform" by Edward R. Kantowicz, in *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* (Winter 1985), John Wiley & Sons, 605 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10158.

Tax reform is one of the perennial crusades of American politics.

Yet, despite all the rhetoric on Capitol Hill, the U.S. tax code has swelled to more than 1,000 incomprehensible pages. Now that President Reagan has decided to pursue the elusive goal of tax reform, it is worth pondering where his predecessor went wrong.

For four years, President Jimmy Carter struggled manfully to close various tax loopholes, recalls Kantowicz, a former Carleton University historian. Even his crusade to eliminate business tax deductions for "three-martini lunches" came to naught. The lesson, in Kantowicz's view, is that piecemeal efforts are doomed; only a full-scale offensive can succeed.

Carter's first attempt to tinker with the tax system did not really aim at reform. Early in 1977, he proposed a \$50 tax rebate for individuals, a 12 percent business investment credit, and other measures designed to stimulate the economy. By April, however, unemployment had declined on its own. Carter suddenly withdrew the rebate and other proposals, leaving his congressional supporters empty-handed and wary.

That summer, the Carter Treasury Department began writing broader tax reform legislation. But while the new plan featured elimination of capital gains preferences and a ceiling on home mortgage deductions, it also left intact many time-honored loopholes. Autumn came and the bill still was not submitted to Congress. The lengthy delay led to leaks to the press, allowed Washington lobbyists to attack, and encouraged important senators to announce counterproposals. In October 1977, Carter officially jettisoned the Treasury plan.

"Act Three" of Carter's tax reform efforts, Kantowicz writes, "turned swiftly to farce." In January 1978, the President proposed cuts in personal and corporate taxes and an increase in the investment tax credit.

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The preferential tax treatment of capital gains now was not to be altered, but the President clung to some reform fig leaves—notably, limiting the deduction for a business lunch to half the tab.

When Congress finally passed the Revenue Act of 1978 in October, it contained \$18 billion in tax cuts, “a host of new complications in the law,” and an *increase* in the capital gains preference. The three-martini lunch and all but two other Carter targets were unscathed.

What went wrong? Carter overloaded Congress by introducing major tax, energy, and other packages at the same time. Worse, Kantowicz argues, Carter ignored his own sound political instincts. As he wrote in his 1975 campaign autobiography, *Why Not the Best?* “Attempts to reform systems of cash management, taxation, health, welfare . . . are doomed unless they are bold and comprehensive. With small and incremental changes, there is an intense focusing of effort to oppose the change.”

*The Other
Gender Gap*

“The Role of Gender in Recent Presidential Elections: Reagan and the Reverse Gender Gap” by Louis Bolce, in *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (Spring 1985), 208 East 75th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

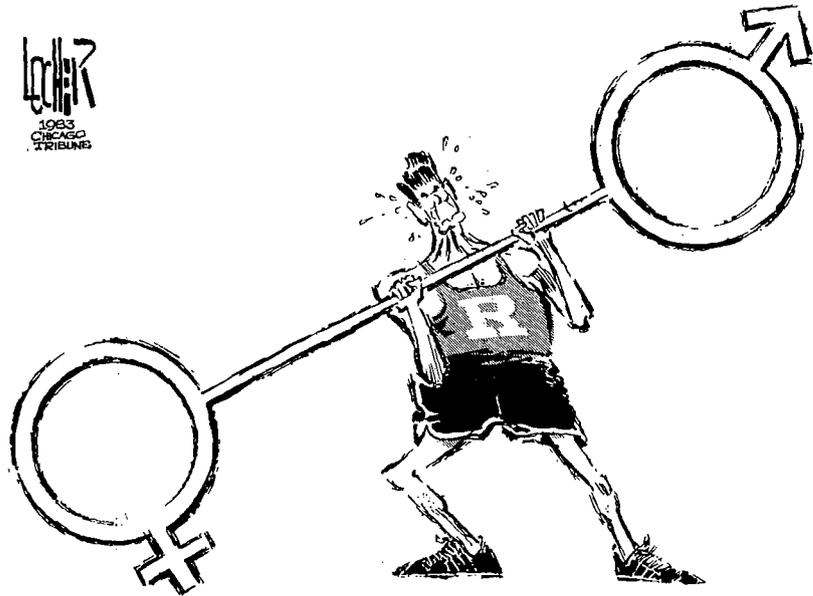
Remember the gender gap? It was one of the imponderables that led some pundits to suggest, for a time, that Walter Mondale, buoyed by “the women’s vote,” might upset President Reagan in the 1984 election. As it turned out, says Bolce, a Baruch College political scientist, the gender gap was “not an anathema to Ronald Reagan but a blessing.”

By that, Bolce means that strong pro-Reagan sentiment among men created the real gender gap. In 1984, according to ABC News exit polls, Reagan garnered 62 percent of the male vote, Mondale only 38 percent. The original gender gap, like the “youth vote” that was supposed to put George McGovern over the top in 1972, proved to be a mirage: Reagan took the female vote by a margin of 54 to 46 percent.

The gender gap theory rested on tenuous evidence, Bolce says. True, a majority of women voted against Reagan in 1980. But their support for the candidacy of independent John Anderson explains much of that. Not only did Reagan outpoll Jimmy Carter among women in 1980 by 47 to 42 percent, but the Georgia Democrat’s share of the women’s vote dropped by nine percentage points between 1976 and 1980.

Opinion surveys do show that men and women consistently disagree on certain issues. Women are more likely to oppose the use of military force and to favor environmental protection and more federal aid to the needy. But on many issues—busing, fighting crime, affirmative action—no gender gap exists. Bolce is not sure why so many women fooled the pundits and voted for Reagan. Perhaps, he says, some women found that their conservative views on some issues outweighed their liberal views on others. He observes that even white women who favored liberal abortion policies gave Reagan (who opposed abortion) 44 percent of their votes in 1980.

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT



Widely seen as a challenge to President Reagan's re-election early in 1984, the pro-Mondale "women's vote" disappeared by Election Day.

In any event, Bolce says, the real news is "the widespread alienation of white males from the national Democratic party." Reagan won 60 percent of white males' votes in 1980 and 66 percent in 1984. Their bed-rock party loyalties also seem to be shifting. In 1976, 22 percent called themselves Republicans; 34 percent Democrats. By 1984, some 36 percent were Republicans and 30 percent Democrats. National Democrats, Bolce believes, have their work cut out for them.

Reviving the State Parties

"State Parties in the 1980s: Adaptation, Resurgence, and Continuing Constraints" by Timothy Conlan, Ann Martino, and Robert Dilger, in *Intergovernmental Perspective* (Fall 1984), 1111 20th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20575.

Twenty years ago, American political scientists were preparing epitaphs for the nation's state political parties. In the new era of TV campaigns and blow-dried candidates, the old Republican and Democratic state organizations, burdened by images of patronage politics and smoke-filled rooms, seemed like political dinosaurs.

Today, report Conlan, Martino, and Dilger, U.S. Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations researchers, there are signs

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of a revival.

Their survey of 40 Republican and 30 Democratic state party chairmen suggests that the GOP is faring better. [Nevertheless, the Democrats hold 34 governorships, the Republicans only 16.] More than half the Republican state party organizations report annual budgets above \$500,000; the majority of their Democratic counterparts spend less than \$250,000. All but a few of the chairmen say that their organizations retain full-time staff members, an unheard-of luxury 20 years ago. GOP staffs average twice the size of their Democratic counterparts.

Reacting to the threat that the "new politics" of TV and political action committees (PACs) would make them irrelevant, most state parties now offer party candidates an array of modern campaign services—public opinion polls, seminars on campaign techniques, media consulting. The GOP generally offers more support: Three-quarters of the Republican state parties and 46 percent of the Democratic ones hired media consultants.

Such strategies appear to be paying off. The state party chairmen estimate that governors, state legislators, congressmen, and local officials are about as active in party affairs as they were in 1960.

Once the backbone of the two-party system, the state parties owe part of their revival to aid from the Democratic and Republican National Committees—data processing services, voter registration efforts, and managerial help, as well as money. Again, the GOP has the edge: State Republicans received \$7.4 million from Washington during the 1984 elections; Democrats \$5.2 million.

Ironically, say the authors, well-intentioned state reform laws, not TV or PACs, now most threaten the resurgence of state parties. Open primaries, ballots that provide no opportunity to vote a straight ticket, and strict regulation of internal party governance all hamper Democrats and Republicans and dampen partisan loyalties among voters.

Politics and Dollars

"Congress's Appetite for Controversial Campaign Finance Reforms Diminishing" by Maxwell Glen, in *National Journal* (Mar. 16, 1985), 1730 M St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

On Capitol Hill, anxiety over the influence of big money and political action committees (PACs) on elections for federal office is widespread. Nevertheless, reports Glen, a *National Journal* contributing editor, campaign finance reform proposals have what one congressman calls "a snowball's chance in you know where of passing."

The reasons are not hard to find. Start with partisan politics. Neither Democratic nor Republican incumbents wish to surrender fund-raising advantages they enjoy under current law. Furthermore, notes Glen, "campaign finance is an issue to which every Member of Congress brings personal experience." Attitudes toward reform frequently cut across party lines.

The campaign finance laws on the books today are the result of four

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bills passed during the 1970s. Individuals can contribute up to \$1,000 to each congressional candidate, PACs up to \$5,000. (In 1976, the Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional any limits on spending by the candidates and on "independent expenditures" by noncampaign organizations.) A 1979 amendment permitted unlimited spending on grass roots activities by political parties. The result, unforeseen at the time, was a vast advantage for the Republicans, thanks to their fundraising prowess. Ever since, Glen writes, both parties have been on guard against "hidden agendas" in reform proposals.

There is no shortage of reform ideas. But one that seems logical to some outside observers is moribund: Public financing of congressional campaigns could not win approval on Capitol Hill even during the 1970s, when Democratic supporters of the plan were strongest. Many of them, notably Senator William Proxmire (D.-Wis.), now favor granting tax credits to campaign contributors if the candidate agrees to limits on his donations from PACs and on his total campaign outlays. Like public financing, however, that plan could cost taxpayers (indirectly) a sizable dollar amount.

Senator David L. Boren (D.-Okla.) advocates a \$100,000 ceiling on the amount House candidates could receive from PACs. But many of his fellow Democrats are unenthusiastic. PAC money often benefits Democrats more than Republicans: Incumbent House Democrats raised 45 percent of their 1984 campaign funds from PACs; Democratic challengers 30 percent. The comparable figures for GOP candidates were 37 and 17 percent.

Without another Watergate to inflame public opinion, Glen concludes, campaign finance reform is dead in the water. About the only thing Congress is likely to agree on this year is the creation of a bipartisan panel to study the issue.

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Arms Control

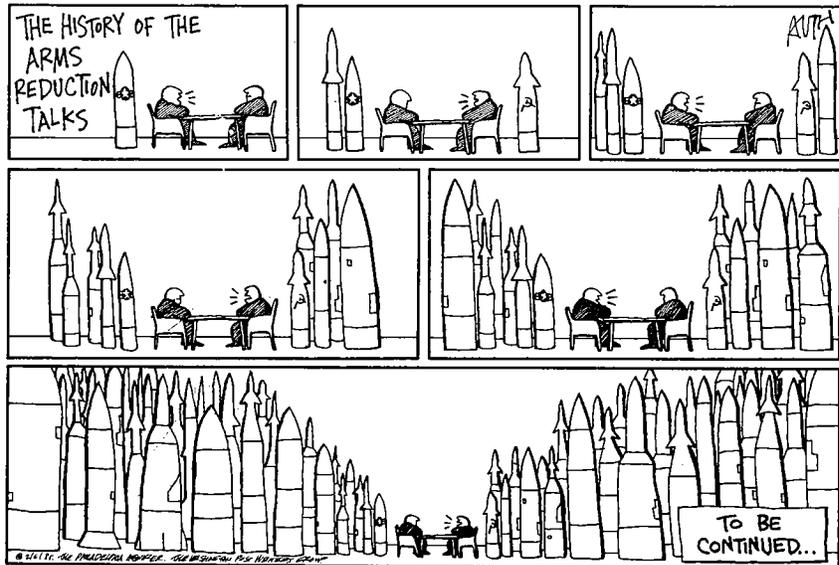
"Pie in the Sky" by Theodore Draper, in *The New York Review of Books* (Feb. 14, 1985), P.O. Box 940, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

As a new round of Soviet-American arms control talks commences in Geneva, the Reagan administration's negotiating position is still experiencing "bureaucratic birth pangs." Draper, a historian, detects its rough outlines in articles published by administration officials.

He does not like what he sees.

In *Foreign Affairs* (Winter 1984-85), U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency director Kenneth Adelman and Paul H. Nitze, special U.S. State Department adviser on arms control, present what Draper describes as "studies in ambivalence."

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Arms control pacts have not stopped U.S. and Soviet nuclear stockpiles from growing. Would growth have been faster without such treaties?

Adelman concentrates on the obstacles to effective arms control—the problem of verification, contrasting Soviet-American “force structures.” Rather than negotiate fruitlessly, he concludes, Moscow and Washington should practice “arms control without agreements.” Each side should voluntarily make concessions (e.g., halting research on antisatellite weapons) without formal pacts, encouraging the other to follow suit.

To Draper, that sounds suspiciously like a simple plan to avoid doing anything. How, after all, he says, would arms control without agreements overcome all the obstacles that face arms control *with* agreements?

Nitze’s views on “Living with the Soviets” sound to Draper like “variations on [Adelman’s] theme.” Like Adelman, Nitze devotes most of his article to an inventory of the difficulties of superpower relations. But then he abruptly advocates a policy of “live and let live” (not a policy but a slogan, Draper contends) and argues for a strategy of “complementary actions” towards the Soviets. Draper asserts that Nitze and Adelman are talking about the same thing: “The real meaning of ‘live and let live’ is ‘arm and let arm.’”

Draper suggests that previous administrations, Democratic and Republican, were not much more deeply committed to genuine arms reductions. The Soviets, he adds, make matters worse. They come to each set of talks with no position or proposal and wait to get the best offer they can. Then Moscow usually turns it down.

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Negotiations as now conducted, concludes Draper, "are only a continuation of the struggle for [global] power by other means." Each major new weapons system—antiballistic missiles, multiple warheads, the Strategic Defense Initiative—brings a new round of arms talks. Even when they "succeed," Draper writes, nuclear arsenals keep growing. Seeking "plain, simple, and sufficient" deterrence with a small number of nuclear weapons on each side is the only logical solution, in Draper's view. But until both sides decide they want it, he concludes, talks at Geneva are futile.

The Red Phone

"The Button" by Daniel Ford, in *The New Yorker* (April 1 and April 8, 1985), 25 West 43rd St., New York, N.Y. 10036.

After President John F. Kennedy moved into the Oval Office in 1961, his thoughts turned to the famous "red telephone" that would alert him in case of a Soviet nuclear attack. President Dwight D. Eisenhower had kept the phone in a desk drawer, but now it was nowhere to be found.

It turned out, recalls Ford, a freelance writer, that Mrs. Kennedy had done some redecorating. Eisenhower's desk had been replaced, and the red telephone mistakenly disconnected and removed.

The red telephone is the last link in the U.S. nuclear "command and control system"—the vast network of early warning satellites, military command posts, radio circuits, and ordinary telephone lines that stretch to the White House from around the world. As the Kennedy episode suggests, it was often neglected. Since the late 1970s, when the growing size and sophistication of the Soviet arsenal made the U.S. system more vulnerable to attack, Pentagon officials have been paying more attention. But the weaknesses remain.

Ford cites the case of the Defense Support Program (DSP) early warning satellite, the Pentagon's chief means of detecting a Soviet land-based missile launch. (There are DSP back-ups, but it would take several precious minutes to switch them on.) The satellite is controlled from a Sunnyvale, Calif., base—"within bazooka range of a highway," says one specialist. It sends its data to a ground station in Australia, which relays it through an American Telephone & Telegraph (AT&T) transoceanic cable to San Francisco. Then the signals go to North American Aerospace Defense Command headquarters inside Cheyenne Mountain in Colorado.

Saboteurs, to say nothing of nuclear explosions, could sever communications almost anywhere. Until recently, the AT&T building in San Francisco, where the cable comes ashore, was unguarded.

Moreover, major U.S. command centers are not built to survive direct hits by nuclear missiles—not even the Cheyenne Mountain outpost. At most, U.S. leaders would have 25 to 30 minutes to decide how to respond to an incoming Soviet missile attack.

Thus, a pre-emptive "decapitating" nuclear attack aimed at the U.S. leadership and communications network is a tempting military strategy.

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Moscow probably does have such a crisis plan. American leaders have always maintained that the United States would never strike first in a nuclear war. But Ford contends that such plans exist. More than one retired Air Force general has discussed the possibility of a U.S. first strike. The new MX missile is useless for deterrence—it cannot survive an enemy attack—but a good offensive weapon. In Ford's view, only an "unstated [Pentagon] reliance on the first strike option" can explain the long neglect of grave flaws in the U.S. command and control system.

Who Needs A Peace Institute?

"The Pseudo-Science of 'Peace'" by Donald Kagan, in *The Public Interest* (Winter 1985), 20th & Northampton Sts., Easton, Pa. 18042.

Unnoticed amid all the legislation that Congress passed in its haste to adjourn last fall was a bill establishing a new United States Institute for Peace. The institute's mission: to subsidize research into the causes of war, to support public "peace education," and to train public officials in "international peace and conflict resolution."

Kagan, a Yale historian, expects nothing but mischief and academic "hocus pocus" from the new institute.

Some critics worry that it will become a "center of pacifist propaganda." Others wonder why a \$16 million federal agency is needed when "peace research," variously defined, is already carried out at 79 private U.S. institutions. Both are valid concerns, says Kagan.

But the greatest flaw of all, he continues, is the naive faith that the institute's backers place in "the marvels [of] the social sciences." Since peace research was born during the 1950s, argues Kagan, it has contributed nothing to the understanding of the causes of war. Jettisoning history and other humanistic disciplines as old-fashioned and imprecise, the social scientists have tried repeatedly to forge "scientific" theories. Results have varied. Cultural anthropologists deny that aggression is rooted in human biology and maintain that it can be unlearned. Freud, on the other hand, believed war to be a manifestation of natural aggression and the death instinct. Erik Erikson saw it as an outcome of individuals' unresolved identity crises.

Today, political scientists dominate peace research. They rely chiefly on statistical techniques to determine what behavioral patterns lead to war. "One might ask," Kagan explains, "if a sequence of five threats in a row followed by less than three capitulations is usually followed by war or peace." In 1969, three political scientists applied a "two step mediated stimulus-response model" in their comparison of the 1962 Cuban missile crisis to the outbreak of World War I. Their conclusion: Nations' perceptions of one another are all-important.

Kagan favors a historical approach to the study of war. History shows, he says, that "perceptions" and the like count for little next to a nation's *intentions*. If two nations do not want to fight, they generally will keep the peace; if they are ready to make war, any excuse will do. And intentions, in Kagan's view, are shaped less by rational calculation

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than by human impulses—revenge, greed, wishful thinking—that cannot be measured by statistics. The new Peace Institute, he predicts, will not just subsidize earnest academic thumb-twiddling but “will erode the forces of common sense, experience, and history that argue for a strong defense as a deterrent to war.”

ECONOMICS, LABOR, & BUSINESS

*The Interest Rate
Puzzle*

“Do Large Deficits Produce High Interest Rates?” by Paul Evans, in *American Economic Review* (Mar. 1985), 1313 21st Ave. So., Ste. 809, Nashville, Tenn. 37212-2786.

Federal budget deficits have been growing since 1979, but contrary to many economists' predictions, the sky still has not fallen.

As a result, revisionist views of deficits are taking shape among economists. Northwestern University's Robert Eisner, for example, has argued that a proper accounting (e.g., including not just federal borrowing, but loans as well) would show Washington to be in the black [see *WQ*, Summer 1984, p. 19]. Now Evans, a University of Houston economist, attacks the widely accepted notion that big deficits are sure to make interest rates jump. During three earlier periods of American history (the Civil War, World Wars I and II), he argues, deficits soared without pulling interest rates up with them.

In 1919, for example, the war effort created a federal budget deficit equal to 16.6 percent of the gross national product (versus five percent in 1984). Only a fraction of the deficit was financed by printing more money; 95 percent was borrowed. Yet, interest rates on private sector railroad bonds, leading indicators of their day, stayed firmly within their prewar range of four to six percent.

Some studies have found weak links between budget deficits and interest rates for the post-World War II period, but many others have found “none at all,” Evans writes. His own research on the October 1979 to December 1983 period, when the Federal Reserve Board abandoned attempts to influence interest rates, shows no relationship. “In over a century of U.S. history, large deficits have never been associated with high interest rates,” he maintains.

Evans advances a “rational expectations” argument to explain this oddity. Faced with a bill for government outlays that eventually will have to be paid for, even if only to retire government debt, people increase their savings. That reduces the demand for goods and services and enlarges the pool of capital available to finance the deficit.

Evans is far from blasé about today's budget deficits. But it is not their effect on interest rates that troubles him. Rather, he worries that economic growth will be sharply reduced if the United States is forced to raise marginal tax rates tomorrow to pay for today's programs.

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Raises & Roses



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Union organizers are trying hard to enlist the growing number of women in the work force, with limited success so far. Only 14 percent of working women carry union cards, compared to 23 percent of men.

More Bad News For Big Labor

"Changing Employment Patterns of Organized Workers" by Larry T. Adams, in *Monthly Labor Review* (Feb. 1985), Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

For several years now, there has been nothing but bad news for leaders of organized labor. Yet, because the federal government stopped gathering national data on union membership after 1978, nobody was sure just how grim the tidings on union membership were.

Recently, reports Adams, a U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics economist, Washington resumed its data collection, and the results confirm the union chiefs' worst fears. Between 1980 and 1984, the nation gained 3.8 million new jobs, but the number of working union members fell by 2.7 million, from 20.1 million in 1980 to 17.4 million in 1984. (The government now collects data only on *working* union members, not those who are unemployed or retired.)

To view the decline another way: Unions represented 23 percent of all employees in 1980, only 19.1 percent in 1984.

Organized labor has suffered setbacks before, Adams notes. When the national economy turned sluggish between 1956 and 1961, some 1.2 million members dropped from union rosters.

The recent losses were concentrated in the mining, construction, and manufacturing industries, where some 800,000 jobs were lost between

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1980 and 1984. Plant closings, "runaway shops," and stiffer resistance to unions by employers added to the impact; all told, 1.9 million union jobs disappeared.

More worrisome to organized labor is the fact that membership fell even in growing sectors of the economy. The payrolls of service industries (e.g., health care, communications, and transportation) swelled by nearly five million during the five-year period, but unions lost some 700,000 members. Up to half the losses were the result of federal deregulation of the trucking and airline businesses, which spurred harsher competition between union and nonunion companies. In finance, insurance, real estate, and wholesale and retail sales, union membership in 1984 averaged only seven percent of the work force.

So who still carries a union card? About one-third of all skilled workers, such as machine operators, and 36 percent of all employees of local, state, and federal governments. The two most unionized groups in the economy: female teachers in the public sector and black male workers in every field.

Encouraging Citizen Savers

"The Link between Savings and Interest Rates: A Key Element in the Tax Policy Debate" by Robert H. DeFina, in *Business Review* (Nov.-Dec. 1984), Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, 10 Independence Mall, Philadelphia, Pa. 19106.

One of the top priorities of Washington policy-makers is boosting Americans' personal savings in order to increase the capital available for investment in the U.S. economy. Two obvious strategies would be to offer higher interest rates to savers or to cut taxes on income from savings.

Unfortunately, things are not so simple, writes DeFina, senior economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia.

Obviously, a higher interest rate makes saving, say, \$1 of income relatively more attractive than spending it. But this incentive has other effects as well. For example, "target" savers—people who aim to build up a particular dollar amount of money for retirement, college education for their children, or vacations—may *cut* their savings. The reason: Higher earnings from interest will allow them to meet the dollar target with smaller contributions.

Sizing up the conflicting impacts of changes in interest rates has brought economists no clear answers. In his own 1983 study, DeFina found that these influences cancel each other out. Among the 10 other studies he surveys, two agree with his finding. Five others suggest that a one percent boost in real interest rates will yield less than a one percent increase in personal savings. The others predict increases in savings of 1.3, 1.8, and 5.8 percent. Corporate savings, another important source of capital, are an entirely different story.

DeFina adds that he and his colleagues are still far from agree-

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ment. Deepening the mystery is the fact that Americans have altered their saving habits very little despite the massive economic and tax changes of the last 25 years. They saved an average of 5.6 percent of their income in 1960, 6.1 percent in 1984. Both figures are low by international standards.

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*Defending the
Great Society*

"Losing Faith in 'Losing Ground'" by Robert Greenstein, in *The New Republic* (Mar. 25, 1985), P.O. Box 955, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737-9855.

Twenty-three years ago, Michael Harrington fired the first shot of the War on Poverty with his exposé of poverty, *The Other America*. Today, another book, Charles Murray's *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950-1980*, is providing plenty of ammunition for opponents of federal social welfare programs.

Murray's fact-laden book asserts, among other things, that the surge in federal welfare outlays after 1968 actually fostered wider dependency and thus increased poverty [see "The War on Poverty: 1965-1980" by Charles Murray, *WQ*, Autumn 1984]. But Greenstein, director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities in Washington, contends that Murray's data are in many cases selective and misleading.

One of Murray's arguments relies on the case of a hypothetical unwed couple, Harold and Phyllis, about to have a child. The question: Does it make sense for the couple to marry and for Harold to take a job at the minimum wage, or should they simply live together and let Phyllis collect a monthly welfare check? Murray's data for 1970 show that the couple will fare better on welfare. But Greenstein points out that Murray assumed the couple lives in Pennsylvania, a state with welfare benefits far above the national average. Murray also assumed that the couple would not be eligible for food stamps if Harold took a job. Incorrect, says Greenstein.

In fact, the work-versus-welfare calculus for 1970 favored work in most states. In the South, work would have supplied Harold and Phyllis with nearly twice as much income as welfare. And Murray does not examine the couple's situation in 1980. By then, according to Greenstein, a decade of high inflation and skimpy welfare benefit level increases (but wider eligibility) made their choice even plainer. Even in Pennsylvania, the couple stood to gain one-third more income if Harold could find a job.

Nationwide, the poverty rate did not budge from 13 percent between 1968 and 1980. Murray blames a variety of factors, including growing government-induced welfare dependency. But Greenstein has a simpler explanation: unemployment. In 1980, unemployment stood at 7.1 percent; in 1968, just 3.6 percent.

The record, in Greenstein's view, demonstrates the value of federal

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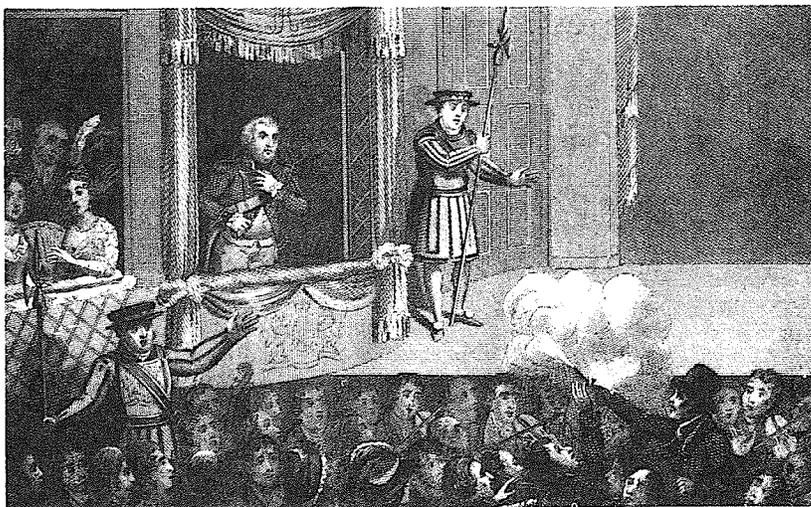
social welfare programs. A 1984 Urban Institute study, for example, shows that such programs lifted fewer than half of the nation's poor above the poverty line in 1965 but some 70 percent by the late 1970s. If it were not for the nation's erratic economic performance during the 1970s, Greenstein contends, the War on Poverty might have been won.

Preserve the Insanity Defense

"Empirical Research on the Insanity Defense" by Henry J. Steadman, in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (Jan. 1985), Sage Publications, 275 South Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212.

In June 1984, President Reagan's would-be assassin, John Hinckley, Jr., was found not guilty by reason of insanity. The verdict stirred up deep-seated popular suspicions that the insanity defense is a wide-open loophole for dangerous criminals.

The facts belie such notions, writes Steadman, a sociologist and director of research at the New York State Office of Mental Health. In 1978, for example, some 5,000 defendants nationwide pleaded not guilty to various felonies by reason of insanity; only 1,554, or 30 percent, won acquittal. State and federal prisons accommodated 307,276 inmates during 1978. The 3,140 criminally insane people housed in state and county mental hospitals that year represented a mere two percent of all patients.



Only after 1800, when James A. Hadfield won acquittal by reason of insanity for his failed attempt on the life of England's King George III, was confinement of the criminally insane required by law.

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Steadman estimates that insanity pleas were entered in 0.17 percent of New York State's 127,068 felony cases in 1978.

Successful insanity defendants share certain characteristics. They are mostly male, white, middle-aged, and unmarried. The vast majority are either unskilled or unemployed. Their crimes vary from state to state: More than half of New York's criminally insane are murderers, but only one-quarter of New Jersey's are. Assault and burglary offenses are common; sex offenders account for a tiny share of insanity acquittals nationwide.

Do the criminally insane spend less time in custody than convicted criminals? It depends on the state, Steadman says. At St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C., where Hinckley is held, the average detention time is 5.4 years, longer than comparable felons are held. But in New York and Connecticut, felons serve nearly twice as much time as the criminally insane. In general, detention time for the criminally insane varies with the seriousness of the crime—which is odd, Steadman observes, if such people are ostensibly held for treatment, not punishment. After release, the criminally insane and convicted criminals commit new crimes at about the same rates.

Only during the last 10 years have such data on the criminally insane become available. More research is needed to aid policy-makers. Meanwhile, Steadman argues, tightening supervision of those who are found not guilty by reason of insanity, as New York State did in 1980, would cut down on the much-headlined early releases and repeat offenses that turn the public against the insanity defense.

Food Fanatics

"The Meat and Potatoes of Eating Out"
by William Dunn, in *American Demographics* (Jan. 1985), P.O. Box 68, Ithaca, N.Y. 14851.

Many, perhaps most, Americans nowadays are heavily armed with microwave ovens, food processors, and other kitchen conveniences. Their freezers are stocked with TV dinners that bear French names and aspire to be *haute cuisine*. And they are eating less (measured in calories per person) than in years past. Even so, they are flocking to restaurants, delicatessens, and fast-food outlets in record numbers.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 41 cents out of every dollar spent on food in 1983 wound up in restaurant cash registers. That compares with 33 cents of every food dollar in 1970. On average, Americans eat out 4.2 times every two weeks (and paid \$89 billion to do so in 1982). Dinner edges out lunch as the favorite away-from-home meal. It accounted for 39 percent of meals purchased.

Even as the American appetite for dining out grows, the number of places to eat is shrinking—from 274,000 in 1974 to 258,000 in 1982. That means more big restaurants and more McDonald's, Shakey's, and other high-volume operations. In 1982, fast-food outlets constituted 45 percent of American restaurants and were growing quickly.

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Speeding things along is the enormous popularity of fast-food breakfasts, which date back to the unveiling of the Egg McMuffin in 1974. Ethnic foods (especially Mexican or Tex-Mex) are hot items. The boom in salad bars gets most of the credit for a quantum leap in U.S. vegetable consumption—notably, a sextupling of broccoli consumption per capita between 1962 and 1983.

Affluence, the growing number of busy working women and of people who live alone, and the premium Americans place on leisure time are among the explanations for the swelling U.S. restaurant trade. The aging of America, however, may bode ill for Ronald McDonald and his fast-food friends. As people age, Dunn notes, they are less likely to eat in fast-food establishments, more likely to dine in regular restaurants.

Columbus As God's Messenger

"Prophecy and Discovery: On the Spiritual Origins of Christopher Columbus's 'Enterprise of the Indies'" by Pauline Moffitt Watts, in *American Historical Review* (Feb. 1985), 400 A St. S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.

"God made me the messenger of the new heaven and the new earth of which he spoke in the Apocalypse of Saint John . . . and he showed me the spot where to find it." So wrote Christopher Columbus in 1500, eight years after discovering the New World.

Columbus has gone down in history as a bold explorer and man of science who overcame the ignorance and superstition of his time. But as his words suggest, argues Watts, a Pomona College historian, there was another side to the great navigator. Behind his voyages was an "apocalyptic vision of the world and of the special role that he was destined to play in the unfolding of events that would presage the end of time."

Although he probably lacked formal education, Columbus was well versed in geography, astronomy, and geometry (as well as Latin). His notion that the Earth was round was not original but absorbed through wide reading. In fact, Columbus relied on the (incorrect) calculations of the 10th-century Arabian astronomer Alfraganus in estimating that he need sail only some 2,500 miles westward from the Canary Islands to reach the Orient.

But Columbus was also an avid reader of ancient and contemporary prophetic religious works. After his first voyage to the New World, he Latinized his name to Christoferens (Christ-bearer) and began assembling a compilation of his favorite readings, his never-completed *Book of Prophecies*. Seldom examined by scholars, these selections reveal the spiritual preoccupations of the Admiral of the Ocean Sea. Many concern the chain of events leading up to the end of the world and the Second Coming of Christ.

After 1492, Watts says, Columbus increasingly came to see himself as God's agent in fulfilling these prophecies. He developed "a virtual obsession with the recovery [from the Muslims] of Mount Zion, symbol of

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the Holy Land." "Who will offer himself for this work?" he asked Spain's King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. "Should anyone do so, I pledge myself, in the name of God, to convey him safely thither." Columbus also believed that a worldwide conversion to Christianity was necessary before the Apocalypse could occur and that his discoveries of the New World "had greatly accelerated this final process."

PRESS & TELEVISION

*Covering
Campaign '84*

"General Election Coverage: Parts 1 and 2" by Maura Clancey and Michael J. Robinson, in *Public Opinion* (Dec.-Jan. and Feb.-Mar. 1985), American Enterprise Institute, 1150 17th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036-9964.

Conservative commentators found much fault with the three major TV networks for anti-Reagan bias during the 1984 presidential campaign. Clancey and Robinson and researchers at the University of Maryland and George Washington University, respectively, see plenty of evidence that President Reagan did indeed come off badly on TV newscasts but very little to show that political bias was to blame.

They surveyed all 790 election-related TV evening news segments broadcast after Labor Day 1984. Three-quarters of the film clips showed no real "spin" one way or the other. But when TV reporters did make subjective remarks, the results were clear: 90 percent of Reagan's coverage was unfavorable, and Vice President Bush did not get a single favorable mention. Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro, by contrast, drew 1,970 seconds of "good press" on TV, 1,450 seconds of "bad press."

Forty percent of all the coverage was devoted to "campaign issues"—i.e., the candidates' performance on the stump, not government policy. Here again, the Republicans fared badly. Nine of the top 10 campaign issue stories (e.g., Reagan's age, his availability to the press) were "bad news" for the GOP.

When TV journalists focused on the "horse race" aspects of the campaign, the results were different. Such "who's ahead" assessments "ran four-to-one positive for Reagan/Bush, three-to-one negative for Mondale/Ferraro."

The Democrats did not enjoy kid glove treatment; they just enjoyed less negative coverage than did the Republicans. And "liberal bias" in the networks does not explain the difference, the authors argue. Only 21 TV news stories showed any evidence of *ideological* spin, and 10 of them were conservative. Looking back to the 1980 presidential campaign, they note that TV journalists treated candidate Reagan much more gently than they did President Jimmy Carter or his sometime rival, Senator Edward Kennedy (D.-Mass.).

In both the 1980 and 1984 election coverage, Clancey and Robinson

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Baffling some TV newscasters, most U.S. voters did not share their views of President Reagan during the 1984 presidential election campaign.

perceive the workings of “compensatory journalism.” TV reporters, they say, “simply feel that they have a special mission to warn Americans about the advantages any incumbent has.” Irritation at Reagan’s “Teflon presidency” and an “impish” desire to liven up a one-sided contest spurred them to go a bit harder on Reagan. To the authors, however, the most interesting thing about TV coverage of Campaign ’84 was how little effect it apparently had on the electorate.

*Statecraft
As ‘Leakcraft’*

“Leaks and Other Informal Communications” by Stephen Hess, in *Society* (Jan.-Feb. 1985), Box A, Rutgers—The State University, New Brunswick, N.J. 08903.

The morning newspapers often set teeth gnashing in the White House. Leaks—disclosures of inside information—are the cause of this high-level angst; they are also an increasingly common part of life in official Washington.

The fact is, says Hess, a Brookings Institution Senior Fellow, most leaks are sprung by the President’s own political appointees, not by career civil servants or Capitol Hill types. And more often than not, the leaks are intentional efforts to manipulate the press and public opinion. “A government,” observes the *New York Times*’s James Reston, “is the only known vessel that leaks from the top.”

Hess discerns varying motives in leakers. There is the “goodwill” leaker, who hopes that a reporter will someday return the favor; the

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"animus" leaker, who aims to settle a score with another official; and the "policy" leaker, who aims to shape an emerging proposal. A specialized subcategory is the "trial balloonist," who wishes to test public reaction, usually with the hope that it will be negative. Not to be forgotten are "ego" leakers, often relatively anonymous aides, who divulge information to prove their own importance, and the occasional old-fashioned "whistle blower."

Since reporters rarely reveal the identities of their talkative sources, it is hard for the reader to know which motives are at work and whose interests are served by a given disclosure. When reports that Libyan "hit squads" had been dispatched to make an attempt on President Reagan's life surfaced in December 1981, *New York Times* columnist William Safire concluded that it was a White House ploy to publicize Muammar Qaddafi's "export of terrorism." No, replied Joseph Kraft in the *Washington Post*, the Reagan administration was too fearful of upsetting the planned withdrawal of Libyan troops from Chad to risk publicity that would anger Qaddafi.

A month later, Reagan established a set of guidelines aimed at plugging leaks. Among its provisions was one calling for the use of lie detectors in interrogating officials suspected of leaking. A furious response from newsmen effectively killed the guidelines.

Hess believes that Reagan was ill-advised to attempt such a crack-down: Presidents are more often leaked for than leaked against. And melodramatic government claims to the contrary, very few leaks compromise national secrets. Hess is also skeptical of arguments that 'leakcraft' leaves Washington journalists prey to official manipulation. So widespread is the habit of leaking that there is always one loose-lipped insider to counterbalance another.

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

*Rethinking
John Stuart Mill*

"Mill and Millians on Liberty and Moral Character" by Harry M. Clor, in *The Review of Politics* (Jan. 1985), Box B, Notre Dame, Ind. 46556.

"Over himself, over his own mind and body, the individual is sovereign," declared John Stuart Mill (1806-73). The English philosopher's ideas undergird the arguments of such contemporary thinkers as Oxford's Ronald Dworkin for expanded personal freedom.

What is interesting about Mill, says Clor, a Kenyon College political scientist, is that he did not favor freedom for its own sake but because he believed that it developed human character to its highest potential. Unfortunately, Clor argues, that conviction also led Mill into some insoluble contradictions.

In *On Liberty* (1859), Mill argued vigorously for dropping all restraints on personal conduct save those that bar people from injuring

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one another (without consent). From polygamy to drug abuse, all varieties of human behavior would be permissible. Through "experiments of living," human beings would be free to pursue their individuality, one of Mill's highest values.

By this definition, Clor notes, the Marquis de Sade would qualify as an admirable man. As if to answer, Mill, in his 1861 essay *Utilitarianism*, distinguished between higher and lower human pursuits, with such aberrations as the Marquis's falling into the lower realm.

But Mill never showed how a society governed by the principles of *On Liberty* would encourage citizens to pursue "higher" pleasures. In fact, Clor says, Mill never really grappled with the reality that many people, given a choice, will take the low road. He was not naive about the dark side of human nature, Clor argues. He was convinced that men and women develop their higher faculties only by making choices. Those who simply accept without thought conventional norms and traditional wisdom need only the "apelike [faculty] of imitation."

But Mill assumed that men given free choice would retain many customs and traditions. Clor simply is not willing to count on that.

Biblical Mysteries

"Translating the Bible" by Barry Hoberman, in *The Atlantic Monthly* (Feb. 1985), Box 2544, Boulder, Colo. 80321.

Until a few decades ago, most English-speaking Protestants thought of the King James Version as simply "the Bible." (Catholics used the Douay-Rheims Version.) But today there are at least a dozen different versions, and translators are begetting more all the time.

According to Hoberman, a Harvard Divinity School graduate, the task of translating the Bible into English has been going on since the late 14th century. Scholars cannot even agree on what should be included: No one disputes that there are 39 books in the Old Testament, the traditional Jewish canon, but some Bibles can contain 66 or even 81 books (the Old and New Testaments and the 15 books of the Apocrypha).

One of the big questions confronting translators is simply determining what to translate. Because no original Hebrew or Greek Biblical manuscripts survive, scholars must pick and choose from a variety of texts. For the New Testament, composed over the course of 50 to 100 years, the task is relatively simple. But the Old Testament took 1,000 years to write, and it comes to us in a jumble of fragments of ancient texts in long dead languages. (However, the Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in 1947, show that many parts of the "definitive" version of the Old Testament, arrived at by a group of medieval Jewish scholars called the Masoretes, is quite accurate.)

The actual translation of a given text into English is no easy matter, either. Should it be rendered literally or idiomatically? In archaic language or contemporary? Good translations are not necessarily word for word, says Hoberman, but they do seek "to convey the meaning of the text accurately."

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Among recent translations that fail this test is, ironically, the popular fundamentalist Living Bible (published as *The Book* in 1984), marred by a sharp anti-Semitic bias. What the Revised Standard Bible renders as "we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe," for example, *The Book* gives as "We were slaves to Jewish laws and rituals." A more recent effort by the National Council of Churches to remove "sexist" language from the Scriptures has produced its own share of problems. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son" thus becomes "For God so loved the world that God gave God's only Child."

A committee of Protestant scholars and clergymen now at work on a new edition of the Revised Standard Version expects to complete its work by 1990. Doubtless, many other Bibles will follow it. The words of the Bible, Hoberman says, are as much a matter of debate as are the messages and theology that they convey.

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*The Slow Pace
Of Science*

"The Grimsel Glacier and Other Oft-Told Geologic Tales" by Jonathan Weiner, in *The Sciences* (Mar.-Apr. 1985), 2 East 63rd St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

The neglected genius whose ideas are ahead of his time is a stock figure in scientific lore. And not by accident, writes Weiner, a contributing editor of *The Sciences*. Such stories reflect the essence of scientific progress.

Some of the world's most famous scientists were victims of the before-his-time syndrome. Nicolaus Copernicus's theory that the planets revolved around the sun did not catch on until some 70 years after his death in 1543. More typical, perhaps, is the scientific visionary who remains relatively anonymous. Copernicus himself, for example, was anticipated by the little-known Aristarchus of Samos, who died in the third century B.C.

The history of geology, Weiner writes, shows that "the seeds of new ideas have been sown many times before they took hold, as if they fell at first on solid rock."

In 1837, for example, Jean Louis Rodolphe Agassiz proposed to his colleagues in the Swiss Society of Natural Sciences the startling notion that the granite boulders that littered the limestone alpine valleys had been deposited not by the Biblical Flood, as was generally believed, but by ancient glaciers. He went so far as to argue that much of the Earth had at one time been covered by sheets of ice up to a mile thick. It was Agassiz who applied the term *Eiszeit* (Ice Age) to the period in question. Agassiz was not the first to explain the boulders' presence in this way—the region's small farmers, a mountaineer, a highway engineer, and finally a salt mine engineer, Jean de Charpentier, all had the same idea—but it took a man of Agassiz's scientific stature and with his talent for self-promotion to convince the scientific community.

Such anecdotes "amuse and faintly trouble us because we like to

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think of truth as something fixed and immutable, which people [recognize] when they see it," observes Weiner. Even in science, that is far from certain. "Histories show us instead how scientific progress depends on consensus, and how often that comes down to one human being's trying to talk another around."

Animal Protection

"Plus Ça Change: Antivivisection Then and Now" by Harriet Ritvo, in *BioScience* (Nov. 1984), 1401 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Va. 22209.

"The word *vivisection* has an old-fashioned ring, and *antivivisectionist* is even more suggestive of quixotic Victorian crusades," writes the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Ritvo. Yet, protests against the use of live animals in scientific research have been growing in recent years.

The origins of antivivisectionism actually predate the Victorian era. By 1780, a number of Evangelical clergymen in England, along with philosopher Jeremy Bentham, had made a public issue of the right of animals to humane treatment. In 1822, the British Parliament passed a law "to prevent cruel and improper treatment of Cattle." Two years later, its advocates formed the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) to ensure that the law was enforced.



"Save us, we would save you!" was the rallying cry of the London Animals' Guardian Office, publisher of this 1906 postcard.

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Gradually, two factions emerged from the ranks of the animal-protection advocates. Antivivisectionists opposed virtually all scientific experimentation with living animals; the humane movement, which dominated the SPCA, did not.

Antivivisectionists "tended to be more idealistic than humane society members," Ritvo reports, "more radical in their criticism of the scientific enterprise." Religious sentiment often compounded an antisience bias. "What becomes of the belief in a good and all-compassionate God," asked antivivisectionist (and physician) Anna Kingsford in 1886, "if men are to be taught that the way to knowledge and healing involves deeds which hitherto have been supposed to characterize only the worst and wickedest of cowards."

The movement peaked in England after 1885, when Louis Pasteur made public his discovery of a vaccine against rabies, manufactured by infecting healthy rabbits with the disease. Even though a rabies epidemic had taken 79 English lives in 1877, revulsion against Pasteur's method sparked a public outcry against use of his vaccine. Within 20 years, however, the role of animal experimentation in the conquest of such deadly diseases as diphtheria deprived antivivisectionism of broad popular support.

Today's most vocal animal-rights protesters in Britain and the United States, like their Victorian predecessors, doubt the value of all scientific research and its results. Their success or failure is one barometer of science's popular standing. But there are also among the protesters less vocal "regulationists," Ritvo observes, who make strong arguments against some laboratory abuses of animals.

Doubting Darwin

"Agnostic Evolutionists: The Taxonomic Case against Darwin" by Tom Bethell, in *Harper's* (Feb. 1985), P.O. Box 1937, Marion, Ohio 43305.

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution meets disbelief nowadays mostly among those who stand by the Biblical story of Creation. There are, however, some skeptics within the scientific community, most notably among a school of taxonomists called "cladists."

Cladistics (from the Greek *klados*, or branch) is the child of East German entomologist Willi Hennig (1913-76), who insisted that conventional taxonomy had made use of groupings of plants and animals that were meaningless. One example, says Bethell, a *Harper's* contributing editor, is the distinction—still made—between vertebrates and invertebrates. The term *invertebrate* is too all-inclusive to be the basis of any group, cladists argue. After all, "strawberries and chairs" could be called invertebrates. Yet the distinction allows evolutionists to offer neat formulations such as "vertebrates evolved from invertebrates."

But the cladists' most fundamental reservation about evolution springs from the fact that no fossilized organism can be proved to be the ancestor of another organism. "Is *Archaeopteryx* the ancestor of all

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birds?" asks paleontologist Colin Patterson of London's British Museum of Natural History. "Perhaps yes, perhaps no: There is no way of answering the question. It is easy enough to make up stories of how one form gave rise to another, and to find reasons why the stages should be favoured by natural selection. But such stories are not part of science, for there is no way of putting them to the test."

Many evolutionists admit that taxonomy has, in the past, been a bit slipshod; few make such sweeping statements as "mammals evolved from reptiles" anymore. (Cladists assert that *reptiles*, like *invertebrates*, refers to no real group of animals.) Still, evolutionists say, Darwin must be right: If one agrees that all organisms have parents and that there was once a time when there were no mammals on earth, then the logical conclusion is that mammals arose from nonmammals.

Of course, Bethell notes, not everyone shares those assumptions. To his mind, the only proper scientific stance is to reject the certainties of both Darwin and the Bible in favor of the cladists' "agnostic" view of evolution.

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*Still Needed:
An Energy Policy*

"A Time for Every Purpose: The Case of Energy" by Hans H. Landsberg, in *Issues in Science and Technology* (Winter 1985), National Academy of Sciences, Room JH 726, 2101 Constitution Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20418.

After the 1973-74 Arab oil embargo, Congress quickly approved a raft of measures designed to put the United States on the road to energy independence.

The nation has since made great progress, according to Landsberg, a Resources for the Future analyst. In 1983, the United States consumed 22 percent less energy per dollar of gross national product than would have been the case had 1973 efficiency levels held. Oil consumption represents a slightly smaller share of total energy use (43 percent), and oil *imports* now supply only 28 percent of overall U.S. oil needs, down from 47 percent as late as 1977.

However, Washington cannot claim much of the credit, Landsberg argues. Steep fuel price increases spurred most improvements in conservation (and the shift away from oil). If government is to make a difference, he says, the White House and Congress will have to do a better job of finding the right balance between federal intervention and market forces.

The Reagan administration, for example, insists on limiting federal support chiefly to long-term, high-risk projects. Thus, it bankrolls \$1 billion a year in highly experimental work on nuclear breeder reactors and nuclear fusion but, until recently, refused to give a dime for quick-payoff research into coal "clean burning" technology—which could

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soon reduce coal-related air pollution and spur wider use of this plentiful fuel. Meanwhile, the recent dip in oil and gas prices has reduced private firms' incentives to carry on coal research.

Another example of tangled priorities is the U.S. "synfuel" effort. Created by Congress in 1980, the Synthetic Fuel Corporation subsidizes private companies producing synfuel (e.g., oil from shale and tar sands). Its annual budget: \$8 billion. But despite the subsidies, today's temporary oil glut has rendered current synfuel technology uneconomical. Many private companies have closed down their synfuel plants. What was needed all along, Landsberg argues, was federal financing for research-and-development efforts.

Washington has enjoyed a few successes. The Strategic Petroleum Reserve, once a laughingstock, now holds the equivalent of "100 days of U.S. imports from all sources, eight months from OPEC sources, [or] two years from Arab members of OPEC." The key, in Landsberg's view, is determining what government must do and what the private sector can do. "Effectiveness, efficiency, and equity," not ideology, should determine these choices.

*Second Thoughts
On Forecasting*

"Charting the Way the World Works" by Donella H. Meadows, in *Technology Review* (Feb.-Mar. 1985), P.O. Box 978, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737-9878.

When *The Limits to Growth* was published in 1972, its dire warnings about the world environment's future created a national sensation. Meadows, a Dartmouth professor of environmental studies and one of the book's co-authors, writes that public misconceptions about the new science of "global modeling" caused the uproar.

The Limits to Growth was a report on the world's first computerized model of the global economy, designed by a group of Massachusetts Institute of Technology researchers. Such models are not the "crystal balls" the public (and many newsmen) take them to be, writes Meadows. Far from aiming to predict the future, they merely "represent mathematically assumptions about the inter-relationships among global concerns such as population, industrial output, natural resources, and pollution." Many of *today's* global models stem from researchers' disagreements with the methods and assumptions of previous ones.

Some 20 global models are now in use worldwide. The Soviet Union has several, and the Japanese government, the World Bank, and the United Nations have their own stored on computer tapes. Recently, the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff paid \$1.4 million to obtain one of their own.

"Existing resources and known technologies can support all the needs of the world's people today and for some time to come" is the major conclusion that most of these models share, writes Meadows. "Inequities, wastefulness, and mismanagement," not physical scarcity, are the problem. "The world trade system," she argues, "transforms more than enough food for everyone into hunger for one in five."

Of course, today's trends are not likely to go unchanged. Most global

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projections show conditions changing markedly after the year 2000—utopia glistens on one end of the spectrum, and nuclear winter darkens the other. Such complexity and contradiction, Meadows says, make peering into the future no less difficult now than in the past.

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The Poetry Boom

"The Poetry Reading: Public Performance/Private Art" by Donald Hall, in *The American Scholar* (Winter 1984-85), 1811 Q St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

When the great Irish poet William Butler Yeats toured the American college circuit during the 1930s, he did not read his verse aloud. Instead, he delivered lectures on "Three Great Irishmen."

Poetry just was not commonly read aloud. Today, says Hall, himself a poet, things are different. The public reading "has become the chief form of publication for American poets. Annually, hundreds of thousands of listeners hear tens of thousands of readings." Is this a change for the better? Hall says that the readings are both "devastating" and "the best thing that ever happened to American poetry."

Of course, poets are reaping material rewards. Fees ordinarily amount to about \$150. A poet who employs an agent to represent him can earn \$1,000 per reading (James Dickey has collected \$4,500 for a single performance). "For the first time in centuries," Hall notes, poets (including Gary Snyder, Robert Bly, and W. S. Merwin) are earning a living from their art alone.

Yet, there is a dark side. To begin with, the new audio market for poets encourages mediocre ones to ply their wares. "Even great poets cheapen their poems by exhibitionism" on the podium, Hall says.

More worrisome is the way in which shaping poetry for live performances influences how poets compose. "Light-verse surrealism is a prevailing mode—silliness, goofiness—and it derives from the platform." The pitch and volume of the author's voice, his gestures and facial expressions, often substitute for meter, rhyme, and structure. Hall admits that he has been tempted to stop searching for *exactly* the right word and settle for an approximation because "I can say it so it is right."

Don't public readings bring poetry to a broader audience? Yes, concedes Hall, but only poetry of a sort. Many who attend readings "are addicts not of poetry as a whole but of poetry as it is performed."

Yet *good* poets can gain more than money from readings. "Reading old things aloud," Hall says, makes the poet a "scholar of old errors" and leads to rewriting and improvement. (He cites Galway Kinnell as a prominent poet whose work reflects this process.) And reading out loud confirms the communal nature of poetry. At the best moments, "the poet, saying lines labored over in solitude, reads them returning on the faces of the audience."

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A preliminary 1871 sketch of "Whistler's Mother."

Whistler's Mother

"Anna Whistler the Venerable" by Phoebe Lloyd, in *Art in America* (Nov. 1984), 542 Pacific Ave., Marion, Ohio 43302.

Anna Whistler, "America's most famous mother," was a starchy, North Carolina-born woman who discouraged her gifted son from drawing as a child but later became the catalyst of his painting.

James Whistler was born in Massachusetts in 1834. His father, a widower with three older children, was a well-to-do railroad builder who died in 1849. Anna, his second wife and a devout Christian, "turned widowhood into a career," writes Lloyd, a National Humanities Center Fellow. "She wore widow's weeds for the 31 years left to her."

Free of his mother's supervision, Whistler proved to be a feckless fellow. He collected more than 200 demerits during three years at West Point and was dismissed. At 21, he journeyed to Paris, where he avoided formal painting instruction in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, taking only occasional private lessons. Four years later, he moved to London, met the beautiful Joanna Hiffernan, and made her his mistress and model. In 1863, after she had adopted his child by another mistress and borne one herself, she and Whistler took a house together.

Before the year was up, Anna Whistler arrived and helped engineer Joanna's departure. She quickly installed herself as "mistress of ceremonies" in her son's house. "While his genius soars upon the wings of ambition," she wrote in 1864, "I am thankful to observe that I can and do influence him." One measure of her housewifely diligence: Her recipe for peach cordial called for cracking open 300 peach stones.

Whistler worked at his easel from dawn to dark during the 1860s but completed few canvases—none at all in 1868 and 1869. Then, when a model failed to appear for a sitting one day in 1871, he began the famous portrait of his mother. His career flowered. Yet, no sooner had his mother moved to a nursing home in 1875 than he resumed his old ways. He fathered two more illegitimate children, "took to wearing patent leather pumps with pink bows," and lived so extravagantly that he

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soon found himself in bankruptcy court.

Ironically, Whistler was one of the first advocates of "art for art's sake," the emphasis on form over content. He was infuriated when his friend Algernon Swinburne commented in print on the "tender depth of expression" in his mother's portrait. To his death, the painter insisted that the painting contained no more emotion than what was suggested by its full title, *Arrangement in Grey and Black: Portrait of the Painter's Mother*.

A Dead End In Bloomsbury

"From Clapham to Bloomsbury: A Genealogy of Morals" by Gertrude Himmelfarb, in *Commentary* (Feb. 1985), 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

The Bloomsbury group is enshrined in the literary imagination as an early 20th-century coterie of brilliant and somewhat eccentric British artists, writers, and intellectuals. Himmelfarb, a historian at New York's City University, sees in them a prime example of moral degeneration, of what happens when morality is cut loose from religion.

Some of their names are nearly legendary: Leonard and Virginia Woolf, John Maynard Keynes, Lytton Strachey, Duncan Grant, Clive Bell. The "Bloomsberries," as they called themselves, were the intellectual descendants of the 18th-century Clapham Sect, a religiously inspired group of politicians and writers who, among other things, helped force Britain to abolish its colonial slave trade in 1807.

Within a century, the sect's legacy of high-minded public spiritedness was a shadow of its former self. Consider Leslie Stephen, grandson of a member of the Clapham Sect and father of Bloomsbury's Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell. Stephen was an agnostic who wrote *Science of Ethics* (1882)—one of many vain efforts by irreligious late-Victorians to find a "scientific" foundation for morals. The Bloomsberries, however, took as their mentor the philosopher G. E. Moore, whose *Principia Ethica* (1903) overthrew conscience and responsibility to others and celebrated "personal affections" and "aesthetic enjoyments" as the greatest of all goods.

"We repudiated entirely customary morals, conventions, and traditional wisdom," Keynes wrote. "Before heaven we claimed to be our own judge in our own case."

They pursued their spiritual liberation with more devotion than most biographers realized until recently. For example, it was no secret that many in the group were homosexuals, Himmelfarb writes, but "the compulsive and promiscuous nature" of their couplings was. The Bloomsberries' contempt for their countrymen and for public life in general was bottomless. All but two male members of the group avoided military service to their country during World War I.

With the exception of Keynes (and possibly Virginia Woolf), Himmelfarb says, this absorption with "personal affections" led the Bloomsberries to produce "memoirs, letters, and diaries . . . more memorable than their novels, biographies, essays, and paintings." The barrenness

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of the Bloomsbury group's artistic efforts, she says, is one measure of the futility of their parents' efforts to forge a morality that "tried to maintain itself without the sanctions of religion. That morality turned out to be too impoverished, too far removed from its original inspiration, to transmit itself to the next generation."

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*Can South Africa
Save Itself?*

"Interpreting Constitutional Change in South Africa" by Newell M. Stultz, in *The Journal of Modern African Studies* (no. 3, 1984), 32 East 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

In November 1983, South Africa's white citizens voted overwhelmingly for a new national constitution giving nonwhites a small voice in the government. Most critics of South Africa's apartheid system dismissed the change as a sham. Stultz, a Brown University political scientist, sees a glimmer of hope that it is not.

The new constitution, he notes, is not even a halfway measure. It establishes a tricameral Parliament, with one house each for whites, Indians, and "Coloureds." But blacks (72 percent of the population) still have no representation, and the nonwhite chambers of Parliament hold little real power. Yet, Stultz says, it is possible that the new constitution is the first step in what political scientists call "reform by stealth."

Earlier "reform-mongers" include Japan's 19th-century Meiji Emperor, Turkey's Kemal Atatürk, and France's Charles de Gaulle. According to Stultz, such reformers "rig" the political process "in such a way that 'progressives' think they are choosing between the preferred reforms and the *status quo*, while 'conservatives' concurrently are persuaded to see the choice as between what is being suggested and revolution."

Is that what President P. W. Botha is up to? The 69-year-old long-time legislator was "on the far right wing of South African politics" for decades before becoming prime minister in 1978. But his constitutional proposal angered the hard-liners within his ruling National Party, who defected to form the Conservative Party in 1982. Botha's plan also stirred dissension within the ranks of the smaller, liberal Progressive Federal Party—many members thought it did not go far enough. In short, Botha may be playing both ends against the middle.

Stultz also sees signs of "reform by stealth" in provisions of the Botha-sponsored constitution. Indian and Coloured lawmakers have enough power to block so-called general affairs legislation (requiring the consent of all three houses); they will surely use that power to chip away at apartheid policies. Moreover, the constitution replaced the office of prime minister with that of president; Botha's fixed, five-year

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presidential term seems perfectly designed to free him of the need to answer to the National Party.

Botha has given no outward sign of aiming to dismantle South Africa's apartheid system. But it is still "just barely" conceivable, Stultz says, that he hopes to go down in history with de Gaulle and Atatürk.

Divided Cyprus

"Cyprus: A Last Chance" by Leigh H. Bruce, in *Foreign Policy* (Spring 1985), P.O. Box 984, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

Tiny Cyprus is one of the modern world's perennial trouble spots. Eleven years after Turkish troops invaded and carved out a Turkish Cypriot enclave, the situation is as volatile as ever, reports Bruce, a *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent.

Settled by Greeks, the island was taken over by the Ottoman Empire in 1571 and passed into British hands in 1878. Under Ottoman rule, Turkish settlers arrived on the island. Today, Turkish Cypriots number 120,000; Greek Cypriots, about 530,000. *Enosis* (union with Greece) had been a goal of some Greek Cypriots since the 1820s. But only in 1955, after the British refused to consider any form of Cypriot self-determination, did a faction under Gen. George Grivas take to arms.

By 1959, London had reversed itself. It agreed (along with Greece and Turkey) to an independent Republic of Cyprus. An elaborate government structure was devised to contain ethnic conflicts: The president



Archbishop Makarios III (1913–77) was a pivotal figure in Cypriot history. Only after he dropped his insistence on union with Greece in 1959 was London willing to consider giving up its Mediterranean possession.

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and vice-president were to be of Greek and Turkish origin, respectively, and each was to have veto power over the other. The arrangement did not last long. Archbishop Makarios III, long the de facto leader of the Greek Cypriots and since 1960 the island's president, had had no hand in writing the constitution. In late 1963, he demanded sweeping constitutional changes aimed at achieving majority rule. Bloody fighting broke out between Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

New violence erupted in 1967. By then, Makarios favored an independent Cyprus rather than union with Greece, and the newly installed military junta in Athens backed General Grivas's attempts to undermine his old ally. In July 1974, pro-*enosis*, Greek-backed forces in Cyprus toppled Makarios, sparking Turkey's military invasion.

Stalemate has prevailed ever since. Some 30,000 Turkish troops now occupy about a third of the island. Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş is busily engaged in establishing an independent state; reunification talks with his Greek Cypriot counterpart, President Spyros Kyprianou, broke down in January 1985. Yet, Bruce believes that compromise is possible—and necessary if a permanent partition of Cyprus is to be avoided. The Cypriots themselves could get together if Athens and Ankara could be persuaded to put aside *their* quarrels over the island. That, Bruce says, would require active U.S. diplomacy.

India's Live Population Bomb

"One Son Is No Sons" by Stanley A. Freed and Ruth S. Freed, in *Natural History* (Jan. 1985), Box 4300, Bergenfield, N.J. 07621.

During the 1950s, the village of Shanti Nagar in northern India was without electricity, modern farm machinery, or regular newspaper service. Its barely literate inhabitants lived in mud huts and had little contact with the outside world.

All that has changed now. The streets are paved and lined with brick houses. Here and there, TV antennas perch on rooftops. There is regular bus service to nearby cities, where some residents work. One thing, however, remains conspicuously the same. Shanti Nagar's families still have many children (an average of 5.2). The story is the same throughout India, say the Freeds, researchers at the American Museum of Natural History. Increasing prosperity and vigorous government promotion of birth control have failed to slow the birthrate significantly. Indeed, overall population growth is up slightly (to 2.23 percent annually) because improved medical care has cut mortality rates.

India's population (735 million) is growing by 15 million annually. By 2025, it could surpass China's.

Through periodic visits to Shanti Nagar (a fictitious name), the Freeds have watched the nation's changes up close. "The vast majority of Indians have no social security, private pension plans, or annuities; they rely instead on their sons." Even in the cities (where only 24 percent of the population lives), big families are the norm.

Sterilization is the most common method of birth control in India to-

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day. But most couples simply delay it until they have enough sons—"one son is no sons" goes a popular saying. A perverse side effect is a growing imbalance in the sex of children. In Shanti Nagar, there were 104 males for every 100 females in 1958; by 1978 there were 111. Couples who produce, say, three sons stop having children, but those with three daughters continue until they get boys.

The Freeds have little faith that either further economic progress or the creation of a social security program would stem India's population growth. "Indians do not believe that the government or anyone but their sons will take care of them when they are old." Yet, if Indians do not change voluntarily, the Freeds say, the government may feel compelled to restrict family size by law.

Target: Albania

"The Spark That May Cause a Fire" by Roberto Ducci, in *The Atlantic Monthly* (Feb. 1985), Box 2544, Boulder, Colo. 80321.

Enver Hoxha ruled communist Albania with an iron hand for 40 years. He ruthlessly eliminated most of his potential rivals—and thus most of Albania's political leaders as well. Ramiz Alia has taken Hoxha's place, but chaos is still a possibility; Albania could receive from Moscow the same kind of "brotherly aid" extended to Afghanistan.

Ducci, a former Italian diplomat, calls this scenario speculative, but not improbable. Hoxha steered his poverty-stricken nation of two million on an independent, even eccentric, course. In 1961, he severed his nation's once close ties to Moscow and allied himself with Chairman Mao's China. Then in 1976, he turned his back on China as well. Today, Albania maintains no diplomatic relations with Moscow or Washington (and has only tenuous ties to Beijing). It also refuses to be counted among either the neutral nations of Europe (e.g., Sweden, Switzerland) or the Third World's "nonaligned" states.

The community of foreign diplomats in Albania's capital city, Tiranë, is so small, Ducci remarks, that "they often find it difficult to organize a foursome around a bridge table."

Ducci speculates that Moscow would have much to gain if it could seize control of post-Hoxha Albania. The Balkan nation nestles between Greece and Yugoslavia on the Adriatic. Its three warm-water ports — Durrës, Vlorë, and Sarandë—would be useful bases for the Soviet Mediterranean fleet. Moreover, Soviet troop encampments and missile bases in Albania would surely curb the independent instincts of Yugoslavia's communist rulers and intimidate Greece, a North Atlantic Treaty Organization member.

In short, Ducci suggests, a foothold in humble Albania might ultimately enable Moscow to extend its control over the entire Balkan region. If Moscow judged the West unlikely to react, the gamble of sending Soviet paratroops into a post-Hoxha Albania might seem worthwhile. "The next scene," Ducci writes, "could be embroidered differently by different novelists."

RESEARCH REPORTS

Reviews of new research by public agencies and private institutions

"CETA: Politics and Policy, 1973-1982."

University of Tennessee Press, 293 Communications Bldg., Knoxville, Tenn. 37996. 272 pp. \$24.95.

Authors: Grace A. Franklin and Randall B. Ripley

Few federal programs have been more controversial than the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). Charges of local waste, muddle, and fraud plagued the program almost from its inception in 1973.

Franklin and Ripley, Ohio State University political scientists, argue that CETA actually scored some achievements. "But they were not dramatic, nor were they effectively communicated." Most importantly, "comprehensive data were not available in time" to fend off the program's executioners in Congress and the White House during the early 1980s.

CETA was created under President Richard Nixon to consolidate and expand several existing Great Society programs. The idea was to focus efforts on job training for the "structurally unemployed" and to reduce federal red tape, allowing state and local officials leeway to fit federal money to community needs. CETA included provisions for "no-strings" block grants to the states and cities (42 percent of first-year outlays) as well as special remedial efforts for unemployed teen-agers, welfare mothers, and workers displaced by automation. Also included was a small public jobs program.

Between 1974 and CETA's demise in 1983, the Labor Department spent some \$55 billion under this program. During the mid-1970s, it aided more than one million people a year.

Yet, CETA was the victim of constant transformations. Economic recession during the late 1970s led Washington to expand CETA's outlays

for local public-service employment at the expense of job-training programs. CETA soon became synonymous with City Hall payroll padding and make-work jobs.

Nor could Congress, always impatient, resist tinkering with CETA, the authors note. More and more money was siphoned away from block grants to establish special CETA programs for the handicapped, small business, and a multitude of other claimants.

One factor remained constant: State and local officials kept control over CETA programs. That meant that results varied widely, depending on the integrity and competence of local administrators. Yet, the authors contend, recent studies suggest that CETA produced some overall gains, albeit modest ones, for the poor.

Nearly one-third of CETA training-program graduates landed private sector jobs; two years after graduation, the average annual earnings of all former CETA trainees exceeded those of their untrained peers by \$300. CETA also helped people get off welfare rolls: Nearly 40 percent of CETA participants drew welfare checks before joining the training program; only 25 percent did two years after graduation.

All told, Franklin and Ripley estimate, every \$1 invested in CETA *job training* yielded a \$1.38 payoff.

The Reagan administration has replaced CETA with a less expansive Job Partnership Training Act. Before long, the authors predict, it will wind up every bit as politicized and hard to assess as its predecessor.

"State of the World 1985."

W. W. Norton & Co., 500 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10110. 301 pp. \$18.95 cloth, \$8.95 paper.

Authors: Lester R. Brown et al.

"The world has been lulled into a false sense of security by recent progress in slowing population growth, reducing dependence on oil, and replenishing granaries."

So warns Worldwatch Institute president Brown in an annual report on the global environment.

Population growth remains the world's number one problem, he says. In 1984, some 4.76 billion people crowded the globe, 81 million more than in 1983. Many demographers fear that the planet's population will reach 10 billion before growth levels off.

Overpopulation, Brown argues, exacerbates environmental problems. The industrial expansion that accompanies population growth—and prosperity—can generate acid rain, which kills off or retards much plant and animal life. Ocean fisheries are showing the strain of supplying more and more hungry people. Overfishing has cut the annual growth per capita of the world fish catch from nearly four percent during the 1950s and '60s to just one percent since 1970.

Taxing the environment also increases the likelihood of "natural" disasters. In 1983, for example, a

devastating forest fire swept part of Borneo. "Drought combined with forest degradation from logging, agricultural settlement, and the spread of shifting cultivation to dry out the forest and provide a layer of kindling," Brown explains. The blaze left nearly nine million acres of rain forest in ashes. Whole species of rare plants and animals perished.

Getting a grip on the global population crisis, says Brown, is the most important step toward creating a "sustainable society." But imaginative solutions to other problems are also needed. Aquaculture, for example, can give depleted natural fisheries a chance to recover.

Energy conservation, needed to reduce exploitation of dwindling resources, ranks as one of Brown's top priorities. "Just using the most efficient lights in the U.S. would save a third of U.S. coal-fired electric energy," he notes.

Most of all, Brown warns against short-term, seemingly "cost effective" solutions to global ills. A case in point: Overcultivating U.S. cropland as the world's breadbasket could leave America's farms exhausted and arid.

"Misregulating Television: Network Dominance and the FCC."

University of Chicago Press, 5801 Ellis Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60637. 210 pp. \$24.00.

Authors: Stanley M. Besen, Thomas G. Krattenmaker, A. Richard Metzger, Jr., John R. Woodbury

ABC, CBS, and NBC are synonymous with television in the United States. Americans spend more than 85 percent of their TV viewing time watching the Big Three networks' shows.

No "law of physics or Platonic beati-

tude dictates that three is precisely the 'right' number," say the four authors, all economists or lawyers. What has happened is that regulatory policies of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have inadvertently

assured Big Three dominance of the airwaves.

The FCC's blunders, argue the authors, began soon after its birth under the New Deal. In parceling out the broadcast spectrum in 1952, the FCC allotted a relatively small portion to TV. It then insisted on granting station slots to small communities that could not economically support a broadcaster. (Most of these slots remain unused.) Finally, it decided to allow the establishment of VHF and UHF stations in the same areas. Because UHF broadcast signals are inferior, the arrangement ensured that the UHF channels would be neglected and mostly unused.

These decisions virtually guaranteed that only three full-time networks could survive, the authors assert. Economic studies show that "at least one and possibly as many as three" additional broadcast networks could prosper without the FCC rules.

Ever since 1952, the FCC has assumed that local affiliate stations and independent program producers need protection from the networks. It has written volumes of regulations that, in effect, transfer profits from the networks to affiliates and producers. The unintended result: A

new network would have difficulty getting started.

How badly the FCC understands the industry it regulates is illustrated by its 1970 Prime Time Access rule, which limits the networks to providing three hours of programming in the top 50 markets during the four hours of prime time every night. The FCC judged that opening up an hour of prime time would stimulate independent production of "quality" programs. Instead, most local stations schedule inexpensive reruns of "Hee Haw," "Tic Tac Dough," and the like.

The FCC shows no signs of altering its spectrum allocation policies, the authors conclude. But since the mid-1970s, it has wisely dropped its long-standing opposition to "alternative" TV—cable, pay TV, low-power TV. By 1983, some 20 fledgling cable networks were in operation, and the FCC had received some 32,000 applications for low-power stations.

Eventually, the authors predict, these industries will spawn competitors strong enough to challenge the Big Three on the airwaves. Faced with a real challenge to its doctrine, the FCC will have to loosen its stranglehold on the broadcast industry.

"Global Competition: The New Reality."

The President's Commission on Industrial Competitiveness, 736 Jackson Pl. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20503. 451 pp. Vol. 1 (summary), \$2.75; vol. 2, \$11.00.

Americans are finding it hard to cheer about the nation's upbeat economic news, thanks to the prospect of never-ending federal budget deficits. To that worry, the President's Commission on Industrial Competitiveness—30 corporate executives, academics, and public officials—adds another.

The commission fears that the

United States is being left behind in the escalating global competition for markets. It regards the challenge to the long-term health of the U.S. economy as serious enough to merit the creation of two new cabinet-level federal departments.

America's chronic trade deficits (\$107 billion last year) represent only

	DISADVANTAGE		PARITY	ADVANTAGE	
	Major	Minor		Minor	Major
Product Technology					Current → Potential
Process Technology				Current → Potential	
Capital Cost	Current → Potential				
Exchange Rate	Current → Potential				
Human Resource Cost	Current → Potential				
Human Resource Quality				Current → Potential	
U.S. Trade Policy	Current → Potential				
International Trade Laws	Current → Potential				

□ Current
■ Potential

An overview of the commission's assessment. Its top priority: Upgrading "human resources" by greater attention to education. Tax credits would boost research and investment in production line "process technology."

the tip of the iceberg. World trade, now worth some \$2 trillion annually, grew sevenfold between 1970 and 1984. U.S. exports quintupled (reaching \$220 billion last year) but failed to keep pace.

Together, U.S. imports and exports now represent nearly twice as large a portion of the gross national product (22 percent) as they did two decades ago. National boundaries no longer shelter domestic industry: 70 percent of all goods "made in the U.S.A.," whether sold here or abroad, face foreign competition in the marketplace.

Washington is ill-equipped to wrestle with this "new reality," the commission says. Responsibility for trade policy—export licenses, loans to overseas buyers, import quotas—is divided among 25 U.S. executive agencies and 19 congressional subcommittees. A more coherent U.S. trade policy is desperately needed, and only a new, unified U.S. Department of Trade can forge one.

Concern about international trade also prompts the commission to call for the creation of a Department of

Science and Technology.

It points out that even America's vaunted worldwide lead in high technology—scientific instruments, pharmaceuticals, chemicals—is fading. In seven of 10 major high technology fields, the U.S. share of world markets shrank between 1965 and 1980.

The commission finds no single cause for this erosion. Among other things, U.S. labor productivity between 1960 and 1983 grew at one-half the British, one-third the French, and one-fifth the Japanese rates. Since 1980, low-risk bonds have offered higher rates of return than have investments in U.S. manufacturing. West German and Japanese outlays for civilian research and development (R&D) top American nongovernmental spending.

The list of U.S. weaknesses is long. What would a federal Department of Science and Technology do? It would marshal U.S. resources to beef up private sector R&D, fill empty engineering lecterns at U.S. universities, and tend to such banal matters as pressing the prosecution of overseas copyright "pirates."

**"Third World Instability: Central America
As a European-American Issue."**

Council on Foreign Relations, Inc., 58 East 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.
156 pp. \$5.95.

Editor: Andrew J. Pierre

Ronald Reagan's support for *contra* guerrillas in Nicaragua and for President José Napoleón Duarte's anticommunist government in El Salvador is a source of rancor in U.S. domestic politics. But the Reagan policy has also sown discord between Washington and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies.

Here, two Americans and several Europeans and Central Americans try to explain how and why their views on Central America differ.

U.S. policy in the region since World War II represents a "historic failure," argues Fernando Morán, Spain's Minister of Foreign Affairs. "Oscillating between military intervention and neglect," Morán says, "the United States made little contribution to the incipient processes of economic and social change in the region." South America, by contrast, is a relatively stable area in part because European powers long ago gave up their colonial interests there, allowing it to find its own destiny.

Contrary to the Reagan administration's charge that "indirect armed aggression" by the Soviet Union and Cuba is largely to blame for today's Central American turmoil, Morán holds that poverty and inequality are the chief causes of the conflicts. Yet, by labeling the conflict an East-West struggle, Washington invites other Western powers to state their views.

Former Costa Rican president Daniel Oduber agrees with Morán's historical analysis. "American foreign policy-makers," he says, "were interested only in protecting U.S. investments, no matter what kinds of government were in power." Today, they are reaping the results in Central

American resentment.

"Most revolutions," argues Representative Michael D. Barnes (D.-Md.), "have essentially internal causes but attract external actors." Anastasio Somoza Debayle's dictatorship in Nicaragua, he points out, fell in 1979 not at the hands of the Soviets or Cubans but of ordinary Nicaraguans.

The only certain vital U.S. interest in Central America, in Barnes's view, is preventing the establishment of Soviet military bases. Washington's demand that its NATO allies grant it *carte blanche* for all its actions there is simply unreasonable.

"Paradoxically, the best way to promote U.S. interests in Central America is to let go of it," Barnes concludes. "Not in the isolationist sense of withdrawing from the region . . . but in the sense of turning the actors loose to seek their own settlements with each other, with the United States playing an active and supportive role."

But Irving Kristol, coeditor of the *Public Interest*, says, "Yes, there really are dominoes." The United States has a vital stake in seeing that Central America and perhaps Mexico do not pass into the hands of Marxist-Leninists. It is the Europeans, he continues, who have no vital interests in the region. Good allies would keep their disagreements to themselves.

Poverty is a root cause of Central American unrest, Kristol concedes, but it springs from the failure of Central Americans themselves to find the capacity for self-government and economic growth. The fact that such conditions have given birth to unsavory authoritarian regimes, he says, should not deter the United States from defending its interests in the region.

"Africa Tomorrow: Issues in Technology, Agriculture, And U.S. Foreign Aid."

U.S. Office of Technology Assessment, 600 Pennsylvania Ave. S.E., Washington, D.C. 20510. 156 pp. \$5.50.

In the 45 nations of sub-Saharan Africa, population growth (three percent annually) has steadily outpaced annual increases in farm output (1.8 percent) since 1970.

Ethiopia is not the only victim of that formula for disaster; nine other black African nations face food crises this year.

While the United States cannot prevent such calamities, says the congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA), its foreign-aid programs have been severely hampered by politics, shortsightedness, and poor management.

Washington's chief goal is to help Africa learn to feed itself. The U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) devotes about 60 percent of its African assistance to agriculture (\$150 million in 1985), most of it in support of some 1,000 agricultural research and farm projects. (Africa receives another \$235 million in U.S. food subsidies and donations.)

"Altruistic motivations historically have played a large part in development," OTA argues, but today, official Washington often sees foreign aid "as a mechanism to promote U.S. economic and national security interests." As a result, foreign aid flows follow shifting political winds in Washington and abroad. Many projects are not seen through to completion. AID policies also limit the length of U.S. commitments. OTA argues that it requires 10 to 20 years of support to make a farm development project work, not the five years that AID favors.

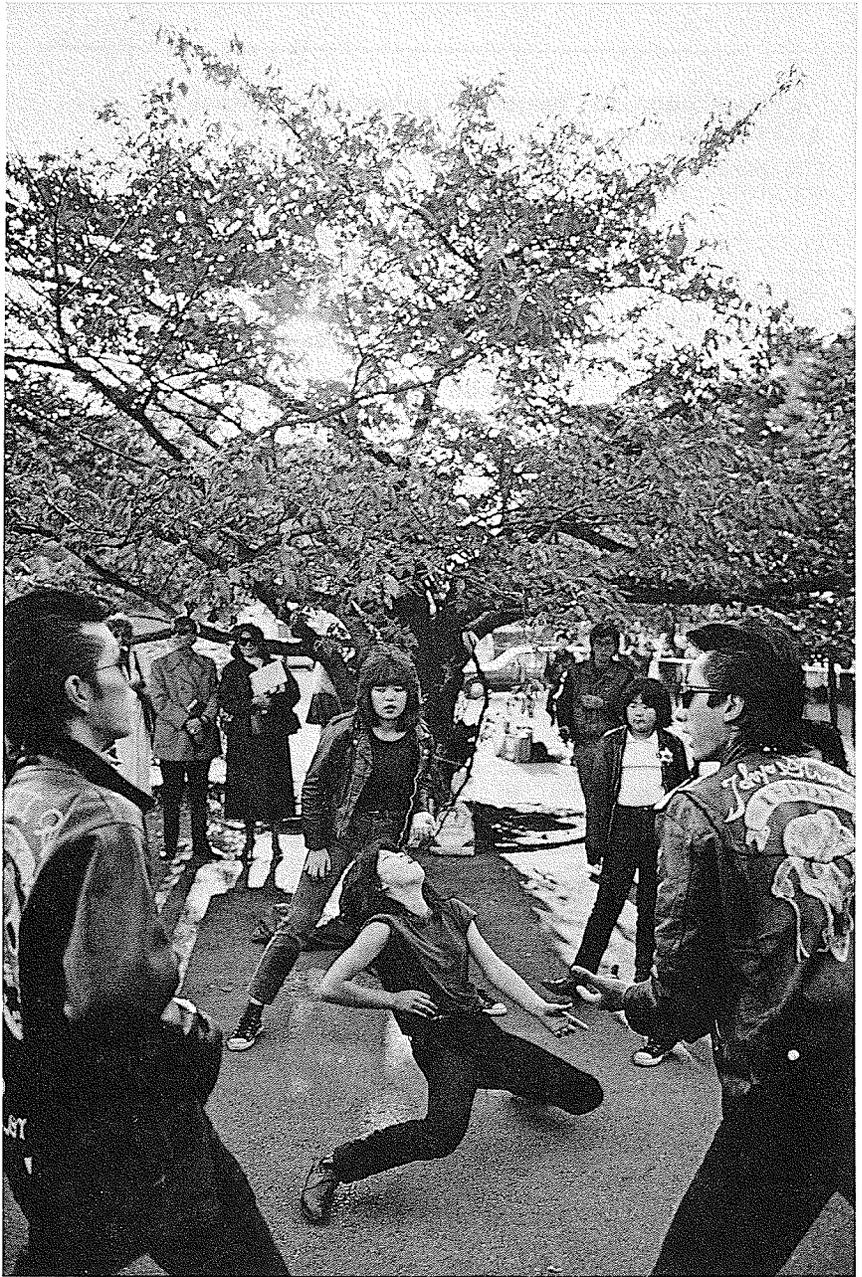
About 70 percent of Africa's 400 million people live in the countryside, and

most of them are subsistence farmers and herders working two- to 10-acre plots. These are the people who must feed Africa in the future. However, OTA believes that irrelevant heavy farm machinery and "high tech" items gobble up too much U.S. aid. Needed, it says, is more money for small-scale village irrigation projects, research into improving traditional farming techniques, and other "appropriate technology."

(It levels similar criticisms at the African governments with which AID frequently works. Too often, OTA says, such governments succumb to an "urban bias in development strategies." Small farmers get little assistance. In many countries, agricultural price controls are imposed to trim city dwellers' cost of living; the result is depressed farm output.)

Agricultural research, a particular U.S. strength, deserves greater AID support. Scientists have worked wonders improving corn, wheat, and rice but have paid little attention to millet, cassava, yams, and other indigenous African crops. More money is also needed to subsidize education for African agricultural students and to strengthen ineffective national agricultural extension programs for farmers' technical education.

OTA notes that women manage a surprisingly large number of Africa's farms, yet by tradition they are slighted by extension agents and excluded from farm loan and education programs. To speed change, the OTA advocates, among other things, expanding subsidized higher education for women, who can then become extension agents and aid female farmers.



Every Sunday, leather-clad teen-agers spill out of Harajuku Station and head toward Yoyogi Park, there to dance until dark. The passion for such distractions has its critics: A recent government white paper asserted that today's Japanese youth are "devoid of perseverance, dependent upon others, and self-centered."

Japan's New Popular Culture

On any given day, Americans encounter something from Japan. To Detroit's dismay, roughly 1.9 million U.S. citizens purchased Toyotas, Datsuns, and other Japanese-made cars in 1984. At work, we use Canon copiers, Komatsu tractors, and Epson computers. At home, we listen to Panasonic or AIWA stereos and watch TV on Sony or Hitachi sets. Scarcely a week of network evening news passes without some mention of Japan, either as economic rival or as political ally.

Yet, despite this daily presence, Japan today remains a country no less strange to American eyes than it was some eight decades ago. It was then that the American Lafcadio Hearn, one of the first Japan scholars, wrote of "the immense difficulty of perceiving and comprehending what underlies the surface of Japanese life."

Current American attempts to understand Japan reflect continuing confusion. Business analysts speak of Japan's economic success—quality-control circles, high worker productivity—in almost mystical tones. Sociologists sketch a society of labyrinthine complexity. Historians go back to the violent extremes of the feudal Tokugawa era (1603–1868) or the horrors of the Pacific War. Feature stories in American magazines and newspapers concentrate on kabuki performances, flower arranging, geisha, and tea ceremonies. What emerges from these various viewpoints is a fragmented, two-dimensional portrait, one that most Japanese would have trouble recognizing.

Unfortunately, fewer and fewer Americans know enough about Japan to overcome the prevailing stereotypes. The nation's top postwar Japanologists, most of whom first came to Japan as members of the U.S. military during the Second World War, are all nearing retirement. So are the bilingual, second-generation Japanese Americans (*Nisei*) who worked in various U.S. government agencies. No comparable crop of Japanologists

has appeared to take their place. In 1982, a mere 731 Americans were studying in Japan, versus the 2,656 U.S. students in Italy; in contrast, almost 11,000 Japanese were at universities and colleges in the United States.

Japan deserves closer attention, not least because it is emerging from a major postwar political and social transformation. During the 1970s, rapid economic growth and a young population—20 percent of all Japanese were between the ages of 15 and 24 in 1973—exposed a highly traditional society to unsettling new influences. Today, observes Kusaka Kimindo, a Tokyo economist and former Wilson Center Guest Scholar, a more prosperous population has abandoned the single-minded pursuit of economic advance and is entering a less arduous “cultural-intellectual” phase.

Popular culture is prospering in this new age. Japan is a society known for its collective instincts, and books, magazines, movies, and TV shows draw a wide audience. As the Japanese scholar Kuwabara Takeo points out, “A fad in Japan does not just take hold among urban or regional groups, but sweeps through most of the nation.” Thanks to such broad appeal, popular culture acts as a good mirror of Japanese social values. And since it takes forms familiar to both the East and the West, it provides an accessible means of cultural comparison.

Here, Fumiko Mori Halloran examines a recent sampling of Japanese best-selling books. Frederik L. Schodt analyzes the Japanese passion for *manga*, or comic books. James Bailey looks at Japan’s big box-office movies.

—Ronald A. Morse

Ronald A. Morse, 46, is secretary of the Asia Program at the Wilson Center and a specialist in Japanese folklore.

BEST SELLERS

by Fumiko Mori Halloran

Some 600 years before Madame de La Fayette penned *La Princesse de Clèves* (1678), one of the first European novels, Lady Murasaki Shikibu told *The Tale of Genji*, an elegant fictional portrayal of life at the Japanese imperial court at Kyōto. Since then, Japan has produced its share of first-class writers, both men and women.

International recognition did not come until 1968, when the Japanese novelist Kawabata Yasunari received the Nobel Prize in literature. "His narrative mastership," noted the president of the Swedish Academy of Letters, "... expresses the essence of the Japanese mind."

To Westerners, the subtle psychology and traditional settings of Kawabata's novels may symbolize the "essence" of Japan. But his works bear little resemblance to the books read by most of today's 119.5 million Japanese. At one of the busiest intersections near Tokyo Station, the Yaesu Book Center houses more than one million different novels, mysteries, biographies, histories, cookbooks, romances, and treatises on science, politics, and economics. The aisles are crowded with students, housewives, business executives, and retirees, all engaged in the popular practice of *tachiyomi*, or reading while standing.

What makes a best seller in Japan?

In a country where the average paperback or hardcover costs roughly one-third of its U.S. equivalent, the range of best-selling titles is enormous. In 1982, best sellers included *How to Enjoy Baseball Ten Times More* and an unadorned edition of *The Japanese Constitution*. Foreign works also do well, especially analyses of business success and economic trends. The Japanese have bought more than 400,000 copies of the translated version of *In Search of Excellence* (1982), a survey of well-run American companies by Thomas Peters and Robert Waterman.

For the most part, however, Japanese historical epics, self-help manuals, mysteries, and biographies remain the readers' favorites. The novels regularly serialized in the national daily newspapers—among them the *Yomiuri* (1983 morning circulation, 8.9 million), the *Asahi* (7.5 million), and the *Mainichi* (4.4 million)—also sit high on best-seller lists.

Best-selling books seldom attract much serious scholarly attention. After all, what valid conclusions about Japan could be

drawn from the popularity of *An Introduction to Astrology* (1979), a two-volume work that sold a total of 7.8 million copies over two years? Consistently popular genres or themes, however, can serve as a fairly accurate cultural barometer.

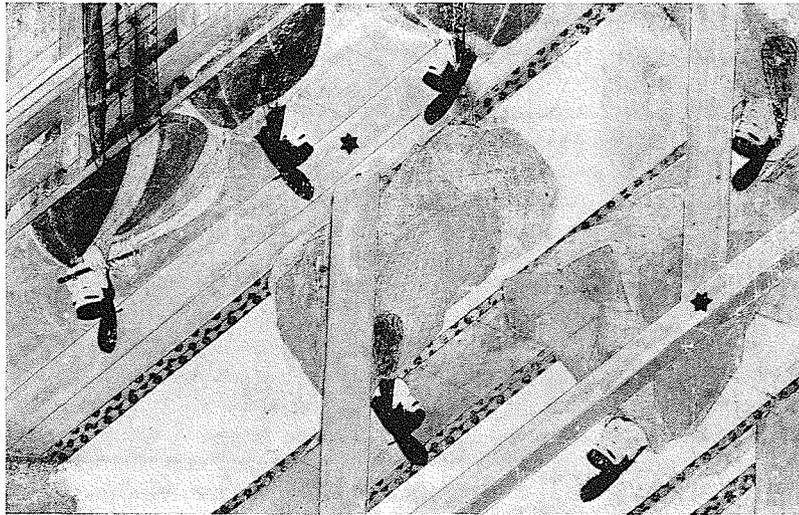
To begin with, the current prominence of the million-copy best seller attests to the transformation of Japan during the last 25 years. More leisure time, higher incomes, and postwar educational reforms have given more Japanese more time and inclination to read. Since 1960, the number of books bought every year in Japan has quadrupled; the number of new titles has tripled. In 1983, the Japanese publishing industry put out roughly 31,000 new titles and a total of 1.2 billion volumes. The United States, a nation with twice Japan's population, published 42,000 new titles and a total of 1.9 billion volumes.

Swimming in the Nude

As books have become more popular, so too have their authors. Novelist Osaragi Jirō, who drew a large following with *Homecoming* (1948), the story of a Japanese expatriate who returns from Malaya at the end of World War II, was seen or heard primarily in literary circles. But Nozaka Akiyuki, a best-selling novelist during the late 1960s and '70s, also gave solo singing concerts and modeled men's wear. And Itsuki Hiroyuki, who gained broad appeal with *Gate of Adolescence*, his two-volume 1976 novel about a young man's move from a small Kyūshū town to the bright lights of Tokyo, profited from radio talk shows and the lecture circuit, where his handsome features attracted a large female audience.

According to Odagiri Kazuo, the head of publications at the prestigious Japanese publishing house Bungei Shunjū, prize-winning novels today are likely to come from "bankers, singers, stewardesses, film directors, cartoonists, and boxers—people writing miscellanies out of some small fund of personal experience." And as in the United States, many television talk-show hosts and "pop" sociologists have become "experts," their opinions sought and published on everything from teen-age mores to educational policy.

Fumiko Mori Halloran, 41, is a frequent contributor to the Japanese literary magazine Bungei Shunjū and a former Wilson Center Guest Scholar. Born in Ōmura City, Japan, she received a B.A. from Kyōto University (1966) and an M.A. from Columbia University (1970). She is the author of From the City of Washington (1979) and The Starlight over America (1982), both published in Japanese.



Scene from a 12th-century scroll of The Tale of Genji. Reading spread rapidly after the advent of commercial printing in Japan in 1609.

A case in point is *Totto-chan at the Window*. Published in 1981, it was written by Kuroyanagi Tetsuko, the popular hostess of three weekly TV variety shows. *Totto-chan* posted sales of 4.5 million copies in its first year, easily surpassing the previous one-year record of 3.6 million—set by *A Japanese-American Conversation Manual* at the beginning of the 1945–52 U.S. Occupation.

Kuroyanagi describes her book as “a series of childhood recollections about an ideal school in Tokyo . . . that combined learning with fun, freedom, and love.” Expelled from public school at the age of six for unruly behavior, the author arrived in 1939 at the Tomoe School, where classes were held in remodeled railroad cars and each pupil worked at his or her own pace. The headmaster shunned traditional subjects for a curriculum that included public speaking, eurythmics, farming, and swimming in the nude. The story ends with the school’s destruction in a 1945 U.S. bombing raid, but an epilogue describes the successful careers enjoyed today by Kuroyanagi and many of her classmates.

Until recently, most Japanese would have frowned on such unorthodox notions of education. *Totto-chan at the Window*, however, appeared just as many Japanese parents, educators, and policy-makers began to question the effectiveness of their public schools. Many criticized the university admissions system, which measures students solely by their performance on

written entrance exams. Others lamented the classroom emphasis on memorized knowledge rather than creative thinking or analytic ability. Parents complained that teachers no longer regarded their work as sacred, while teachers in turn denounced parents for caring too much or too little about the education of their children. And both parents and teachers charged the Ministry of Education—which approves textbooks, establishes standards, and sets curricula—with being too rigid.

A highly centralized educational system was well suited to Japan 30 years ago. Then, only about 51 percent of all junior high school graduates entered high school, and only about 10 percent went on to universities. A firm grounding in mathematics and science contributed greatly to Japan's postwar industrial progress. Indeed, Japanese students—94 percent of whom went to high schools, 38 percent of whom attended universities in 1980—consistently score at or near the top in international tests of ability in mathematics and science. But in a contemporary economy that demands innovation as much as hard work, Japanese businessmen lament the passive thinking exhibited by their young, college-trained recruits.

Much of *Totto-chan's* success obviously stemmed from the widespread popularity of its author. Even so, it touched a nerve. A flurry of education proposals from the Office of the Prime Minister, and the recent adoption of *Totto-chan* as a third- and fourth-grade textbook, suggest that plans are being made for a school system more attuned to the diverse and economically mature Japan of the 1980s.

Eyes on the TV Set

Now that their country's gross national product ranks third in the world (behind that of the United States and the Soviet Union), many Japanese are assessing the psychic costs of their national drive to success. In *Recommendations on Sensitive Human Relationships*, which has sold more than three million copies since 1982, talk-show host Suzuki Kenji asserts that the Japanese "have forgotten how to use their traditional gentleness and sensitivity, a skill dulled by a postwar society centered on money and materialism." Fewer Japanese, for example, respond to the traditional greeting of *o genki desu ka?* (Are you well?) with *hai, okagesama de* (Yes, thanks to your wisdom and mercy). And when the modern Japanese family eats dinner, it is silent not in deference to an old, established rule of courtesy but because all eyes are on the television set.

A novel that describes the impact of affluence in a different

context is *A Flake of Snow* (1983), by Watanabe Jun'ichi. Iori Shōichirō, a well-to-do architect, spends his time and money chasing two women—one his assistant, the other the wife of a wealthy art dealer. Dinners at expensive restaurants, trips at home and abroad (to the Netherlands and Austria), and scenes of explicit sex occupy much of the novel. Despite his many amorous entanglements, Iori avoids any serious emotional commitments, convinced that “no matter whom one marries, the result will always be the same. . . . Only fatigue descends upon you in the end.” Eventually, his wife and his two mistresses abandon him, and Iori realizes that his own lack of commitment has cost him their affections.

Pearl Harbor Revisited

Watanabe's book sold almost one million copies in 1983. Male readers, nicknamed the “Snowflake Tribe,” seemed to identify both with Iori's high living and his dissatisfaction with marriage. Higher incomes have allowed many men to indulge in expensive extramarital dalliances. And judging from a divorce rate that has doubled since 1960 (but is still only one-quarter that of the United States), broken homes are no longer rare.

More outrageous to the older generation than the Snowflake Tribe has been the behavior of young Japanese in their 20s. Since the mid-1970s, novels on the problems of youth have been perennial best sellers. One of the first to go over the million mark was *Almost Transparent Blue* (1976), a novel by Murakami Ryu that depicts the aimless, drug-filled existence of Japanese youths living near the Fukuo U.S. Army Base in metropolitan Tokyo during the Vietnam War.

Substance abuse—mostly in the form of taking amphetamines and sniffing glue or paint thinner—remains relatively rare in Japan. But the rise in juvenile delinquency is regarded as a national scandal. Since 1973, the number of junior high school students arrested each year has doubled. In *Crumbling Toy Bricks*, which sold 2.8 million copies in 1983, a well-known screen and stage actor named Hozumi Takanobu related his struggle to reform his juvenile delinquent daughter, Yukari. With the help of a police department youth counselor, Yukari's parents finally succeed in stopping her from inhaling paint thinner, stealing motorbikes, and hanging around the more dubious quarters of Tokyo.

Older Japanese, who came of age in a bleak postwar environment that demanded sacrifice, have trouble accepting the comparatively coddled status of youths today. The world cap-

tured in *Somewhat Crystal*, a novel by Tanaka Yasuo that sold one million copies in 1978, remains alien to them. The protagonist, Yuri, is a college girl from a wealthy family who works as a fashion model. Together with her live-in rock-musician boyfriend, she spends her days in chic stores and her evenings in discotheques and restaurants.

At the end of this virtually plotless tale, a convenient glossary defines foreign terms such as *dilettante* and provides the names of fashionable stores in Akasaka where one can purchase Ellesse and Fila tennis wear from Italy, Louis Vuitton luggage from France, and Jaeger sweaters from England. But as Yuri herself remarks, "I feel most comfortable in Saint Laurent or Alpha Cubic dresses." Like many books of the "youth" genre, observes literary critic Nakajima Azusa, Tanaka's work "presented a world with no set standard of values."

Several recent best sellers have also focused on Japan's international role, beginning with a reassessment of the country's behavior during the Second World War. During the immediate postwar years, Japanese accepted complete responsibility for the outbreak of war in the Pacific. The U.S. Occupation authorities vigorously promoted this view, censoring all opinions to the contrary.

A familiar sight on Japan's crowded commuter trains, where, according to a 1984 Asahi poll, 31 percent of all Japanese do most of their reading.



Today, works that bring to light once-suppressed facts and interpretations have found much favor. In 1981, a dry and scholarly account, *The Shōwa History by His Majesty's Senior Subjects*, sold 150,000 copies. Drawing heavily on interviews of Kido Koichi, Emperor Hirohito's Chief Attendant, the book's author cites the strangling effect of events such as the decision by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to "freeze" Japanese assets in July 1941 and to stop U.S. oil imports to Japan in August 1941. Plans for Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, crystalized only in the face of this steady economic pressure.

More controversial was *The Two Fatherlands*, by Yamazaki Toyoko, which sold almost one million copies in 1983. At the outset of this novel, the hero, Amoh Kenji, a *Nisei* (second-generation Japanese American) raised in California, is arrested in Los Angeles after the outbreak of war on suspicion of being a spy. When he protests that he is an American citizen, the policeman responds, "That may be true, but until you bleach yourself white, a Jap's a Jap!"

Amoh is sent to a "relocation center," one of the many wartime internment camps set up in 1942 to confine U.S. citizens of Japanese descent. Later, he joins U.S. Army intelligence and serves as an interpreter at the Tokyo War Crimes Trials (1946–48). At book's end, disillusioned by what he perceives as "victors' justice," Amoh commits suicide.

Asking New Questions

The Two Fatherlands provoked a strong response. Prior to its publication as a book, it was serialized in a weekly magazine, overlapping with zealous Japanese press coverage of the November 1981 U.S. congressional hearings on federal compensation for wartime Japanese-American internees. Televised as a 50-hour series, the program reached millions of viewers. Japanese conservatives, who consider strong U.S.–Japan ties essential, decried the anti-American implications of the numerous scenes showing Americans beating Japanese Americans. In the United States, Japanese Americans objected to the message that their loyalties were divided.

Opinions on the historical accuracy of *The Two Fatherlands* may differ. Yet the popular response shows the long shadow cast by the Second World War. The shadow falls, however, not only on Japan as conquered but also on Japan as conqueror. Japanese face constant reminders that their Asian neighbors have not forgotten their experiences under the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere.

In the summer of 1982, the Chinese filed a vigorous protest when they heard that the Japanese Education Ministry had proposed textbooks that referred to the invasion of China during the 1930s as an "advance." In reality, the ministry itself had little to do with the controversial revisions. The Chinese reaction, however, points to the residual bitterness left by the Second World War.

In the same year, novelist Fukada Yusuke received the Naoki Award—given to the best works of "mass" literature—for his *Merchants under the Blazing Sun*. Fukada writes of the animosity between Japanese trading-company men and Filipino lumber traders in Manila. When the Japanese director of the company sees a rusting anti-aircraft gun on the island of Corregidor, he remarks, "What did the Japanese military leave behind after three years? At best, this rusty gun and the Filipino's hatred." To Frank Satō, the half-Japanese, half-Filipino protagonist of the novel, the overbearing behavior of today's Japanese businessmen often seems no different from that of Japanese occupation troops during World War II.

The Japanese are trying harder to understand their fellow Asians. In 1982, for example, two of the best-selling titles were Korean-language textbooks, designed to accompany an instruction course broadcast on television. Twenty years ago, such reader interest would have been inconceivable.

But 20 years ago, Japan did not play the international role that it does today. Rapid growth in trade has brought the country unfamiliar new global connections—to the Mideast, even to Africa. It has also generated its share of domestic travails. In their variety, Japanese best-selling books supply no universally appealing panaceas—and often spark arguments. What their high sales figures do suggest, however, is that Japanese are ready, after 40 years of self-imposed intellectual isolation, to ask harder questions about themselves and their relationship to the rest of the world.



READING THE COMICS

by Frederik L. Schodt

In his travel book *The Great Railway Bazaar* (1975), Paul Theroux recalls his encounter with a comic book left behind by a young woman seated next to him on a train in northern Japan: "The comic strips showed decapitations, cannibalism, people bristling with arrows like Saint Sebastian . . . and, in general, mayhem. . . . I dropped the comic. The girl returned to her seat and, so help me God, serenely returned to this distressing [magazine]."

Japanese *manga*, or comic books, come as a rude shock to most Westerners. With their emphasis on violence, sex, and scatology, *manga* do not seem to fit the typical Western notion of Japan as a subtle, even repressed, society. Yet *manga* are read and enjoyed by Japanese of every social class.

All told, comics accounted for 27 percent of all books and magazines published in Japan in 1980; the more than one billion *manga* in circulation every year amount to roughly 10 for every man, woman, and child in Japan.

The most popular Japanese comics appear in monthly and weekly magazines. Fat, 350-page boys' comic books—which have circulations as high as three million—combine dramatic stories of sports, adventure, and science fiction with humor. Girls' magazines place their emphasis on tales of love, featuring stylized heroes and heroines. Themes in adult male magazines range from the religious to the risqué, mostly the latter; the stories teem with warriors, gamblers, and gigolos. Until recently, Japanese women had to read comics written for teen-age girls or peruse those designed for their boyfriends or husbands. But in 1980, publishers came to their rescue with two monthlies, *Be in Love* and *Big Comic for Ladies*.

Why do the Japanese have such an unusual appetite for comics?

It is possible that their written language predisposes Japanese to more visual forms of communication. In its most basic form, the individual Japanese ideogram, adopted from the Chinese, is a symbol denoting either a tangible object or an abstract concept, emotion, or action. Cartoonist Tezuka Osamu has said of his comics: "I don't consider them pictures—I think of them as a type of hieroglyphics. . . . In reality I'm not drawing. I'm writing a story with a unique type of symbol."

The comic tradition in Japan dates back almost 900 years. During the 12th century, a Buddhist priest named Toba

(1053–1140) penned the *Chōjūgiga* scrolls, literally “humorous pictures of birds and animals.” In a style bearing strong resemblance to today’s Walt Disney figures, the scrolls showed monkeys, rabbits, and frogs bathing in rivers, practicing archery, wrestling, and worshiping. Refinements in woodblock printing during the 17th century spread cartoons from the aristocracy and the clergy to the common people.* European-style cartoons, often modeled on those of the British magazine *Punch*, became popular during the latter half of the 19th century; during the 1920s, Japanese artists marveled at the “Sunday funnies” in America and quickly adopted their style.

The real comic boom, however, did not take place until after the Second World War. Young Japanese in particular were starved not just for food but also for entertainment. Dozens of small *manga* publications sprang up to satisfy the growing demand, a demand spurred by the appearance in Japan of such American cartoon classics as Chic Young’s *Blondie*, serialized and translated in 1946.

To be sure, small children in Japan have always read comics for the same reason that children everywhere do—they are both accessible and fun. But the passage from childhood to adult life has not weaned postwar Japanese from their dependency on comics. Two modern developments help to explain why.

The Samurai Spirit

First, Japan has become a very crowded, urban nation, with a population density that ranks 20th in the world. Unlike many other amusements, comics require little physical space, and they can be enjoyed in silence and solitude. Pioneers in headphone amplifiers for electric guitars, tiny tape players, and other miniaturized gadgetry, the Japanese place a premium on not bothering others.

Second, Japan remains a society ruled by mutual obligations and codes of behavior. Individual desires must be subordi-

*The phrase *manga* was coined in 1814 by the Japanese woodblock print artist Hokusai, using the Chinese ideograms *man* (involuntary or in spite of oneself) and *ga* (picture). Hokusai was evidently trying to describe something like “whimsical sketches.” But it is noteworthy that the first ideogram also has the meaning “morally corrupt.”

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The first U.S. cartoon serialized in Japan, *Bringing up Father* appeared in 1923. *Mutt and Jeff*, *Felix the Cat*, and others soon followed.

nated to the good of the group, yet the pressures for individual achievement have, if anything, increased. To the student cramming for examinations, the businessman stuck in the corporate hierarchy, and the housewife trapped at home, *manga* provide an escape valve for dreams and frustrations. And as such, they play a vital part in Japanese popular culture, revealing legacies from the past, ideals of love, attitudes toward work and play, and above all, a thirst for fantasy.

When the first Japanese comic strips for children appeared during the 1920s, they depicted plucky samurai lads who always protected their feudal masters and fought for justice and the glory of Japan. The spirit, if not the figure, of the dedicated, skillful swordsman presides over many dramatic comics for men and boys. The typical modern samurai superhero slashes his way through sword fights that can last for 30 pages, usually against a backdrop of burning castles, ravaged villages, peasants in revolt, and assorted corpses. He tends to be stoic, not very vocal, and a member of a group. If not a member of a group, he is an outsider confident of his own purpose in a hostile world.

An example of the latter is *Ogami Ittō*, the anti-hero of *Kozure Ōkami* (*Wolf and Child*), by Koike Kazuo and Kojima Gōseki. Factional politics cause him to lose his job as executioner for the Tokugawa clan. After his wife is murdered, he becomes a paid assassin and embarks on a mission of vengeance. What saves the series from degenerating into endless bouts of slaughter—Ogami kills 37 opponents in one episode—is the presence of his infant son. Samurai stories often rely thematically on the

contrast between human bonds and battlefield violence.

Given the martial quality of most traditional samurai epics, one would expect Japanese to savor "war comics" in the American style of *Fightin' Marines*, *Fightin' Army*, and *Sgt. Fury*. The ancient samurai idolized obedience and regarded dying for the sake of honor as a privilege, and the government tried to revive this aspect of the *bushidō* ethic in World War II. Total defeat, however, and the war deaths of 1,972,000 Japanese ended that tradition. Under ARTICLE 9 of the 1946 Japanese Constitution, the Japanese "forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation."

Everything but Cricket

Many artists, in fact, have done their best to ridicule the wartime warrior values. Mizuki Shigeru lost his left arm during an American bombing raid in World War II, and his 350-page comic *Sōin Gyokusai Seyo! (Banzai Charge!)*, based on his own experiences as a soldier, illustrates the hazards of blind obedience. A detachment of soldiers under the command of a major intoxicated with *bushidō* ideals arrives at an island off Rabaul, New Britain. When the Americans appear, the major orders a *banzai!* charge, sending his green troops to destruction. Some survive, but headquarters informs them that since their glorious deaths have already been reported, they must either commit suicide or attack again.

The demise of militarism, however, does not mean the demise of self-sacrifice, endurance, and competition. These Japanese ideals live on in other contemporary activities, notably sports. During the early years of the post-World War II U.S. Occupation, the authorities banned traditional Japanese school sports such as judo, karate, and kendo—all reflections, it was thought, of *bushidō* values. When Gen. Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, finally lifted the ban in 1950, the result was a tremendous boom not only in sports but also in sports comics.

One of the first sports strips to appear was *Igaguri-kun*, by Fukui Eiichi, a tale of a judo expert named Igaguri that found favor with Japanese youngsters. *Igaguri-kun* led to comics featuring not only traditional Japanese sports but also baseball, football, professional wrestling, boxing, and volleyball. (Perhaps the only major sport neglected by Japanese comic artists has been cricket.) Athletic prowess became a source of national pride and provided a legitimate channel for aggressive tendencies. If Japanese boys could no longer dream of growing up to be heroic warriors, they could at least become sports stars.

CONSUMPTION AS CULTURE

The Japanese first tasted American fast food—Howard Johnson's and Kentucky Fried Chicken—at the 1970 World Exposition in Ōsaka. At the time, their income per capita was \$1,702, below those of Puerto Rico and Italy. By 1980, that number was \$7,672, or close to the \$10,094 of the United States, and American-style fast-food franchises, as well as amusement parks, supermarkets, and other service businesses, had sprouted from Kyūshū to Hokkaidō.

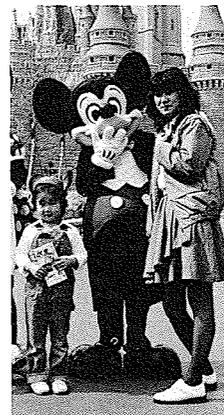
Indeed, McDonald's (with more than 450 Japanese outlets), Kentucky Fried Chicken (430), and other U.S. fast-food eateries probably owe little of their success to their cuisine; the more than 1,500 take-out sushi outlets run by one Japanese company attest to the superior appeal of native dishes. Both Japanese and American chains, however, have profited from the growth in disposable income and from the fact that 40 percent of all married women now work at least part-time.

Meanwhile, a new breed of "office ladies"—young, single working women living with their parents—has entered the consumer ranks, and the slow spread of the five-day work week has allowed more time for excursions and amusements.

The markets thus created or expanded were made to order for the formula of standard ingredients, computerized inventories, and comprehensive training manuals devised by U.S. service companies. One example is Tokyo Disneyland, which opened in April 1983. While it did not invest in the project, Walt Disney Productions provided the local developer with 300 volumes detailing everything from costume design to crowd control. The result: a 114-acre park identical to its counterparts in California and Florida. In 1983, some 10.4 million Japanese strolled with Mickey and Minnie, rode on the Mark Twain Riverboat, or listened to Slue Foot Sue sing (in English) "I'm Looking for a Big-City Beau."

Until recently, notes Tokyo economist Kusaka Kimindo, a former Wilson Center Guest Scholar, "Japanese companies, bound by a reliance on 'serious' industries, neglected to develop amusements." Now they make and market Windsurfers, hang gliders, and other "fun" items—for home and, of course, export. Last February, the Chinese government announced that a Japanese company would build a "Disney-style" park in Beijing.

The Japanese are also taking service technology a few steps further. Some five million vending units sell everything from shoes to mixed drinks. And at a suburban Tokyo supermarket, robots unload trucks and restock aisles. In Japan as in America, leisure and prosperity are now the mothers of commercial invention.



Most popular among the sports comics are highly stylized *bēsubōru*, or "baseball," stories. In 1966, the success of a baseball comic called *Kyojin no Hoshi* (*Star of the Giants*) helped to usher in the genre known today as "sports-guts" comics. Written by Kajiwara Ikki and drawn by Kawasaki Noboru, *Kyojin no Hoshi* stars a young boy named Hyūma Hoshi, who dreams of joining the Yomiuri Giants, Japan's most famous baseball team. His father teaches him to field flaming baseballs, part of a harsh training program for Hyūma that would make any real-life American coach sob with pity. Eventually, the boy becomes one of Japan's ace pitchers. The story ends, however, on a mixed note: Hyūma beats his arch-rival but tears a tendon in his arm and must abandon baseball.

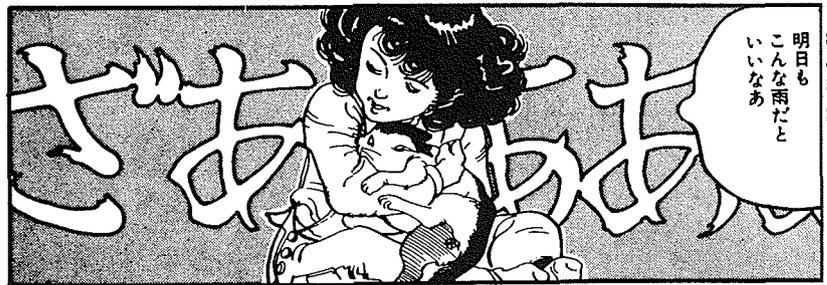
Salary-Man

A companion to the sports comic is the so-called work comic, aimed at an audience of boys and young men who have not yet entered the work force, or at those who have only recently found a job. The stories stress perseverance in the face of impossible odds, craftsmanship, and the quest for excellence; the heroes are young men from the low end of the social totem pole who strive to become the "best in Japan" in their chosen professions.

In *Hōchōnin Ajihei* (*Ajihei the Cook*), by Gyū Jirō and Biggu Jō, a young man forsakes his father's occupation as a traditional chef in order to make fast food for the masses. The relationship between master and apprentice supplies much of the drama. From the 23-volume series, readers also learn how to peel onions, chop carrots, make noodles, and even fry ice cream without melting it. A series by Nakazawa Keiji called *Shigoto no Uta* (*Ode to Work*) concentrates less on technical information and more on the spiritual meaning of hard work and a good job.

Yet, while the Japanese still pay homage to traditional values, they are not the diligent, dull automatons routinely portrayed in the Western news media. Japanese white-collar workers, for example, enjoy their own irreverent genre of comics, known appropriately as *sarariman*, or "salary-man," comics.

American and European business executives, awed by Japanese management techniques, often pine for a more obedient, loyal, and productive work force, like that which supposedly exists in Japan. Salary-man comics, however, show Japanese office workers as they see themselves. One of the first, *Fuji Santarō*, by Satō Sampei, began serialization in the *Asahi* newspaper in 1965. It featured a company employee who, in an early sequence, was shown painting open eyes on his glasses so



Three Japanese comic figures: Noriko (above), a normal Japanese girl; Mazinger Z (right), a warrior-robot controlled by a boy seated inside its head; and Ichiban, the test-taking hero of an "exam" comic, one of Japan's newest genres.



that he could sleep safely during staff meetings.

The typical hero of salary-man comics is a middle-class everyman known in Japan as the *hira-shain*, or rank-and-file employee. His is an unhappy existence. Married to an ugly woman, he dreads going home, and he hangs his head low after being scolded by his boss. The other key figures include the president (likes to play golf, is old and not too bright), the department head (hardworking and stern), the section chief (desperately wants to become a department head but fears he cannot), the "eternal chief clerk" (incompetent and stuck for life in his posi-

tion), and the rank and file, many of whom are also *madogiwazoku*, or "those who sit idle beside windows"—deadbeats in a system of lifetime employment.

Another much-lampooned sacred cow is Japan's traditional family structure. In *Dame Oyaji (No Good Daddy)*, by Furuya Mitsutoshi, a small, pathetic salary-man has the misfortune to have married Onibaba (Demon Hag), a scowling woman built like a warrior-robot. Early episodes all follow the same pattern: The father tries to assert himself, fails, and is tied up, burned, or beaten by his family. He represents the reverse of the stereotype in male-oriented Japan, where the father has traditionally been an aloof, authoritarian figure.

These *manga* that mock Japanese stereotypes are presented only half in jest. In reality, they are proof of the changes that Japanese society has endured since the end of World War II. For example, Japanese women—who first received the vote in the 1946 Constitution—can now turn to a growing number of cartoon strips created by women for women. One of the first was by Hasegawa Machiko, whose *Sazae-san* began in 1946 and ran until 1974. *Sazae*, the heroine, symbolized the new Japanese woman: still family oriented and respectful of tradition, but independent minded. Today, some 45 different young girls' and women's comic magazines appear every month.

Boy Meets Girl

Most of them do not embody current Western feminist ideals. Whether the heroine be a sports star, a young girl, a woman on the job, or a housewife, romance (often illicit) is invariably the motivating dramatic force. Scenes where a young girl is struck in the face by an angry young male, and then thanks him for "caring," can still be found.

The male and female characters in these stories have a distinctly Western look: tall, with large, expressive eyes and light hair. What their physical appearance reflects is a revolution in the way Japanese people view—or wish to view—themselves. Before the Japanese ever saw Westerners, they depicted themselves in scroll paintings and woodblock prints with Asian features, and often smaller-than-life eyes. Today, billboards, television commercials, and magazine ads usually feature Caucasian models, both male and female.*

*A form of surgery popular in Japan today is to have an extra crease put in the upper eyelid, creating a rounder eye (cost: \$1,000). Different ways of raising babies, an improved diet, and greater use of desks and chairs—instead of squatting on cushions—have given many younger Japanese the lithe and lanky look of their comic-book heroes and heroines.

Until a few years ago, most boys and men in Japan regarded girls' comics and the work of women artists with a mixture of puzzlement and derision. They could not understand the female obsession with syrupy romance, and they were repelled by the florid art style. But the increasing sophistication shown in girls' comics such as *Berusaiyu no Bara* (*The Rose of Versailles*), a 1,700-page fictional tale by Ikeda Riyoko of the life of Marie Antoinette, has attracted many male fans. Some read girls' comics in order to learn how women think. Others find the emphasis on emotion and psychology refreshing.

The Visual Generation

Recently, comic-book publishers have made tentative attempts to unite male and female readers. In September 1981, *Duo* emerged. Its catchy slogan: "We reached out for the same magazine at the store, and that was our beginning—*Duo*, for the two of us."

Despite their success in attracting a broad readership, *manga* are not without their critics. Nagai Gō came out in 1968 with *Harenchi Gakuen* (*Shameless School*), which aroused the wrath of parents by introducing overt eroticism into children's comics and by mocking Japan's monolithic educational system. Students in the series spent most of their time cavorting in the nude, playing mahjong, and throwing sake parties. Japanese law forbids the graphic depiction of genitalia or sexual intercourse. But through the use of suggestive techniques, many contemporary comics—children's and adults'—depict far more erotic scenes than are found in *Harenchi Gakuen*.

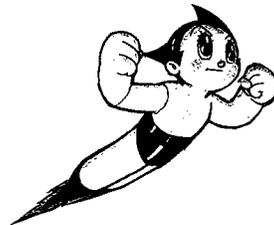
In 1979, as controversy continued, an educator named Matsuzawa Mitsuo fired off a polemic entitled *Nihonjin no Atama o Dame ni Shita Manga-Gekiga* (*The Dramatic Comics That Have Ruined Japanese Minds*). The jacket blurb on his book asked: "IS YOUR CHILD SAFE? . . . Children hold the key to Japan's future, and their minds are being turned into mush. This book tells how comics might ruin the nation . . . and issues a bold warning to parents whose children face the [university entrance] exams!"

Matsuzawa's appeal, and others like it, seem unlikely to stem the comic tide. Besides reading them for pleasure, Japanese now rely on cartoons and comics as an effective way to communicate: They can be found on street signs, shopping maps, instruction manuals, electricity and gas bills, and even in phone booths. One Tokyo publisher recently came out with a history of the world in comic-book form. The growing intru-

sion of *manga* into daily life is one reason that modern Japanese youths, already surrounded by television sets and video tape recorders, are described by pundits in Japan as the *shikaku sedai*, the "visual generation."

All in all, Japan's comic-book industry today dwarfs that of the United States or any other country. But the isolation that helped Japan to develop such a rich comic genre also limits its exportability. American comics can be found around the world: *Superman* alone sells in more than 45 nations. Transplanting Japanese comics is not so easy. To publish them in other languages would involve redrawing or photographically reversing the frames so that they could be read from left to right; word balloons also must be altered to accommodate horizontal (rather than vertical) dialogue. The difference in symbolic vocabulary alone dwarfs any technical problems. How would an American guess, for example, that when the nose of a Japanese male character gushes blood, he is sexually stirred?

Even so, there have been some export successes. Japanese robot stories have won many fans in Europe. A popular figure in mainland China is Tezuka Osamu's *Tetsuwan Atomu*, known in the United States, Venezuela, and Peru as *Astro Boy*. Since 1963, U.S. television has also dubbed and broadcast several Japanese TV series based on *manga*. Finally, the overseas market for *manga* spin-offs—toys, picture books, and video games—ensures that the world will get a glimpse, if only indirectly, of Japan's vigorous new visual culture.



AT THE MOVIES

by James Bailey

The average American knows two kinds of Japanese movies, if he knows any at all. In the first, grunting samurai slash at each other with swords. In the second, a prehistoric monster stomps through downtown Tokyo like King Kong, derailing trains, swatting down aircraft, and smashing buildings.

Today, such scenes seldom appear on the Japanese screen. Like the Western in the United States, samurai and monster films moved to TV (see box, pp. 72-73). Indeed, in Japan as in the United States, the advent of TV took its toll of the cinema business. Attendance is down to one-sixth of its 1960 level. (In the United States, the drop has been less dramatic, but ticket sales still lag below what they were 25 years ago.) In terms of production, Japan's film industry now devotes anywhere from one-half to two-thirds of its annual output to pornography.

Porn, however, accounts for only 16 percent of box-office revenues. Strict censorship ensures that the raciest parts of these movies are their titles: *Hateshinaki Zechō* (*Endless Ecstasy*), *Uzuku* (*Sex Itch*), and *Jokōsei Repōto—Yūko No Shiroi Mune* (*High School Co-ed Report—Yuko's White Breasts*).

What Japanese enjoy most at the movies is not porn but harmless family fare. In 1983, *Nankyoku Monogatari* (*Antarctica*), a tale of sleigh dogs accidentally abandoned on the frozen continent, attracted more viewers than any other domestic film in Japanese history. Ranked behind *Nankyoku Monogatari* on the 1983 list of box-office winners are romantic love stories—one involving a college girl and a private detective, another entangling a high school beauty with a visitor from outer space.

Foreign offerings have become increasingly visible. Today's youth, who make up almost three-quarters of the Japanese movie-going audience, eat Western-style food, wear Western clothes, listen to Western music, and watch Western movies. Twenty-four of the 30 most successful features in Japan were made in the West, mostly in America. Among the more popular in recent years have been *Journey of Love and Youth* and *Dusk*—more familiar to Americans as, respectively, *An Officer and a Gentleman* and *On Golden Pond*.

Twenty-five years ago, the Japanese were relatively content with their own cinema. A 1959 survey showed that 85 to 90 per-

cent of Japanese between the ages of 15 and 19 "disliked foreign films and never went." Internationally renowned directors such as Kurosawa Akira (whose *Rashōmon* took first prize at the 1951 Venice Film Festival), Ozu Yasujirō, and Naruse Mikio enjoyed the support of a studio system that produced almost 500 films in 1960. Their technical and dramatic skills moved Joseph Anderson and Donald Richie, the authors of *The Japanese Film* (1959), to label the Japanese film industry as "one of the world's most vitally creative."

Today, a film by a master such as Kurosawa still has enormous appeal: Only two other domestic releases have grossed more than his *Kagemusha* (*Shadow Warrior*), a lavish samurai epic that shared first prize at the 1980 Cannes Film Festival. But Japan's four largest studios—Tōhō, Tōei, Nikkatsu, and Shōchiku—have responded to competition from TV by moving away from film production. Kurosawa had to secure financing from Twentieth Century-Fox to make *Kagemusha*. Tōhō, his former employer, now earns much of its income by distributing foreign works and has branched out into real estate. The majors made only 116 films in 1983. Designed as commercial rather than critical vehicles, they almost always adhered to tried-and-true genres.

Such fidelity has its aesthetic drawbacks. Yet, repetition can also be an asset. As Thomas Cripps, a historian and former Wilson Center Fellow, observes, the use of "repeated and reworked formulas and archetypes . . . invites us to see reflections of [a society's] values and attitudes." The Japanese silver screen may have lost some of its luster, but it still serves as a somewhat faithful mirror, revealing the Japanese as they see themselves.

According to an old industry adage, a Japanese film-maker can never go wrong with *Chūshingura* (*The Loyal League*) or war. Since the turn-of-the-century advent of Japan's commercial cinema, *Chūshingura*, the saga of 47 samurai who commit mass suicide after avenging their master's death, has gone through more than 200 screen adaptations. The current dearth of locally made swordplay sagas suggests that times and tastes have changed, but there is still box-office appeal in war movies.

In August of 1981, Tōhō presented *Rengō Kantai* (*The Assembled Fleet*), a chronicle of the Japanese Imperial Navy up to the (disastrous) Battle of Midway. It remains one of the 10 most lucrative domestic films ever made. The following June, the studio restaged the Battle of Okinawa in *Himeyuri No Tō* (*Tower of the*

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Japanese movie viewers, whose forebears enjoyed daylong kabuki performances, sat enthralled through all 200 minutes of *The Seven Samurai* (1954), still considered one of the best samurai films.

Lillies) and last summer carried on—this time in the air—with *Zero-san Mōyū* (*Zero Fighter*). Nor has Tōhō alone profited from the dramatic possibilities of mayhem writ large. Tōei had one of its biggest 1982 hits with the World War II-era *Dai-Nippon Teikoku* (*The Imperial Japanese Empire*). In 1984, Shōchiku showed the 1937 conquest of Shanghai in *Shanghai Bansukingu* (*Welcome to Shanghai*). Needless to say, the upcoming 40th anniversary of what Americans call V-J Day will not go unobserved.

While World War II films have shocked Japan's neighbors—Chinese officials protested the whitewashing of Prime Minister Tōjō Hideki in Tōei's *Dai-Nippon Teikoku*—their popularity probably does not signal a renascent lust for martial glory. Few Japanese favor either greater defense spending (regularly about one percent of the Japanese gross national product, versus six percent in the United States) or an expansion of the all-volunteer Self-Defense Forces (manpower has stayed near 300,000 during the past two decades). Today's films of World War II tend to portray ordinary Japanese soldiers and civilians of the period as innocents, more sinned against than sinning.

Buffeted by fires, typhoons, and earthquakes, Japanese have nurtured a mentality known as *higaisha ishiki*, or "victim's con-

sciousness." Furthermore, past centuries of isolation have led many Japanese to feel easily misunderstood by the outside world. They consider their country's nature to be "inexpressible and, in the end, incomprehensible to foreigners," as the novelist Inoue Hisashi put it.

Seen through Japanese eyes, World War II becomes yet another link in a long chain of victimizations and misunderstandings. In *Dai-Nippon Teikoku*, the bombing of Pearl Harbor is but a Japanese reaction to Franklin D. Roosevelt's attempt—as the President is depicted saying—to "get the Japanese to attack us"; a Japanese soldier advancing into Singapore is taken aback by the stiff resistance of the Chinese, who obviously do not realize that "we're trying to liberate them from British rule"; and at war's end, a judge at a war crimes tribunal in the Philippines tells Japanese defendants that "all Japanese deserve to die."

A few antiwar films criticize the military, but mostly for causing the deaths of so many young Japanese. Shōchiku studio's *Shanghai Bansukingu*, which roundly condemns Japanese atrocities in China, is the exception rather than the rule. Japanese noncombatants generally resemble the peace-loving villagers in *Kodomo No Goro Sensō Ga Atta (There Was a War When I Was a Child)*—prevented only through the strenuous efforts of the secret police from taking a half-American little girl to their bosoms and from giving rice cakes to starving Allied prisoners.

Troubles Ahead

The dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki did little to dispel the Japanese perception of themselves as victims. In *Konoko O Nokoshite (Children of Nagasaki)*, a boy survives the bombing of Nagasaki and later becomes a war correspondent. Tragedies elsewhere seem pale compared to his own experiences. At one point, he declares that the absence of nuclear weapons from more recent battlefields, including those in Vietnam and Biafra, causes him to "breathe a sigh of relief."

As seen in the movies, the Japanese sense of victimization continues during peacetime. Against a backdrop of exotic settings, *kaigai rokei* (foreign location) films depict the modern Japanese as a naive people at the mercy of the outside world.

A few examples convey the flavor of the genre. In *Kamisama, Naze Ai Ni Mo Kokkyō Ga Aru No? (God, Why Is There a Border in Love?)*, a Japanese photographer in love with a girl he meets in Switzerland is deported from that country on trumped-up charges. *Kaigenrei No Yoru (Night of Martial Law)*, filmed in Colombia, features a Japanese journalist and his girl-

friend who become embroiled in a coup d'état in the country of Nueva Granada. Eventually, both die by firing squad. The photojournalist hero of *Yōroppa Tokkyū* (*Trans-Europe Express*) endures insults to the Japanese as "yellow monkeys," survives a roughing-up by a muscle-bound bouncer, and is even refused by a Parisian prostitute who tells him, "No Asians."

The results of a 1980 survey by the Office of the Prime Minister illustrate the extent of Japanese xenophobia. Of the 3,000 men and women polled, 64 percent said that they did not wish to associate with non-Japanese, and 38 percent unconditionally opposed international marriage.

Hole in the Pants

In the face of increased outside contacts, however, the Japanese fear of foreigners should eventually fade. Between 1955 and 1978, external investment in the country jumped from \$52.2 million to \$20.2 billion; Japanese investment abroad, from \$159.4 million to \$4.6 billion. The resident foreign population also rose from 599,000 to 767,000, and the number of Japanese living overseas in October 1984 was up nearly two percent from a year earlier, to almost half a million.

Reflecting the increase in foreign exposure, many recent foreign location releases have lost their paranoid flavor. *Rongu Ran* (*Long Run*), which premièred in 1982, is about an athlete who roller-skates across the United States, accompanied by his trainer and a camerawoman. In the course of his journey, he receives a \$1,000 reward for heroism and constant gifts of food and shelter. The 1984 hero of *Uindii* (*Races*), a professional motorcycle racer, never sets foot in Japan, maintaining an apartment in Berlin and a cabin in Canada. He prospers without Japanese female companionship (all his girlfriends are Caucasian), without Japanese food, even without expressing his deepest feelings in his native tongue, since his English is perfectly fluent.

If the Japanese cinema, as critic Furukawa Kiyomi asserts, is more likely to reflect the status quo than to challenge it, then the increase in more balanced portraits of foreign countries deserves much applause.

Cinema-going in Japan is a seasonal activity. Theaters do their best business during school holidays at New Year's, in late April and early May, and, of course, in summer, when distributors release those films aimed at Japanese under 20.

Their overwhelming favorite is the *aidoru eiga* (idol movie), a financial mainstay of the film industry. In 1981, Tōei studio reaped 55 percent of its revenues from idol movies, which ac-

**THE JAPANESE AND TV:
'BLIND DEVOTION'**

In few countries does television exert as much influence as it does in Japan. As Tokyo critic Satō Kuwashi puts it, "Most Japanese worship TV with blind devotion."

A recent survey by the public network, the Japan Broadcasting Corporation (Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai, or NHK), supports Satō's assertion: The average family in Tokyo has its set on for eight hours and 12 minutes a day, the highest level of viewership in the world. By contrast, Americans, also noted for their addiction to TV, watch the tube for six hours and 44 minutes daily. So enamored are the Japanese of the medium that, when polled recently on which one of five items—newspapers, TVs, telephones, automobiles, and refrigerators—they would keep if they could have only *one*, 31 percent (versus three percent in the United States) answered "television."

NHK spokesman Yoshinari Mayumi asserts that television "fulfills a collective Japanese urge—to be all of a group together, watching TV." Indeed, Japan's "group" mentality has encouraged the medium's rapid growth. In 1959, six years after broadcasting began, networks advertised the marriage of Crown Prince Akihito with the slogan "Let's all watch the Prince's marriage on TV." Japanese bought four million sets that year. Similar sprees preceded the 1964 Tokyo Olympics and the 1970 International Exposition in Ōsaka.

During the 1970s, color TVs, cars, and "coolers" (air conditioners) made up the "three Cs"—a trinity of appliances, possession of which signified membership in the middle class. Today, 98 percent of all Japanese households have color sets, versus 89 percent in the United States.

Most Japanese TV sets stay tuned to one of the two channels operated by NHK, a nonprofit network created by the government 32 years ago. NHK subsists on a fee of about \$40 a year, paid on a voluntary basis by more than 30 million subscriber households. "Part national conscience, part full-time instructor," notes Frank Gibney in *Japan, the Fragile Superpower* (1975), NHK acts "as executor of what the French used to call a *mission civilisatrice* on every level of Japanese society."

On NHK's Channel One in Tokyo, viewers get a steady diet of news (38 percent of broadcast time), soap operas, sports, variety shows (23 percent), and "cultural" programs (16 percent) such as concerts, local folk festivals, and a recent 30-hour documentary on ancient Chinese caravan routes. Channel Three serves educational fare: high school science courses, music instruction, English, Russian, and Chinese lessons, and the finer points of *Go*, a Japanese game akin to checkers.

Even the NHK programs that fall in the "entertainment" category take pains to promote national values. One of the more successful Japanese soap operas was NHK's "Oshin," the

ragged-to-riches story of a waif who becomes a supermarket magnate. From 1983 to 1984, the series ran for a total of 297 episodes. Oshin's powers of endurance—tested by a separation from her parents in childhood, her husband's suicide, and other assorted tragedies—became legendary. Parents admonished their children to "be like Oshin," and in 1983, when former Prime Minister Tanaka Kakuei was convicted of accepting bribes, he signaled his resolve to remain in politics by saying "I am a male Oshin."

Japan's five commercial networks—TV Tokyo, Fuji Telecasting, the Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS), TV Asahi, and the Nippon



Scene from "Oshin"

Television Network (NTV)—are far less didactic. Their most popular offerings are homegrown variety specials hosted by comedians and musicians. Hagimoto Kin'ichi, Japan's *Owarai Tarento No. 1* (Laugh Talent No. 1), presides over five different shows a week. U.S. imports fill 15 to 20 percent of airtime, but programs such as "Dallas" and "Kojak" seem relatively tame. (Viewers were puzzled, for example, by a "Dallas" episode that included an attempted rape but no nudity—both often shown on Japanese TV.) Japanese prefer their own samurai dramas, soap operas, and detective stories, all liberally laced with sex and violence. They also enjoy a menu of sports programs, including "Megaton Supoutsu Today—Puro Yakyu Sokuho" ("Megaton Sports Today—Pro Baseball Report").

While critics have long inveighed against lurid commercial programming, the ever-rising level of sex and violence on the screen is beginning to prompt widespread viewer protests. Along with the novelty of TV ownership, the enthusiasm of the home audience is waning. Even the highly popular "White versus Red Singing Match," an annual New Year's Day variety extravaganza that stars Japan's best video talent, has seen its ratings decline. High as it is, overall viewership has been slipping since 1979. A 1983 NHK survey found that 42 percent of Japanese viewers considered much TV programming "monotonous."

Ironically, boredom has set in against a backdrop of rising technical quality. Among other innovations, increased cable and satellite hookups have improved and expanded reception. More importantly, NHK is on the verge of perfecting "high-definition" sets, which promise a picture five times sharper than that available anywhere in the world. If programming improves, the networks could enjoy a boom like that which swept the nation in 1960, when color TV made its Japanese debut.

counted for only 20 percent of new titles. To describe these movies, one is almost forced back to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart's remark on pornography—that while he might not be able to define it, he knew it when he saw it.

Idol movies feature young singer-stars, usually wrestling with loss of innocence and the quest for identity. These rites of passage, however, differ in Japan and the United States. American-made "teenpix" such as *Porky's* and *Risky Business* feature randy boys and girls who want nothing more than to test their sexual skills. Couples in the Japanese idol movies, like determined Peter Pans, strive to remain children for as long as possible. Even in a feature as raunchy as *Pantsu No Ana (Hole in the Pants)*, rife with sexual and scatological jokes, the hero and heroine never exchange so much as a chaste kiss.

Pumping Gas

For young Japanese, the loss of innocence does not entail exchanging the constraints of adolescence for the privileges of adulthood. As Ruth Benedict notes in her famed study *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (1946): "The arc of life in Japan is plotted in opposite fashion to that in the United States. . . . Maximum freedom and indulgence [are] allowed to babies and to the old. Restrictions are slowly increased . . . [until] having one's own way reaches a low just before and after marriage."

The familiar adolescent's question, Who am I? is answered less by declarations of independence than by a reaffirmation of social and family ties. Consequently, many idol movies involve a search for missing family members: Yamaguchi Momoe's for her father in *Uaito Rabu (White Love)*, Tahara Toshihiko's for his brother in *Uin Monogatari (Vienna Story)*, Harada Tomoyo's for her father in *Aijō Monogatari (Curtain Call)*.

That these young men and women seldom set out to find their mothers is a reflection of the typical Japanese family. Traditionally, the Japanese mother acts as a constant and close companion, often living vicariously through her children. The father remains a distant figure, devoted as much to his job as to his family. Indeed, a recent survey of salaried males disclosed that over 70 percent answered Yes to the question "Is work the most important thing in your life?"

A postwar trend toward social and economic equality, not to mention the traditional reluctance of individuals to stand out in a group-oriented society, has led to the portrayal of young characters who are the equals of—rather than the role models for—the predominantly middle-class viewers. Gone are the days of heroes



Merry Christmas, Mr. Lawrence (1983), a Japanese-English co-production about a POW camp in Java, was one of the few films popular both in Tokyo and abroad.

such as Nakamura Kinnosuke, a kabuki apprentice who appeared as a sword-wielding swashbuckler in a series of idol movies during the 1950s. Today's typical youth identifies instead with the roles played by Tahara, who works at a service station and dreams of becoming a big-league pitcher in *Sunika Burūsu* (*Sneaker Blues*) or is a student of music in *Uiin Monogatari*.

Idol movies are also less likely to set trends than to reflect them: A trendsetter, after all, stands apart from the group. Hence, a film such as *Munasawagi No Hōkago* (*Uneasiness after School*) presents not what will be chic but what already is chic: high school girls strolling down a currently fashionable street, visiting a currently fashionable department store. The amazing speed with which films in Japan are shot, edited, and distributed enables them to embody what is *au courant* when it is *au courant*. Last October, for example, a local studio announced that producers of its late December release would begin shooting in early November.

Comedies are often the only films that can rival the popularity of idol movies. In 1979, they were the most profitable products for three of the four major Tokyo studios. Comedies have also employed the talents of some of Japan's newest and bright-

est directors. Vincent Canby, the *New York Times* film critic, named *Kazoku Gēmu* (*Family Game*), by Morita Yoshimitsu, one of the 10 best films of 1984. A cold-blooded satire of the middle class, Morita's film is about parents who hire a private tutor to help their son pass his university entrance exams. The tutor browbeats and humiliates the entire family, a fate they stoically endure because their son's test scores have improved.

But while Morita and other directors have recently won critical plaudits, Yamada Yōji and his 16-year-old comedy series *Otoko Wa Tsurai Yo* (*It's Hard Being a Man*) still draw the largest crowds. Semiannual installments have regularly been Shōchiku studio's top money-earning films. All told, the 34 episodes make up one of the world's longest running film series.

Good-bye to Gangsters

The series's appeal does not lie in innovative plot lines. In each installment, an itinerant peddler and ne'er-do-well named Torajirō Kuruma, or "Tora-san," as he is known affectionately, returns from his travels to try the patience of his loving and long-suffering family, which forever wonders when he will marry and settle down. An incurable romantic, Tora-san invariably falls deeply in love with what the vernacular press has dubbed his "madonna"—a geisha, an old high school classmate, a boarder at his relatives' house. And, just as invariably, he loses her.

The reasons for Tora-san's eternal appeal are twofold: his plight, and the way of life that he represents. "Humor which allows one both to laugh and to weep," note Anderson and Richie, "is particularly admired by the Japanese." Like Charlie Chaplin—widely revered in Japan—Tora-san, in his trademark checkered suit, is both funny and sad. "He is eager to help others in trouble," observes director Yamada, "but he is simple, not very smart, hasty, and is constantly misunderstanding situations."

Those misunderstandings produce the word play for which the series is renowned. In installment number 24, *Torajirō Haru No Yume* (*Torajirō's Dream of Spring*), Tora-san's family has lent his room to a luckless American salesman named Michael (pronounced "Mai-ko-ru" in Japanese). When Tora-san returns unexpectedly, his flustered sister tries to dissuade him from taking a peek at the new lodger: "Well, uh, you see, we gave your room to, ah, Maiko . . ." "A *maiko* (apprentice geisha)!" interrupts a delighted Tora-san. "Well, why didn't you say so?" Off he goes on a tangential, rapid-fire disquisition on the imagined charms of the beautiful boarder, who, in actuality, stands behind him—lanky-limbed, big-nosed, and bald.

In addition to laughter, Tora-san provides a comforting reminder of bygone days. "His clothes, his language, his outlook on life," declares film critic Ian Buruma, "suggest the long-lost world of artisans and small merchants, large families, and tightly knit neighborhood communities where the policeman knows the beancurd-maker and values are fast and firm." Above all, Tora-san and his relatives embody a traditional Japanese sensitivity and gentleness. And like Tora-san's friendly fictional neighborhood—the Tokyo *Shitamachi* (Low City) near the Sumida River—such sensitivity is disappearing amid the pressures of modern urban Japanese life.

Popular as the current cinematic fads may be in 1985, they are subject to change. Fifteen years ago, *yakuza* (gangsters) were the rage. As film critic Satō Tadao points out, gangster heroes were "loved by the Japanese, who were mostly poor and believed that they were honest while the rich were liars." Today, a better-off nation no longer dotes on the exploits of gangsters. When executives and directors with no experience of World War II take the helm at Japan's movie studios, war films, too, may disappear.

Yet inevitably, a thematic continuity among these various genres will persist. In the United States, the cinematic "death" of the Wild West cowboy was matched by the "birth" of the outer space heroes of *Star Wars*—the fight for truth, justice, and the American Way simply moved to another arena. In Japan, the *tateyaku* protagonist—strong, noble, and not given to displays of emotion—began as a stock kabuki figure. Although he has changed somewhat during his dramatic evolution (first as a samurai, then as a *yakuza*), he still exists in the current crop of World War II features.

With its ever-changing translations of age-old themes and images, popular cinema gives us a certain access to the way people think and act in the societies where such films are made. It is especially valuable in understanding Japanese society. But basing any overarching conclusions on the limited sampling offered here would be unwise. War, "foreign location," "idol," and Tora-san movies tell us this much: Japan is becoming less isolated, more worldly, and it is adopting more Western fads, habits, and ideas. In the process, the Japanese are adjusting, rather than discarding, their own traditions and beliefs. East is not yet West, nor is it ever likely to be.



BACKGROUND BOOKS

JAPAN'S NEW POPULAR CULTURE

Despite the proliferation of Japanese television, video games, and video cassette recorders, most Western works on Japanese culture still sketch a society of dedicated aesthetes, variously arranging flowers, sipping green tea, plucking the three-stringed *samisen*. A few books indicate, however, that popular pastimes are more contemporary and less refined.

Kuwabara Takeo, a scholar of French literature, analyzes his country's cultural shifts during the last 150 years in *Japan and Western Civilization* (1983; Columbia, trans., 1984). Any study of Japan's "mass" society must take into account the appeal of *pachinko* (a form of pinball), golf driving ranges, and *karaoke* (empty-orchestra) bars, where patrons sing along to the latest pop tunes. "We can no longer pretend," Kuwabara asserts, "that Japan's ancient artistic traditions represent our contemporary culture."

Truly popular amusements began to emerge during the 17th century. The unification of Japan under the Tokugawa Shogunate (1603–1868) brought stability and nurtured the growth of an urban merchant class. These townsmen supported new varieties of "theater, painting, and prose fiction, all of which, while drawing heavily on Japan's aristocratic cultural tradition, evolved as distinctly popular, bourgeois forms of art." So writes H. Paul Varley, a Columbia University Japan scholar, in his survey of *Japanese Culture* (Praeger, 1973; Univ. of Hawaii, rev. ed., 1984, cloth & paper).

Sir George Bailey Sansom, one of the most respected Japanologists, supplies a more comprehensive

chronicle of these times in *Japan: A Short Cultural History* (Cresset, 1931; Stanford, rev. ed., 1952, cloth & paper). Among other theatrical entertainments, kabuki enjoyed a large audience. Sansom notes that "not only did the plots and languages of the plays affect contemporary behavior and speech, but the dress and conduct of the actors . . . dictated the fashions of the day."

Those interested in the modern form should turn to *Kabuki* (Kodansha, 1969), a lavishly illustrated volume by Gunji Masakatsu, one of the foremost authorities on the subject. Though television, radio, and cinema have thinned the ranks of kabuki viewers, roughly 1.5 million still attend performances every year.

Like kabuki, sumo wrestling had its professional origins during the Tokugawa era. Free-lance samurai, or *rōnin*, turned a rite at Shintō shrines into a commercial attraction by staging matches on street corners. The wrestlers now train in 30 different "stables" and compete in 11,000-seat indoor arenas. Patricia L. Cuyler traces the evolution of *Sumo* (Weatherhill, 1979) and argues that its unique combination of the sacred and profane—"the observance of ritual added to the spectacle of 300-pound giants slamming into each other—makes this indigenous wrestling form the national sport of Japan."

During the late 19th century, the Emperor Meiji opened his country to the West and declared: "It is our firm wish that you, our subjects, change your way of dress and your manners." His countrymen responded by taking their first lessons in the waltz and the quadrille (1884), exchanging

toasts at their first beer hall (1899), and drinking coffee at their first café (1911). Edward Seidensticker, a noted author and translator, relates these developments in **High City, Low City** (Knopf, 1983), a survey of life in Tokyo from 1868 to 1923.

Japanese Popular Culture (Tuttle, 1959; Greenwood, 1973) received its next dose of Westernization during the U.S. Occupation (1945–52). According to the Japanese authors of these 15 essays—edited by sociologist Katō Hidetoshi—the Americans influenced everything from “the desirable shape for a woman’s bosom” to nightclub names (Metro, Hollywood, and Chicago) and advertising slogans (“Kiss-proof lipstick—Now popular in America”).

The Japanese, however, retain only those foreign elements that suit their sensibilities. So argues George Fields, an advertising executive who sums up his Japanese experiences in **From Bonsai to Levi’s** (Macmillan, 1983). A case in point is the failure of instant cake mixes. General Mills based its marketing strategy on the fact that Japanese could use their rice cookers to bake cakes. But housewives balked because, as Fields observes, “the cake mix ran the danger of contaminating the rice”—the staff of life.

One import that the Japanese have adopted as their own is baseball. Yet, while the 12 Japanese major league teams may play the same game as their 24 U.S. counterparts, the way in which they play it is profoundly different. Few American teams would emulate the behavior of the Yakult Atoms (now the Yakult Swallows), who lined up on the first base line, removed their caps, and bowed to their fans to apologize for their

12th straight loss.

In **The Chrysanthemum and the Bat** (Avon, 1983, cloth & paper), a look at Japanese baseball, Robert Whiting notes that tense games can reveal a side of the Japanese not often seen. After one loss to the hated Yomiuri Giants, irate fans of the Hiroshima Carp pelted the Giants’ bus with rocks, cans, and beer bottles.

Although the Japanese still seldom give vent to such outbursts in public, the portrayal of violence in their books, magazines, and movies has steadily increased. Growing in popularity are macabre mysteries and detective stories. A sampling is in **Japanese Golden Dozen** (Tuttle, 1978), edited by Ellery Queen. Japanese commuters are especially fond of these tales, which annually sell more than 20 million copies.

This obsession with mayhem appears in a society known for its low crime, suicide, and divorce rates. Actor and film critic Ian Buruma ponders this paradox in **Behind the Mask** (Pantheon, 1984), which traces the Japanese imagination from the myths of creation to the present day.

More than anything else, Japanese popular diversions supply an escape, one no less governed by strict conventions than the tea ceremony or flower arranging. When Japanese company men go on their regular group binges, they regress into almost childlike behavior: Some are fed by hostesses wielding chopsticks; others dance around in their underwear. By the end of the evening, observes Buruma, “emotions have been vented, the play is finished, the hierarchy restored and nothing remains the next morning except . . . a headache.”

Ideas

JAMES MADISON AND THE CONSTITUTION

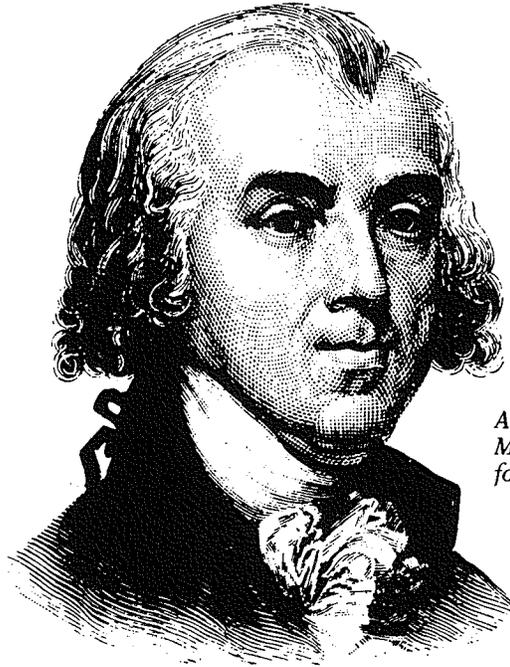
In 1987, Americans will celebrate the bicentennial of their nation's Constitution. Already, the American Historical Association and the American Political Science Association have launched Project '87, a joint scholarly effort to re-examine the work of the Founding Fathers and to encourage "public understanding and appraisal of this unique document." In the spirit of this enterprise, A. E. Dick Howard discusses the life and thought of one of the Constitution's leading architects.

by A. E. Dick Howard

He was not what today we would call a charismatic leader; for strength of personality, it is his wife, Dolley, who comes to mind. He was only five feet, six inches tall and in his early years was often in poor health. He lacked the majestic presence and martial prowess of George Washington. His prose, while copious and competent, had none of the bite of Thomas Paine's pamphlets or the elegance of Thomas Jefferson's letters. In an age when public speaking was a prized political asset, his voice was weak and faltering. He was, in sum, an unlikely candidate for the historic role he played.

Yet, it was James Madison, more than any other Founding Father, who shaped our constitutional system of government—in effect, institutionalizing the American Revolution.

Madison was well aware of his shortcomings. He believed himself to be physically and temperamentally unsuited for both the law and the ministry. But he possessed an alert and agile mind. He was a voracious reader. And, despite early infirmities, he was productive and energetic. As Madison matured, he drew about him a circle of powerful friends who recognized in him a quiet but keen sense of humor, a potential for icono-



An engraving of James Madison (1751–1836), the fourth U.S. President.

clasm, and an unshakable integrity.

“His diffidence,” wrote Edmund Randolph, a friend, “went hand in hand with his morals which repelled vice, however fashionable. In convention debate, his lips were never unsealed except to some member, who happened to sit near him; and he who had once partaken of the rich banquet of his remarks, did not fail to wish to sit daily within the reach of his conversation.”

We are in reach of his conversation still, for Madison’s words transcend the centuries. Much has changed in the United States since the times of the Founding Fathers, but Madison has much to tell us yet. And it may not be idle, from time to time, when faced with thorny issues of governance and equity, to wonder what Madison might have said and done.

James Madison was born to gentry at Port Conway, Virginia, on the Rappahannock River, on March 16, 1751. Shortly after his birth, the Madison family moved west from the Tidewater district to the Virginia Piedmont, at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. This trip to the family plantation, Montpelier, was only 50 miles or so, but in Madison’s day, life and politics in Virginia were heavily colored by differences in outlook

between the “eastern establishment” and the Commonwealth’s more boisterous western counties. Like Thomas Jefferson, who lived not far away and who would be a friend for 50 years, Madison grew up with that strange blend of rustic life and cultivated discourse that marked life among the well-to-do in the Piedmont. And like Jefferson, the young Madison enjoyed the leisure purchased by slavery—a leisure employed in the education of a Virginia gentleman.



In 1769, after years of private tutors and a stint at Donald Robertson’s celebrated Latin school, Madison took a distinctly unusual step for a Virginian. Influenced by one of his tutors, he enrolled in the College of New Jersey (now Princeton University) instead of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg. The decision to attend Princeton, where Edinburgh-educated John Witherspoon had lately been installed as president, was a momentous one.

Among other things, it brought Madison into contact with the ideas of the Scottish Enlightenment. The young scholar came to appreciate the notion—fundamental among such Enlightenment philosophers as Francis Hutcheson, Thomas Reid, and Adam Ferguson—that the study of history could yield generalizations about human nature, thereby furnishing guidelines for the governance of human affairs. At the same time, Madison became familiar with the writings of Locke, Montesquieu, Harrington, Grotius, and Hobbes. He devoted himself to an intense study of “The Law of Nature and of Nations.” With what he later remembered as the “minimum of sleep and the maximum of application,” Madison completed his baccalaureate studies in less than three years, but he stayed several months longer to study under Witherspoon.

He left Princeton in 1772 with a firm faith in empiricism and common sense. Years later, when the Constitution was up for ratification, Madison would ask Americans to judge the document on the basis not of “custom” or a “blind veneration of an-

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tiquity" but rather of "their own good sense, the knowledge of their own situation, and the lessons of their own experience." Experience, he held, was "the last best oracle of wisdom."

Madison returned to Montpelier to ponder his future. He was soon overtaken by a sudden, debilitating nervous disorder. The illness was complicated by persistent intimations of mortality, prompted in part by the sudden death of a college friend. "I am too dull and infirm now," he confided in one letter, "to look out for any extraordinary things in this world for I think my sensations for many months past have intimated to me not to expect a long or healthy life." But despondency soon gave way to a passionate interest in public affairs.

The first issue to engage Madison's attention involved religion—specifically, local Anglican persecutions of Baptists and other dissenters. Princeton had seethed with revolutionary fervor, and Madison was an ardent patriot. But it was intolerance by a corrupt, established church that truly got him angry. In letters to a friend, William Bradford, during 1773–74, Madison railed against "Knavery among the Priesthood" and asserted that "religious bondage shackles and debilitates the mind and unfits it for every noble enterprize." Religious liberty would be for Madison a lifelong crusade.



Correspondence on political questions eventually drew Madison into active politics. In his first contest for elective office, in 1774, he won a seat on Orange County's Committee of Safety—charged with enforcing the boycott of British goods decreed by the Continental Congress. Two years later, on the eve of revolution, Madison, aged 25, became the youngest member of the upstart Virginia Convention in Williamsburg—the de facto government of the Commonwealth, supplanting the House of Burgesses. In May of 1776, the Convention took a fateful step, instructing Virginia's delegates at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia to introduce a resolution calling for independence from Great Britain. Shortly afterwards, when the Virginia Convention was drawing up a state constitution, Madison drafted the clause guaranteeing "the full and free exercise of religion."

Madison suffered the only electoral defeat of his career a year later, in 1777, by refusing to ply his Orange County constituents with drink—an established election-day custom at the time. But his talents by then were plain to the legislators in Williamsburg. In 1780, Madison was sent to Philadelphia as a delegate to the Continental Congress. For the first time, he was

immersed in national rather than regional politics and would continue to be so for the next three years, until the Treaty of Paris formally ended hostilities.

Returning to Virginia in 1783, Madison found relaxation in intellectual pursuits. As if in training for the task that lay ahead, he made a special study of confederations, ancient and modern. He wrote to Jefferson, then in Paris, asking his friend to send him books, especially those throwing light on the "general constitution and droit public of the several confederacies which have existed"—leagues such as those of ancient Greece and contemporary Switzerland. With characteristic energy, Jefferson saw to it that a procession of books went across the Atlantic to Madison, some 200 volumes in all.

Madison's reading ranged from Plutarch and Polybius to Mably and Montesquieu. In these writings, he found repeated confirmation of what was becoming a favorite Madisonian thesis: A confederacy cannot hold together without a strong central government. One by one, Madison considered the strengths and weaknesses of confederacies down through the ages—the Lycian, the Amphictyonic, the Achaean, the Helvetic, the Belgic, the Germanic. On each of these he penned a monograph, always concluding with a section entitled "The Vices of the Constitution." Ultimately, Madison produced a 40-page manuscript, which he later cannibalized for *The Federalist* (1787–88).



Madison undoubtedly suspected that his scholarly preoccupations were not idle. The 1780s were an uncertain time for the young American nation. The Articles of Confederation had been adopted in 1781, linking the 13 states in a loose federated regime. The defects in the arrangement quickly became apparent. Under the Articles, Congress had neither the power to tax nor the power to regulate commerce. The Articles declared that "each state retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence," and the several states proved eager to take the document at its word, often at the expense of the national welfare. Economic rivalries were especially sharp, with each state pressing its own special interests—whether trade, agriculture, or manufacturing—and inclined to treat its neighbors as it would a foreign power.

The answer to these problems, Madison concluded, was to give Congress the power to regulate commerce. As he wrote to James Monroe, the states could no more exercise this power separately than "they could separately carry on war, or separately form treaties of alliance or Commerce." In the Virginia legisla-

ture, Madison introduced a resolution calling on the 13 states to meet and consider to what extent uniformity in their commercial regulations might advance their interests and their mutual comity. The resolution passed, and Virginia formally proposed a conclave in Annapolis in September 1786.

Only five states sent delegations. But the men of those five delegations, including Alexander Hamilton and Edmund Randolph, came to a radical conclusion: Merely overhauling the commercial provisions of the Articles was not enough; the Articles as a whole were fundamentally flawed. The men gathered at Annapolis resolved that each state should appoint commissioners to meet at Philadelphia "to devise such further provisions as shall appear to them necessary to render the constitution of the federal government adequate to the exigencies of the Union." In other words, they called for a constitutional convention.



No one who attended the great gathering at Philadelphia in 1787 was better prepared for the job of constitution-crafting than was Madison. In letters to Jefferson, to Randolph, and to Washington, Madison set out his thinking about the nation's constitutional needs. The larger states, he felt, must have fairer representation, and the national government needed enhanced authority—including authority to override state laws in conflict with national legislation. Madison summed up his position in a letter to Washington: "Conceiving that an individual independence of the States is utterly irreconcilable with their aggregate sovereignty; and that a consolidation of the whole into one simple republic would be as inexpedient as it is unattainable, I have sought for some middle ground, which may at once support a due supremacy of the national authority, and not exclude the local authorities whenever they can be subordinately useful."

Called ostensibly to draft amendments to the Articles of Confederation, the Philadelphia convention almost at once moved on to more ambitious business—the writing of a totally new constitution.

The advocates of wholesale reform boasted a major advantage: They had in hand a comprehensive constitutional blueprint, the so-called Virginia Plan, shaped largely by Madison. It was adopted as the working model. The Virginia Plan proposed a National Executive, a National Judiciary, and a National Legislature consisting of two houses apportioned according to population and empowered to legislate "in all cases to which the

separate States are incompetent."

The 36-year-old Madison was the dominating spirit of the convention. His winning ways, persuasive powers, and command of constitutional principles deeply impressed the other delegates. Georgia's William Pierce wrote, "Every person seems to acknowledge his greatness. He blends together the profound politician, with the Scholar."



Many of Madison's specific ideas failed to be adopted—for example, his proposed Council of Revision, drawn from both the judicial and executive branches, which could veto laws passed by Congress or state legislatures. But in its essentials, the Constitution eventually agreed upon was the one proposed by Madison. The three branches of government, the separation of powers, the powerful central government—all of these elements survived. As if this were not contribution enough, Madison also served as the convention's chief, though unofficial, rapporteur. Using a self-invented shorthand to speed his note-taking, Madison carefully transcribed the proceedings. As he reported later, "It happened, also, that I was not absent a single day, nor more than a casual fraction of an hour in any day, so that I could not have lost a single speech, except a very short one." His almost verbatim account of the convention was not published until 1840, four years after his death, because Madison scrupulously observed the vow of secrecy imposed on convention delegates.

As the country turned to the business of ratification, Madison was out in front once more. Together with Hamilton and John Jay, he penned a brilliant series of essays for New York newspapers in support of the new Constitution. Of the 85 essays, collected and published as *The Federalist*, Madison wrote 29.

The Federalist has few competitors as America's most important single contribution to political theory. In *Federalist* No. 10, Madison defines one key task of government, in terms that appear eerily prescient, as being to reconcile rivalries between competing economic groups. The "regulation of these various and interfering interests" suggests the modern notion of the "broker state." Madison was under no illusions about human nature. "But what is government itself," he asks in *Federalist* No. 51, "but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary."

Above all, Madison was a pragmatist. He treats government not as an abstraction but as an engineering problem. In *Federalist* No. 48, contemplating relations among the three branches of

the central government, Madison dwells on the importance of checks and balances. The experience under the Articles had taught him to be suspicious of mere "parchment barriers." Since a total separation of powers in the federal branch was obviously unworkable, the only way to avoid an undue concentration of power in any one branch was to have the several branches "so far connected and blended, as to give each a constitutional controul over the others."

So elegantly and thoroughly was Madison's defense of the proposed charter marshaled in *The Federalist* that the essays quickly became, and have remained, essential glosses on the Constitution.

After rancorous debate, the Constitution of the United States of America was finally ratified in 1788. Madison led its Federalist proponents in Virginia, ultimately defeating the forces of Antifederalists Patrick Henry and George Mason by a vote of 89 to 79 in that state's ratifying convention. Virginia's decision was of great significance. Given the state's pivotal position in the nation, in terms of wealth, population, and intellectual influence, a rejection of the charter by Virginia might well have prompted other states to follow suit.



The Constitution was ratified, but with implicit strings attached by the Antifederalists. Chief among them was the addition of a Bill of Rights—the first 10 amendments. Madison was uneasy about spelling out Americans' fundamental liberties. He was concerned, for one, that the list might prove incomplete. He feared that enumerating rights might imply the existence of a parallel set of powers never meant to be delegated to the central government.

Nevertheless, as he explained to Jefferson, a Bill of Rights could serve two powerful objectives. First, "the political truths declared in that solemn manner" would "acquire by degrees the character of fundamental maxims of free Government." Second, occasions might arise when the existence of a Bill of Rights could prove to be "a good ground for an appeal to the sense of community."

When the First Congress convened in New York in 1789, Madison, now a congressman from Virginia, led the battle for the Bill of Rights. In June, he brought the issue to the floor, moving for a Committee of the Whole to consider amendments proposed by eight of the state ratifying conventions. Facing considerable opposition, Madison brilliantly engineered pas-

sage of the Bill. He winnowed down the list of amendments, ignoring those that would have enhanced state power at the expense of the federal government. Out of the proposals that remained (essentially libertarian), he crafted a series of amendments remarkably similar to the 10 that were ultimately ratified. He patiently answered the objections of his colleagues and adroitly avoided efforts by opponents to delay the votes or weaken the proposals.



Madison squarely faced arguments that the Bill of Rights would amount to no more than a "scrap of paper." Once the Bill of Rights was incorporated into the Constitution, he submitted, "independent tribunals of justice will consider themselves in a peculiar manner the guardians of those rights; they [the courts] will be an impenetrable bulwark against every assumption of power in the Legislative or Executive." This prediction, that the judicial branch would assert the right of judicial review, was borne out in 1803, when Chief Justice John Marshall handed down the Supreme Court's decision in *Marbury v. Madison*.

With ratification of the Bill of Rights, James Madison brought an end to the most important work of his career. To be sure, he remained in public service for many decades, but those decades have the tenor of anticlimax. In his instructions for his tomb at Monticello, Jefferson wanted only three accomplishments recorded: the writing of the Declaration of Independence (1776), the authorship of the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom (1785), and the founding of the University of Virginia (1819). There is no mention of his holding high office. Madison, like Jefferson, served as Secretary of State and as President of the United States. And, like Jefferson's, Madison's legacy is somehow separate from all of that. It is not too much of an exaggeration to say that Madison would be as esteemed today if he had died in 1790 instead of almost half a century later.

In 1797, James Madison left public life, hoping to spend more time caring for his 4,000-acre Montpelier estate—and for his new bride, the former Dolley Payne Todd, a vivacious and charming woman whose beauty and wit made her a political asset as well as a beloved companion. But the election of 1800 brought Jefferson to the presidency and Madison into the cabinet. In his autobiography, Madison has the following—and only the following—to say about his service under Jefferson: "In 1801 he [Madison] was appointed Secretary of State and remained such until 1809."

In that year, Madison himself assumed the nation's highest office, spending two difficult terms (1809–17) in a presidency that is chiefly remembered for the War of 1812 and the burning of the White House by British troops. The War of 1812 was an inconclusive tragicomedy that soon lost popular support. But the United States emerged from the conflict with a fresh cadre of heroes (e.g., Oliver Perry, Andrew Jackson), a national anthem ("The Star-Spangled Banner"), and the confidence born of beating off the British in a second war of independence. With peace in 1815, moreover, came unprecedented prosperity. "Notwithstanding a thousand Faults and blunders," John Adams wrote to Jefferson in 1817, Madison's administration "has acquired more glory, and established more Union, than all his three Predecessors . . . put together"—one of whom, of course, was Adams.

Madison left office in 1817 and returned to Montpelier with Dolley. He spent the remainder of his life largely in private pursuits. Like Jefferson, an apostle of scientific agriculture, he urged fellow farmers to abandon practices that were exhausting the soil. He became absorbed by the issue of slavery—a problem that he and his fellow delegates at Philadelphia had failed to deal with in 1787—and accepted the presidency of the American Colonization Society, which encouraged the manumission of slaves and their return to Africa. He had hoped, by provisions in his will, to emancipate and repatriate his own slaves, but he fell deeply into debt. Madison's last public appearance was at the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829–30, a gathering that accomplished little of the long overdue constitutional reform that Jefferson and others had been urging for years. Confined to bed by rheumatism during his final years, James Madison died quietly at Montpelier on the morning of June 28, 1836.



A few months earlier, he had dictated a final public message, "Advice to My Country," to his wife. In it, Madison expressed his anxiety about rising tensions between the North and South. He called upon his countrymen to ensure that "the Union of the States be cherished and perpetuated." Ultimately, they would do so, at the cost of over half a million lives lost in a bloody Civil War.

One is tempted to ask, however: By Madison's lights, how has our stewardship been in other respects? If he were here today, what would he think of the way our constitutional system has evolved? Let us consider several Madisonian themes—federalism, faction, self-expression, and religious liberty.

As far as federalism is concerned, Madison would probably be apprehensive. Madison's career reflected a concern for both central authority and states' rights. The Supreme Court was conceived by him to be the arbiter—a "balance wheel" of the constitutional system. In fact, over the years, the Court has shown a persistent bias. It has been far more willing to protect federal interests against state encroachments than vice versa. Meanwhile, in recent decades particularly, the Congress has shown little restraint in enlarging its legislative domain, often ignoring the precepts of federalism. Even that great nationalist, John Marshall, believed that it was the duty of the nation's highest tribunal to oversee Congress in this regard. The Supreme Court no longer does.



On the subject of factions, Madison distrusted their potential, skeptical of the value even of political parties. He lamented in *Federalist* No. 10 that legislative measures "are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice, and the rights of the minor party; but by the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority." Regulation of conflicting interests must be the "principal task" of Congress.

On balance, Madison would probably find that the United States has made progress here. The courts have looked scrupulously for ways to protect ethnic and other insular minorities from the "over-bearing majority." Beginning with the Fourteenth Amendment, and quickening after World War II, Americans have come to enjoy an increasingly inclusive set of substantive civil rights. During the 1960s, "one-man, one-vote" rulings curbed the power of legislatures to protect and promote special interests: whites over blacks, the countryside over the cities. State tribunals have taken the lead in overturning laws that restrict access to trades and professions.

Obviously, there are still "vested interests," with allies in Congress and the federal bureaucracy. Political action committees wield undue influence. Madison would have been displeased by this, but not surprised. What *would* have surprised him is the forum in which "factionalism" is most frequently challenged—not the Congress, supposedly meant for that purpose, but the courts.

In the area of personal autonomy, the United States has traveled far beyond anything Madison could have imagined. Madison championed the freedom of conscience and expression. He declared, in 1784, that the "opinions of men, depending only

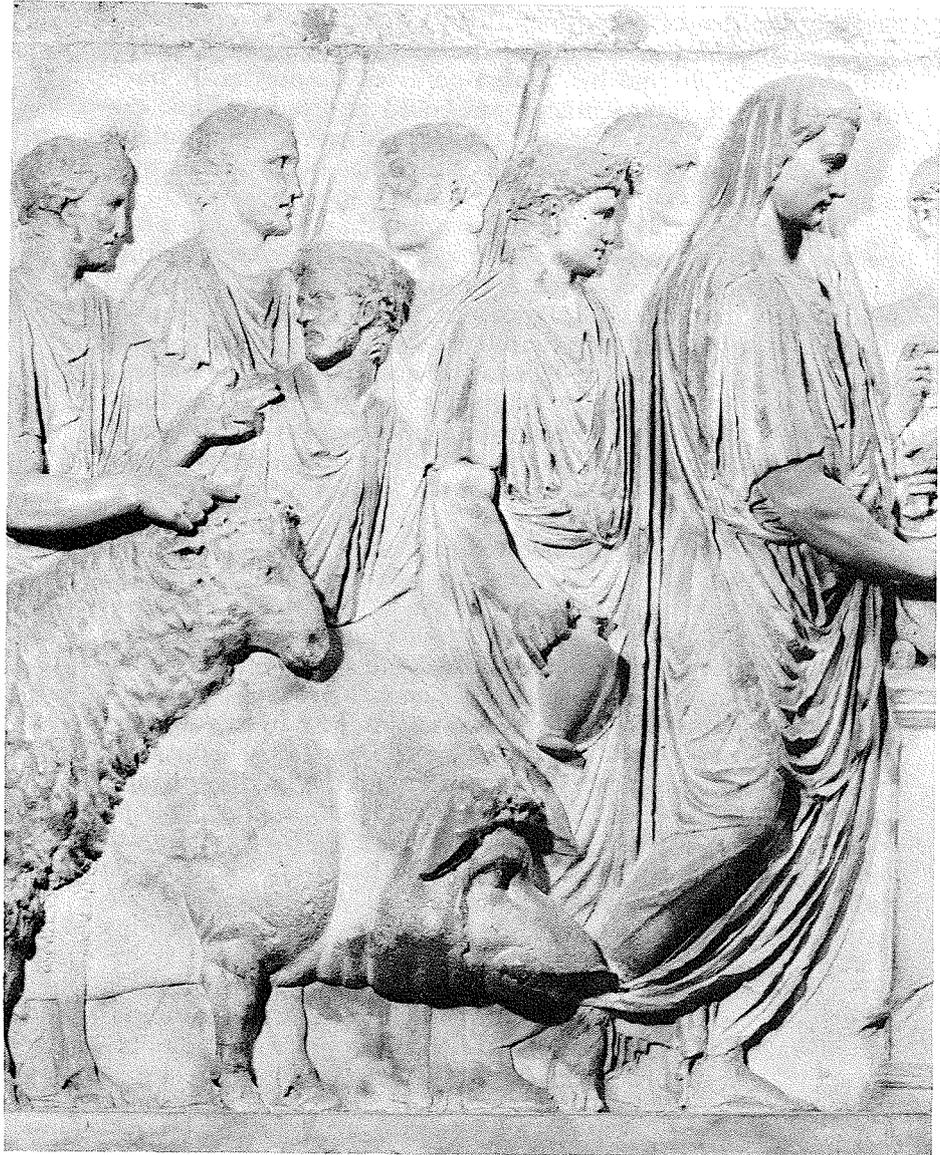
on the evidence contemplated by their own minds, cannot follow the dictates of other men." But Madison was concerned chiefly with *political* freedom—the freedom of speech, press, and assembly. He and his contemporaries would hardly have argued that the First Amendment could be used to limit the reach of obscenity laws, or that the right to privacy guaranteed access to contraceptives. Today's individual liberty cases owe more to John Stuart Mill than to Madison.

The First Amendment protects more than the right to free speech. It also ensures the free exercise of religion and prohibits the "establishment" of any state religion. Madison, of course, felt strongly about this. Religious persecution had first drawn him into politics. On more than one occasion, he fought in constitutional conventions or legislative bodies to guarantee religious freedom. In First Amendment cases, the Supreme Court has looked repeatedly to Madison for guidance on issues of religion. He would be satisfied to learn that, over the years, the Court has found ways to strengthen the "wall of separation" between church and state.

James Madison was hailed in his own lifetime as the Father of the Constitution. In typical fashion, he declined the honorific. The Constitution was not, he contended, "like the fabled Goddess of Wisdom, the offspring of a single brain" but instead "the work of many heads and many hands." And so it continues down to this day. Each generation of Americans, by means of amendment or interpretation, has left its mark on the nation's charter.

But as we try to sort out our own problems, as we apply our heads and hands to the fundamental law of the land, we would do well to recall the sensible mix of theory and practice, of hope and caution, of patience and good will, that Madison brought to his endeavors on behalf of the new republic. As a public man, he was remarkably selfless; receiving "credit" for his accomplishments mattered little to him. He backed compromise with his forceful pen, even when its terms were not wholly congenial, believing that once agreement was achieved, it was a civic duty to defend the "middle way." He embodied an unusual combination of qualities—qualities that seem more precious today because they are so rarely seen in public men.





The keeping of all sorts of statistics began when early civilizations learned to count their populations. The Romans, who for a time held a census every 5½ years on average, revered numbers. This marble frieze of about 100 B.C. shows a gathering for a post-count Ceremony of the Census, which included the sacrifice of animals to the gods.

Statistics

"Lies, damn lies, and statistics." During the 19th century, when that denunciation was first uttered (whether by Benjamin Disraeli or Mark Twain is still disputed), the industrializing nations were just beginning to become addicted to statistics—figures on population, the economy, and other matters of concern to the state. As scholars note, even accurate numbers can obfuscate as well as illuminate. "I still think that a familiarity with the best that has been thought and said by men of letters," critic Joseph Wood Krutch wrote in 1963, "is more helpful than all the sociologists' statistics." Yet, of necessity, the worldwide drive to quantify people, money, and almost everything else continues. To help policy-makers and others, the U.S. government alone spends \$1.4 billion a year collecting statistics, and it publishes 6,000 books of them annually. Here, William Alonso and Paul Starr discuss the role that "official" statistics now play in daily life. William Petersen looks at how the *politics* of numbers has affected the U.S. census.

A NATION OF NUMBERS WATCHERS

by William Alonso and Paul Starr

To read a newspaper in the United States (as in any advanced society) is to be bombarded by statistics. On any given day, the numerical fare may include figures on the cost of living and the unemployment rate, "lagging" and "leading" economic indicators, out-of-wedlock birthrates, reading scores, and life expectancies, not to mention data on crime, divorce, and oil reserves.

Most of these statistics are "official," in the sense that they are produced by the government. In some countries, of course, official statistics are routinely disbelieved. But where the statistical collecting and reporting agencies enjoy a reputation for professionalism, their findings are commonly presented—and

accepted—as neutral observations, like a weatherman's report on temperature and atmospheric pressure.

This view is too simple, of course.

Official statistics do not merely hold a mirror to reality. They are the product of social, political, and economic interests that are often in conflict with one another. They are shaped by presuppositions and theories about the nature of society. They are sensitive to methodological decisions made by complex bureaucracies with limited resources. Moreover, official numbers, especially those that appear in series (e.g., monthly inflation figures, quarterly bulletins on economic growth), do not reflect instantaneously all these shaping factors: They echo the past subtly, just as a landscape reflects its underlying geology.

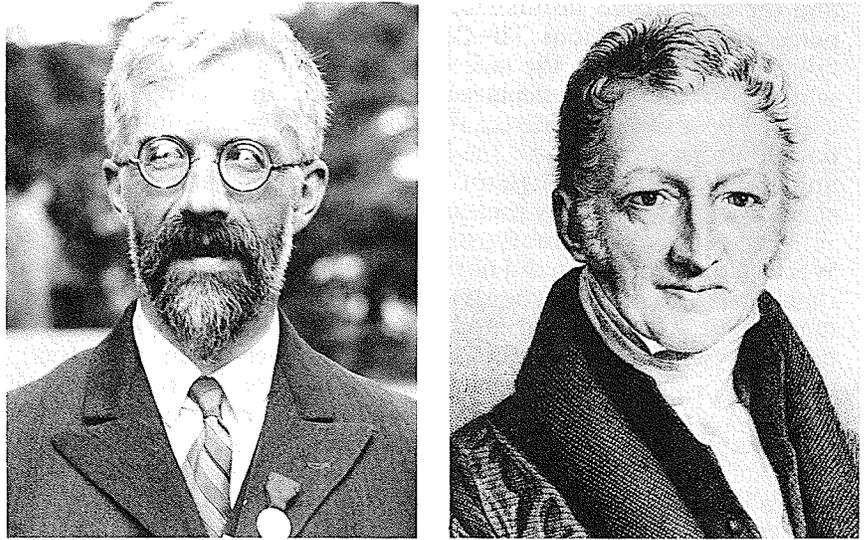
A Subtle Business

Official statistics have always been subject to competing influences, of course, but never before in America has so much *money* ridden on what the numbers say. In 1940, for example, only about nine percent of the federal budget was distributed as grants to states and localities. But by the early 1970s, that percentage had nearly doubled, and today such funds (totaling some \$100 billion) make up about one-fifth of state and local revenues. Where these billions get spent is largely determined by congressionally mandated formulas using statistics.

Numbers direct much more than just federal funding, as we all know. Standards for affirmative action in employment and school desegregation depend on official data on ethnic and racial composition. Several states now limit their budgets to a fixed share of projected state income, and a proposed "balanced-budget" amendment would do the same for the federal government—in effect, incorporating the fuzzy science of economic measurement and forecasting into the Constitution.

Official statistics directly affect the lives of millions of Americans. They determine the cost-of-living adjustments made to many wages and to Social Security payments, and they determine who is

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*Statistics' two faces: Methods developed by such theoreticians as Britain's Sir Ronald Fisher (1890–1962) helped science to flourish. What linked statistics to social policy was the work of men such as Sir Thomas Malthus. His 1798 *Essay on Population*, arguing that people could multiply beyond society's ability to feed them, led to Britain's first modern census.*

poor enough—or too rich—to qualify for food stamps and subsidized school lunches. They are used in regulating businesses, large and small, and they determine the rates at which hospitals are paid by Medicare. Higher rates, for example, apply to urban hospitals, but determining which areas count as urban and which as rural depends on statistical standards.

It is no wonder, then, that America has become a society of statistics watchers—from the congressman worried about redistricting by the state legislature under the “one-man, one-vote” court decisions of the 1960s, to the elderly couple on Social Security worried about rising costs; from the investment banker gauging changes in the money supply, to the farmer watching the figures on cost-price “parity” for his crops. Such numbers as the unemployment rate, the money supply, and various price indices have become thoroughly institutionalized: Even the hours of their release are etched on the Washington political and economic calendar, for they are certain to stir debate on the effects of government policy and to influence the financial markets.

But official statistics also affect society in subtler ways. By the categories employed, the questions asked (and not asked),

and the tabulations published, the statisticians change images, perceptions, aspirations. The Census Bureau's methods of classifying and measuring the size of population groups determine which citizens will be declared "Hispanics" or "Native Americans." These decisions direct the flow of various federally mandated "preferments," and they, in turn, spur various alliances and antagonisms throughout the population. Such numbers shape society while they measure it.

The absence of numbers may also be telling. For years after World War II, Lebanon did not hold an official census out of fear that a count of the torn country's Christians and Muslims might upset their fragile, negotiated sharing of power (which broke down anyway). Saudi Arabia's census has never been officially released, probably because of the Saudis' worry that publishing an exact count (showing their own population to be smaller than many suppose) could encourage enemies to invade or promote subversion. In Britain a few years ago, Scotland Yard created a furor when, for the first time, it broke down its statistics on crime according to race. Some Britons objected that mere publication of the data was inflammatory.

Statistics are lenses through which we form images of our society. During the early decades of the Republic, Americans saw the rapid growth in population and industry recorded by the Census Bureau as a confirmation, for all the world to see, of the success of the American experiment. Historian Frederick Jackson Turner announced his famous conclusion about the closing of the U.S. frontier on the basis of 1890 census data.

Today, our national self-perceptions are regularly confirmed or challenged by statistics on such fundamental matters as the condition of the nuclear family (allegedly still eroding), reading and literacy rates (ditto), the (slight) reversal of rural-to-urban migration, and our industrial productivity and military strength relative to other countries. Whether the meanings read into the data by politicians and pundits are reasonable or fanciful, the numbers provide a basis for popular and specialized discussion. Even when they misrepresent reality, they standardize our perceptions of it.

The process is thus recursive. Winston Churchill observed that first we shape our buildings, and then they shape us. The same may be said of statistics.

WHO'S WHAT: 1790-1980

by William Petersen

I

DEFINING 'AMERICANS'

Even two centuries ago, this was no easy task. Though largely of English stock, the people of the young country lacked the characteristics of a "nation." They had a varied ancestry and spoke different languages. Many had come to the New World to practice freely their own religions. In *Letters from an American Farmer* (1782), J. H. S. de Crèvecoeur, an immigrant to New York State from France, wryly observed that an American is "a European or the descendant of a European . . . whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons now have four wives of different nations."

Before long, even that sketch would understate the heterogeneity of the United States.

As America went on to absorb more immigrants from more places than any other country ever had, its demographics were constantly changing. By April 1, 1980, the date of the last decennial census, the population had increased by 56 times since Crèvecoeur's day, to over 226,500,000. Only 50 million were of English or part-English descent. "Minorities," a relatively new term in the social lexicon, were typically the fastest growing American groups. From 1970 to 1980, when the total population grew by only 11.4 percent, the lowest rate since the 1930s, the number of "Blacks" rose by 17 percent, to 26.5 million. "Hispanics" surged by 61 percent, to 14.6 million. There were also 3.5 million "Asian and Pacific Islanders."

The country's efforts to quantify its population go back to its origins. The early Americans, as the 19th-century historian George Bancroft put it, "seized as their particular inheritance the tradition of liberty." A novel concept: a nation unified by civil rights and personal freedom. The means of unification was the Constitution. In 1787, when the framers met in Philadelphia, the country that had been fashioned by the Articles of Confederation was near collapse, and Britain and Spain were ready to absorb the pieces. The delegates *had* to overcome their differences, and in effect, they did it by the numbers.

Under the Confederation, each of the 13 states had equal

power, but the delegates from the larger ones wanted to give equal representation to each citizen. The compromise was the bicameral Congress. In the Senate, where each state would be represented equally, the less populous ones would have a relative advantage; in the House, proportional representation would give this to the more populous states. Because the distribution of House seats would have to be adjusted to reflect population changes, the new Constitution's ARTICLE 1 called for a census every 10 years. Thus, the first link between America's politics and population counts was forged.

Numbers and Nationality

A second compromise in Philadelphia affected how the counting would be done. Though Northern delegates denounced slavery, they recognized that to demand its abolition would wreck the convention. Instead, they agreed that representation in the House would be based on the number of all free persons (except Indians "not taxed," or not living in the general population) plus three-fifths of "all other persons," meaning slaves. One hundred slaves would be equivalent to 60 free persons, black or white—a provision that actually augmented the slaveholding states' representation. Sanctioned by the Constitution itself, this arrangement would continue until the Emancipation.

In the first six censuses, from 1790 to 1840, the population was classified by age group, sex, and status as free or slave. In 1850 and 1860, however, Congress turned the census into a national inventory. In the latter year, data were gathered about health, mortality, literacy, pauperism, occupation, income, wealth, agriculture, manufactures, mining, fisheries, commerce, banking, insurance, transportation, schools, libraries, newspapers, crime, taxes, and religion. But there was no attempt to catalogue ethnic stocks. Because ethnicity had little place in the law, Congress saw no reason to include it in the census.

Scholars and politicians saw the population (apart from Indians and slaves) as unitary, or becoming so. While there was

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Population statistics had become very important in America when this caustic cartoon, "Spoiling the Broth," appeared in 1921. That year, Congress moved to lower immigration numbers using other numbers—quotas.



much 19th-century prejudice against Germans and (especially) Irish, and although some immigrant leaders strove to preserve native languages, the ideal was acculturation. Typically, Europe's minorities—say, Croats in Serbia or Basques in Spain—have tried to maintain their traditional ways. In America, most groups have tried to hasten their own assimilation.

This was especially true of the "new immigrants," who came in great numbers from the 1870s until the flow was interrupted by World War I. Their aspiration was symbolized by the 1908 play *The Melting Pot*, by Israel Zangwill, an English-born son of East European Jews. All European strains, he held, would blend into a nobler American compound; the play's hero, a Russian-Jewish immigrant, married the immigrant daughter of the tsarist official responsible for the pogrom in which his parents had died.

By the early 20th century, however, the country's scholars and politicians were debating whether the Old World's huddled masses should continue to be welcomed in large numbers. Francis Walker, director of the 1870 census and subsequently presi-

VIETNAM: WAR BY THE NUMBERS

Last December, discussing the Vietnam War, former Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara said that he had always had a "constant skepticism of all figures."

However, during his Pentagon tenure (1961–68) under John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson, the former Ford Motor Company president became a champion of statistics and "systems analysis" as key tools of cost-effective management, including management of the 500,000-man U.S. troop build-up in South Vietnam during 1965–67.

Indeed, lacking conventional gauges of progress (e.g., ground gained or lost) in Vietnam, both LBJ and McNamara pressed General William C. Westmoreland, the U.S. commander, and other subordinates for monthly statistical reports on everything from "enemy KIA [killed in action] per U.S. land operation" to "Vietcong-initiated incidents" to "U.S. battalion-days in the field." Aircraft sortie rates, tons of bombs dropped on North Vietnam, tons of "miracle rice" seed distributed to South Vietnamese farmers—all were grist for the Washington systems analysts. Most notorious became the high-level pressure on U.S. combat leaders for prompt tallies of enemy slain in battle—"body counts"—which were inevitably inflated, as in all wars.

By 1967, as General Earle G. Wheeler, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, wrote Westmoreland, "An insatiable thirst for hard numbers [has developed] here in Washington." One big reason was that LBJ, up for re-election in 1968 and facing mounting domestic criticism of his war policy, wanted "numbers" to show Congress and the public that the costly effort in Vietnam was beginning to pay off.

Hence, senior U.S. officials were highly sensitive to the political impact of estimates of enemy manpower, for example, since such numbers were routinely made public to indicate "progress." Their anxieties flavored the 1967 internal feud (then vaguely echoed in the press) over a fresh estimate by Washington-based Central Intelligence Agency analysts of upwards of 250,000 Communist part-time



McNamara, 1966

dent (1881–97) of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, expressed what became a widely held view. The immigrant, he had written in the 1890s, was once "the most enterprising, thrifty, alert, adventurous, and courageous of the community from which he came." But the latest newcomers—from eastern and southern Europe—were "the least thrifty and prosperous from every foul and stagnant pool of population in Europe, which no breath of intellectual or industrial life has stirred for ages."

irregulars, including women and children. The CIA people argued that leaving the part-timers out of a newly revised Order of Battle (an official intelligence listing of enemy units and their strength) would vastly understate Communist manpower in South Vietnam. Westmoreland and others in Saigon variously argued that (a) the irregulars, however troublesome, posed no offensive threat, (b) any firm tally of their numbers was impossible, (c) including them in the estimate of total enemy military manpower would be adding apples and oranges—highly misleading to the public. After a year's bitter debate, a bureaucratic compromise ensued. The irregulars were described (but not enumerated) in a footnote appended to the Order of Battle.

"This statistical controversy was simply an annoying irrelevancy," John L. Hart, the CIA chief in Saigon, later wrote; its outcome had no effect on the war's conduct.

But Westmoreland was depicted as leading a "conspiracy" to suppress vital truths in a 1982 CBS-TV documentary ("The Uncounted Enemy") rehashing the quarrel. Newspaper TV critics (at first) hailed the CBS show. The general, now retired, sued for libel, and the 17-year-old "statistical controversy" was replayed once again in a New York City courtroom last winter. After five months of conflicting testimony, both sides agreed to drop the matter last February; CBS and the general each claimed vindication.

Although the McNamarian thirst for numbers provoked much cynicism in Saigon, some data, taken with a grain of salt, proved valuable. A monthly Hamlet Evaluation Survey (HES), rashly exploited in 1967 for administration propaganda purposes, relied on questionnaires filled out by local U.S. advisers. It alerted senior U.S. officials in Saigon to security trends in each of South Vietnam's 240 districts and 44 provinces; coupled with other information, HES showed where the less obvious trouble spots were.

In the end, enlisting statistics to show "progress" was Lyndon Johnson's ill-fated substitute during 1965–67 for defining a coherent war strategy beyond that of simple perseverance. Despite their heavy casualties, the Communists' 1968 Tet Offensive shook political Washington. No Pentagon computer could measure the crucial intangibles of war, notably Hanoi's willingness to suffer enormous losses for years to achieve the "liberation" of South Vietnam.

In 1921, Congress passed a stopgap measure limiting European immigration to three percent of the number of foreign-born of each nationality in America at the time of the 1910 census. Under another temporary control imposed in 1924, the three percent was reduced to two percent, and the base population was changed to that of the 1890 census, when the proportions from southern and eastern Europe had been far smaller. The 1924 act also included a provision to set permanent quotas

based on the national origins of the total population, rather than those of just the foreign-born.

Assisted by two specialists paid by the American Council of Learned Societies, Census Bureau personnel undertook the task of calculating the number of U.S. inhabitants "whose origin by birth or ancestry is attributable to [each] geographical area" designated in the immigration statistics as a separate country. In fact, the many marriages across ethnic lines made it impossible to divide up the population by national origins. Instead, the analysts proposed to measure the contribution various national stocks had made to the total gene pool of white Americans.

Enter 'Cultural Pluralism'

To do this, they started from the schedules of the 1790 census, using family names to estimate the nation's ethnic composition. As the committee itself pointed out, there was great "uncertainty" in this procedure, since many names are common to two or more nationalities, and many immigrants from Continental Europe had changed their names to English equivalents. Nonetheless, the committee forged ahead and added to their 1790 base subsequent immigration figures, though these too were grossly imprecise. Immigrants from the old multi-ethnic empires that were broken up after World War I (such as Austria-Hungary) were classified on the basis not of their countries of birth, which were no longer considered relevant, but of their names. A "Pole" might have come from Poland, Germany, Czechoslovakia, or the Soviet Union.

Though no one in Congress believed that the committee had succeeded in accurately portraying America's ethnic composition, its work established the immigration pattern from 1929 until the law was changed in 1965. During this period, quotas set the European influx at about 150,000 a year, of whom more than 85 percent were to come from the British Isles, Scandinavia, Germany, the Low Countries, France, and Switzerland.

In a different way, official concern about assimilation also extended to blacks. From 1840 to 1910, censuses counted blacks and mulattos separately; the 1890 enumeration used four subcategories: "blacks," "mulattos," "quadroons," and "octaroons." More than a generation's research about U.S. blacks was summarized by the Swedish economist and sociologist Gunnar Myrdal in his 1944 book, *An American Dilemma*, in which he argued that all but the most superficial differences between the races would disappear as white attitudes changed and the education and social conditions of blacks improved.



Statistics serving health: Three years before this 1954 photo showing Salt Lake City children lining up for polio shots, gamma globulin (a blood-borne antibody) was tested on a national population "sample." The numbers proved that a poliomyelitis vaccine would be effective.

Prejudice and discrimination did decline, especially after World War II, and in much of polite society there was strong pressure to blur all remaining group differences. During the late 1940s, for an American academic even to suggest a factor in elections such as "the Jewish vote" or "the Negro vote" would have put him beyond the pale. Ideally, Americans were expected to act as individuals in a population that with respect to public institutions was ethnically undifferentiated. As late as 1960, the American Civil Liberties Union tried, unsuccessfully, to have race questions deleted from the census.

Gradually, the goal of total assimilation changed. Following a pattern described in 1938 by Harvard historian Marcus Lee Hansen, third-generation Americans often revived old-country customs that their immigrant grandparents and second-generation parents had put behind them. As Hansen said, "What the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember."

The Melting Pot began to give way to "cultural pluralism." Social philosopher Horace M. Kallen, a founder of the New School for Social Research, had coined the term in 1924 to designate an antiassimilationist view he had been advocating since

1915. A democratic society, he argued, does not require a complete melting down of all ethnic groups. Alien attributes that had to be forsaken (especially loyalty to a foreign state) should be distinguished from those that could be retained in a pluralist society (such as language and religion).

The list of acceptable alien characteristics, however, eventually came to include even political ties to the old country. In *The Future of American Politics* (1956), political journalist Samuel Lubell held that both the "interventionists," who supported the Allies early in World War II, and the "isolationists," who wanted to stay out of Europe's troubles, were expressing vestigial loyalties to the countries of their ancestors. Because it was politically impossible to support Germany directly, descendants of German immigrants in the Middle West became isolationists; New England Yankees, on the other hand, voted to aid Britain when her need was dire, though they were far removed from their English antecedents. Though dubious, Lubell's thesis did much to establish a presumed link between ethnic blocs and votes on public policy as a routine focus of journalists' and academics' analyses. And those writings, in turn, eventually legitimized that link.

A New Political Purpose

The weaving of ethnic and racial strands into federal politics and law was accelerated by the resuscitated New Deal coalition that President Lyndon B. Johnson mobilized during the 1960s in order to put his Great Society into law. Federally mandated preferments in education and jobs soon became quotas, with or without that designation. Washington specified "goals" and "timetables" with respect to specified categories—blacks, Hispanics, American Indians, and women. The search for "roots" would hardly have become so prominent in popular culture without such regulations, which distributed material advantages to organized ethnic blocs.

The concept of equality was also revised. The moral equality proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence (but compromised by slavery) was given legal force in the constitutional amendments adopted after the Civil War. They abolished slavery, gave all citizens equal protection under the law, and safeguarded the right to vote from racial discrimination. Subsequent court decisions had the effect of blocking the establishment of a colorblind society. But beginning during the 1950s, Congress sought again to bar all race-based discrimination. When Senate opponents voiced fears that the 1964 Civil Rights Act's ban on job bias might lead to racial preferences,

Hubert H. Humphrey (D.-Minn.) said that if “any language” could be found in Title VII supporting quotas, he would “start eating [the bill’s] pages one after another.”

How could one know when equal opportunity had been achieved? By the numbers, said the judges and the Washington officials. Consider how statistical parity was sought in academic hiring and promotions. Colleges with federal contracts were required to measure the size and composition of the “available” pool of potential candidates, classified by race, ethnic group, and sex, for each job, from maintenance hands to professors—not really a feasible task. Administrators then had to compare the proportion of each minority group in each job category with that of those groups in the pool and hire more from the designated minorities in any categories where representation fell short. Recruiting a specialist in Old Norse or astrophysics who was also a minority or a woman was (to use a term common in



“Averaging” at work: In 1705, noting that the comet now named for him appears about every 76 years, the English astronomer and mathematician Edmond Halley (1656–1742) figured, correctly, that it would next approach the Earth and become visible in 1758. It is due again next year.

writings on education) a challenge.

School busing (to adjust the numbers of white and black pupils) and job quotas (to ensure the efficacy of affirmative action) spread. Once again, the colorblind norms that Congress intended to promote were turned upside down. Eventually, in many cases, nothing mattered so much about a person seeking access to jobs or education as race, ethnic origin, and sex. In the apt phrase of Antony Flew, philosophy professor at the University of Reading, England, the "contradictions of enforced equality" led to "a politics of Procrustes."

Organizing with one's racial or ethnic brethren became increasingly important. Class-action suits, common after the early 1960s, helped to establish a new status for groups. Laws written to remove barriers to individuals' advancement were interpreted in ways that redefined society, giving some groupings a legal identity they never had had before. Population numbers acquired new salience.

The political purpose of censuses and other numerical soundings was no longer to enable the native stock to check on whether immigrants were being assimilated on schedule. It was to aid spokesmen for certain minorities in making claims for preferences and benefits proportionate to the groups' numbers.

II

THE GROUPING OF AMERICA

The statistical bureaus of many countries have struggled with the problem of ethnic classification, and their answers have often been arbitrary, to put it no stronger.

Census manuals in Mexico, for instance, define an Indian as someone who speaks an Indian language and wears the sandals called huaraches. But after the same person learns to speak Spanish and to wear shoes, he would be designated a "mestizo," a person of mixed European and Indian ancestry.

Ethnic data have sometimes been manipulated to increase the apparent size of the dominant group. In the pre-1914 censuses of Germany, the Polish dialects Kashubian and Masurian were distinguished from Polish, but those reporting German dialects no less different from High German were incorporated into the "German" population. In Austria-Hungary, even Yiddish speakers were used to increase the "German" part of the population.

The arbitrariness of ethnic counts begins with the government's choice of the population to be tabulated. Generally, the U.S. Census Bureau has *subclassified* only ethnic groups long established in America. Those of British origin get their ancestry further defined as English, Scottish, Welsh, or Irish. But no distinctions have ever been made between those Japanese Americans whose families originated in the main Japanese islands and those from Okinawa, or between Chinese Americans with Cantonese roots and those who derived from Hong Kong, or via Hong Kong from northern China. Yet for the people concerned and for anyone trying to understand them, these latter differences are crucial.

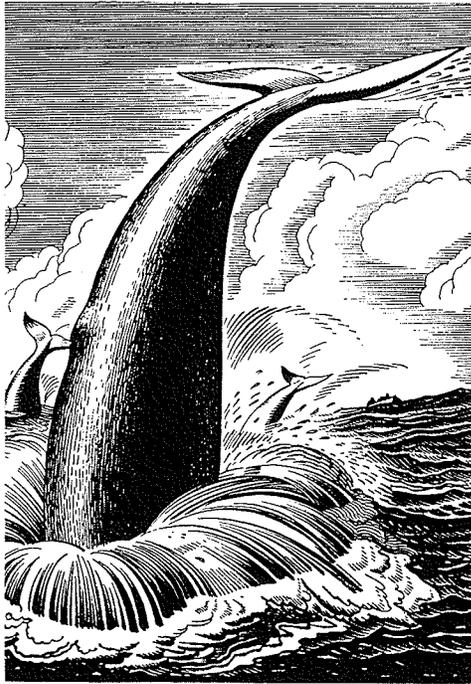
Why Counting Is Difficult

How Americans are tabulated has also often been arbitrary. An Italian who stepped off a boat at Ellis Island before World War I might have seen himself as a Sicilian or a Calabrian. Often it was only after they arrived that immigrants learned to identify with "their" nation. Officials had to make questions simple—What was your country of birth?—and this blurring of details often fostered assimilation. However, having discovered that they belonged to a nation, some developed a retrospective patriotism. The first Lithuanian newspaper was published in America; the Czechoslovak nation was launched at a meeting in Pittsburgh. The very name of Pakistan was coined by Muslim Indian students in London.

American data on the country of birth were rather useless in classifying immigrants from pre-1914 Germany, Austria-Hungary, or Russia. For example, between 1898 and 1904, when for the first time immigrants were classified by stock independent of their country of origin, the new arrivals listed as "German" included not only 151,118 from the German Empire but also 289,438 from such other countries as Austria-Hungary, Russia, and Switzerland.

Nothing better illustrates the traps in ethnic and racial classification than the Census Bureau's struggle to count the "Mexican Americans" of the Southwest. Until 1920, they were delineated in the same way as European nationalities, then so designated only for the first two generations. However, that seemed inappropriate, for Mexican Americans were apparently remaining a distinctive group, more like blacks than like Europeans. In 1930, therefore, the Census Bureau included them under the rubric "Other races," or nonwhites.

Though many Mexican Americans proudly designated



How are animal numbers figured? By statistical analysis. For elusive creatures such as whales, cetologists reckon population size and growth (or decline) on the basis of a species's "life history" that they create from birthrates and other data. Thus, the National Marine Fisheries Service puts the 1983 sperm whale total at 732,000—while conceding that an actual count, were one possible, might differ by 200 percent.

themselves "La Raza" (The Race), they resented the redefinition, and both the Mexican government and the U.S. Department of State protested. Whether or not the new classification was racist, as they charged, it proved to be flagrantly inadequate for a census enumeration. There was a huge undercount of native-born persons of Mexican descent, particularly among those of lighter complexion or in the middle class. In New Mexico, about half the population—some 200,000 people—spoke Spanish, but the census found only 61,960 "Mexicans" in the state.

In the 1940 census, officials tried language as an index. A sample of the population was asked to give its mother tongue, the language spoken as a child. The results contradicted the then usual assumption that foreign languages generally disappear by the third generation. Nearly 19 percent of whites reported a mother tongue other than English (most frequently German, Italian, Polish, Spanish, Yiddish, or French), and almost half were of the second or third generation. But of those who had at least one Mexican-born parent, only about seven percent named Spanish as their mother tongue. The Mexican-American population was not the anom-

alous group it had been thought to be.

In 1950, 1960, and 1970, the census used Spanish *surnames* to identify not just Mexican Americans but all "Hispanics," an umbrella grouping that first appeared in the 1950 count. A list of some 7,000 Spanish names supplied by the Immigration and Naturalization Service was supplemented with about 1,000 names provided by specialists in Romance languages. But this measure was no more successful than earlier indices.

When the roster of names was augmented by others from such subcultural regions of Spain as Galicia, Catalonia, and the Basque country, the number of Americans who in 1970 could be classified as of Iberian origin rose by 21 percent. Moreover, because the name of the head of the household was used to indicate ethnic origin, Hispanic women who had married non-Hispanics disappeared statistically (and non-Hispanic women who had married Hispanics gained a new ancestry).

The Categorical Imperative

Other Hispanics disappeared for other reasons. Martín, the 10th most common name in Spain, was left off the list because it frequently appears also among people of English, French, and German origin. Also omitted from the count were Hispanics with Anglicized names, as well as many from Chile, Argentina, and other places where non-Spanish names are common. Filipinos with Spanish names were classed as Asians.

A check of the 1970 count showed that, outside the Southwest, only 46 percent of those with a Spanish name described themselves as of Spanish origin, and only 61 percent of those who claimed Spanish origin had a Spanish name.

The lack of a suitable index for Mexican Americans suggested that they were not a homogeneous grouping, and this was certainly the case. Descendants of those living in territories annexed in 1848, after the Mexican-American War, demand that they be called "Hispanos" and insist that they are *not* Mexican Americans. The Mexican Americans, for their part, can be divided into three quite distinct subgroups, as noted by Fernando Peñalosa, a sociologist at California State University, Long Beach. Those who regard their ethnic heritage as of little importance, he observed in 1970, are likely to call themselves "Americans of Mexican ancestry." "Mexican Americans" are conscious of their ancestry but often ambivalent about it. Militant spokesmen for what they deem to be Mexican-American values insist on the term "Chicano."

As with other minorities, U.S. officials tended to see the mil-

BALLPARK FIGURES: CREATING THE PERFECT STAT

During the 1984 season, the Pittsburgh Pirates' pitching staff held opposing teams to only 3.11 earned runs per game, producing the lowest earned run average (ERA) in the major leagues that season. The 1984 San Diego Chargers dominated the National Football League in offense, with a rushing and passing total of 6,297 yards. But the Chargers did not make the play-offs. And the Pirates were *last* in their division.

So much for statistics? Hardly. Despite, or because of, the fact that the "stats" so ubiquitous in sports are so eminently debatable as measures of performance, demand for them is booming. Not only do the 1984 Super Bowl champion San Francisco 49ers have a "chief statistician," S. Dan Brodie; he has parlayed his trade into a business that prospers by helping 17 other professional football teams keep themselves, their fans, and the voracious sporting press supplied with numbers on how teams and players do at home versus on the road, on artificial turf versus on natural turf, and so on. A best seller last year was the fact-packed *Bill James Baseball Abstract*, by a Kansas zealot whose idea of fun is to determine, for example, that an American League pitcher now hurling 200 innings a season has only a 23 percent chance of playing that much five years hence. The Society for American Baseball Research (SABR) has 5,000 members, many of whom earn a living by poring over old records to publish papers on such subjects as "The Probability of Batting .400."

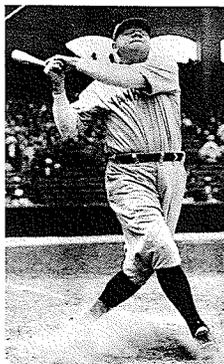
Especially in baseball, where batting averages have been calculated since the 1870s and "official" status was awarded to the runs-batted-in (RBI) average in 1920, the quest for new, improved measures of performance is unending. Among other proposed indices have been the on-base average, runs created, batter's-run average, total average, and isolated power (extra-base hits divided by

itants as representative of the whole subnation. During the 1960s, when courts in the Southwest decided that rights guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment and various federal statutes applied to this ethnic group, it was labeled "Chicano." By 1980, "Chicano" had won a place on census forms as an alternative to "Mexican American." Seldom has a symbol of militancy been co-opted so rapidly.

In its effort to identify Mexican Americans, the Census Bureau inadvertently hit upon the larger category of "Hispanics" for all persons of Spanish origin or Spanish heritage. This statistical construct has hardly any relation to the real world. Racially, the 14.6 million Hispanics counted in 1980 were highly varied: whites, blacks and others. The subgroups to which they assigned themselves on the census form differed greatly in me-

at-bats). Two "sabermetricians," as SABR statisticians call themselves—baseball historian John Thorn and American League statistician Pete Palmer—are championing Linear Weights.

As they explain in *The Hidden Game of Baseball* (1984), Linear Weights is a rating system that takes into account every event in which a player is involved. First, his record in offensive events (e.g., base hits, stolen bases, outs) is worked through a formula* that determines the total number of runs he has contributed above what the statistically average player would have scored. The runs value is then applied in another formula that deals with defensive and base-running skills. The result is the ultimate statistic: "overall player wins," the number of team wins a person has produced over and above the average performer.



Babe Ruth

George Herman ("Babe") Ruth (1895–1948), the best player ever by many other statistical measures, is also tops in Linear Weights. His overall wins total: 116.9.

While such computations may not be what draws the typical baseball fan to the park, Thorn and Palmer argue that numbers, in fact, lie at the heart of the national pastime. The game "may be loved without statistics," they say, "but it cannot be understood without them. Statistics are what make baseball a sport rather than a spectacle, what make its past worthy of our interest as well as its present."

*Runs = (.46)1B + (.80)2B + (1.02)3B + (1.40)HR + (.33)(BB + HB) + (.30)SB - (.60)CS - (.25)(AB - H) - .50(OOB)

dian age, educational level, occupation, and almost every other social indicator. Their 1980 numbers and median family incomes:

Mexican American	8,740,000	\$13,823
Puerto Rican	2,014,000	10,175
Cuban	803,000	16,043
Other Spanish	3,051,000	14,560

Cubans, many of whom are relatively prosperous exiles, seem to resent being lumped with other Hispanics. From the other side, in 1980 Manuel Bustelo, head of the National Puerto Rican Forum, protested that the term "Hispanic" "has served to

convey a more positive picture of overall advancement, while concealing the fact that Puerto Rican communities on the mainland are worse off than in previous years."

Like the Hispanics themselves, businessmen are wary of the catchall label. Several years ago, when Anheuser-Busch, maker of Budweiser beer, pitched its "This Bud's for you" campaign at Spanish-origin consumers, it took care to record its jingle in four styles: a hot *salsa* for the Puerto Ricans in New York, a *charanga* style for the Cubans in Florida, and two *mariachi* arrangements, one for the Mexican Americans of Texas (who had come mostly from border regions) and the other for those of other Southwestern states (whose roots were more apt to be in the Mexico City area).

From the point of view of the Census Bureau, the term "Hispanics," like "Negroes and Other Races," is convenient for tabulation. It also pleases those Hispanic politicians who hope to enhance their power as representatives of a larger sector of the population. And to the average "Anglo," the grouping provides an appealingly simple view of a complex ethnic subpopulation. All who speak no matter what variant of Spanish, or whose forebears came from whatever Spanish-speaking land, can be lumped together despite their differences—differences that are, however, significant to the minorities involved as well as to anyone who truly wants to understand them.

III

HOW PEOPLE SEE THEMSELVES

People can be assigned to a race or nationality or any other type of grouping on the basis of either (a) some specific attribute, as judged by an observer or (b) self-identification. In 1960, when the Census Bureau began to substitute mailed questionnaires for enumeration by interviews, it also began to depend on self-identification, a reliance that is now complete.

Although the distinction between the two methods of delineating minorities is of crucial importance, it is often overlooked, and the resulting confusion has been compounded by the lack of appropriate terms. "Ethnic" is an adjective. Used as a noun (as in "white ethnics"), it is still journalese or slang. In the absence of a satisfactory term, makeshifts such as "minority" and "ethnic group" have been used to designate subnations of a population.

A distinction exists between a "group," which, properly de-

defined, has some degree of cohesion, and a “subpopulation,” “category,” “grouping,” “aggregate,” “bracket,” or “sector”—all terms denoting only some shared attribute, usually one that has been emphasized by officialdom. Only when members of a category acquire self-conscious unity do they become a group.

Usually, a transition from category to group is pioneered by a small band of intellectuals or civic leaders. They may propagandize for generations before being accepted by those they have appointed themselves to represent. Ethnic spokesmen have acquired influence through wealth (e.g., German Jews during the late 19th century), professional standing (black clergymen), and general political power (the Irish in Eastern cities). Only occasionally have leaders emerged through elections in an organization that most members accept as representative (e.g., the Japanese American Citizens League during its heyday, roughly from the 1940s to the 1960s).

Self-proclaimed conductors always insist that the whole orchestra is following their beat, even when the cacophony of divergent sections is clearly audible. Yet, it is mainly from what the conductors say that the public—and Washington politi-



Gross national product (GNP), a country's total output of goods and services, is a widely used statistic; the World Bank, for instance, employs it in determining eligibility for loans. Brazil, despite the First World look of cities such as São Paulo (left), has a GNP per capita low enough (\$1,890) to rank as a loan-worthy “developing” nation.

cians—decide whether a category has become a group, what its aspirations are, and how seriously its demands should be taken. During the 1960s, for example, the mass media and most social scientists paid more attention to such minuscule but dramatic phenomena as the Black Panthers than to the thousands of black churches. But most of the people for whom both the churches and the radicals allegedly spoke backed the churches' social program—not separatism, for instance, but a fair treatment of blacks within the American system.

Occasionally, the Census Bureau has helped to quicken the development of group support by granting the self-appointed leaders more recognition than their supposed constituents have given them. During the 1970s, the bureau set up committees to voice the concerns of blacks, Hispanics, and Asian and Pacific Americans. Most members of the panels were activists interested in manipulating the census so that it would validate their views. Thus, many recommendations of the Advisory Committee on the Spanish-Origin Population for the Census of 1980 would have raised the Hispanic total. The committee urged (successfully) that the census question on *ethnicity* appear on the 1980 questionnaire before that on *race*; if asked about race first, some Mexican Americans might have designated themselves as "Indian," and some Puerto Ricans might have checked "Black."

Changing Labels

Self-identification, seemingly a reliable indicator of group membership, can take odd turns. As a group's self-consciousness develops and its members become more aware of the implications of their stated identity, they may revise their own labels. Decades ago, several small groups of people in the South who had black, Indian, and white forebears protested their classification as "Negroes." They became "Indians." In Hawaii, the terms "Portuguese" and "Spanish" were long used to denote people of mixed race and low status. As they moved into the middle class, they persuaded local officials to reclassify them. In 1940, they became "Caucasians."

Black Americans have changed their labels several times. For decades after the Civil War, the polite group name was "colored," which avoided connotations of blackness and African origin, both regarded as demeaning. During the 1940s, "colored" began to be supplanted by "negro" (Spanish for black), then "Negro." The civil-rights movement of the 1960s brought new terms. While Roy Wilkins, executive director (1965–77) of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

(NAACP), held to "Negro," younger or more radical spokesmen insisted on being "blacks" (or "Blacks"), which had been taboo. Others adopted another once-shunned label, "Afro-Americans."

If a person calls himself a Negro and refuses to be identified as a black or Afro-American (or vice versa), what is a statistical agency to do that is trying to count everyone in the category? The Census Bureau's answer in 1980 was to allow people to check off "Black or Negro." But all the subgroups involved probably represent different social characteristics and political attitudes.

IV

THE CASE OF INDIANS

No other minority included in U.S. censuses has been counted as erratically as American Indians.

Federal policy on Indians has gone through many changes, from their removal to reservations during the mid-19th century, to a renewed effort (1950-70) to integrate them into society, to the present compromise between the two. Policy has partly determined how many Indians there are.

Their number in 1800 has been estimated at 600,000. Largely because of disease, the total fell during the 19th century. By 1890, when all Indians were included in the census for the first time, just 248,253 were counted. So steep was the decline that a new ritual spread among the Plains Indians, a Ghost Dance that would bring dead tribesmen back to life.

The 1900 count was a mere 237,196. But then, in 1910, the total rose to 276,927. The reason: A special effort was made to include all who could be regarded as Indian. It was believed that a thorough census would never again be possible because tribal life was disappearing and Indian stock was thinning. Indeed, only 56.5 percent of those counted in 1910 were said to be full bloods.

Over the following years, the indicated population has fluctuated sharply. According to a review of the 1950 tally, the enumeration of approximately 345,000 Indians unaccountably omitted about 75,000 who would normally report themselves as such on public documents. Of these, about 30,000 mixed bloods were counted as whites. Also by-passed were 25,000 who did not customarily report themselves as Indians but were entitled to benefits as members of federally recognized tribes.

The woefully inaccurate record continued. According to the



*The "statistization" of sex began when Alfred C. Kinsey published *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* in 1948 and a companion study of women in 1953. For a nation enamored of numbers, as arresting as Kinsey's findings (e.g., that males' sexual capability peaks at about age 17) was the fact that he got so many people to talk about their sex lives: 18,500.*

1970 census, the Indian population grew from 1960 by 38 percent, to 793,000. That was 67,000 more than the increase indicated by reported births and deaths—a discrepancy too big to be explained by errors in registration, a 1960 undercount, and immigration. Apparently, most of the 67,000 were people who called themselves white in 1960 and Indian in 1970.

The 1980 enumeration showed an even greater surge. The 1,423,043 Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts counted represented an astounding 72 percent increase since 1970. Native Americans, long lamented as headed for extinction, became the country's fastest growing population.

Some of the increase represented real growth and a more careful count. But the reason for much of the population explosion was that greater racial self-consciousness and rising federal benefits attracted many persons at the margin. As quoted in the *New York Times*, a (presumably genuine) Mohawk remarked that federal programs were creating many "instant Indians."

In real life, Indians are hardly a group at all. Roughly half live in cities, not on reservations. The 291 federally recognized tribes, from the largely unassimilated Pueblos of Arizona and

New Mexico to the Mohawk steelworkers of New York, merge into a composite only in relation to the laws or administrative procedures regarding all Indians. Old enmities persist; tribes take one another to court over competing claims almost as often as they do the federal government.

Someone with a partial affiliation to a tribe must think carefully when asked, Are you an Indian? As an Indian, he can share in his tribe's assets, including special federal benefits in education, employment, and medical care. As a white, he may avoid discrimination. Sociologists generally stress the unpleasant consequences of living at the margin of two cultures, but an Indian can gain by alternately playing two roles. Tribal chiefs are aware that both their own prestige and the dollar flow from Washington rise with membership. True, if too high a percentage of a tribe is predominantly white or lives away from tribal land, Congress may abolish its reservation; but this is generally not a threat. Most chiefs try to persuade all potential members to join, and anyone with some tie to a tribe is likely to do so.

Strangely, the Census Bureau has joined in the same campaign, also citing the federal benefits that can accrue if Indians are counted as such. In cities with many Indians, bureau officials solicited Indian help in improving the 1980 count. Earlier, they were told, undercounts of minorities had cost cities (and thus their poorer inhabitants) federal funds allocated according to the cities' population numbers.

Since 1960, Indians have not been classified because they are so regarded in their community, because they are members of a recognized tribe, or because they have a certain ratio of Indian forebears. They become Indians by their own declaration, in part reacting to official assertions that it is in their financial interest to do so. A less satisfactory way of counting members of any group would be difficult to devise.

V

NEXT: THE NEW IMMIGRANTS' SONS?

Ideally, a census should take place in a political vacuum, for partisan passions about any of the numbers affect its results. But if that ideal was ever approximated, it is no longer.

With the rise of the welfare state, many local and private functions were shifted to Washington, as was the focus of inter-

est groups of every type seeking preferred status. Ethnic groups had long organized themselves in political clubs at the municipal level; their members wanted licenses, franchises, contracts, and other benefits, and success in getting them depended in part on the pressure they could exert on City Hall. Until several decades ago, however, the expectation was that ethnic groups would not act as political blocs on the national scene. The norm that each American voted as an individual in national elections was followed, at least in part. It is a supreme paradox that in the United States (as elsewhere) greater state control over the economy and over society has led not to the growing popular indifference to ethnicity that every socialist since Karl Marx anticipated but to the opposite, as now reflected in the U.S. census.

'Instant Poles'

By 1990, census operations will almost surely be even more politicized. The groups now given preferment under affirmative action are not the only ones that have suffered from discrimination in the past and from some of its effects at present, and the descendants of the "new immigrants" are telling government officials that they are aware of that fact.

A symptomatic exchange took place in 1982 hearings before the Illinois Department of Human Rights. Up for consideration was a measure (subsequently enacted) to extend the protection of the state's law on job discrimination and affirmative action, enjoyed by blacks, women, and other minorities, to groups that had been denied rights and privileges because of their national origins.

As explained by the bill's sponsor, State Representative Robert Terzich, the law should cover "umbrella groups and multiple-ethnic communities," such as Southeast Asians, Eastern Europeans, and persons from the Baltic states. How could one prove that a group is suffering from discrimination? Chicago Alderman Roman Pucinski, a former U.S. Representative who heads the local Polish-American Congress, suggested a statistical test: Look at the numbers, as had been done with the beneficiaries of the current law. A survey that he cited showed that only a tiny fraction of the executives of the 500 top firms in the Chicago area were of Slavic origin. By the logic of affirmative action, he pointed out, this was proof that the firms discriminated against Slavic Americans and that remedial action was required from the government.

If group-based legal preferences were actually to spread as such spokesmen demand, the Census Bureau presumably would



"A statistician? How very essential! One is, after all, a statistic all of one's life, isn't one?"

be called on to furnish the data on which to base new entitlements. One can readily suppose that America's tribes of "instant Indians" would then be augmented by much larger numbers of "instant Poles" and "instant Italians." The federal bureau in charge of measuring the size of the groups and thus, indirectly, of specifying how much federal preferment each would receive would find itself in the middle of a political free-for-all. Moreover, census officials would find it all but impossible to defend themselves against attacks on their ethnic data. When self-identification was adopted, the bureau lost control over the ethnic statistics for which it is responsible.

Self-identification is, by nature, open to abuse. An extreme case occurred in 1979: Robert Earl Lee, an engineer with the Montgomery County (Maryland) Environmental Protection Department, changed his name to Roberto Eduardo Leon and, claiming a Spanish-origin grandfather, had himself reclassified from white to Hispanic. Under affirmative action, he acquired a new preference in promotion. Leon's boss was amused ("It's nice to have a Hispanic on our staff"), but county officials soon

removed his minority status and ruled that henceforth a committee would examine changes in ethnic self-designation.

If pressure by neglected groups for recognition continues rising, it will become more apparent that no racial or ethnic groups can be bounded exactly. Typically, these consist of core groups, the members of which so identify themselves consistently; a margin, whose members may declare themselves in or out depending on circumstance; and a periphery, with little association unless it is specially stimulated.

Such a pattern describes virtually all groupings, even blacks. At one time many contrived to "pass" as whites, and more recently, there was speculation that some had moved in the opposite direction. The longtime (1931–55) NAACP leader Walter White had blue eyes and a light skin; as he averred in his 1948 autobiography, *A Man Called White*, in spite of his color and his name, he was black.

The point is, many Americans are not sure what they are. In surveys in which a range of people were asked their ethnic origins in successive years, one out of three gave a different response from one time to the next. According to Tom W. Smith, a specialist on ethnicity at the National Opinion Research Center, survey organizations and the Census Bureau have all found that half or less of the white population is both able and willing to answer a question on national origin. "Of all the kinds of basic background variables about a person," Smith noted, this "is the most difficult of all to measure." Some 10 to 15 percent of adult whites can give no ethnic identity, for they do not know their heritage. Of the 35 to 40 percent that cite two or more ethnic strains, 11 to 12 percent cannot choose a principal strain.

In other words, in accordance with national policy, the Census Bureau has been assigned a statistical mission impossible: to set precise boundaries to what 200 years ago Crèvecoeur already saw as America's ever-changing checkerboard of ethnic groups—and to do so, moreover, under the greatest pressure conceivable from everyone potentially affected.

The Politics of Numbers is one of a special series of 18 books to be published in 1985 and 1986 by the Russell Sage Foundation, the leading U.S. foundation devoted primarily to research in the social sciences. The series is sponsored by the National Committee for Research on the 1980 Census, chaired by Charles F. Westoff, Princeton University. The Committee is sponsored jointly by the Social Science Research Council, the Russell Sage Foundation, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, in collaboration with the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

BACKGROUND BOOKS

STATISTICS

- Publishers issued 53,380 new books and revised editions in America in 1983, versus 15,012 in 1960.
- The country has 13,084 golf courses, 1,220,000 coin-operated video games, and 19,000 movie theaters (average ticket: \$3.15).
- Of every 1,000 married couples, 14 are inter-racial, up from seven in 1970.
- Women passed men in college enrollment in 1979. By 1983, they comprised 51.2 percent of the nation's 12,320,000 students.
- Among the 50 biggest U.S. cities, Tulsa, Oklahoma, has the highest per capita money income (\$11,059); El Paso, Texas, the lowest (\$6,550).
- Motor vehicle deaths (within a year of the accident) went from a peak of 56,300 in 1972 to 44,600 in 1983.

These are some of the items in the latest **Statistical Abstract of the United States** (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985, paper). It is a 991-page compendium of data from scores of public and private sources that is billed as "the standard summary of statistics on the social, political, and economic organization" of America. As seen in the *Abstract*, the nation has no shortage of statisticians—whose specialty, as defined by W. Allen Wallis and Harry V. Roberts in **The Nature of Statistics** (Free Press, 1962, cloth; 1965, paper), provides "a body of methods for making wise decisions in the face of uncertainty."

Keeping tallies of people, events, and things is a mark of advanced societies. Hyman Alterman writes in **Counting People: The Census in History** (Harcourt, 1969) that "the civilizations of the pre-Christian era that have left records of enumerations of their people . . . developed a system of mathematics and number notation of a high order."

The societies that began population counts (the Babylonians kept records as early as 3800 B.C.) did so to see how many taxpayers and potential warriors they had. But such knowledge could be a source of peril as well as of strength. The Old Testament tells of King David's 1017 B.C. order to Joab: "Go now through all the tribes of Israel . . . and number ye the people." Joab worried that Satan had tricked the king into the census, figuring that a count would anger the Lord. Sure enough, after the tally (it found 1,300,000 "valiant men that drew the sword"), Israel suffered a plague that killed 70,000.

Even now, censuses arouse fear, notes Alterman. When some newly independent Third World nations attempted a first census, the counters "were either killed or driven off."

The term census—derived from the Latin *censere*, to assess—came from the Romans, the first people to hold regular population counts. As Dan Halacy notes in **Census: 190 Years of Counting America** (Elsevier/Nelson Books, 1980), the Roman censor not only registered all citizens but also collected taxes and served as "a guardian of public morals."

For centuries after Rome's fall, few counts were taken, partly because of a lingering religious aversion to them. But as the Dark Ages waned, trade grew, and so did a need for reliable numbers. In 1085, William the Conqueror sent agents through England to interview one in every 100 people—an early effort at statistical "sampling"—to gather data for the so-called Domesday Book. In Florence in 1338, data on bread sales were used to reckon the city's population: 90,000. By 1515, enough numbers were available to allow the Ital-

ian Niccolò Machiavelli to publish *Portraits of France and Germany*, an analysis of their resources.

The census's modern age was launched during the 17th century by John Graunt, a Londoner who employed parish birth and death records to estimate population size—useful, he said, for “good, certain and easie Government.” When Graunt showed that London was more populous than Paris, Alterman writes, his feat “aroused envy in the latter city and stirred a great deal of discussion there about the need for more reliable estimates of population.”

Other milestones followed. In 1679, the English mathematician Sir William Petty published *Political Arithmetick*, “the art of reasoning by figures upon things relating to government.” Seventy years later in Germany, Gottfried Achenwall wrote a detailed description of the major European nations—and coined the term *Statistik*. Britain conducted its first modern census in 1801, when France also held its first true census. Greece followed in 1836; Switzerland, in 1860; Italy, in 1861.

By then, America's decennial census was already the oldest periodic national head count. The U.S. lust for numbers was admired by European statisticians, as related in **The Census Bureau: A Numerator and Denominator for Measuring Change** (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975, paper). During the 19th century, France's Moreau de Jonnes hailed the Americans' use of statistics to shape “their civil and political rights, and the destinies of the Nation.”

By Jonnes's time, statistics had helped to change popular perceptions everywhere. For example, when in 1830 the Belgian mathematician and social scientist Adolphe Quetelet introduced the concept of

“the average man,” people were shocked that humans could be reduced to numbers. The very word average was crass: It came from *avaria*, Old Italian for damage to cargo at sea. (Much of statistical method was developed by insurers calculating marine casualty probabilities.)

In **Social Indicators and Public Policy** (Elsevier, 1975), Judith Innes de Neufville examines how government came to “institutionalize” statistics—and, in turn, to be governed by them. Example: unemployment figures. After Washington found during the depression that it had no measure of national unemployment, Labor Department specialists undertook monthly surveys of joblessness, and before long, the results were shaping policy: In the Employment Act of 1946, Congress made it a duty of government to try to maintain “full employment” as measured by the official figures.

The interweaving of government and statistics has continued unabated. In pushing Great Society legislation through Congress, Lyndon Johnson set up a team in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to “develop the necessary social statistics and indicators” as “yardsticks” to “measure the distance we have come and plan for the new way ahead.”

The world owes much to statistical method. Among its less-publicized achievements, statistical theory helped Gregor Mendel found the modern science of genetics a century ago, showed World War II naval planners how convoys could reduce ship losses to German submarines, and has permitted actuaries to calculate insurance premiums. Yet, history has provided those who scorn the collectors and interpreters of numbers with much ammunition. In **How to Lie**

with **Statistics** (Norton, 1954, cloth & paper), Darrell Huff cites the 1950 U.S. census, which counted more people in the 65-to-70 age group than had been found in the 55-to-60 bracket in 1940. The reason: Lots of Americans had raised their age to become eligible for Social Security.

Statistical projections are particularly fraught with peril. During World War II, for example, a U.S. Census Bureau booklet entitled *Uncle Sam: How He Grew* cited the reckoning of "authorities" that "by about 1980 our population growth will have stopped altogether, at a peak of around 153 million." Among other effects, the forecast helped to persuade Montgomery Ward's management to trim expansion—unlike Sears, which continued to grow.

Nonetheless, the flow of fearless or fearsome projections continues. Witness the **Global Two Thousand Report to the President**, edited by Gerald O. Barney, 3 vols. (Pergamon, 1980–82, cloth; Penguin, abr., 1982, paper only). The work of a presidential commission, it concluded that "if present trends continue, the world in 2000 will be more crowded, more polluted, less stable ecologically" and that life "will be more precarious" for "most" people.

New ways of quantifying the present also are always in demand, which accounts for the "misery index." Simply a combination of the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate and the inflation rate (as measured by the U.S. consumer price index), this concoction won notice during the 1976 presidential race; candidate Jimmy Carter made much of the Ford administration "misery" rate, which was

near 12 percent by election time. (The index hit 19.2 before Carter left office in January 1981.)

Judging national well-being by any single measure is a tricky undertaking. Have the good times gone? Perhaps, to judge by the Census Bureau's numbers on median family income: After surging by 38 percent during the 1950s and 34 percent during the 1960s, family income rose by only 0.4 percent during the 1970s. But in **The Good News Is the Bad News Is Wrong** (Simon & Schuster, 1984), Ben J. Wattenberg argues that many "Super Numbers" point to continued improvement. Some SNs:

- The 400 percent increase over just two decades in the number of young blacks (1.1 million) in college.
- The rising proportion of married couples under 35 who own their homes (up from 38 percent in 1950 to 62 percent in 1980).
- The 33 percent decline of sulfur dioxide in the air from 1975 to 1982.

Such figures, says Wattenberg, show trends that "are clearly positive—some of them sensationally so."

Positive or otherwise—and no matter how vital to the operation of a complex modern society—all aggregate numbers should not be swallowed whole. As the British statistician Sir Josiah Charles Stamp (1880–1941) warned:

"The government are very keen on amassing statistics. They collect them, raise them to the nth power, take the cube root and prepare wonderful diagrams. But you must never forget that every one of these figures comes in the first instance from the village watchman, who just puts down what he damn pleases."

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CURRENT BOOKS

SCHOLARS' CHOICE

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

ONE AND INSEPARABLE:

**Daniel Webster
and the Union**

by Maurice G. Baxter
Harvard, 1984
646 pp. \$25

**MARTIN VAN BUREN
AND THE AMERICAN
POLITICAL SYSTEM**

by Donald B. Cole
Princeton, 1984
477 pp. \$45

The subjects of these two fine biographies, Daniel Webster and Martin Van Buren, do not stand out in the minds of most Americans as dominant figures in their nation's past. Yet each was a significant force in American politics before the Civil War. Webster's brilliant advocacy in court and in Congress gave America's emerging corporations crucial legal and political support. And Van Buren's tenacious, grassroots political organizing created a new style of partisan politics. Historians Cole and Baxter also show how the efforts of these two different men contributed to the formation of America's distinctive two-party system.

Webster and Van Buren had several things in common. Both were born in 1782, the sons of rural innkeepers. Both became lawyers and both rose to positions of national prominence. But there, for the most part, the resemblance ends.

Webster and his family supported the Federalist party, while the Van Burens stood with the Democratic-Republicans of Thomas Jefferson. Strong supporters of the Constitution and the powerful central government it created, Federalists were firm defenders of the established social order. They believed that the upper classes alone could control the potentially disruptive elements in American society. Jeffersonians, though led mostly by men of affluence, had greater confidence in popular self-government and favored greater social and economic equality. They also preferred a looser Union, stronger states' rights.

Why did Van Buren and Webster head in opposite political directions? Family background offers strong clues.

Webster's father was something of a small-town success story. A self-educated hero of the Revolutionary War, prosperous in his business, he was a pillar of the town government of Kingston, N.H. He was also a strict Calvinist and an equally orthodox Federalist. Ambitious for his children, he sent his youngest son, Daniel, to Exeter and then Dartmouth, where he graduated with distinction in 1801.

Webster never found reason to doubt the justice of the system from which he had benefited. Even when young, says Baxter, he "never once inclined toward ideas of abrupt change from established political truths as he understood them." The party of Thomas Jefferson, he thought, "was pushing the nation toward despotism and ruin through deceitful, false appeal to popular rule, 'through the dirt and mire of uncontrolled democracy.'"

Van Buren's childhood inclined him toward everything that Webster

feared. His father was not among the elite of Kinderhook, N.Y. A Jeffersonian in a predominantly Federalist county, he was an outsider in politics and an affable but mediocre businessman. He did manage to send his son, Martin, to the local academy for several years, but a generous cousin had to provide for the young man while he read the law on his own. Later in life, Van Buren exaggerated his lowly origins, but, as Cole points out, "there is little doubt that his inferior status bothered him."

Early differences between the two men persisted in their subsequent careers. Webster quickly rose to the top of the legal profession in Portsmouth, N.H., carried along by his intellect, self-assurance, and growing oratorical brilliance. An effective Federalist campaigner, he represented Portsmouth in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1813 to 1817, where he opposed the War of 1812 as doing injury to vital New England commercial interests. He moved to Boston in 1816 and became closely allied with the city's financial community. In 1823, he returned to the House and served two terms before entering the U.S. Senate in 1827. Whether in Congress or in court, he was an eloquent champion of business and its needs. The Boston Yankees found his talents particularly useful during a time when industrial growth (mainly in textiles and shoes), the opening of new railroads and canals, increased overseas trade, and great shifts in population threatened social stability.

While Webster mingled with New England's merchant princes, Van Buren was struggling to build his Kinderhook law practice on trespass and debt cases. Going over to the Federalist side would have brought Van Buren the patronage of the wealthy, but he stuck to his Jeffersonian convictions. Stumping for the Republicans in New York state elections, he began to view some of his fellow party members, including Governor DeWitt Clinton, as trimmers, far too willing to compromise with the Federalists in the state legislature and elsewhere.

To promote party loyalty, Van Buren put together his own faction, known first as the "Bucktails" and then as the "Albany Regency." His mission was unswerving: to encourage fellow Republicans to hew to the decisions of local party caucuses, to use patronage for political purposes, and to subordinate all personal ambition to the party ticket.

Many Americans, then as now, saw political parties as corrupting instruments of greedy men seeking personal gain from politics. As Cole explains, the members of Van Buren's Regency believed "that political parties were democratic organizations that enabled people to take part in government." Moreover, "the Regency's new theory of party was premised on a new concept of society—one based not on consensus but on unavoidable conflict." This notion was repugnant to the Federalists, who thought of the polity as a single social organism. But Van Buren's concept underlies the modern view of democratic politics as the arena of contending interest groups.

For better or worse, Van Buren's tactics were effective, and he brought them into the national political arena when he entered the Senate in 1821. By this time, the Federalists posed little threat to Republican dominance in Washington. Yet the leading Jeffersonians—including Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, John C. Calhoun, and Andrew Jack-

son—had turned against one another in an unseemly scramble for the presidency. If the bickering continued, Van Buren predicted, it could lead to a Federalist resurgence. He also fretted about such divisive issues as slavery. Debate over whether Missouri would enter the Union as a “free” or “slave” state had nearly sundered the Republican party in 1820–21.

Disappointed by Adams’s election to the presidency in 1824, Van Buren spent the next four years traveling the country, rebuilding a Jeffersonian alliance of “planters of the South and plain Republicans of the North.” In 1828, Van Buren rose to high office with President Andrew Jackson, first as his Secretary of State and then as his Vice President. In 1836, he succeeded Jackson to become the country’s eighth President. Along the way, Van Buren managed to put together a new and more vigorous Republican coalition, which gradually became known as the Democratic party.

The other half of America’s two-party system emerged during the 1830s. Reluctantly adopting Van Buren’s organizational methods, Webster and other Jackson foes forged their own party, the Whigs. Yet, as much as Webster opposed Jackson’s policies—including his assault on protective tariffs and the Bank of the United States—he never felt comfortable using what he considered to be “demagogic” tactics. Instead, he cultivated ties with key businessmen and editors, mailed out hundreds of texts of his speeches, and waited to be called by the nation to the White House.

Webster’s strategy failed. Though he won the electoral votes of Massachusetts in 1836, he repeatedly failed to win his party’s nomination (in 1832, ’40, ’48, ’52). When the Whigs turned instead to such popular figures as Gen. William Henry Harrison and Gen. Zachary Taylor, Webster sulked. He never learned to play by party rules. Nor could he fully accept the reality that politicians in the Age of Jackson had to woo the electorate—or they would not rule at all.

Failing to win the presidency, Webster left his biggest mark on law and rhetoric. The new American corporations needed a powerful federal government to protect their local rights and contracts, and Webster was their most effective advocate. Without the protection afforded by Webster’s important legal victories (e.g., *Dartmouth College v. Woodward*, which protected corporate charters from alteration by state legislatures), American industry would probably not have grown so rapidly or so boldly.

Moreover, the same powerful national government for which Webster fought in court became the focus of popular American patriotism. Webster, in his memorable speeches, stressed that the Union was not a fragile compact of states but the enduring government of a whole people. It was essentially Webster’s concept of the Union, recast in a more egalitarian vocabulary, that Lincoln articulated at Gettysburg. Though Webster may have fought hardest for the “haves” in American society, his advocacy proved to be as indispensable as Van Buren’s partisanship to the building of the new nation.

—Harry Watson ’85

NEW TITLES

History

GERMAN BIG BUSINESS AND THE RISE OF HITLER
by Henry Ashby Turner, Jr.
Oxford, 1985
504 pp. \$25



"It is impossible," wrote the German émigré-scholar Max Horkheimer, "to speak about fascism without also speaking about capitalism." It is against such conventional wisdom that Turner, a Yale historian, directs his book. Leftist Weimar Republic journalists and, later, like-minded historians always insisted that the Nazis' rise to power during the 1920s and '30s was financed by Germany's corporate giants. Turner maintains that the leaders of the major industrial firms—including IG Farben, Krupp, and Siemens—had every reason *not* to back Hitler, and, in fact, did not do so, at least in the beginning. First, they saw the Nazis' failed Munich "Beerhall Putsch" of 1923 as the work of an outlaw organization. Even more troublesome to corporate leaders was Nazi anticapitalist rhetoric; Nazi anti-Semitism only compounded the fears of Jews (and many Gentiles) on corporate boards. Above all, German tycoons could not be sure where Hitler stood on practical business matters. He refused to address their vital goals: the elimination of binding arbitration in labor disputes, the return to a 10-hour workday, the reduction of state interference in business. Instead, he preached ultranationalism and repeatedly denounced the reparations for World War I imposed on Germany by the victorious Allies under the 1919 Treaty of Versailles. Turner describes Nazism as a "genuinely populist movement," financed largely by membership dues and a grassroots fund-raising apparatus.

THE FOUCAULT READER
edited by Paul Rabinow
Pantheon, 1985, 390 pp.
\$19.95 cloth; \$9.95 paper

Michel Foucault's concern was with knowledge and power—specifically, with the way Western states since the Renaissance have used knowledge (e.g., political philosophies, educational principles, scientific theories) to maintain an orderly system of power relationships. During the two decades before his death last year at the age of 58, the French

philosopher influenced a generation of scholars throughout the world in history, literature, and a host of other fields. His work was largely an extension of the thought of Friedrich Nietzsche: Foucault tried to show how the "will to power" had become institutionalized in the modern state. He focused on such social sore spots as crime, delinquency, disease, and sexuality because Western governments have tended to intervene most actively in those areas. Armed with theories, statistics, and an array of disciplinary techniques, the well-meaning agents of the state have, according to Foucault, established the "norm" and sequestered the "deviant." More subtly, they have reduced human beings to manipulable "subjects." His belief that all Western political systems succumbed to this urge to dominate their citizens made him a target of criticism from all ideological quarters, even while intellectuals of the Left and the Right absorbed his ideas. Foucault's major books, essays, and interviews are broadly represented in this first general anthology, ably edited by Rabinow, a University of California anthropologist.

THOMAS MORE

by Richard Marius
Knopf, 1984

562 pp. \$22.95



Thomas More (1478–1535) was canonized 400 years after his martyrdom, but even before the Catholic Church's official recognition, biographers tended to depict him as a saint, a "museum piece rather than a man." Marius, a Harvard historian, shares the admiration of earlier biographers, but his More is human with a vengeance. Torn throughout his life by conflicting impulses—toward asceticism (he almost entered a Carthusian monastery when he was 25) and toward marriage and worldly success—More chose the latter but was never comfortable with the choice. His adult life, says Marius, was a "quest to be always busy" in order to quiet his guilt over material comfort and pride of place. In his public career as a lawyer and lord chancellor (1529–32), More was compliant, often obsequious, an "eternal staff sergeant," says Marius. A devoted son to his father, he seems to have had a lifelong

need for the approval of his elders and betters. Even in his martyr's death—he was executed for refusing to recognize Henry VIII's claim to be head of the English Church—he looked beyond his king to the higher authority of the Catholic Church. Ironically, martyrdom provided a kind of comfort: "The man perplexed by multitudes of choices now had no choices left." Marius emphasizes More's intolerance of "heretics," of whom there were many following Martin Luther's defiant stand in 1517. And he downplays More's practical stand in 1517. He "could never be single-minded about governance and power [because he] was distracted by concern for his own soul." In the end, though, Marius's More remains larger than life.

Contemporary Affairs

**NO SENSE OF PLACE:
The Impact of Electronic
Media on Social Behavior**
by Joshua Meyrowitz
Oxford, 1985
416 pp. \$22.50

Consider the accomplishments of television: It has blurred the distinction between the sexes, made *taboo* a dead word, made "adult-like children" and "childlike adults," and diminished the stature of some politicians and public figures by showing them to be all too human. It has done all this, and more, by undermining "the traditional relationship between physical setting and social setting." In the past, the place one occupied in the world—whether home, workplace, or school—determined appropriate behavior. By broadcasting a panoply of people and situations, the electronic media have widened the options and thus changed the way people act. Writes Meyrowitz, a professor of communications at the University of New Hampshire, "The new and 'strange' behavior of many individuals or classes may be the result of the steady merging of formerly distinct environments." Television, for instance, has "fostered the rise of hundreds of 'minorities'—people who, in perceiving a wider world, begin to see themselves as unfairly isolated in some pocket of it." Obviously, not all this is new ground. Marshall McLuhan

opened up the field some 20 years ago with his *Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962) and *Understanding Media* (1964), and scholars have been working it ever since. Nevertheless, Meyrowitz's study has two distinct virtues: First, he analyzes the vast literature on the subject; second, he extends McLuhan's analysis by showing *how* the media are transforming modern societies.

**MORALITY AND POWER
IN A CHINESE VILLAGE**

by Richard Madsen
Univ. of Calif., 1985
283 pp. \$24.50

China's Communist revolutionaries claimed they were not only bringing social and economic justice but also creating a better sort of person, a "new man." Madsen, a University of California sociologist, takes a look at the results in Chen, a small village in Guang-dong Province. Between 1949 and the late 1960s, the people of Chen worked out a compromise between their ancient Confucian code of values and the new Marxist-Maoist ethos: They tempered family loyalty (the central tenet of Confucianism) with the principles of communist egalitarianism. Villagers expected party cadres both to work for the collective good of the community and to show favoritism to their own kin—allowing a relative to work on a productive piece of land, for instance. So the average peasant did the same himself. The Cultural Revolution (1966–76) upset the balance. Confused by changes in official ideology, peasants had to decide for themselves whether politically "correct" behavior was also moral. Should one denounce a relative whose attitudes were incorrect? Should individual or family self-interest be totally subordinated to the good of the community? The chaotic Cultural Revolution had, according to Madsen, two lasting effects: It exposed the absurd rigidities of Maoism (how could one divest oneself of all self-interest?), and it threw into doubt the virtue of family loyalty. By what star do the Chinese peasants steer their lives today? A selfish pragmatism, says Madsen, propped up with such fuzzy slogans as "Seek the Truth from Facts." Such a moral vacuum, he concludes, could lead to corruption—and, in turn, to a whole new cycle of drastic official remedies.

**ROADSIDE EMPIRES:
How the Chains
Franchised America**
by Stan Luxenberg
Viking, 1985
313 pp. \$17.95

It is the rare American town that does not have its own McDonald's restaurant. This most successful of franchise businesses has become a model for others—corporations that sell the right to sell everything from automobile mufflers to suntans. The men who pioneered the first chains were often hands-on entrepreneurs: Colonel Sanders, decked out in white suit and string tie, took to the road in 1956 to market the chicken fried in supersecret 11-herbs-and-spices batter he originally sold in his Corbin, Ky., restaurant. For years, he personally supervised the restaurants that bore his name. Luxenberg, a free-lance business writer, finds the remarkable success of the chains somewhat puzzling: Why, he wonders, does a people that claims to prize diversity embrace so avidly the big franchise chains, where all aspects of business are, at least in principle, standardized? In part, the answer lies in brisk advertising campaigns. More important to consumers, perhaps, are convenience, predictability, and low cost. To Luxenberg, however, such virtues come at a very high price. Over the past 30 years, franchises have obliterated much of American regional culture, commerce, and cuisine. The various chains are likely to grow, but franchise corporations face some challenges. Many franchise holders chafe under strict and often arbitrary company guidelines. And there has even been talk of unionizing among the poorly paid armies of fast-food workers.

**ADULT ILLITERACY IN
THE UNITED STATES:
Report to the Ford
Foundation**
by Carman St. John Hunter
and David Harman
McGraw-Hill, 1985
224 pp. \$8.95

The U.S. Bureau of the Census concluded in 1980 that over 99.5 percent of all adults in this country read or write. That statistic would be encouraging were it not for the fact that most illiterate people do not fill out census forms. And, in most cases, those so incapacitated are too embarrassed to ask for help. These two books give a more accurate assessment. Hunter, an educational consultant, and Harman, an Israeli professor of education, figure that 23 million American adults cannot read at all; some 37 million more cannot understand an apartment lease, a utility bill, a

ILLITERATE AMERICA
by Jonathan Kozol
Doubleday, 1985
270 pp. \$15.95

paycheck stub listing deductions. The cost to society is high. Kozol, author of *Death at an Early Age* (1967), estimates that U.S. taxpayers spend at least \$20 billion a year on welfare and unemployment benefits, prison maintenance, and court costs directly attributable to adult illiteracy. "Will anything be done?" asks Kozol. The 1983 report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education exhorted parents to read aloud to their children. Illiterate parents, helpless to obey, perpetuate a cycle of illiteracy. Last year, the U.S. government spent \$100 million on programs to teach adults to read—an average of \$1.65 per illiterate adult. In 1982, the director of the National Advisory Council on Adult Education estimated that it would take a minimum of \$5 billion to make serious progress in reducing illiteracy. Together, the various existing remedial programs—supported by government, nonprofit groups, business—reach only four percent of illiterate Americans. The authors' feelings are strong; Kozol, in particular, is not given to understatement. For all that, he sounds something like a voice in the wilderness.

Arts & Letters

THE INTELLECTUAL FOLLIES:
A Memoir of the Literary Venture in New York and Paris
 by Lionel Abel
 Norton, 1984
 304 pp. \$17.95

An anecdotal account of the intellectual life of New York and Paris from the 1930s to the present, this memoir is an informative addition to a rapidly growing genre. Abel, a playwright and critic, writes with irony-tinged nostalgia of the artists and intellectuals who enlivened Greenwich Village and the Left Bank with revolutionary ideas that they thought would help usher in a new age. For most of Abel's peers, the key decision of the '30s was the choice of a political hero—most often either Trotsky or Stalin. During that time, Abel writes, "New York City went to Russia," and it stayed there until Stalin signed a pact with Hitler in 1939. Abel also explores the artistic and philosophic controversies of the time. Sympathetic to the moral confusion that gave rise to such movements

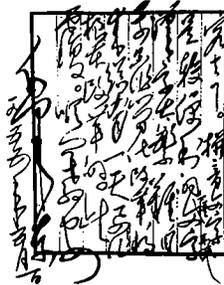
as surrealism, he also recalls the absurdity of poet André Breton's declaration "that the simplest surrealist act consists in going, revolver in hand, into the street and firing as many shots as possible at random into the crowd." Abel has similar reservations about the Theater of the Absurd, which he believes was far more "propagandistic" than its creators thought. Its popularity, he concludes, was due less to its artistic experimentation than to a "widespread discontent with political leaders, social institutions, the manners and morals of the time." Abel's comments on significant intellectuals are measured and complex. He notes, for example, the contradictions in Jean-Paul Sartre's life and work but compares him to Fyodor Dostoyevsky for making "available to intellectuals of his period systematic ways of rationalizing their lives." Refreshingly, he resists joining in the blanket condemnation found in many recent memoirs covering the same period. Abel too clearly recalls the historical circumstances—from the economic crisis during the '30s to the dropping of the atomic bomb in 1945—to render easy verdicts on artists and critics who groped for radical solutions.

**HENRY GREEN
AND THE WRITING
OF HIS GENERATION**
by Michael North
Univ. of Va., 1984
222 pp. \$16.95

Henry Green's generation of British writers was too young to fight in World War I. Watching helplessly as that gruesome struggle took its toll, they acquired a chronic sense of impotence. As adults, these writers failed artistically—and commercially—until they used material from their lives to create successful fiction or poetry. Green's friends—including George Orwell, Evelyn Waugh, Anthony Powell, W. H. Auden—eventually achieved that success. Green (1905–74) did not. North, a professor of English at the University of California, Los Angeles, suggests that what Green did well as a novelist is what kept him obscure. Instead of pitting his characters against society, he left them inextricably and happily bound up with their fellow men. He also endowed them with imagination. In such novels as *Living*, *Caught*, and *Concluding*, everyday people of all social classes, whether

laborers or factory owners, rewrite their lives, rejecting bits of the past and present, literally "making a living." Whether this inventiveness makes them liars or creators appears irrelevant to Green. What matters is that they keep going. Green himself led a quiet, relatively uneventful life. (Born in Birmingham, he was educated at Oxford and returned to the family engineering firm where he worked until his death.) Green has become a "writer's writer," admired for his subtle characterization and spare style by such fellow craftsmen as V. S. Pritchett, John Updike, and Eudora Welty. North offers an excellent introduction to the uninitiated.

**THE CHINESE
LANGUAGE:
Fact and Fantasy**
by John DeFrancis
Univ. of Hawaii, 1984
330 pp. \$20



Everybody "knows" things about the Chinese language that are not strictly true: It is the oldest written language in the world; it has ideographic, not phonetic, characters; it is one of the most difficult languages for native speakers of English to learn. DeFrancis, a professor of Chinese at the University of Hawaii, clarifies matters. Sumerian, he relates, was actually written a millennium and a half before Chinese, though among scripts still in use today, Chinese is the oldest. Chinese characters are phonetic, although certain ones were originally pictographs; in fact, as DeFrancis explains, the notion of a strictly ideographic script is a linguistic myth. Also only half true is the much-vaunted difficulty of learning the language: Studies reveal that spoken Chinese is only five percent more difficult than French for the average English speaker to learn. *Written* Chinese is about five times as hard to master as written French. But what does it mean "to speak Chinese"? Of the one billion natives who do, roughly two-thirds speak Mandarin and are incomprehensible (except in writing) to the other third who speak Cantonese, Hakka, and Min. To the amateur linguist, DeFrancis offers a wealth of lore on everything from the evolution of Chinese characters to the many (and as yet unsuccessful) 20th-century attempts at speech and writing reform.

**HABITATIONS OF
THE WORD**

by William H. Gass
Simon & Schuster, 1985
288 pp. \$17.95

The 12 essays in this collection are concerned with literary figures or literary matters—Ralph Waldo Emerson, the neglected fiction of Ford Maddox Ford, the various uses of the word *and*, the act of reading. But Gass, a novelist and poet as well as a professor at Washington University, is, by training and temperament, a philosopher. Consequently, his essays repeatedly return to philosophical concerns—often to the question of the written word and its relationship to the external world. Gass insists that artful words impose order and meaning on the world: “The war for reality is . . . a struggle between data and design, and if the data win there is a tendency to see the world as brute dumb fact and indifferent chance. . . .” Elsewhere, he argues that style, in literature and in life, is not merely an ornamental quality: It is what keeps everything—words, objects, people—from being reduced to mere utility. A plastic cup, the “triumph of our culture’s bottom end,” is, according to Gass, a “descendental object. It cannot have a history. It has disappeared into its function.” Gass implies that the better part of culture consists of all those man-made objects that become, by the art invested in their making, ends in themselves.

*Science & Technology***“SURELY YOU’RE
JOKING, MR.
FEYNMAN!”:**

**Adventures of a
Curious Character**
by Richard P. Feynman
(with Ralph Leighton)
edited by Edward
Hutchings
Norton, 1985
350 pp. \$16.95

While still a graduate student at Princeton University, Feynman explained principles of theoretical physics to the likes of Albert Einstein and John von Neumann. During the Second World War, he helped develop the atomic bomb at Los Alamos, N.M. In 1965, he won the Nobel Prize in physics. Through it all, Feynman has remained, in spirit, an amateur scientist. Ever since his childhood in Far Rockaway, N.Y., he has viewed laboratories not as places where “I would measure, or do important experiments” but instead as places where “I was piddling around all the time.” Feynman’s first teaching job was at Cornell University, where, fearing premature “burn

out," he resolved to do only what was fun. When a student threw a plate frisbee-style in a university cafeteria, Feynman noticed that the red Cornell seal "went around faster than the wobbling." Pursuing this mystery—to the bewilderment of colleagues—he ultimately solved a fundamental problem in quantum electrodynamics. For that, he received the Nobel Prize. Feynman's exploits range beyond the lab: In Los Alamos, he upsets the project administrators by cracking their supposedly unbreakable safes; in dolphin researcher John Lilly's sensory-deprivation tanks, he analyzes his own hallucinations to discover their composition. Anecdotal and chatty, this rambling autobiography succeeds far better than do many pretentious studies in depicting the scientist who loves his work.

**REFLECTIONS ON
GENDER AND SCIENCE**
by Evelyn Fox Keller
Yale, 1985
176 pp. \$17.95

The father of the experimental method, Sir Francis Bacon (1561–1626), described science as the marriage of mind and nature. Implicit in the metaphor was the assumption that Mother Nature is a passive object waiting to be discovered and manipulated by the researcher—reflecting what Western society has long defined as a "male" outlook. Keller, a mathematical biologist at Northeastern University, does not deny the successes of the Baconian model. She does, however, show, in these nine theoretical and historical essays, how culturally determined notions of gender affect, and sometimes limit, the practice of science. In biology, for instance, researchers persistently rejected the theory of "interactive" cellular organization in favor of a "central governor" theory, despite a complete lack of evidence for the latter. Similarly, it took 30 years for the "DNA dogma" of a master molecule handing down information to the other parts of the cell to give way to the hypothesis of internal transformation of genetic material. Recognizing that "both science and gender are socially constructed categories" is, according to Keller, a step toward a more accurate description of the natural world.

PAPERBOUNDS

SINGULAR VOICES: American Poetry Today. Edited by Stephen Berg. Avon, 1985. 326 pp. \$9.95

Anthologists of poetry often have difficulty with organization and pace; they rely on biographical or editorial notes to carry the reader from poet to poet. In this collection of works by 31 contemporary Americans, Berg, an editor and poet, has come up with a fresh approach to the problem. Each poet has selected one recent poem, composing a "self-interpretive essay" to follow it. The essays range from close self-analysis to tangential musings. Richard Wilbur, for instance, describes his "Lying" as a "baroque poem, in the sense that it is a busy and intricate contraption which issues in plainness." The collection features such established masters as James Dickey and Stanley Kunitz as well as a number of newcomers, including Tess Gallagher and Carolyn Forché. No longer so wedded to the confessional mode, many of today's poets have ventured into the more public theater of politics and contemporary events. Berg has performed an editorial feat: In an era when most American poets pare their verse to essentials, it is illuminating to read the thoughts they have judged to be not quite poetry but well worth saying.

FOR YOUR OWN GOOD: Hidden Cruelty in Child-Rearing and the Roots of Violence. By Alice Miller. Farrar, 1984. 284 pp. \$8.95

Miller, a Swiss psychoanalyst, believes that nothing is more destructive to a child's development than pedagogy—under which label she includes all systematic programs of child-rearing. Hers is not, however, an appeal for permissiveness. Indeed, Miller locates and con-

demns the powerful, manipulative element in the great bible of permissiveness—Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Emile*. Her target is any "disciplinary method" that inhibits or represses a child's natural emotional reactions. Rigid behavioral systems imposed by parents upon their children only perpetuate the repressions that adults suffered during their own childhoods. And the common outcome of extreme repression is violence, either against oneself or against others. Miller illustrates her argument with three case studies of tortured childhoods: one of a suicide, one of a murderer, and one of Adolf Hitler.

THE PASSING OF THE GREAT WEST: Selected Papers of George Bird Grinnell. Edited by John F. Reiger. Univ. of Okla., 1985. 182 pp. \$7.95

Known as the Father of American Conservation, ethnographer and naturalist George Grinnell (1849–1938) grew up a city boy. But his childhood, spent with the sons of John James Audubon on the great naturalist's upper Manhattan estate, provided an ideal education for the future outdoorsman. In 1870, Grinnell went West with O. C. Marsh's geological expedition; he quickly earned a reputation for his vivid descriptions of human and natural life on the Great Plains (and moved no less a figure than Theodore Roosevelt with his warnings about a threatened wilderness). Living for months at a time among the Cheyenne and the Pawnees, Grinnell produced several volumes of ethnography that are valued by anthropologists to this day. Editor Reiger has constructed a fetching mini-biography by splicing together, and commenting upon, colorful fragments of Grinnell's previously unpublished papers.

America's Longest War: The Fight over Fluoridation, 1950–

Fluoride, when added to the public drinking water, safely helps to prevent dental cavities. Nevertheless, according to a vocal minority of Americans, fluoridation not only is the work of a “conspiracy of experts” but also causes everything from communism and mongolism to cancer and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). They have won so many local political battles since 1950 that today almost half of the nation’s population remains without the benefits of fluoridated water. Here, historian Donald R. McNeil goes back to the origins of this continuing American controversy.

by Donald R. McNeil

A few things remain constant in America—death, taxes, baseball, and since 1950, widespread, often successful efforts by a passionate minority to keep fluoride out of the public drinking water.

Why has there been such recurring popular resistance to a simple health-care measure of proven benefit to everybody’s teeth?

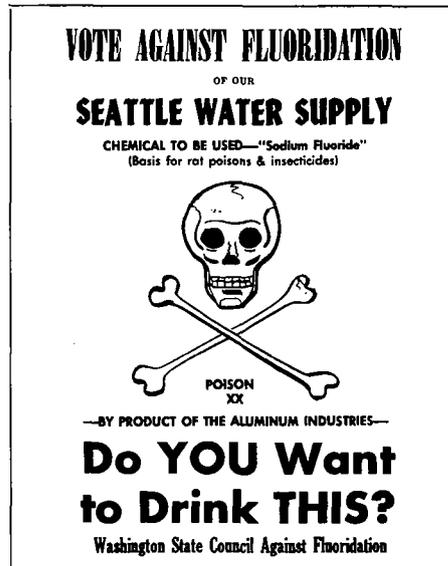
More than 10,000 scientific studies have shown that adding one part per million (ppm) fluoride to water will safely and effectively inhibit tooth decay, particularly if fluoride is consumed during the first nine years of a person’s life.

Yet neither studies nor facts convince a determined, heterogeneous coalition of antfluoridation activists. They have repeatedly challenged the authority of virtually

every major national and international health group—including the American Medical Association, the American Dental Association, the U.S. Public Health Service, and the World Health Organization—and campaigned to keep fluoride out of the country’s water supply.

The results of their agitation are striking: 40 years after fluoride was first introduced into a public water system in Grand Rapids, Michigan, almost half of all U.S. citizens remain without the benefits of fluoridated water.

Citizens somewhere vote on this issue every year. The outcomes of most local referendums are not encouraging to scientists, dentists, and their political allies. Between 1980 and 1983, according to the Centers for Disease Control, fluoridation was



The 1952 Seattle referendum was one of the first big-city defeats for fluoridation. The argument that fluoride is a poison is still used—an argument that ignores the matter of dosage.

approved by 23 communities (such as Kansas City, Missouri; Sheridan, Oregon; Rutland, Vermont) and rejected by 69 (including Springfield, Massachusetts; Wooster, Ohio; Billings, Montana).

On the other hand, there were 468 fluoridation starts during the same three-year period, mostly initiated by city councils or county boards; seven states currently require that public water contain the chemical. But the reversal of such governmental actions by popular referendums (a legacy of the Progressive era in 36 states and the District of Columbia) is not unusual; according to one rough estimate by the National Institute of Dental Research, there have been around 1,500 local popular votes on fluoridation since the early 1950s, with the "antis" winning a majority of them.

Nor is it, as some might imagine, only the smaller cities and towns that reject fluoridation. The citizens of Los Angeles voted it down in 1975, and voters in San Diego, Portland

(Oregon), San Antonio, and Newark have all rebuffed efforts to reduce tooth decay by way of the water supply. Jersey City, New Jersey, a metropolis of some 225,000 residents, is one of the many U.S. municipalities that first adopted fluoridation (in 1974) and then got rid of it in a popular referendum (in 1978).

At the same time, the U.S. surgeon general, Dr. C. Everett Koop, has described tooth decay as one of our nation's "greatest health problems in terms of the number of people affected and its persistence." In terms of dollars, too. According to one estimate by the Centers for Disease Control, the nation's annual bill for dental treatment comes to around \$19.5 billion, roughly half of which is spent on treating tooth decay. There is ample evidence to show that one milligram of fluoride daily reduces a child's cavity count by 50 to 60 percent—at the cost of about 15 to 30 cents per person per year.

Even so, the antis continue to win friends and influence people, baffling

journalists and public officials. Why do the foes of fluoridation keep winning more battles than they lose?

One leader of a successful 1983 dump-fluoridation campaign in Levittown, New York, explained a strong element of the movement's perennial appeal: "We're skeptical of government—we want control over what our children consume." Others claim to be fighting corporate greed. As one Northampton, Massachusetts, voter put it back in 1955, "The chemical industry is for fluoridation, even though it may be dangerous, because they will profit from it." That charge is still heard today.

A Triumph

To some degree, the anti's' success also grows out of a long American tradition of popular hostility to "tampering" with nature. Milk was not pasteurized during the 1920s nor were children immunized against diphtheria and smallpox without an initial public outcry. Chlorine is now routinely added to water supplies in the United States to destroy bacteria responsible for cholera, typhoid, and dysentery, but when the idea was first proposed at the turn of the century, opposition was fierce. More recently, scientists have encountered similar bouts of public anxiety over gene-splicing and artificial heart implants.

What is peculiar about the fluoridation controversy is that it has been going on for 35 years—during an era marked by unprecedented gains in science and medicine. The foes of fluoridation have repeatedly won support from a citizenry supposedly

well informed about matters of health and quick to applaud new medical technology. A 1978 issue of *Consumer Reports* described the persistence of the controversy as "one of the major triumphs of quackery over science."

No to Aluminum

The chronicle of fluoridation begins with a detective story.

In 1901, when Dr. Frederick McKay, a young dentist and recent graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, opened a practice in Colorado Springs, he noticed that many of his patients had permanently stained teeth—a discoloration known locally as "Colorado Stain."

First intrigued, then obsessed, McKay began to look into the matter. One of the first things that he learned was that the stain was so widespread in many Rocky Mountain communities that people took it for granted. But none of McKay's investigations yielded a cause.

Nevertheless, by 1916, after extensive investigation throughout the United States, he felt certain that "something in the drinking water" was the culprit. So intent was he on his search for the cause that he ignored the significance of his own published observation that mottled teeth also showed "a singular absence of decay."

Fifteen more years passed before McKay finally solved the mystery—in Bauxite, Arkansas (population: 1,800). The peripatetic investigator discovered that people in Bauxite born after 1909 had badly

Donald R. McNeil, 61, is provost of American Open University of New York Institute of Technology. Born in Spokane, Washington, he received his B.A. (1949) from the University of Oregon and his M.A. (1950) and Ph.D. (1956) in history from the University of Wisconsin. He is the author of In Search of Clio (1955) and The Fight for Fluoridation (1957).



Dr. Frederick McKay (1874–1959). The fluoridation saga began with his quest for the cause of stained teeth.

stained teeth; those born before 1909 did not. What had happened in 1909? McKay learned that in that year Bauxite changed its water supply, replacing shallow surface wells with three deep wells.

When McKay published his findings in 1931, Bauxite's largest employer, the Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA), took notice. Its managers were then engaged in a battle of words with critics who charged that aluminum cookware was poisonous. ALCOA executives were understandably worried that aluminum would be blamed for stained teeth as well.

After reading McKay's article, H. V. Churchill, ALCOA's chief chemist, ordered that a sample of Bauxite well water be tested for rare elements—elements that would go undetected in the usual water tests. The results showed a relatively high level of fluorine (the gaseous element that, when combined with another element, such

as sodium, constitutes fluoride), 13.7 ppm. On January 20, 1931, 29 years after McKay began his search, Churchill informed him that fluoride was responsible for the stain.

As it happened, a husband and wife research team at the University of Arizona, H. V. and Margaret Cammack Smith, made the same discovery at the same time. Their laboratory tests produced even more conclusive proof of the effect of fluoride than had the ALCOA tests.

The U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS), which had long ignored McKay's pleas for assistance, now assigned an energetic young scientist from its San Francisco office, Dr. H. Trendley Dean, to verify the Churchill and Smith findings.

Throughout the 1930s, Dean amassed statistics from across the country. His "shoe leather surveys" confirmed the correlation between fluoride and mottling. He also found that discoloring began when water contained more than one ppm fluoride.

Testing Grand Rapids

Only gradually did Dean's attention shift to the possible beneficial effects of fluoride. Looking back over his data, he found that children from places where the water contained more than one ppm fluoride did indeed have a lower incidence of dental caries than those from areas with water containing a lower concentration of the chemical. In 1938, he published his findings.

Four years later, Dean and his colleagues established that one ppm fluoride was a safe and effective decay preventive and did not cause mottling.

In 1944, spurred by the work of Dean and McKay, the USPHS decided to launch an experimental program and arranged to add sodium

fluoride to the public water supply in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Nearby Muskegon was selected as the control city—no fluoride would be added to the water there. The city fathers had no objection.

On January 25, 1945, as World War II neared its end, Grand Rapids residents began to drink fluoridated water. They were soon followed by the citizens of Newburgh, New York, of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, and of Marshall, Texas. If fluoridation proved to be safe and effective at the end of these various 10- to 15-year tests, the USPHS intended to urge all communities to add fluoride to their water.

The pioneers of fluoridation were generally a cautious lot. Dean, in particular, thought that communities should at first fluoridate only on a test basis. He and other USPHS officials were caught off guard when a small but enthusiastic group of Wisconsin dentists, encouraged by McKay, challenged the "go-slow" approach.

Trusting the Experts

Led by a vigorous, plain-speaking Madison dentist, John Frisch, and the state dental-health officer, Francis Bull, the Wisconsin group called for immediate action—fluoride to *all* the people, and the sooner the better. The rationale behind their hurry-up campaign was simple: People had been drinking naturally fluoridated water at levels far exceeding one ppm for centuries, and there was no sign that they had ever been hurt by it.

It was fitting that the cry for immediate action should come from Wisconsin. Since the heyday of Senator Robert M. LaFollette, Sr., at the turn of the century, forward-looking academics, lawyers, doctors, and politicians from Wisconsin had be-

come nationally known for their crusades to bring a wide range of public services to the people of their state. The Progressives, as they were called, placed great faith in the authority of the expert. With the help of experts, the Progressives regulated the railroads and utilities, passed laws on civil service, pure food, and tuberculosis control, and created a powerful state board of health.

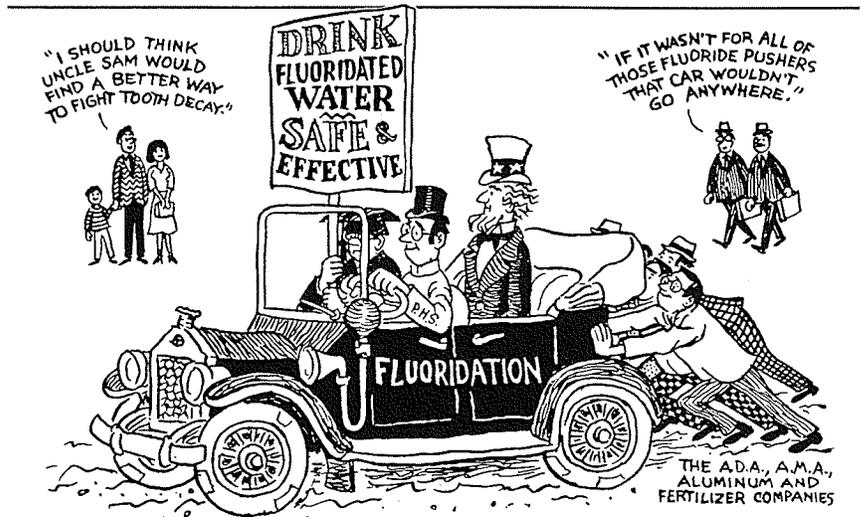
A False Dawn

Frisch, Bull, and the other profluoride dentists were neo-Progressives. The fluoridation of water, they believed, was but another step toward improving the quality of life in Wisconsin.

Not everyone agreed. Even Frisch's own colleagues on the state Fluorine Committee had reservations. "Of course I believe Wisconsin would like to be a pioneer," one colleague wrote, "but we can well afford to go slowly."

Scorning such hesitations, Frisch and his closest allies went ahead with plans for fluoridating all of Wisconsin's public water supplies. From 1946 to 1950, he barnstormed across the countryside, working unstintingly for his goal of "50 by '50"—50 communities fluoridated by 1950. His aggressive style brought victory after victory.

To convince skeptics and to overwhelm the "go-slowers" in Madison, Frisch chartered a bus and took one-third of the city's dentists to Union Grove, Wisconsin, where the water supply contained the optimal one ppm fluoride. The visiting dentists examined the teeth of 500 children and found that they had a decay rate that was only 27 percent that of Madison's children. All the "rabid skeptics" came back "fluorine enthusiasts of the first magnitude," Frisch



later reported.

Frisch's efforts paid off. By January 1, 1950, 50 Wisconsin communities, including Madison, were fluoridating their water.

These successes, coupled with positive reports from Grand Rapids, Michigan, and other trial cities, began to undermine Washington's gossamer position. Even after only four or five years, the results from the experimental communities were showing a remarkable reduction of tooth decay among young children. In the spring of 1950, responding to pressure from the Wisconsin crusaders and others, the USPHS abandoned its earlier position and approved immediate fluoridation for all communities in America. Within a year, the American Dental Association (ADA) and the American Medical Association (AMA) had followed suit.

"Cease firing; the war is over!" Frisch wrote McKay, who was still actively pushing for widespread adoption of fluoridation. But the victory celebrations were premature. The fight was just beginning.

In fact, resistance had begun to

form even before the big health organizations put their imprimatur on fluoridation. In Stevens Point, Wisconsin—one of the towns where Frisch campaigned—the backlash was led by Alexander Y. Wallace, a self-styled "watchdog of the public treasury," local poet, and frequent writer of letters to the editor. His argument: Fluoride was "poison."*

Wallace's zeal and vocal cords matched Frisch's, and largely as a result of his protests, the Stevens Point City Council turned down a proposal to fluoridate in July 1949.

Led by the dentists, the profluoridation forces in Stevens Point (population: 15,000) did not surrender. Enlisting the support of several women's groups, they urged the city council to reconsider. On November 21, 1949, the council did an about-face and authorized fluoridation. Wallace promptly collected the 1,300 signatures necessary to bring the

*The argument, used to this day, ignores the principle of dosage. Only at somewhere between 2.5 and 5 grams per liter would fluoride ions be certainly lethal to an average 154-pound adult.

question to a referendum, and the beleaguered councilmen, having no choice under the law but to accept, scheduled the vote for September 1950. But before the referendum, the council secretly ordered fluoride to be added to the public water. Wallace found out, denounced the council's "underhanded trick," and quickly gained a larger audience.

'Good Bye, Fluorine!'

He then redoubled his efforts. Painting Frisch and company as "foreigners" and faddists, he produced the "expert" testimony of several medical school deans to support his view that fluoridation was still experimental—as, in the eyes of the USPHS, it still was. Adorned with skull and crossbones, his handbills went on to urge the citizens to "Get the Poison out of our Drinking Water."

While Wallace organized mass meetings and rewrote the lyrics of popular tunes to add lift to his campaign ("Good Night, Irene" was changed to "Good Bye, Fluorine!"), Frisch and the women's club campaigners decided to ignore him. They hoped that the facts and reasonable arguments would triumph.

They did not. On September 19, 1950, after what one resident described as the "bitterest fight in the city's history," the citizens of Stevens Point rejected fluoridation by a vote of 3,705 to 2,166.

Wallace's triumph at Stevens Point, well publicized by the national press, soon acquired folkloric status among the opponents of fluoridation. It was their Battle of Bunker Hill, and it demonstrated not only that fluoridation was a political issue but also that a well-orchestrated campaign could defeat the experts.

Before Stevens Point, there was no organized opposition to fluoridation.

There were only scattered cries of alarm from people who (like Wallace) had earlier opposed the pasteurization of milk and other government-imposed health measures.

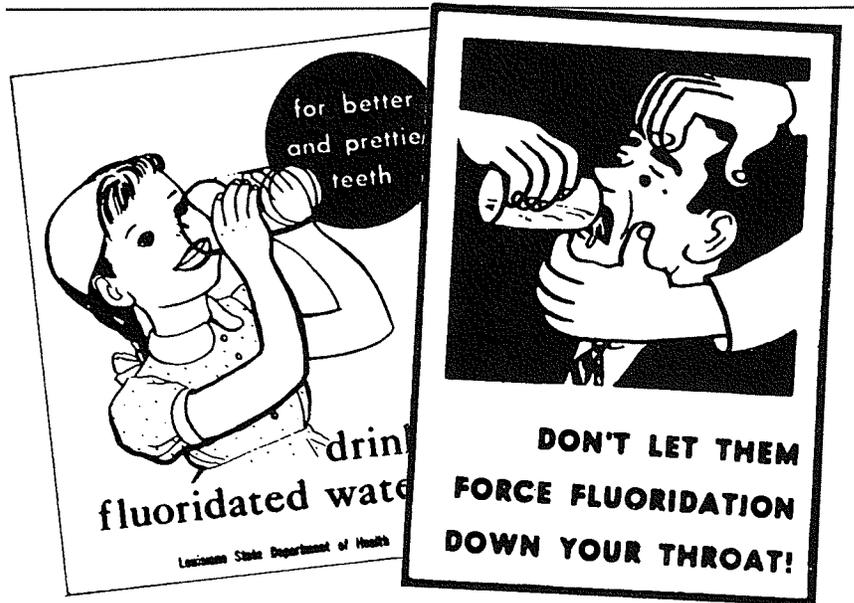
Now, however, national networks began to form. Individuals, including some dentists, chiropractors, natural health advocates, and ordinary "concerned citizens," found allies in such diverse organizations and publications as the John Birch Society, the Ku Klux Klan, the Citizens Medical Reference Bureau (a long-time fighter of immunization), *Prevention* magazine, and the Medical-Dental Ad Hoc Committee on the Evaluation of Fluoridation.

These groups and individuals began sharing information, offering suggestions on tactics, and in other ways (sometimes financial) providing mutual support.

Trouble in Texas

During the earliest days of the struggle, fluoridation opponents sought recruits from the scientific community above all others. Some scientists and physicians actively supported the anti—for a time—while others became unwitting allies of the resistance movement.

Among the latter was Dr. Alfred Taylor, a University of Texas biochemist. In 1950, Taylor began laboratory tests on mice to determine whether sodium fluoride was an anticancer compound. He discovered that while there was no change in the incidence of cancer, mice that drank fluoridated water developed cancer earlier than did other mice. Taylor tried to keep his findings secret, since they were only preliminary, but some of his graduate students could not resist leaking the news. Soon the Associated Press was running the story.



Fluoride converts the primary material in tooth enamel, hydroxyapatite, into more acid-resistant fluorapatite. Opponents call fluoride "forced medication."

More than 20 Texas towns and cities that were on the verge of fluoridating, including Austin, Dallas, and Fort Worth, decided to postpone. "The rumor afforded the opponents, the diehards, and the lukewarms a screen to hide behind," lamented Dr. Edward Taylor, the Texas state dental-health officer (and no relation to the biochemist).

USPHS's Dean went immediately to Austin to investigate. He found that the experiment had been invalid all along. Taylor had not realized that all of the mice—both the experimental and control groups—had been fed Purina laboratory chow that contained a whopping 42 ppm fluoride. But it was too late to kill the notion, by then widely publicized, that fluoride brought on cancer. For decades, Taylor's findings, variously embellished, were used in battles by antis of all persuasions.

Some of the handful of medical men who joined the early opposition saw a cause kindred to others. Dr. Paul Manning, a dentist from Springfield, Massachusetts, had formed the Research 44 Association in 1949 to combat what he viewed as forced experimentation on human beings. Fluoridation was, to Manning, simply a case in point. As testimony to the successes of "godless medical technocrats," he wrote to sympathizers in the early 1950s, "lie Buchenwald and Grand Rapids, Dachau and Newburgh."

Another ally, Dr. George L. Waldbott, a Detroit physician specializing in allergies, began during the mid-1950s to report cases of fluoride poisoning. When he journeyed to Milwaukee to support a petition before the city council to stop fluoridation, the city health commissioner pointed out that Waldbott routinely

made his dire diagnoses without ever seeing his patients.

Waldbott was undaunted by such criticism. In January 1955, he and his wife, Edith, published the first issue of the *National Fluoridation News*, a bimonthly bulletin detailing alleged instances of fluoride-induced illness or new "scientific" evidence against the chemical. The publication quickly became the national bulletin board for antifuoridation information.

Drugs in the Water

The number of doctors and scientists in the opposition has dwindled since the early days of the controversy. But many groups and individuals espousing vitamins, natural foods, and drugless therapy have remained staunch champions of the cause, providing support for other antis involved in local referendum battles.

An early champion was Royal Lee of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, long an enemy of government intervention in matters of health. In 1933, the Food and Drug Administration declared that his Vitamin Products Company, which marketed vitamins and patent medicines nationwide, was making false and fraudulent claims for one of its products. Six years later, a federal court found Lee guilty of violating the Food and Drug Act by making "false and misleading" statements about his product. In 1945, the Federal Trade Commission ordered him to stop disseminating "false properties of medicinal preparations."

Despite these setbacks, Lee prospered. With some of his wealth, he established in Milwaukee the Lee Foundation for Nutritional Research. This nonprofit foundation was dedicated, in Lee's words, to protecting the public against "vi-

cious commercial interests" that were busy "selling the public down the river." Besides fluoridation, Lee fought the sulfa drug "racket" and, echoes of the battle in Bauxite, the use of aluminum cooking utensils. Lee died in 1971, after a life of affluence and vigorous activism.

Perhaps the most widely known of all the so-called natural scientists was Dr. Charles Betts of Toledo, Ohio. Though he never graduated from dental school, he was a licensed dentist—and another ardent foe of aluminum. As fluoridation spread, Betts began stumping the country in support of its local opponents. Denouncing proponents as "checkbook charlatans" who "spew forth their Munchausen scientific muck," he asked his audiences if they wanted "those Mexicans, Negroes, and Puerto Ricans in your water department" to put "drugs in your water."

The International Chiropractic Association, with its headquarters in Davenport, Iowa, became a center for the dissemination of antifuoridation data. At odds with the medical profession as much as with fluoridation, chiropractors have remained powerful local leaders of the movement.

Mass Medication?

Ever since the late 1940s, the fluoridation question has been sporadically linked to other social and political issues. Religious freedom is one.

In 1951, John Benediktson, the president-elect of the California Dental Association, complained that local dental societies urging fluoridation had "run into local opposition from Christian Scientists." The ADA sent a delegation to the Christian Science Church headquarters in Boston to determine its official position. The church leaders said they had de-

FLUORIDATION AROUND THE WORLD

Compared with most other countries in the world, America, despite all the controversy, is well down the road to widespread fluoridation. Only Australia and Ireland, with, respectively, two-thirds and three-fifths of their populations drinking fluoridated water, are ahead of the United States. Twenty-nine other nations have taken steps to follow suit. Roughly 12 percent of the population of Great Britain drinks fluoridated water, and Canada comes close behind the United States, with over one-third of its population drinking fluoride-treated water. The extent of fluoridation in the Soviet Union and the East European states is unknown, but their governments all officially endorse the practice. Meanwhile, West European countries and Japan remain very far behind, with only a few trial runs to their credit; and fluoridation ranks low among the preoccupations of the Third World.

cided to leave the matter "more or less to local determination."

But local determinations have varied. During the 1950s and '60s, many of the state committees of the church vigorously campaigned against what members felt was forced "mass medication." Some sued for relief. When one case came to trial in Missouri in 1961, the state's supreme court ruled that fluoride was not a medication but a trace element found naturally in food and water. It was added only where there was an insufficient concentration to prevent cavities. On these grounds and others, the constitutionality of fluoridation has been upheld.*

The antifuoridation forces have also enlisted a number of less benign allies. During the 1950s, Golda Franzen, a San Francisco housewife, became the leading exponent of the idea that fluoridation was a "Red conspiracy." She predicted that fluoridation would produce "mo-

ronic, atheistic slaves" who would end up "praying to the Communists." Franzen's warnings, echoed by such groups as the John Birch Society and the Ku Klux Klan, acquired particular salience during the anti-Communist fevers of the McCarthy era.

For his part, C. Leon de Aryan, editor of an anti-Semitic publication in San Diego, described the spread of fluoridation as a plot to "weaken the Aryan race" by "paralyzing the functions of the frontal lobes."

Heterogeneous though they were, the various opponents of fluoridation proved to be surprisingly effective right from the start.

In Seattle, Washington, in 1951, for example, the antifuoridation committee drew support from Christian Scientists, a few dentists, health food operators, and fervent anti-Communists. Another set of allies, the chiropractors, publicized fluoride's alleged deleterious effects—tumors, brittleness of bones, oily sweat, undue financial anxiety, loss of memory, and nymphomania. The antis won, 84,000 to 44,000.

This drama in Seattle was to be repeated, time and again, all over the

*Although antifuoridationists frequently resort to lawsuits, no court of last appeal has ruled in their favor on health grounds. The U.S. Supreme Court has consistently refused to review fluoridation cases.

nation. Even after the 10-year tests in Grand Rapids and Newburgh were completed in 1955, with favorable results, the resistance movement continued (though with fewer and fewer respectable scientists behind it).

An article in the February 1955 *Scientific American* offered an explanation. The authors, Bernard and Judith Mausner, had surveyed the voters in Northampton, Massachusetts, where fluoridation had just been defeated by a 2-to-1 margin. They found that opposition votes came mostly from the elderly, people without children under 12, and people in the lower income brackets. Most of the opponents they interviewed had failed to finish high school.

The Mausners concluded that the outcome resulted largely from growing anti-intellectualism and the

“current suspicion of scientists, a fear of conspiracy, the tendency to perceive the world as menacing.”

Populism?

Such suspicions and fears have continued to help the opposition forces win a clear majority of the fluoridation referendums in America ever since. To be sure, the rhetorical emphasis has shifted with the times. During the Vietnam War and the Watergate trials, distrust of authority became a popular opposition theme. Among other vogues and trends to which the antifuoridationists lately have attached themselves are the back-to-the-soil movement, the “organic” and “natural” food fads, environmentalism. And during the late 1970s, the increased use of local and statewide referendums and the rise of single-issue interest-group activity (concerned with everything from taxes to abortion) gave weight and legitimacy to what many journalists now saw as the “populist” tactics of the antis.

During the last 10 years, new anti-fluoridation leaders have come onto the national scene. None of them is more effective or widely known than John Y. Yiamouyiannis, a Connecticut-born biochemist educated at the University of Chicago and the University of Rhode Island. In 1974, Yiamouyiannis was hired as the science director of the National Health Federation. Based in Monrovia, California, this enterprise has, during its short but vivid history, backed such remedies as electrical therapy (given to patients diagnosed by mail) and laetrile. In a 1963 news release, the federal Food and Drug Administration described the federation as a “front for promoters of unproven remedies, eccentric theories, and quackery.”



John Yiamouyiannis, the reigning anti-fluoridation leader, has also come out against chlorinated water.

Long an opponent of polio vaccination and the pasteurization of milk, the federation hired Yiamouyiannis to take on fluoridation.

The doctor more than earned his keep. Traveling throughout America and around the world, he appeared on TV and radio talk shows, helped to frame local lawsuits to halt fluoridation, and claimed to have established links between fluoride and cancer.

Victory in Los Angeles

One of his signal victories, aided by chiropractors, health food advocates, and radical environmentalists, was the defeat of fluoridation in the 1975 Los Angeles referendum. The studies he cited there—demonstrating what he alleged was a higher than average cancer rate in fluoridated communities—were examined by the Centers for Disease Control, the National Cancer Institute, and the National Academy of Sciences and found to be insubstantial. According to one reviewer, the studies were more in the nature of a “propaganda flyer than a serious scientific effort.”

Nevertheless, many Los Angeles voters were swayed by evidence manufactured (or sometimes selectively culled from reputable scientific sources) by Yiamouyiannis and his allies. Two prominent state legislators, Art Torres and Richard Alatorre, turned against the measure when they were told that a World Health Organization (WHO) study found that the tooth enamel of the malnourished was more susceptible to mottling. (They were not told that WHO endorses fluoridation or that the study was dealing with famine conditions.) The verdict of the legislators weighed heavily. The antis won handily in Los Angeles, by a



Fluoridation, antis charge, is another costly “big government” scheme.

vote of 213,573 to 166,549.*

After a dispute with the president of the National Health Federation, Yiamouyiannis was fired in 1979. He promptly launched his own organization, the Center for Health Action, in Delaware, Ohio.

From his new base, Yiamouyiannis went on to establish himself as the antis’ reigning oracle on fluoridation. In his recent book, *Fluoride: The Aging Factor* (1983), he charged that fluorides attacked the body’s own immunity system and were responsible for colds, premature aging, arthritis, birth defects, and, inevitably, cancer.†

*In California, the antis are particularly zealous; only 17 percent of the state’s population is served by fluoridated water supplies.

†To those unable to flee from fluoridated communities, Yiamouyiannis offered a line of water distillers, ranging in price from \$449 to \$1,149. All, he said, removed fluoride, as well as other “harmful inorganic contaminants,” from the water.

Last year, attuned to current events, Yiamouyiannis announced from Ohio that fluoride caused AIDS—a diagnosis echoed by Dr. John Lee, a Marin County, California, physician active in the West Coast antifuoridation movement.

Jim Jones Kool-Aid

Apart from a few new faces and a few new variations on old themes, little has changed in the antifuoridation movement since the late 1950s. The *National Fluoridation News* continues to come out four or five times a year, although it is now edited by one Edith Fabian in Gravette, Arkansas. The Ku Klux Klan currently seems to have other preoccupations, but chiropractors and health food enthusiasts continue to enlist in the cause, no less zealous than those partisans of yesteryear.

A 1983 battle in Springfield, Massachusetts, makes this clear.

Proponents of the measure included all the respectable local and national health organizations, the Jaycees, the League of Women Voters, the American Legion, and other civic groups. The antifuoridation group, the Save Our Water Committee of Springfield, was chaired by Susan Pare, a former high school science teacher, and had the enthusiastic backing of the Massachusetts Communities for Pure Water, led by a Springfield chiropractor named Stephen Dean. In public meetings, TV debates, letters to the editor, and a blizzard of handbills, the energetic antis managed to associate fluoridation with everything from Three Mile Island to Jonestown to Love Canal. At a public hearing, one opponent warned his fellow citizens against putting "Jim Jones Kool-Aid in our water supply."

The news media, including the

Springfield *Daily News* and the local television stations, supported fluoridation, but they let the antis have their say. The *Daily News's* editors looked into some of the opposition charges and found them false. But the barrage of alarms and accusations from the antis was so steady that it was difficult for the paper, or any of the local media, to check everything. So they didn't.

Another factor worked in favor of the antis: the reluctance of the mayor (until just before the vote, when he quietly came out in favor) and of most Springfield city council members to take a public stand on the measure. That shyness has, with a few exceptions, been the rule among American local politicians ever since the earliest days of the controversy. Fluoridation's foes are far more passionate than its supporters; endorsing fluoridation is likely to cost a politician more popularity than he gains.

Paying the Price

Expecting reason to prevail in central Massachusetts, the League of Women Voters and other fluoridation supporters were stunned when the votes of the November 8, 1983, referendum were tallied. With a voter turnout of nearly 50 percent, 17,313 people voted against, and 7,535 for, fluoridation.

Did the 1955 Mausner profile of typical opposition voters—ill-educated, low-income folk—hold for the Springfield election? Not at all. Paul Robbins, a political consultant hired by the profluoridation forces, found that anti voters came from all social and economic classes and all educational levels. "The better educated people tended to be swayed by the freedom of choice argument," said Robbins. "The pseudoscientific

scare material worked better on the less well educated. But even bright, informed people were affected by the atmosphere of uncertainty created by the rabid antis."

Sister Caritas, the head of a local hospital and a fluoridation backer, offered her own explanation: "I just don't think people are aware that there is a serious dental disease problem."

Indeed, across America, according to a 1984 survey by the Opinion Research Corporation, only two percent of those polled mentioned fluoride as an important factor in the prevention of cavities. The survey also revealed a probable cause of this surprising ignorance: Despite the ADA's stand, most dentists, when talking to patients, tend to stress general hygiene over the benefits of fluoridation. This means that the public's most authoritative sources of dental information, the family dentists, do little to make people aware of what they have to lose if fluoridation is defeated in their communities.

In fluoridation, as in space exploration, the United States is a leader; but it is unlikely that the USPHS's

goal, set in 1950, of fluoridated water for all Americans will soon be achieved.

The reason is simple. The fluoridation question is almost tailor-made for endless controversy in a free-wheeling democratic society. Fluoridation, unlike chlorination, is not a life-or-death matter. Its scientific rationale has little emotional appeal. When it comes to a vote, fluoridation is largely a symbolic issue. Arrayed against its adoption have been, and always will be, not only the fanatics, the fearful, and the vendors of snake oil but also a goodly proportion of those Americans who simply distrust authority, government, science. Those people will not go away, nor, in all respects, would the nation be better off if they did.

As long as the issue is left to local determination, Americans should expect the fluoridation controversy, in all its bizarre and time-honored variations, to crop up in their towns and cities for many decades. This is one of the prices—not the dearest, but not the smallest, either—that Americans pay for having the kind of open political system they do.

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BROOKINGS

COMMENTARY

No Golden Years Yet

We welcome timely letters from readers, especially those who wish to amplify or correct information published in the Quarterly and/or react to the views expressed in our essays. The writer's telephone number and address should be included. For reasons of space, letters are usually edited for publication. Some of those printed below were received in response to the editors' requests for comment.

Voice of Experience

I feel certain that your readership profited from your collection of essays on aging in America ["The Elderly," New Year's 1985].

If I could have added one article to the issue, it would have been on long-term care and our need for a national policy. Although we live in a rich nation, there are terrible gaps in our health and social programs, the most tragic of which is the lack of a meaningful long-term care policy today in the United States.

Furthermore, when institutionalization is needed, no appreciable federal or private insurance exists to pay for custodial care by nonmedical persons related more to meeting everyday needs than to seeking cure for illness. For example, only \$200 million of the home nursing care bill was covered by insurance in 1981. This figure represents less than one percent of the outlay for federal and state programs for the poor. Medicaid paid the lion's share, about 50 percent. Most of the rest was paid out of the pockets of the families of those afflicted by long-term illness.

We need to marshal some of our greatest minds to change our health care system, which does not provide a medical program under which every American can get the kind of medical care that he or she requires. I assure you that my colleagues and I on the House Select Committee on Aging will continue exploring alternatives in an attempt to close some of these health care gaps.

*Congressman Claude Pepper
Chairman
House Select Committee on Aging
U.S. House of Representatives*

In his commentary on the Elderly in America, Timothy James refers to the "woeful image" of aging.

During the 1950s and '60s, that may have been true. After all, up to one-third of the nation's older citizens were living in poverty in those years. Medicare had not been invented. And the image of the aged in the news and entertainment media was a misleading stereotype of frailty, senility, impoverishment, and worse.

We have made great economic and social progress since then. The poverty rate has been significantly reduced. Older Americans are now recognized as an active and potent force on the political scene. Now the media portray us in positive, substantive roles.

Unfortunately, the pendulum may be swinging too far in the other direction. Today, the image of aging is one of affluence. We are told that we have achieved "economic parity" with younger persons. Because *some* of us can afford retirement condominiums and trips abroad, we are told that *all* of us can afford reductions in our Social Security benefits and Medicare coverage.

This misleading stereotype raises questions about the fundamental fairness of Social Security and other benefit programs for older persons. It implies that it is unfair for younger workers to have to pay taxes to support an "affluent" older population that no longer needs such support. And it implies that we are being "greedy" if we protest across-the-board cuts in our economic and health care protection.

If it was wrong in the 1960s to imply that all older persons were living in poverty, it is equally wrong today to imply that they are generally affluent and living well.

Despite our economic progress, the over-65 population continues to have the highest poverty rate of any adult age group. Nearly four million of the nation's older citizens have total incomes of less than \$4,800. For another 2.2 million, incomes hover between \$4,800 and \$6,000.

The problem is particularly severe for older women. The total median income in 1983 for women aged 65 and older was \$5,600. One in every three older women

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living alone is in poverty. And the poverty rate among the minority elderly and those of advanced age exceeds 40 percent.

Ironically, it is precisely the oldest and poorest of the elderly population—those who rely on Social Security for nearly their total income and who are most dependent upon Medicare to help with high medical costs—who would be hurt most by the kind of wholesale, across-the-board program cuts that are now being advocated.

For instance, a one-year freeze in Social Security cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) would force an additional half a million older persons below the poverty line in a year's time, according to a study by Data Resources, Inc.

That is why it is so sad that this myth of affluence is being given such credence, particularly when certain of the nation's politicians are looking for any possible excuse to make further cuts in Social Security, Medicare, and other social programs. It is also unfortunate that this false image is being used to fan the flames of generational conflict between old and

young. For in that kind of warfare, there surely will be no winners.

As Senator Bill Bradley (D.-N.J.) quite correctly states: "Social Security is the best expression of community we have in the country today." That's the best kind of attitude all of us—young and old alike—need to have as we confront the challenges that an aging population will bring.

Vita R. Ostrander
President

American Association of Retired Persons

Putting the Lie

Timothy James is considerably off the mark to cite Shakespeare's lines from *As You Like It* as illustrative of the way "figures of advanced years turned up in literature mainly as objects of scorn" ["The Trade," *WQ*, New Year's 1985].

When it comes to "sans teeth" and the rest, it is not Shakespeare who "puts it," but Jacques. What Shakespeare "puts" is the verbal and dramatic lie to everything that issues from Jacques's mouth, all of it quite melancholy, of course.

Jim Hiner
Madison, Wisconsin

The Mind: A Dualist Speaks

The *Wilson Quarterly's* cluster of articles on the Mind [Winter 1984] is a sign that we have emerged from the dark night of behaviorism.

For over 30 years, I have published on dualist-interactionism. In my book with Sir Karl Popper, *The Self and Its Brain*, there was a full development of dualist-interactionism as a philosophy with support from neuroscience.

P. E. Roland, for example, found that the act of mental intention initiated neuronal discharges in the supplementary motor area in the medial part of the frontal lobe, whereas neuronal discharges in the motor cortex occurred only when an action was being carried out, not merely being thought about. Another striking discovery of Roland's was that when mental attention was focused on a finger, for example, in order to detect an extremely weak touch, there was increased

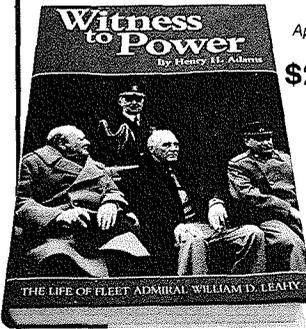
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neural activity in the special touch area for the finger as well as in the mid-prefrontal lobe. Here again, a mental event, the attention, initiated neural activity. However, this experimental evidence that mental events can initiate neural events as postulated in dualist-interactionism could provide no clue as to the nature of this influence of mental events on neural events.

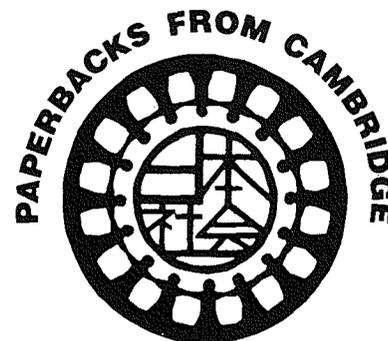
A way out of this impasse has been suggested by the quantum physicist Henry Margenau in *The Miracle of Existence* (1984). He proposes that the nearest physical analogue of the mind could be a probability field of quantum mechanics, which possesses neither matter nor energy and is not sharply localized in place. Yet such a probability field could convey information to extreme microstructures without transfer of energy. The microsite for such action on nerve cells could be the synaptic endings on its surface by branches from other nerve cells. In response to an impulse, a synaptic ending, or knob, functions probabilistically in the emission of a single vesicle of transmitter. This vesicle is extremely small, with a mass of about 3×10^{-17} grams, so it is of a size that could be influenced by a probability field.

Thus, there is now a possible physical explanation of a mental event initiating a neural event, namely an altered probability of vesicle emission at a synapse. Such an effect could be cumulative for many of the thousands of synapses on a nerve cell that could be simultaneously influenced. And hence, by virtue of the influence of probability fields, the nerve cell might be caused to generate an impulse discharge. So we may have the beginning of a mind-brain action that eluded Descartes, but it is at most merely a beginning.

*Sir John C. Eccles
Contra, Switzerland*

Correction: Carter's 'Malaise'

It is not true, as I mistakenly stated in my article "The Broker State," [WQ, Winter 1984] that President Jimmy Carter "told the public that a 'malaise' of the American spirit was at the root of government troubles." He spoke in that July 15, 1979,



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speech of "the erosion of our confidence in the future," of a "crisis of confidence," of occasional "paralysis and stagnation and drift." But the "malaise" label was apparently fastened upon this interesting speech by Senator Edward P. Kennedy and then in the 1984 campaign by President Reagan. Carter never used that word, and I regret any complicity in attaching it to him.

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—Ed.

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