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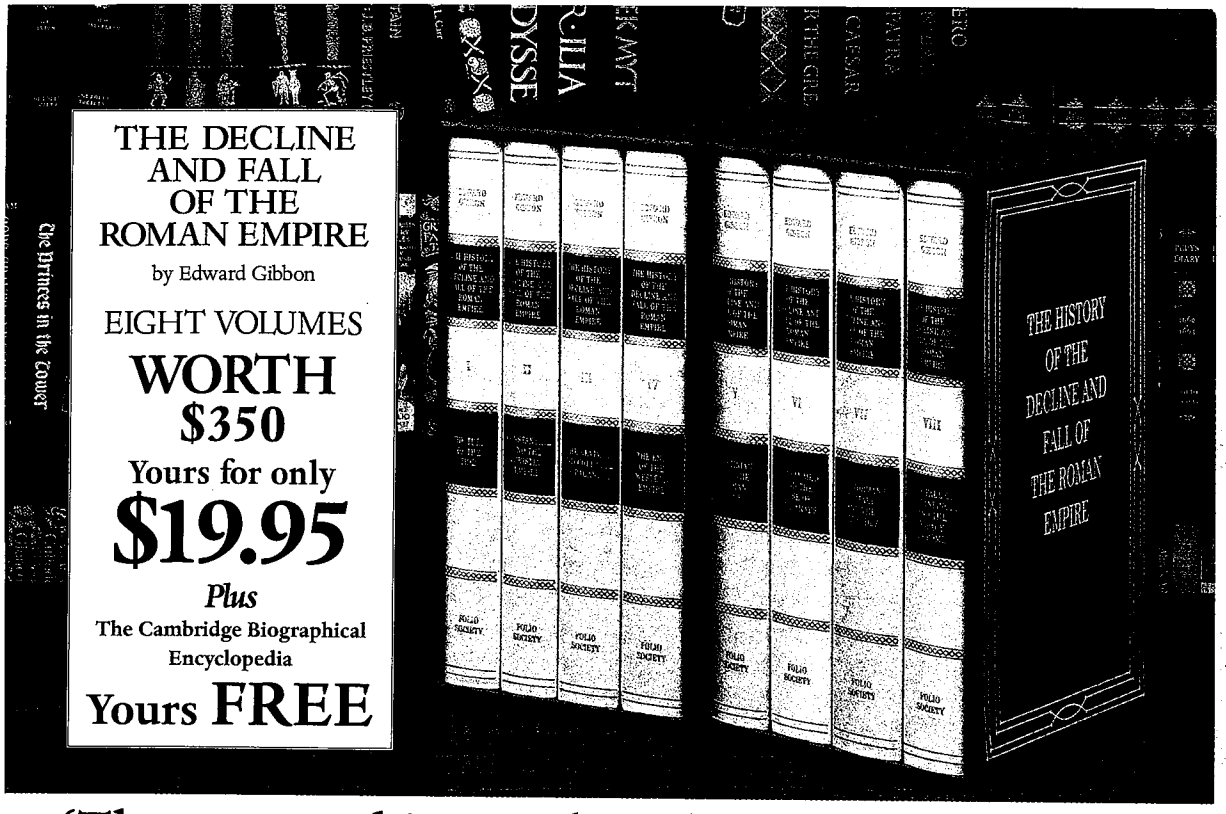

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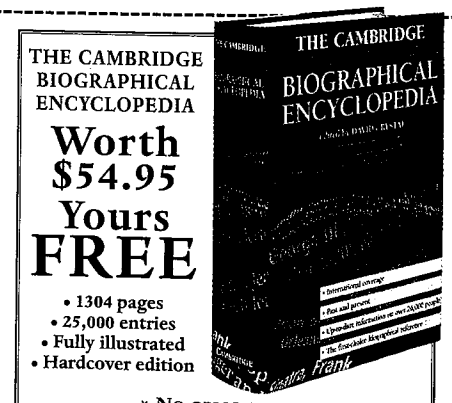

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Editor's Comment

Americans are not likely to hear much about the issue of privacy in this year's presidential election, and for good reason. Even the specialists and advocates are still struggling to comprehend the many ways in which new information-related technologies are altering the boundaries between self and society. The changes are occurring in a wide variety of settings—in cyberspace, on the job, at home, even on the streets—and at a rapid pace. Few of the questions they raise allow for straightforward answers. We may reflexively say, for example, that a person's medical and genetic records should enjoy absolute protection—but even if the person poses a threat to public health? Even if the person turns up unconscious in a hospital emergency room?

It would be a mistake to think of such dilemmas as isolated questions of policy. In historical terms, privacy is a luxury good. It is a product of political democracy—explicitly recognized as a right by the U.S. Supreme Court only in 1965—that has been given shape by culture and affluence. It finds expression in a host of philosophical, legal, and everyday forms. In the 19th century, for example, travelers in rural America thought nothing of sharing a bed with a complete stranger; today, middle-class children feel put upon if they must share a bedroom with one of their own siblings. Yet if we think of privacy in the West as a careful respect for each individual's unique identity, its roots can be seen to lie deeper, in philosophy and religion. So we are in the process of negotiating the terms for the continuation of a precious and complex legacy, and the essays in this issue are meant to point toward some of the new directions that legacy may take.

With this issue, we introduce a number of improvements in the *WQ*'s appearance. Our thanks to award-winning designer David Herbick, who has added, as we trust readers will agree, a new note of elegance and accessibility to our pages.

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The writer's telephone number and postal address should be included. For reasons of space, letters are usually edited for publication. Some letters are received in response to the editors' requests for comment.

The Debate over Secularism

In making his case to restore religion to the public square, Wilfred M. McClay ["Two Concepts of Secularism," *WQ*, Summer '00] caricatures the position he terms "positive secularism." Strong, or positive, secularism does not seek to confine religion to the domain of personal expression in order to establish unbelief. Rather, it does so in the hope of equipping public life with religion-free "buffer zones" where citizens of every faith—and of none—can come together as persons and citizens, confident that no alien faith, not even that of the majority, will mar that encounter. It assures that no single creed's idiosyncratic moral concepts will unduly dominate public-policy debates, and that the government can go about the people's business untroubled by the strife of sects.

In his call for a more limited, "negative" secularism—tempered by external values derived from faith—McClay offers to reimpose a Christian yoke upon a society now marked by unprecedented religious diversity. In view of the rapid growth of non–Judeo-Christian minorities, we should be asking whether the public square is naked enough. If not, we risk open religious strife in our schools and courtrooms, when a resurgent civic Christianity is forced on record numbers of Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, and nonreligious Americans.

The protection McClay would offer is plainly inadequate, and for proof we need look no further than the closing paragraphs, in which he issues a technophobic call to curtail scientific exploration of the human genome and human cognition based on a uniquely Judeo-Christian understanding of human nature as an endowment from God. This is precisely the sort of sectarian interference in public debate that a more muscular secularism would properly forbid. Judaism and Christianity may see human nature as a divine grant whose character we must not tamper with, but other world religions see it differently, as do many nonreligious Americans. I find it chilling how cavalierly McClay seems ready to exclude these minority viewpoints from his vision of the polis.

Tom Flynn
Senior Editor, Free Inquiry *magazine*
Amherst, N.Y.

Wilfred McClay's "Two Concepts of Secularism," like the Isaiah Berlin essay on liberalism to which the title alludes, has the potential of becoming a standard reference in public discussions about the nature of the American experiment. McClay is certainly correct about the growing awareness of the undesirability and impossibility of "the naked public square." When in 1984 I published my book by that title, the argument was considered highly controversial. Today it is a candidate for becoming the established wisdom.

In my concurring opinion to McClay's masterful essay, I would emphasize two additional considerations. First, the failed American attempt to construct a naked public square was of relatively short duration, and was almost entirely due to the contemporary success of secular elites in using the courts to impose a definition of social and moral reality in conflict with the lived experience of almost all Americans. That attempt was aggressively launched in the aftermath of World War II, and established for a time a rule of ideological secularism in which "the separation of church and state" meant the separation of religion and religion-based morality from public life. In today's politics, and to a considerable extent in our jurisprudence, that quasi-religious establishment of secularism is very much on the defensive.

McClay also might have developed

more explicitly the idea that religion, and the Judeo-Christian moral tradition in particular, provides a much more secure basis for the inclusion and protection of secularist dissenters than the dissenters are able to provide for the inclusion and protection of religious believers. The naked public square is a very dangerous place for minorities. A society devoid of transcendent referents to the absolute good by which it would be judged (as in "We hold these truths . . .") is also devoid of transcendent inhibitions against evil, including the evil of the tyranny of the majority.

The Rev. Richard John Neuhaus
President, Religion and Public Life
New York, N.Y.

Wilfred McClay's article is unpersuasive and frightening in what it fails to acknowledge. McClay asserts that "any large-scale religious revivalism or enthusiasm the United States is likely to see in the years to come will have accepted the prior restraint that negative secularism imposes."

From the vantage of the American Southwest, one wonders what world the author inhabits. It may be that the religionists one can observe from McClay's perspective are committed to the idea of pluralism and act "within the container of a negative-secular understanding of the world," but the real world is populated by tens of millions of people who affirm "their view of religion as the ultimate faith that rightfully supersedes the tragic blindnesses and destructive irrationalities of the historical secularisms."

This commitment leads them to a monistic view of society in which they possess the sole truth and their way is the only path to communion with God and to ultimate salvation. It is an intolerant path which rejects any hint of the pluralism McClay so fervently admires. And this is not a small group of people, this cadre of illiberal Protestants; nor is it quiescent, nor is it willing to play by the rules. Rather, in the

pursuit of the souls of unbelievers, virtually any subterfuge or deception is allowable, for the ends always justify the means. As we experience this perspective in real life, it is offensive and frightening.

McClay's article would have been more satisfying if he had admitted that there is a sizable constituency of Americans for whom secularism is an anathema, and religion a vehicle to negate and eliminate anyone who does not agree with the worldview they so militantly propagate.

Kenneth D. Roseman, Ph.D.
Senior Rabbi, Temple Shalom
Dallas, Texas

Race and Education

I feel a responsibility to respond to the publication of John McWhorter's article ["Explaining the Black Education Gap," *WQ*, Summer '00]. He proposes that black anti-intellectualism explains the education gap. Certainly, anti-intellectualism is prominent within certain segments of the black population. But that it is a centerpiece of a homogeneous abstraction called "black culture" defies the most minimal standards of intellectual skepticism. Nor does McWhorter mention that antiintellectualism is a prominent facet of culture in the United States as a whole.

Moreover, the majority of the evidence he presents to support his thesis is anecdotal: "A black teacher friend of mine" or "my own experience during five years on the faculty at Berkeley." To elevate personal observations to absurd generalizations is an oversimplification of the highest order. Were an article of similar quality submitted by Molefi K. Asante, Angela Davis, or Johnetta Cole, it would not be gracing your pages. Yet on this subject, the grossest generalizations supported by the most ephemeral evidence are standard fare. No wonder the attempts to rectify the education gap stray so far from the mark

David Covin
Director of Pan African Studies
California State University, Sacramento
Sacramento, Calif.

By identifying the anti-education values that emerged from slavery and Jim Crow as the principal cause of the black education gap, John H. McWhorter's brilliant article illuminates the path to closing the gap not only for blacks but also for Appalachian whites, Hispanics, and other groups that have fallen behind. In each case, the principal obstacle to educational achievement is cultural. That race is irrelevant is underscored by the case of white Appalachia. As shown by Brandeis University historian David Hackett Fisher in his book *Albion's Seed*, anti-education values and attitudes can be traced back to the culture of the British borderlands whence came most of those who settled in Appalachia.

Changing deeply rooted negative cultural values and attitudes about education will not be easy. But resources directed to changing those values and attitudes may be far more productive in the long run than resources directed to better school facilities.

Lawrence E. Harrison
Academy for International and Area Studies
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

I take issue with John McWhorter's hypotheses and conclusions in his article "Explaining the Black Education Gap." He asserts that "victimologist" thinking, anti-intellectualism, separatism, and a cultural disconnect from learning are the primary reasons for the educational gap. He views affirmative action as part of the problem.

Simply telling an individual to stop thinking like a victim is tantamount to blaming the victim for seeing the world as it is. Prior to *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), black students and their teachers were segregated in separate schools in most of the country. Discrimination could be seen in the situation of people like my educated father, who toiled as a sewing machine mechanic during the day but would sit up late at night bookkeeping for the same St. Louis employer who preferred not to acknowledge his full worth by day. He, and other well-educated black parents who were trapped in menial jobs, still stressed the importance of education, although they knew their children's chances for reaping its rewards in the prevailing climate were quite low. To say, then, that black culture does not acknowledge or reward academic achievement is unfair. The author uses too broad a brush.

What black students (and all students) need is not criticism, but positive dialogue addressing how solutions to the education gap can be effected. Strong motivation, higher expectations, and respect have proven to be conducive to student achievement. These tools are available to any teacher (regardless of race) who realizes that a teacher's job is to challenge and inspire students. Unfortunately, many teachers are biased and culturally disconnected from their students. But if educators, parents, and friends made a concerted effort to motivate all students beginning at an early age, affirmative action could go the way of the Ford Edsel.

Vivian L. Kemp
Milwaukee, Wis.

If the cause of the black education gap is cultural, doesn't the cure need to be cultural as well? In the 1960s, a concerted campaign to foster black pride replaced processed hair with natural hair, "Negro" with "black," and deference with assertiveness. Why not a coordinated effort by black intellectuals, celebrities, and pop culture performers to oppose anti-intellectualism and to promote academics? Sympathetic whites, Asians, and others could be recruited as well. A concerted effort could be very effective in throwing out the belief that good books, good study habits, and good grades are "white."

Glenn J. Howard
Bound Brook, N.J.

India's New Status

Even after the demise of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, India, when it was wasn't ignored, was targeted for criticism by American legislators for its nonaligned and alleged pro-Moscow policies. However, as Stephen P.

Cohen points out in "India Rising" [*WQ*, Summer '00], a great change has taken place on Capitol Hill.

American domestic considerations are now working to New Delhi's advantage as American legislators have concluded that increased attention to India brings benefits in the American political system. Ironically, this improvement has taken place since India conducted its May 1998 nuclear tests. Congress, sensitive to agricultural and business interests, has been pressing the administration to relax the sanctions that were imposed at that time. There is a growing appreciation among a majority of legislators that India, which has unresolved conflicts with China and Pakistan, is living in a "tough neighborhood." And for the first time, economic opportunity has figured in congressional thinking about India. American legislators have finally realized that India's market of hundreds of millions of consumers can yield dividends for both Wall Street and Main Street. As American investment in India increases, so too does New Delhi's influence in Washington.

New Delhi's position on Capitol Hill has been especially bolstered by the political activity of the more than 1.2 million Indian Americans—up from 387,000 in 1980—who reside in the United States. Indian Americans have a higher per capita income than any other ethnic group in the country, and a larger percentage of its working members hold managerial or professional positions. The community has an especially large representation of doctors, engineers, scientists, architects, and computer technologists. The educational achievement and economic status of this upwardly mobile and politically active community have succeeded in changing the perceptions of Indians in Congress. Its influence is reflected in the strength of the Caucus of India and Indian Americans, whose 108 members now constitute a quarter of the entire House of Representatives. The transformation of congressional attitudes from a condition of either indifference or deep-seated hostility to their current positive state on Capitol Hill confirms the necessity for a foreign country to have a strong domestic base of support in the American political system if it intends to be influential in Washington.

Arthur G. Rubinoff
Professor of Political Science
The University of Toronto
Toronto, Canada

Cuba's Future

I was moved by Bob Shacochis's "The Other Tempest" [*WQ*, Summer '00], a brilliant essay on Cuba's transition from revolutionary socialism to an uncertain future. Cuba, as Shacochis suggests, has in many ways come full circle. Early on, Castro decried tourism as a source of corruption and an affront to rational pride. He turned instead to the creation of an egalitarian society that guaranteed the basic material needs to all. This was made possible largely by massive Soviet subsidies. But with the collapse of the Soviet Union, Castro has been forced to re-embrace tourism—now Cuba's leading industry.

It is still perhaps a cleaner form of tourism than in the old days. There are no casinos, and prostitution has been severely curbed (after flourishing initially). And the Mafia isn't there to run things as it did during the Batista era. But even with such corrupting influences held at bay, is not the old model, the egalitarian society, profoundly incompatible with the new economy based on tourism? Clearly, sweeping accommodations must be made.

When Cubans explore possible models for their future, most of the ones I talk to seem to agree with Shacochis's interlocutors: To the extent possible, they want to maintain the good things of the Revolution—universal education, health care, and social welfare benefits—but they also want a loosening of the rigid command system. They want more self-initiative in seeking solutions to their economic problems. They seem to want, in short, something resembling a social democracy. Will they eventually achieve it? I have enough faith in the good sense of the Cuban people to believe they will achieve it, and achieve it, in the words of Pablo Armando Fernández, "with dignity."

Wayne S. Smith
Washington, D.C.

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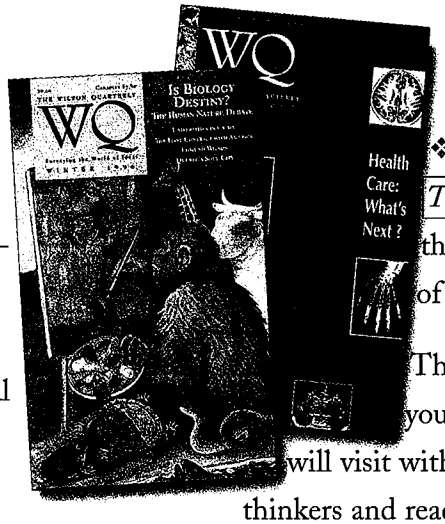

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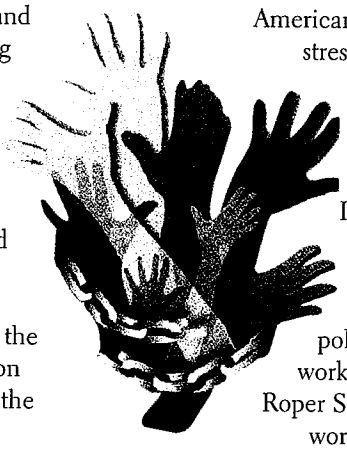
Findings

Grave New World

The American Sociological Association held its 95th annual meeting this past August at a couple of Washington hotels, and the event would have warmed the heart of anyone who thinks the world's in need of saving by social scientists.

The theme of the five-day meeting was "Oppression, Domination, and Liberation," and the official program sported an image of a cluster of arms and hands stretching upward through broken chains—reaching for justice presumably, as hands often reach in stage productions of Brecht plays. There followed a catalogue of 577 sessions, sections, workshops, seminars, and roundtables "on all types of theoretical, empirical, historical, comparative, and policy research advancing analysis and understanding of oppression, discrimination, exploitation, and stratification, as well as of resistance, liberation, and egalitarian strategies and movements."



Reaching for justice

In his keynote speech, the president of the association spoke 1960s-style against the evils of global capitalism, which now has an unprecedented power and reach. He even took the 21st century to task for what it won't get done in the next hundred years—yes, the 21st century, the one that for temporal purists has not yet even begun. Advances in medical science, he told the crowd, will allow 115-year-old Americans to play tennis while 15-year-olds die of AIDS in Africa. (The possibility that science might find, and even share, a cure for AIDS was apparently past imagining.) And as if all the familiar problems the sociologists face were not alarming enough, the president found a new one to induce those pre-dawn cold sweats: Technological advances will create smart, self-replicating robots, and they may be beyond human control.

The president urged his fellow sociologists to use their scholarly skills against injustice, inequality, and environmental degradation. The crowd applauded warmly, like delegates at a political convention in no mood for the niceties of argument.

On the bright side, some of those savvy robots may one day become sociologists.

Loving Labor Less?

In a 24/7 world, where fax machines are found in cars and laptops on the beach, Americans, we're told, are exhausted, stressed out, and dissatisfied with their jobs. But that's not what people tell pollsters, says Karlyn Bowman, a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, writing in *Public Perspective* (Sept./Oct. 2000).

A whopping 85 percent of those polled are satisfied with their field of work, according to a 1999 survey by Roper Starch Worldwide. Contrary to the worrying headlines in today's newspapers, this number is equal to the percentage expressing satisfaction in 1973. More telling, Bowman continues, is the 69 percent of respondents who said in a 1997 Louis Harris poll that they would take the same job again "without hesitation." That percentage, she adds, had *increased* since 1977.

Also contrary to the headlines, three-quarters of those polled in 1998 said they were proud to be working for their employer. Nearly 70 percent were happy with their pay.

What have changed are attitudes toward

leisure. Yes, there's been an increase in the proportion of those who say they don't have enough of it—from a quarter in 1963 to a third this year—but the *quality* of leisure time now looms much larger. In 1955, 43 percent of respondents told Gallup pollsters they enjoyed their time at work more than their time off, while 44 percent savored leisure more. When Gallup asked the question last year, only 16 percent put work first. The old idea that leisure is chiefly for recharging one's batteries seems to have gone out the window. What's new is not that Americans love their jobs less but that they love their leisure more.

Laughter and Health

For thousands of years, conventional wisdom has held that humans can laugh their way to health. Even Shakespeare gave voice to this view: In *The Taming of the Shrew*, the character Christopher Sly is told to "frame your mind to mirth and merriment, which bars a thousand harms and lengthens life."

Enter Robert R. Provine, author of *Laughter: A Scientific Investigation* (2000), bearing grim news. "Laughter no more evolved to make us feel good or improve our health than walking evolved to promote cardiovascular fitness. The idea that laughter is a calisthenic for body and soul has become so pervasive that we tend to overlook the fact that laughter evolved because of its effect on others, not to improve our mood or health."

Laughter, argues Provine, a neurobiologist and psychologist at the University of Maryland, "began as a ritualization of the panting sound of rowdy play" among primates, but human laughter is "elicited by a wider range of stimuli, including conversation." It has since evolved further, becoming a social tool used to show—consciously and unconsciously—interest, subservience, disdain, or any number of other attitudes.

Moreover, research into laughter's effects on health has produced results that are, at best, mixed. Some studies even indicate that optimism and a sense of humor are *inversely* related to longevity. No laughing matter, that.

Russia's Silent Patriots

Russia's athletes feel cheated. As if reduced government subsidies since the fall of the Soviet Union were not enough, they have also endured a peculiar form of humiliation in international competitions: Their new national anthem has no words. Six years ago President Boris Yeltsin officially replaced the Soviet anthem with Mikhail Glinka's "Patriotic Song," composed in 1833. Despite the efforts of a lyrics commission, the song has remained wordless. Apparently, there's no consensus on what to say.

Convinced that their failure to qualify for the Euro 2000 soccer championships stemmed partly from the wordless anthem, soccer players wrote President Vladimir Putin in July, pleading for a "real" anthem. "We don't want to hang our heads any longer when our anthem is played in international arenas," they said. Once again, however, Moscow was stumped. The Russian Duma (parliament) even toyed with the idea of reinstating the old Soviet anthem—sans the old words. In any event, as we go to press, Russia's medalists seem likely to stand speechless on the podiums at this year's Sydney Olympics.

The Soviet Union always knew exactly the words it would let the world hear. The new Russia is still searching for the words that will speak its heart—to the Russian people and to the world alike.

Second-Place Blues

Don't feel too sorry for those bronze medalists in Sydney. According to a study of the medal winners at the 1992 Games, those taking home the bronze are almost always happier than those with the silver. The *Annals of Improbable Research* recently reminded us of a 1995 study that found the Number Twos to be pretty blue. The authors attributed this to the fact that silver medalists were probably reaching for the gold, while most bronze victors are glad just to be in the winners' circle.

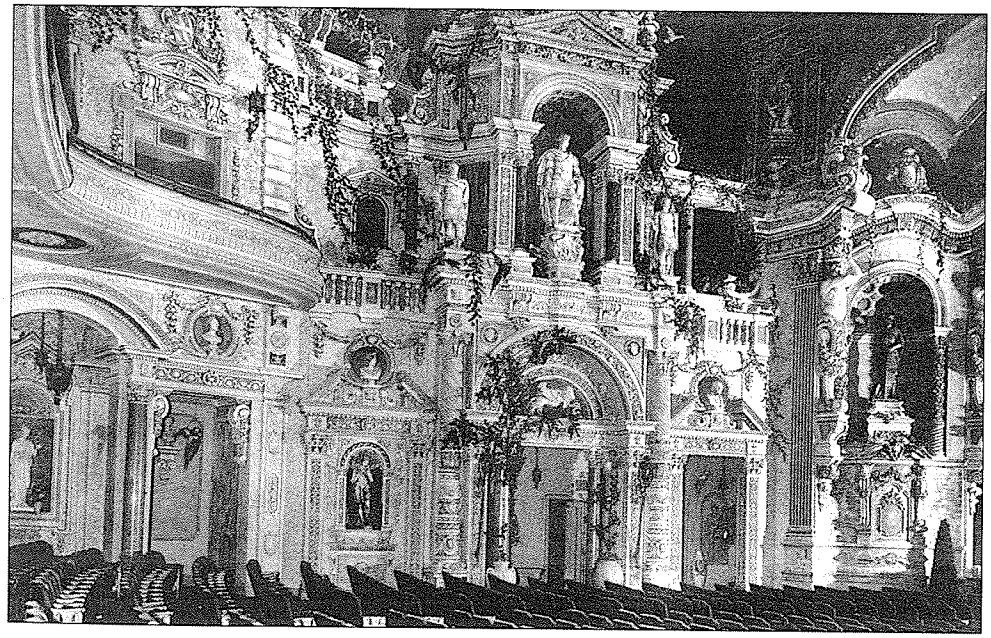
Paradise Lost

In a recent piece on movie houses old and new, the *New York Times* published a photo of the interior of Loews Paradise Theater in the Bronx. The only adequate response to the photo mixed disbelief, laughter, and regret in just about equal measure. The Paradise is one of those architecturally giddy American movie palaces of the 1920s and 1930s—rococo, barocco, and perhaps just plain loco—that once prospered in downtowns across the country. In New York City, these extravagant confections rose even in neighborhoods far from Manhattan, the city's official entertainment heart. In the midst of the drab and the everyday, a space was cleared for the fantastic. Up the walls of the Paradise, for example, an astonishing floor-to-ceiling assemblage of arches, portals, nooks, crannies, statues, busts, pedestals, and sense-be-damned ornamentation grows like jungle vegetation.

The grand lobbies of these old theaters—some even had fountains and goldfish pools—guided you to broad staircases, at the top of which lay the loge, that exclusive first-level expanse of seats shielded behind red velvet curtains. The seats were a little more expensive than the rest, and springing for the difference was by no means automatic. Above the loge rose the balcony, where height thinned the air and cigarette smoke curled upward to the projector's stream of light. (Was it a knowing cruelty to exile smokers to the balcony and test their wounded lungs on the long ascent?)

The outsized theaters began to lose their audiences and their purpose by the 1950s, and though some of them survive in New York and elsewhere, they rarely show movies. Movies are a thing of megaplexes now—10, 20, 30 theaters tucked in every corner of a space that might once have held the single vaulting expanse of a Loews Paradise. You pay dearly (and not just in dollars) for the privilege of being a lab rat in the often vertical maze of the megaplex, where you need a map, a compass, and a streak of good luck to find screen 12 or 17 or 26.

But you can't miss the concession stands. They're there at every turn—with buckets of soda, bags of popcorn that hold the harvest of a whole field of stalks, rivers of chemically tinted butter, lava flows of cheese sauce. The fish that used to splash in movie palace pools wouldn't stand a chance in the megaplex: They'd be gutted



The Loews Paradise Theater showed its last movie in 1994

and fried, and served with salsa and chips.

The megaplex provides a service, in an environment as unremarkable as that of the average contemporary office, and far less accommodating. (You can list badly, for example, elbow first, into the vast hollow of the cupholder in the armrest of your stadium-style seat.) When the megaplexes have had their day—death will find them as surely as it found the movie palaces—there will be no rallies to preserve their anonymous ranks. The only crowds the doomed spaces will attract will be moviegoers volunteering to ignite the explosive charges that bring them down.

Journalism's Bay of Pigs

For reporters, it has long been a resonant cautionary tale: how the *New York Times* erred by not telling all it knew about the planned Bay of Pigs invasion before the misadventure took place on April 17, 1961. "If you had printed more about the operation," President John F. Kennedy later told a *Times* editor, "you would have saved us from a colossal mistake."

The tale has been told over and over, in various versions. Marshall Loeb, editor of the *Columbia Journalism Review*, said last year that Kennedy "asked the *Times* to withhold disclosing the Bay of Pigs invasion before it began. They withheld it, much to the regret of one and all."

It's a nice story, but Washington reporter Michael Doyle, after doing what reporters are supposed to do—namely, check the facts—says it just ain't so. He tells in the *Sacramento Bee* (Sept. 10, 2000) what did happen.

The *Times* did not suppress reporter Tad Szulc's big April 7, 1961, story. "Anti-Castro Units Trained to Fight at Florida Bases," said the headline. Szulc's original draft included references to the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and a probable invasion date of April 18. An editor thought the prediction too speculative and removed it. Other changes were made after CIA Director Allen Dulles—not Kennedy himself, says Doyle—was consulted. The edi-

tors excised the CIA references. Instead of a big four-column headline on page one, the story ran under a one-column headline. It still "included references to U.S. backing, and it clearly conveyed the imminence of the invasion," Doyle notes. Nor did the *Times* let up: "Castro Foe Says Uprising is Near," said the next day's headline. The *Times* and other papers ran many more stories over the succeeding days.

The invasion plans had gained too much momentum to be stopped, even if the *Times* story on April 7 had been "unfettered," Doyle argues. Szulc told him that he later said to Kennedy, "I can't believe you would have canceled an invasion because of a newspaper story. And he said, 'No, you're right.'"

A Banana Republic

Drawn in, perhaps, by the bitter banana trade war between the United States and the European Union, Virginia Scott Jenkins, a scholar at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, peels back the fruit's yellow veneer in her new book, *Bananas: An American History*. This nutritious fruit, she shows, did more than improve the American diet. A luxury upon its arrival in the late 19th century, it quickly became America's favorite year-round fruit—and a source of political intrigue, economic upheaval, and social passion.

Getting "blessed bananas" from the banana wagon

The U.S.-EU tariff spat is not the first time that *Musa sapientum* has sown controversy. In 1913, the U.S. Senate aroused an indignant public when it included bananas in the Underwood-Simmons Tariff Act. The tax, cried groups as diverse as the Reform Club and the Housewives' League, "would bring hardship upon the poorer classes," and put the much-loved banana out of the reach of many working-class Americans. Pressured by incendiary speeches and protests, the Senate eventually dropped the "poor man's luxury" from the Underwood-Simmons list.

The victory inspired a number of popular banana odes, including E. T. Nelson's paean to "blessed bananas," in which he calls them "food fit for the gods." By the 1940s, the sleek, yellow fruit had become an American obsession. Mothers, seduced by advertisers' depiction of the banana as a bundle of vitamins in a "germ-free wrapper," panicked when the fruit became scarce during World War II. U-boat sinkings and the requisitioning of ships by the U.S. Navy had reduced banana imports from an average of 55 million stems per year during the 1930s to 24 million in 1943. Parents seem to have forgotten, Jenkins says, that bananas were not abundant when they were children themselves.

Today, bananas are big business. Americans spent more than $3.4 billion on the imported fruit in 1995, and U.S. fruit companies are estimated to have lost $1 billion because of EU trade practices. Yet despite its economic weight, the fruit no longer inspires the love of old. Although it is still extolled for the nutrients it provides—potassium, fiber, calcium, folic acid, and phosphorus—the banana, Jenkins points out, is now more likely to inspire a bad joke than a corny poem.

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Billie Holiday
Lover Man 1377
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Summer Nights 1295
Ranee Lee
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Like Someone In Love 1261
Eric Dolphy
Something Sweet Something Tender 1262
Lee Konitz/Charlie Haden/ Brad Mehldau
Body and Soul 1263
Nancy Wilson
Lush Life 1294

TOP BRASS
Lee Morgan
The Rumproller 1267
Donald Byrd Fuego 1268
Kenny Dorham
El Matador 1269
Freddie Hubbard
Hubtones 1270
Miles Davis
Woody'n You 1271
Miles Davis Donna 1272
Clifford Brown Cookin' 1273
Dizzy Gillespie
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Dexter Gordon
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Sonny Stitt
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Summertime 1378
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Unlocking the Green Pharmacy

We live in an age when research on the human genome promises to revolutionize the way we cope with disease. At such a time, the most traditional of healing systems, plant medicine, would seem to have little to offer. But plants may hold therapeutic benefits far more remarkable than we have yet been able to understand—and modern science may at last have the tools to reveal them.

by Joel L. Swerdlow

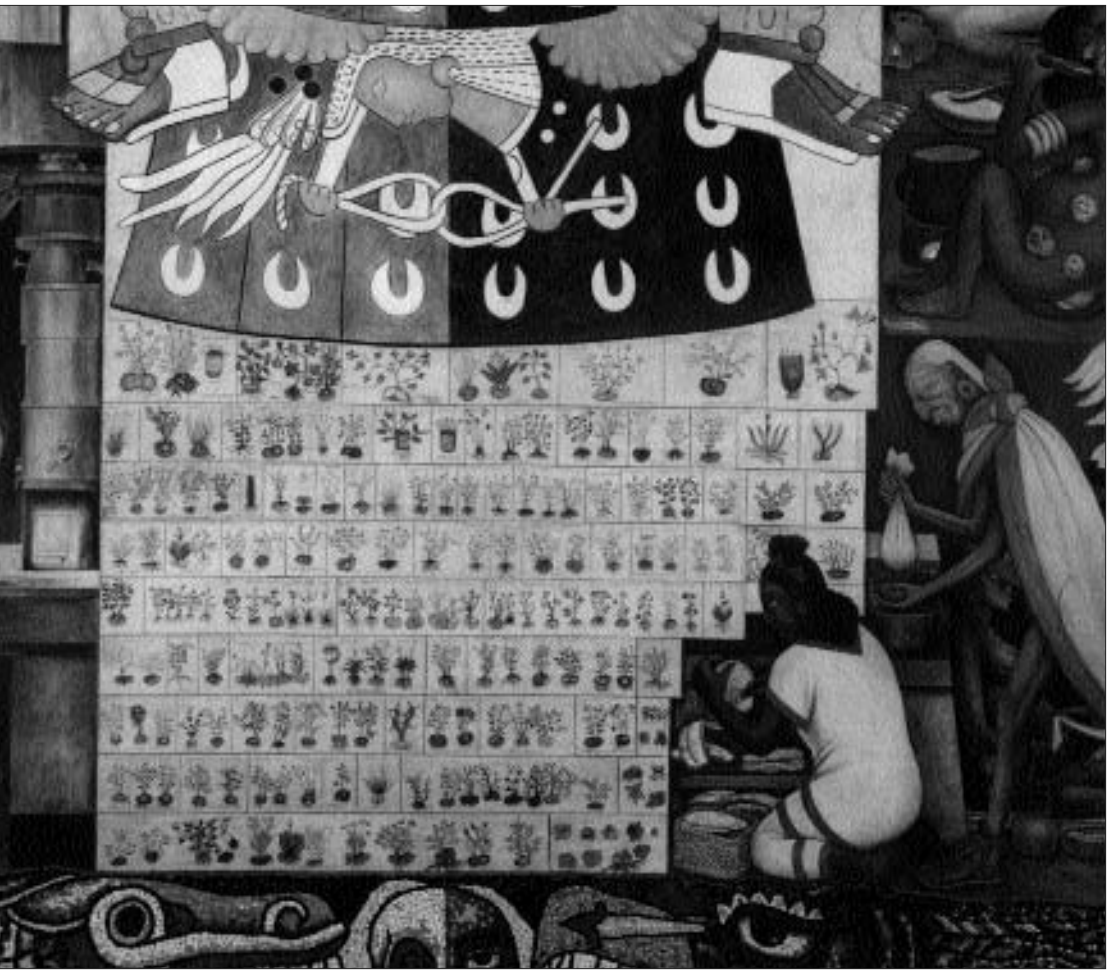
The modern Western world, with the United States in the vanguard, is the first culture in recorded human history to abandon plants as the core of its medicine. And why not? When science has begun to read the secrets of the human genome and to hold out the promise of astonishing future medical breakthroughs, of what possible relevance can plant medicine be? But, in fact, we have an extraordinary amount still to learn about the therapeutic value of plants, and our progress in genome research argues, perhaps surprisingly, not that we should abandon plant medicine but that we should join it to modern medical science.

The term *genome*, as now commonly used, means the sum of all chromosomes in an entity. Chromosomes contain genes, and genes, among other things they do, give instructions for the production of various chemicals. As we improve our understanding of plant genomes along with our understanding of the genomes of human beings and disease-causing agents, we will be able to prevent and combat disease in ways hitherto impossible. And, in the process, we will erase the unnecessary and, indeed, harmful distinction between prescription drugs and so-called herbal supplements, many of which are plant medicines sold over the counter.

That advances in genome research should lead us back to plant-based medicine, which is so often dismissed by scientists as primitive and of unprovable worth, may seem absurd. But the seemingly absurd has an honored place in scientific innovation. Jacques Monod, who won the 1965 Nobel Prize in medicine for describing the genetic regulation of enzyme and virus synthesis, has said that scientists often react in two stages to a new idea. Initially they call the idea absurd. Then they call it obvious.

If there is to be a resurgence of interest in plant medicine, we must first acknowledge the extent to which modern medical science has abandoned plants, and we must understand why that has happened.

Americans commonly, and mistakenly, believe that many of our drugs come from plants and that many of those plants originate in the rain forest. The reality is that, of the more than 5,000 prescription drugs the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved since the early 1960s, fewer than a dozen are based on plants or the chemical formulas derived from substances found in plants. No modern pharmaceutical drug has come from the Amazon River



A Diego Rivera mural depicts Mexican medicinal preparations from pre-Columbian to modern times.

Basin other than the drugs derived from plants that the conquistadors and their successors encountered more than 300 years ago (such as ipecac, coca, and pariera, a component of curare). Rain forests elsewhere in the world likewise have yielded very few new drugs.

We need to recognize what is at stake in our turning away from plants as sources of medicine. The Madagascar rosy periwinkle, for example, has chemicals (isolated by scientists in the late 1950s) that cure most cases of lymphatic leukemia and are also effective against Hodgkin's disease and testicular cancer. Madagascar is home to more than 10,000 known plant species, perhaps 70 or 80 percent of which are indigenous. And yet, no plant indigenous only to Madagascar other than the rosy periwinkle has contributed to any drug approved by the FDA. Why have we not derived two anticancer drugs from Madagascar's flora? Or three? After all, the periwinkle is a flowering plant much like other flowering plants, and if it can be a source of effective medicine, there is every reason to believe that many other species of plants can be as well.

There are some 300,000 known plant species in the world, and that may be only a small percentage of the *actual* number of species. Yet several hundred plants, at most, currently yield drugs produced by the pharmaceutical industry, and fewer than a dozen have yielded anticancer drugs. Because the pharmaceutical industry in the United States spends what experts estimate to be only about one percent of its annual $23 billion research budget on plant-based research, the chances of discovering a significant number of additional plant-based pharmaceutical drugs are small. Pharmaceutical

Vinca rosea (rosy periwinkle)

researchers these days have relatively little interest in reading what Shakespeare called nature's "infinite book of secrecy."

Modern medicine began to abandon plants in the late 19th century, when it developed the capability to manipulate individual chemicals and to manufacture synthetic drugs. The number of plant-based entries in the official United States Pharmacopoeia peaked at about 600, or 59 percent of the total, in 1890. By 1940, plant entries had fallen to 28 percent, and they are now at less than two percent. Advances in synthetic chemistry led to a new reliance on drugs that consist of a single active molecule, rather than on plants, each of which can have hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of compounds that act on one another at the same time as they affect the human body

The single-active-molecule approach drove plant-based drugs from pharmacy shelves and has now dominated Western scientific thinking for more than a century. It makes drugs easier to discover, standardize, and patent. Pharmaceutical research did not turn away from plants because tests showed them to be harmful or ineffective. Plants lost out because what they offer is too complex. Given the overwhelming emphasis on synthetic chemistry in pharmaceutical research, it is hardly surprising that the Nobel Prize in medicine, which has been awarded since 1901, has never been given for work on the medicinal use of plants.

The single-active-molecule approach is at the center of the current debate about the safety and effectiveness of herbal supplements. Annual sales of plant-based supplements amount to $5 billion in the United States alone, which certainly suggests that the public, at least, is in no mood to give up on plants. In fact, the public and the scientific community share the most common concerns about herbal supplements: They want them to be proven safe and effective, and they want them to carry accurate and understandable labels. But the supplements have so many ingredients that it is usually impossible to know exactly what to test and measure. Consider echinacea, on which Americans now spend about $300 million a year to combat symptoms of colds and flu. The herb contains compounds such as caffeoyl-tartaric acid, chlorogenic acid, cichoric acid, and echinacoside that serve as markers for bioactivity (activity that affects living cells), but no one knows how many chemical compounds in echinacea actually have an effect on the human body or precisely what their effect may be.

The genomes of plants, which can be far more massive and complex than the human genome, are responsible for the production of chemicals found nowhere else. Most plants use those chemicals to transform sunlight into sugar and carbon dioxide into oxygen; the extraordinary chemical capabilities of plants also allow them to generate new organs throughout their lives. Humans cannot grow new hearts or lungs, but plants can grow new flowers. We take that for granted, yet it's an amazing occurrence.

Until the early 1990s, scientists thought that most of the chemicals produced by flowering and other plants were useless waste products of the plants' basic metabolism. They called the chemicals "secondary metabolites," to distinguish them from "pri-

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mary metabolites" (amino acids, for example), which are essential to functions such as absorbing water. But we now know that secondary metabolites perform numerous functions that help plants survive. And their survival record is extraordinary. Flowering plants have been on Earth for more than 100 million years. They prevailed against whatever killed the dinosaurs, and they have devised intricate chemical defenses against bacteria, fungi, viruses, insects, and herbivorous animals.

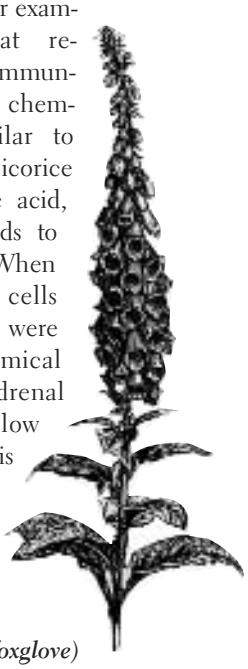
Flowering plants lack sensory organs, yet the chemicals they use in their sensory processes, which govern their contact with the world, are more sophisticated than those found in animals. Instead of eyes, for example, plants developed proteins in light-sensitive compounds that collect clumps of light energy. And plant roots contain chemicals that can detect nitrates and ammonium salts in the soil; the roots then move toward those elements, which are vital to their growth.

Plants are at the mercy of microbes, insects, and hungry animals. They can't run from their enemies, so they have developed an arsenal of bioactive substances with which to wage chemical warfare. The arsenal often includes chemical communications. Sensing the arrival of a disease-causing virus, some plants (such as tobacco) release chemicals that both protect their leaves and travel through the air to alert nearby plants of the approaching virus; when the neighboring plants receive the message, they begin to generate their own defensive chemicals. Other plants are capable of sensing from the presence of a caterpillar's saliva that their leaves are being eaten. So the plants emit substances that attract a wasp; the wasp lays eggs in the caterpillar; and as the eggs develop, they kill the caterpillar.

Research has documented that a plant's chemical-based defense system may rival the complexity of the human immune system. Plant defenses even have chemical memory, which scientists call "systemic acquired resistance." After combating a particular disease-causing virus, a plant can retain a resistance to that virus and related microbes—a rough counterpart to acquired immunity in humans. Another plant defense is the capacity to order cells near an invader to die and, thereby, to exude acidic chemicals that poison the invader. Some plant cells can stiffen to exclude and wall off invaders, while still others produce the equivalent of antibiotics. Sophisticated chemical defense mechanisms can even time the greening of leaves to the absence of herbivores, or protect plants from the damage caused by direct exposure to sunlight.

In recent years, science has offered more and more evidence that a genetic commonality links us to plants. Plant-human connections are remnants of a common evolutionary origin billions of years ago, before multicellular life divided into plants and animals. Many plants, for example, generate an amino acid called glutamate, which they use for internal communications. Humans also create glutamate, which serves as an important chemical messenger in the human brain; faulty glutamate signaling has been associated with Alzheimer's disease and schizophrenia. Further research into the genetic workings of plants and into how they produce substances such as glutamate may well lead to a better understanding of debilitating human diseases.

Other instances of genetic commonality are evident in the apparently countless ways plant-generated chemicals bind to human receptors. Spinach, for example, produces what researchers call an "immunoactive material" with chemical properties similar to those of insulin. And licorice produces glycyrrhizic acid, an alkaloid that binds to human kidney cells. When that happens, the cells respond as if the acid were aldosterone, a chemical released by the adrenal glands to combat low blood pressure. That is why herbalists advise people with *high* blood pressure not to take licorice.



Digitalis purpurea (foxglove)

Salicylic acid is yet another chemical involved in systemic acquired resistance in plants, though its exact contribution to the process remains a mystery. When taken by humans, salicylic acid, popularly known as aspirin, not only relieves headaches but reduces the incidence of cancer, heart disease, and strokes. Exactly how it does so is still not understood.

Although there is no predicting where further research into plant-human genetic ties may take medicine, genetic research has revealed unexpected links between plants and human diseases. For example, sequencing the genome of *Xylella fastidiosa*, bacteria that attack citrus plants, yielded the presence of genes closely resembling the genes that cause meningitis in humans. Does that mean that the chemicals citrus plants produce to fight the bacteria hold clues that might be useful in the human fight against meningitis? No one knows for sure. But for those who doubt a relationship between plants and human ailments, the following account of foxglove, or digitalis, a drug widely prescribed today for heart failure, might be instructive.

In 1775, William Withering, a physician in Birmingham, England, had a female patient with severely swollen legs, a condition then called dropsy. Although it was not known at the time, such swelling is often a sign of congestive heart failure, the heart being simply too weak to pump blood effectively. Withering could do nothing for his patient and assumed she would die. When he heard a few weeks later that she was doing well, he paid her a visit and learned that she was taking an herb tea provided by an old woman who ministered to people beyond the help of doctors. The old woman showed Withering the components of the herb tea recipe. Looking at what he described as the "twenty or more" herbs in the woman's medicine, and knowing that in cases of dropsy a diuretic is needed to get water out of the system, he decided that "the active herb could be no other than the Foxglove." (To this day, we do not know what the other herbs were.)

The powdered leaves of foxglove had been used as a medicine in Europe for hundreds of years. One herbal book contemporary with Withering noted that "six or seven spoonfuls of the decoction produce nausea and vomiting, and purge," and other books reported foxglove's effectiveness against epilepsy, hereditary deafness, skin ulcers, and eye tumors.

In subsequent years, Withering used foxglove to treat his patients for a range of ailments. He tried several varieties and strengths of the plant—roots, leaves, leaves in powder, leaves picked when the plant was flowering, green leaves picked in winter, and leaves mixed with small amounts of opium. Although he believed that the foxglove only eliminated fluids, he recognized as well that it "has a power over the motion of the heart to a degree yet unobserved in any other medicine."

In 1785, after 10 years of experimentation, Withering published a book entitled *An Account of the Foxglove*. More and more people were taking foxglove, he wrote in the preface, and he wanted the benefit of his experience to lessen the risk of their being harmed by its improper use. He also wanted to make sure that "a medicine of so much efficacy should not be condemned and rejected as dangerous and unmanageable."

The cases for which Withering used foxglove were, he wrote, "the most hopeless and deplorable that exist," and he did not resort to the drug until "the failure of every other method compelled me to do it." Thus, he was once called by a fellow doctor to see a female patient "nearly in a state of suffocation; her pulse extremely weak and irregular, her breath very short and laborious, her countenance sunk, her arms of a leaden colour, clammy and cold. She could not lye [sic] down in bed, and had neither strength nor appetite, but was extremely thirsty. Her stomach, legs, and thighs were greatly swollen." Withering hesitated before administering his digitalis preparation, for he believed the woman would die and give the new drug a bad name. After taking the mixture, she began to vomit. Then she urinated eight quarts of water, her breath came easier, and her swelling subsided. Nine years later, Withering reported, the woman was still alive.

Modern science has never been able to

devise a chemical that achieves what the raw plant chemical digitalis achieves, or to improve upon it. Like most bioactive plant chemicals, it has a mode of action and a structure that are beyond the power of scientists in a laboratory to imagine. What scientists have been able to document is that foxglove is among a group of plants whose leaves, flowers, seeds, roots, and bark contain glycosides. Glycosides are chemicals that act on the contractile force of the cardiac muscle. They slow the heart rate and increase the force of contractions. And when the heart pumps blood more efficiently, the kidneys are better able to cleanse the blood of wastes and toxins.

Digitalis is a plant-produced chemical that can be isolated, which means that it fits in well with the single-active-molecule approach to modern pharmaceuticals. But screening for single active chemicals from tens of thousands of other plants, many of them widely used in traditional medicine, has yielded few usable drugs. The consistent failure suggests that looking for a single active molecule as the healing component of a plant is like opening a radio to find the one piece that produces the sound. To benefit from the inherent chemical complexity of plants, we must devise drugs that have numerous active ingredients. Research on the human genome demonstrates why such drugs are so important.

A decade ago, scientists expected that they would one day be able to target the one gene responsible for each major disease. Early successes, such as the isolation of one gene "linked" to Duchenne muscular dystrophy and one linked to hemophilia, seemed to bear out that expectation. But the discoveries led to little in the way of actual treatment. In fact, researchers have coined the word *oligogenic* to signify that most major diseases involve many genes. So a treatment using many drugs, each of which affects a different biochemical process, makes sense. Such multimodal treatments, whose complexity resembles the complexity found in plants and plant medicine, now pervade modern medicine. Perhaps the most prominent example is the "AIDS cocktail," a combination of several types of drugs. Other combinations include chemotherapy cocktails to treat cancer, the use of four or more antibiotics to treat tuberculosis, and the simultaneous use of two or more drugs to treat heart attacks, malaria, rheumatoid arthritis, chronic hepatitis C infections, and diabetes.

Echinacea purpurea

Multimodal treatments usually combine unrelated drugs that act in different ways on different parts of the body. Treatment for difficult cases of diabetes, for example, may combine one standard drug that reduces the liver's production of blood sugar with another that makes muscles more sensitive to insulin. A treatment for persistent depression may include the prescription of three major antidepressant drugs, each of which affects the human brain's production of a different neurotransmitter.

At the same time, evidence of the extraordinary power of another type of multimodality is growing. Hundreds of studies document with surprising consistency that the more fruits and vegetables people eat, the less likely they are to suffer from heart attacks, strokes, or cancer. There is a link between that finding and our growing knowledge of genes. In the next few years, physicians are likely to have at their disposal tests that identify patients with a genetic tendency toward cancer or heart disease. Having few resources at their disposal to treat the problem genes directly, the doctors will urge, among other things, that their patients eat lots of fruits and vegetables.

But getting the most out of fruits and vegetables, despite their proven health benefits, is not always a simple matter. How foods are prepared can affect the levels and bioavailability of *nutraceuticals*—a word coined in the early 1990s to describe chemical components in dietary fruits and vegetables that may have little or no food value but that help to prevent and treat disease. Cooking

can significantly affect those chemicals, for better or for worse. Cooking garlic, for example, seems to eliminate many of its disease-fighting chemicals, while cooking tomatoes markedly increases the availability of lycopenes, chemicals that are effective against some cancers.

To obtain therapeutic effects equal to those that could be derived from eating particular quantities of food may require the extraction of chemicals from fruits and vegetables and their transformation into what we would call a medicine. Most people are probably unwilling to eat several cloves of fresh garlic every day, even though chemicals in garlic lower cholesterol, combat hypertension, and may help fight stomach cancer. Hence, a leading brand of garlic pills contains "aged garlic extract" that is said to deliver chemicals without causing upset stomach or "garlic breath." Extracts of garlic and other foods provide far more disease-fighting compounds than people could ever obtain from eating the foods. The limonene in oranges, for example, appears to slow the formation of tumors, and even to shrink existing tumors. But to get effective levels of limonene, you would have to eat 400 oranges a day, as you would have to eat massive quantities of nuts, many of which are high in compounds such as ellagic acid, a health-promoting antioxidant, to obtain their therapeutic benefit.

What's worse, the very chemical in a food that fights disease may make the food difficult to eat. Sulforaphane in broccoli, for example, stimulates enzymes that detoxify chemical carcinogens, but it gives the broccoli a bitter taste, perhaps to discourage animals from eating the plant. The broccoli available in stores has been bred to have a milder taste, which makes it less effective against carcinogens. Genetic manipulation might one day produce broccoli that is high in chemicals similar to sulforaphane without the bitter taste. Research might even create a broccoli pill containing concentrated sulforaphane or a synthetic version of sulforaphane. But there is at least one significant obstacle: Sulforaphane is unstable and is released only when broccoli is chewed. The pills might work, but they might also sacrifice benefits found in the natural package known as broccoli, including many benefits not yet identified by modern science. Alas, there may be no way to obtain all the benefits of bitter-tasting broccoli without eating the real thing.

That fruits and vegetables fight disease makes sense. If substances from the Madagascar rosy periwinkle can kill cancer, why should plants that people eat as food not have a comparable therapeutic effect? But because plant foods, like medicinal plants, contain hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of chemicals, we cannot yet explain exactly how they combat disease.

The use of fruits and vegetables as medicine has an important precedent in vitamins, which were called "accessory food factors" when they were first identified in the early 20th century. A lack of sufficient vitamins can result in crippling and often fatal diseases, such as scurvy and beri-beri, just as a lack of sufficient nutraceuticals can lead to disease. Continuing research on nutraceuticals may be especially important because the per capita consumption of fruits and vegetables in America remains much too low, despite years of advice from mainstream medical authorities. Americans may be so addicted to convenience that they'll never experience the medicinal benefits of eating enough fruits and vegetables until those benefits are available in simple pill form.

Still, obtaining the health-enhancing effects of plant-based chemicals is a simple matter compared with creating pharmaceutical drugs. To manufacture "green" drugs that are safe and have predictable effects, modern science must figure out how to penetrate the complexities of medicinal plants. And if it is to do that, it must move beyond the search for drugs that rely on a single active ingredient.

Money is not the answer, because the investment of more money would in all likelihood only produce more of the same, which is virtually nothing. Since the discovery of drugs from the rosy periwinkle 40 years ago, the National Cancer Institute and pharmaceutical companies have spent billions of dollars looking for single active

Plant samples taken from a rain forest in Madagascar will be sent to the National Cancer Institute, which screens more than 20,000 natural compounds annually, including many that could offer new drugs.

chemicals in plants and other natural sources. The results have produced promising leads and chemicals that act strongly against cancer, HIV infection, and other conditions in laboratory tests. But very few of those chemicals have reached human clinical trials, and fewer still have been the basis for the production of new drugs. Never before, in fact, has a society collected so much information about medicinal plants that it is unable to use, because it is so accustomed to defining "use" as isolating and extracting a single active ingredient.

If we are to embrace the complexity of plants while maintaining the precision and the virtues of modern science, we need a new conceptual framework and a new approach. "You can't depend on your eyes," Mark Twain warned, "when your imagination is out of focus." The good news is that the imaginations of scientists who accept the research challenge will have help from two powerful sources: computers, whose data-crunching capacity is growing exponentially, and chaos or complexity theory, which demonstrates that extraordinarily complex phenomena such as tornadoes and enzymal interactions can have relatively simple and manipulable beginnings. The study of various forms of complexity already indicates that straightforward rules may govern bioactive chemicals whose relationships now seem impossibly chaotic. Who knows what advances we may achieve by applying the combined power of computers and complexity theory to the study of human and plant genes?

Moving beyond the single-active-molecule tradition will meet resistance from scientists trained in the current era, which began with the discovery of antibiotics in the middle of the 20th century and nurtured the belief that medicines must be finely targeted magic bullets. That belief could become even more deeply entrenched as we begin to tinker with our genes. But resistance to new ideas is hardly uncommon in the history of modern medicine. The acceptance of germ theory, for example, did not become widespread among physicians until some 40 years after the theory had been proved definitively. And Florence Nightingale, who led efforts to introduce modern standards of cleanliness into America's hospitals, refused to believe that diseases are linked to bacteria; she died in 1910 holding to the accepted wisdom of her youth that diseases are

caused by miasmas, noxious gases emanating from the earth.

There is a growing body of evidence that may lower resistance to the use of plants as medicines. Double-blind placebo studies, the gold standard of pharmaceutical research, are revealing the limits of the single-active-compound approach. Many of the studies focus on skin diseases, the manifestations of which are relatively easy to see and measure. In one study, all the participating patients had severe cases of atopic dermatitis, a disease of unknown origin characterized by red, thickening, scaling patches of skin on the face, feet, and hands. Modern medicine had been unable to improve their condition. Some of the participants received a combination of Chinese herbs; others drank the same amount of a placebo combination of herbs with "no known benefit to atopic dermatitis" but with "a similar smell and taste to the active treatment."

As reported in *The Lancet* in July 1992, every patient taking the Chinese herbs experienced "a rapid and continued improvement in both erythema [redness of the skin] and surface damage," which led the authors to conclude "that TCHT [traditional Chinese herbal therapy] affords substantial clinical benefit in patients whose atopic dermatitis had been unresponsive to conventional therapy." Although "an understanding of the pharmacological basis for the beneficial effect" of these plants is "limited," the authors wrote, the plants are known to have anti-inflammatory, sedative, and immunosuppressive effects, and they might also have stimulated the patients' genes to increase the production of particular beneficial enzymes or decrease the production of harmful ones.

Studies of this kind argue that modern medicine can tap into the wisdom of other healing cultures. The extensive Chinese pharmacopoeia uses hundreds of plants, in tens of thousands of combinations, and yet it has contributed to only two Western pharmaceutical drugs (one a decongestant and stimulant of the nervous system, the other an antimalarial). Ayurvedic medicine, the healing system in India that dates back thousands of years, has yielded only one Western drug (used against high blood pressure and as a tranquilizer), and the Native American pharmacopoeia one such drug at most (a female oral contraceptive). These traditional systems of healing, which are often, and wrongly, dismissed as primitive, share two fundamental characteristics with contemporary genetic medicine: an emphasis on prevention, and the tailoring of treatment to each individual patient. Those fundamental similarities should encourage us to embrace ancient systems as we move into the age of genetics.

In the rural Bengal region of eastern India, a snake charmer, heeding the teachings of his father, eats leaves from several plants whenever he is bitten by a cobra. Laboratory experiments at the University of Calcutta have demonstrated that the leaves keep cobra venom from harming laboratory rats, but no one has yet identified the chemicals in the plant that cause the immunity or explained why they are effective.

Parasites that invade human red blood cells and cause malaria have grown resistant to chloroquine, the powerful Western antimalarial drug. Somehow the parasites keep the chloroquine from entering red blood cells. So local healers in Madagascar tell malaria patients to eat a particular kind of leaf when they take the chloroquine. And in the presence of chemicals from the leaf, the chloroquine enters the blood cells and kills the parasites.

Such stories are entertaining and provocative, but they will lead to scientific breakthroughs and new medicines only if we become alert to the research opportunities all around us. As Proust said, the true voyage of discovery is not a journey to new places; it is learning to see with new eyes. If we are to rediscover the medicinal power of plants, we must learn to see them differently. The skeptic may ask why we should begin to base more of our medicines on plants at a time when we are making such extraordinary advances in genetics. Wouldn't that be an absurd thing to do? On the contrary, it's the obvious thing to do. ❑

Colorado, in the 1930s

The Dust Bowl Myth

Americans today know the Dust Bowl migrants of the 1930s from Dorothea Lange's moving photographs and John Steinbeck's Grapes of Wrath. *The reality was a little different.*

by Charles J. Shindo

Of all the grim spectacles created by the Great Depression, none has won a stronger hold on the American imagination than the travails of the Dust Bowl migrants. Driven westward to California by drought, dust storms, and economic disaster, they entered the national mythology as symbols of American grit and determination in the face of adversity, and as symbolic victims, often invoked when modern social ills are addressed.

In the title song of his 1995 album *The Ghost of Tom Joad*, Bruce Springsteen enlisted the protagonist of John Steinbeck's classic 1939 Dust Bowl novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, in the contemporary struggles against homelessness and unemployment. Tom Joad and family also served the cause of social criticism in a 1990 stage production by the Chicago-based Steppenwolf Theater Company. "This story," said director Frank Galati, who adapted the novel for the stage, "comes back to us from a dark time to invite us to reflect on what we really value."

But determining what the Dust Bowl experience tells us about the deepest values of Americans turns out to be more complicated than such statements suggest. In the images Steinbeck gave us, the migrants are oppressed and more-or-less helpless victims of economic, political, and natural forces beyond their con-

trol and even their comprehension. Their experience required the solidarity and generosity of the public and collective action by the migrants themselves. Other artists—such as Dorothea Lange, whose haunting *Migrant Mother* photograph of 1936 may be even better known today than *The Grapes of Wrath*, and folksinger Woody Guthrie, whose life and works, including "Tom Joad" and other Dust Bowl songs, have lately inspired a museum exhibition and a flurry of scholarly activity—held similar views about what was needed.

In all the artistic representations of the Dust Bowl migration, however, including the more traditionalist rendition of Steinbeck's novel presented in director John Ford's 1940 film, the very different values and views of the migrants themselves are strangely missing. Yet it is a testimony to the power of art that the surviving myth is not precisely what the artists intended either. It is a myth that has come to encompass more than the Dust Bowl migration, more even than the Great Depression and the New Deal. Lange's famous portrait of one migrant mother with her children, their faces hidden, hers showing strain and worry and fear for the future, has come to stand not just for the anxiety Americans felt during the depression but for the end of the Jeffersonian dream of the yeoman farmer, for Americans' inevitable movement from the farms to the cities, and for something indomitable in the American spirit.

Even by broad definition, the so-called Dust Bowl migrants were only about a third of the more than one million migrants from around the nation who journeyed to California during the 1930s. They came mainly from Oklahoma, Arkansas, Missouri, and Texas—and, for the most part, from *outside* the region (primarily, Kansas, Colorado, and the panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas) that was hardest hit by the vast and frightening dust storms of the early and mid-1930s. Indeed, the rate of migration to California from this Dust Bowl region was lower during the depression than it had been in earlier decades or would be in later ones, when mild weather and the promise of economic opportunities drew hundreds of thousands to the Golden State. In the popular imagination of the period, however, the dust storms came to symbolize all the overwhelming forces that were uprooting farmers and others and propelling them westward, against their will, in search of work. The dust storms were so dramatic, and the image of them so compelling, that they obscured the fact that many of the families who arrived in California during the depression were "pushed" there by other calamities—such as crop failures, foreclosures, or the loss of blue-collar jobs—or by competition from agribusiness, in a southern agricultural economy that had begun to be transformed even before the depression.

Whatever they were fleeing, the migrants came. "They come along in wheezy old cars with the father or one of the older boys driving," reported a *Fortune* magazine writer in 1939. "The mother and the younger children sit in back; and around them, crammed inside and overflowing to the running boards, the front and rear bumpers, the top and sides, they carry along everything they own. . . . You notice the faces of the people in these cars. There is worry, but also something more: They are the faces of people afraid of hunger; completely dispossessed, certain only of being harried along when their immediate usefulness is over."

Overwhelmingly white and young, the more than 300,000 migrants from the Southwest came mostly in family groups and settled near other family members or friends in California. Most were not dispossessed small farmers but city and town folk who had been employed in small businesses and the oil industry and who settled in and around California's cities, particularly Los Angeles and San Diego. Only about 130,000 were farm folk. It was these "Okies" (as they came to be called, at first with derogatory intent) who ended up, for the most part, in the farming communities of the San Joaquin and Imperial Valleys—and before long, thanks to Steinbeck, Lange, and others, in the American imagination as "the Dust Bowl migrants."

Fleeing natural disaster (or circumstances so overwhelming that they seemed like forces of nature), the Okies found that farming in California was very different from what they

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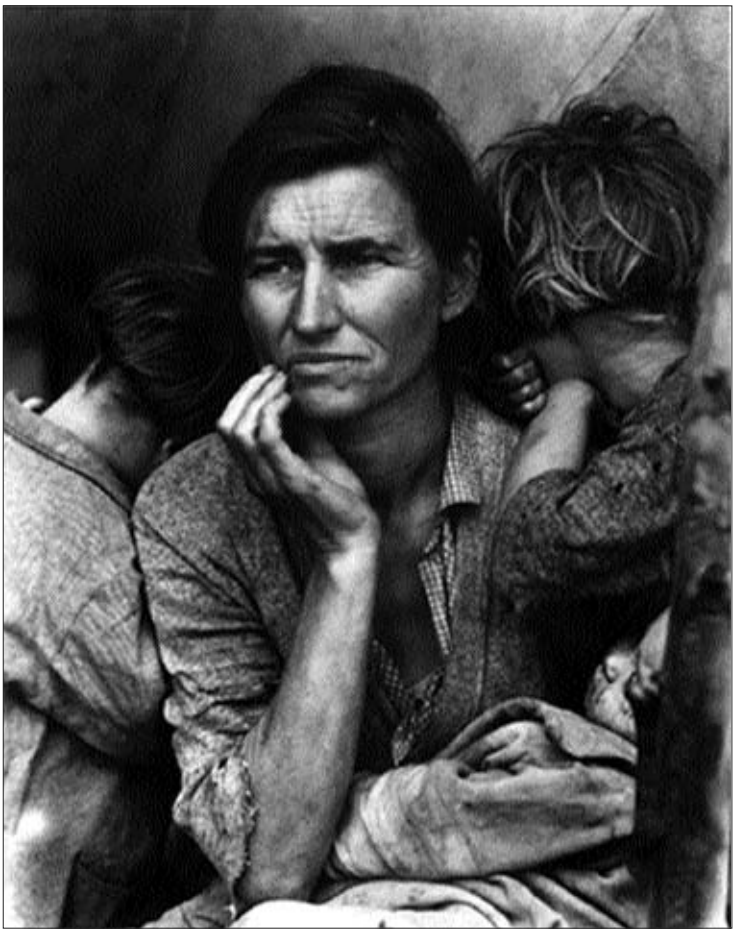
had known at home. The family farm scarcely existed in their new state. Large landowners and growers dominated agriculture, and they needed seasonal armies of cheap migrant labor to work their orchards of fruits and nuts and vast fields of vegetables and cotton. Wages were low and working conditions abysmal.

This is the harsh reality that Tom Joad and his family confront after they arrive in California. Forced to live in one of the wretched roadside settlements known as "Hoovervilles," they soon learn about the unsparing practices of large owners and growers. Realizing the futility of fighting the system by themselves, the Joads seek refuge in one of the migrant camps run by the New Deal's Resettlement Administration (later the Farm Security Administration). There, they are provided with showers, toilets, and washtubs, and treated with respect. "Why ain't they more places like this?" Tom asks.



"Migrant Mother," Dorothea Lange's affecting portrait of Florence Thompson, seemed to epitomize the plight of the Dust Bowl migrants.

Nobody had paid much attention to the Golden State's migrant workers in earlier years, when most were foreign born, recruited by the growers from China, Japan, India, the Philippines, and Mexico. But the new Okie farm workers, who were white, Christian, and native born, aroused public sympathy—and the attention of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. The first of 12 main government camps for migrant workers opened in Marysville, in Yuba County, in October 1935. The camps were a great improvement over the miserable Hoovervilles in which many migrants had been living. The Resettlement Administration also worked to document and publicize the migrants' plight.

In *An American Exodus: A Record in Human Erosion* (1939), Resettlement Administration photographer Dorothea Lange and her husband, Paul S. Taylor, regional labor adviser for the agency, combined her photographs and his text to portray the Dust Bowl migration as a consequence of the increasing use of tractors and heavy machinery in the corn and wheat fields of the Southwest. The farm folk were being driven off the land by manmade forces, not just natural ones such as drought. Mechanization had made tenant farming and sharecropping in the South even more economically marginal than they had been. The soil—depleted by overproduction—was turning to dust. Hardworking tenant farmers and sharecroppers resisted the tractor and the power of large landowners, but their efforts

were futile, Lange and Taylor believed. Mechanization was inevitable. Just as industrialization had long before stripped the urban artisan of his independence, now it was dispossessing the small farmer. Like other reformers, Lange and Taylor saw the solution to the migrants' problems in the creation of a self-conscious agricultural working class strong enough to win decent wages and working conditions. In the meantime, the New Deal would help the migrants adjust.

Lange's photographs added a "human" element to Taylor's analysis of statistics and trends, and *An American Exodus*, with its striking images of dust-covered farms and abandoned houses surrounded by machine-cultivated rows of crops, won high critical praise. But far more influential than the book was a Lange photograph that was left out because it did not fit the book's theme of mechanization and change. The photo was "Migrant Mother," taken by Lange in Nipomo, California, on a rainy March day in 1936, in an episode Lange would later call "the assignment I'll never forget."

Driving home after a month in the field, Lange passed a sign for a pea pickers' camp just off the highway. Having already shot a boxful of film documenting the conditions of California agriculture, she kept driving. But 20 miles later, she turned around and went back. "I was following instinct, not reason," she remembered. "I drove into that wet and soggy camp and parked my car like a homing pigeon. I saw and approached the hungry and desperate mother, as if drawn by a magnet." Skipping the questions she usually asked about family history and local conditions, Lange began right away to photograph the mother and her children. The woman, Lange later recalled, mentioned that her husband was a native Californian, that she was 32 years old, that they had been living on frozen vegetables they found in the fields and on birds caught by the children, and that they had just sold the tires from their car for money to buy food.

Lange did not get the woman's name (it was Florence Thompson), and took only six shots. Confident that she "had recorded the essence of my assignment," Lange approached no others in the camp. As it turned out, her sixth exposure became her most famous photograph. Soon published in the national magazines *Survey Graphic* and *Midweek Pictorial*, the image of worried motherhood confronting adversity stirred more sympathy for the migrants and their plight than any government report or news article could.

Lost to sight in Lange's photograph, and in most other Dust Bowl representations, were the actual concerns of Florence Thompson and those like her. Though many migrants were glad for the refuge provided by federal camps like the one in Marysville, the formation of a rural proletariat was far from their minds. Washington, one migrant worker told an interviewer, ought to give each family a farm of its own: "There ought to be 40 to 60 acres to the man accordin' to the size of his family. . . . Let the people farm with teams rather than with machinery. That would mean more work fer more people and so do away with a lot of relief."

The Okie migrants came to California in the belief that after working in the fields as wage laborers for a season or two, they would be able to afford a down payment on a piece of land. The migrants, writes James Gregory in *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California* (1989), were populists who believed in "the dignity of hard work and plain living and promised deliverance from the forces of power, privilege, and moral pollution, near and far." They "wanted fiercely to resettle on property of their own," sociologist Lillian Criesler wrote in 1940.

Like most white Southerners of their day, the migrants were Democrats, who supported FDR but preferred that problems be solved at the local level. They disliked the idea of a large federal government and, for the most part, were opposed to large-scale government relief efforts—even for themselves. "If people stay on relief too long it takes somethin' out of them," said Jesse Jacobs, a farm worker in California. His daughter agreed: "I think that relief has ruined about the majority of workin' men." Other migrants complained that relief destroyed a man's "pride," as one Henry Rollin put it, and "takes that independent American citizen feelin' away from a man," in the words of I. G. Spurling.

But the Okies' dream of becoming self-sufficient family farmers was completely unrealistic, Lange and Taylor and their fellow artists and reformers believed. Not only was property

Dorothea Lange's 1935 photo of these potato harvesters in Kern County, California, showed another side of the Dust Bowl migrants' life.

beyond their reach, but they could not deal with "the mysteries and hazards of fluctuating markets for highly commercialized crops" in California's advanced farm economy.

For folksinger Woody Guthrie, an Okie migrant himself, the solution was clear. He cast the migrants as proud workers in a class struggle, whose fulfillment would come with radical political change. "I might not know what it's all about,/ I'll join with the Union and soon find out," he sang. Though Guthrie spoke in the language of Okie cultural tradition, he ignored the migrants' political and economic conservatism. In the same vein, folklorists such as Charles Todd, Robert Sonkin, and John and Alan Lomax, tried to place the migrants in an American folk tradition. Collecting folksongs in the California migrant camps, Todd and Sonkin used their recordings to publicize the migrants' plight—and gave a liberal and progressive interpretation of the migrants' aspirations.

Some migrants did turn, as reformers hoped, from erstwhile independent family farmers (or at least tenant farmers and sharecroppers) into class-conscious workers bent upon securing their rights through organized action. But most—fiercely independent, religious, and conservative—clung to their rural values and resisted that transformation. Indeed, in the struggles that took place between striking workers and employers in California, migrants more

often sided with employers and served as strikebreakers.

Even Steinbeck's Joads, after failing to find work near Weedpatch, the government camp, and moving north to a peach ranch, are hired as strikebreakers. Tom Joad thus learns firsthand about the deceitful tactics of the growers and owners. After defending himself from vigilantes, he is forced into hiding, then leaves his family, going off in the hope of somehow bringing about change in favor of his people. "I been thinkin' a hell of a lot," he says, "thinkin' about our people livin' like pigs, an' the good rich lan' layin' fallow, or maybe one fella with a million acres, while a hunderd thousan' good farmers is starvin'. An' I been wonderin' if all our folks got together an' yelled, like them fellas yelled, only a few of 'em at the Hooper ranch—"

Though the future of the Joads is unclear at the novel's end, Steinbeck's point is not. Collective action by the migrants is the key to regaining their dignity, their proper place in society. The migrants, in Steinbeck's view, were backward, and their cultural affinities for religion and tradition irrational. Their failure to understand the new industrialized corporate state was a more fundamental cause of their plight than transitory natural forces such as drought.

For Steinbeck, as for Lange and Taylor and other liberal reformers, what the migrants needed most was education in democratic self-government and the necessity of political action. "The new migrants to California are here to stay," the novelist wrote in a series of articles for the *San Francisco News*. "They are of the best American stock, intelligent, resourceful; and, if given a chance, socially responsible. They can be citizens of the highest type, or they can be an army driven by suffering and hatred to take what they need." Contemporary readers of *The Grapes of Wrath* were encouraged to believe that, by supporting FDR's New Deal, especially the programs of the Resettlement Administration and, later, the Farm Security Administration, they could help the dispossessed farmers regain their dignity.

Steinbeck's educational and even philosophical ambitions for his work largely disappeared in the screen version that appeared in 1940. John Ford had his own notions of democratic America, and the film industry had its marketplace imperatives. Ford's faith in traditional values, evident in his other films, led him to favor the familial and spiritual aspects of Steinbeck's narrative, and he also supplied the usual Hollywood happy ending. In his *Grapes of Wrath*, Ford sought simply to tell an uplifting story. The film shows the Joads' lot progressively improving, from Hooverville to the peach ranch to the government camp. Ford's Joad family became symbolic not just of the hard-pressed migrants, but of a troubled America whose strong character would see it through the depression. The movie, as one recent critic has complained, provides "a hollow celebration of that emptiest abstraction, The People, along with a cop-out analysis which avoids blaming any individual or interest for the plight of the Okies." Though reformers preferred the novel, the masses, migrants included, flocked to the movie.

The Dust Bowl migrants never did become a rural proletariat. The government migrant camps helped ease their suffering but did not radically change their status. Only with the coming of World War II and the boom in California's war production industries did the Okies escape their plight as migratory farm workers. Yet their essentially populist conservative values survived. In later years, as Dan Morgan shows in *Rising in the West* (1992), a history of a single Okie family, the migrants and their descendants—whom Morgan sees as a link between the Old South and the New West—became part of the coalition that elected Ronald Reagan governor of California in 1966 and 1970.

The outcome, of course, was hardly what Steinbeck, Lange, and their fellow reformers had in mind in the 1930s. But neither was it what the Okie migrants themselves imagined. There was no return to the proud independence of living on the land. As the artists and reformers of the 1930s correctly perceived, the migrants' Jeffersonian vision of America could no longer be sustained. The exodus of Americans off the land, from country to city, from farm to factory, could not be stopped. Nor could the myth that others created out of their ordeal. That myth has become, in a way, the migrants' legacy to America. In the face of Florence Thompson, a nation has come to see its many selves. ❑

PRESERVING OUR PRIVACY

Technology's enchantments have a way of blinding us temporarily to their sometimes far-reaching social consequences. So it is that we are just beginning to confront the challenges that new information and genetic technologies pose to traditional notions of privacy—not just the right to be left alone but the right to determine how we will be known to the world. Yet we are not the pawns of technology. We have choices to make—and how we choose will shape our individual identities and define the future character of American society.

Jeffrey Rosen *on the meaning of privacy*
Phillip J. Longman *and* ***Shannon Brownlee*** *on the surprising implications of maintaining privacy in genetic testing*
Douglas Neal *and* ***Nicholas Morgan*** *on protecting privacy in a networked world*

Why Privacy Matters

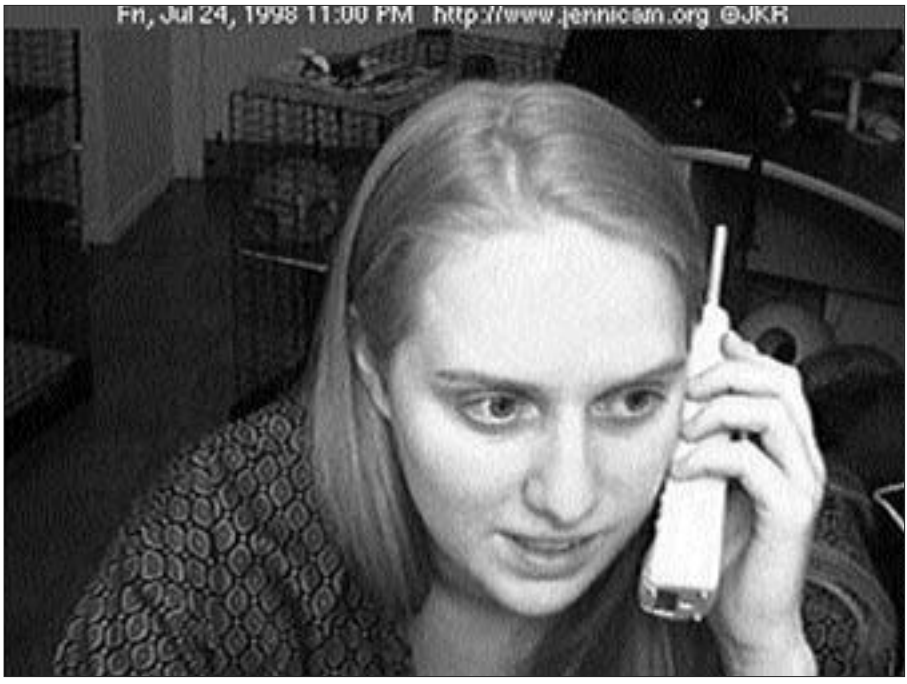
by Jeffrey Rosen

At the beginning of the 21st century, America is, more than ever, a culture of exhibitionism that also claims to be a culture concerned about privacy. Citizens cheerfully watch Big Brother TV, or set up Web cams in their bedrooms, even as they tell pollsters that privacy is one of the most important political issues facing the country today. The impulses toward exposure and concealment conflict with each other, obviously, but they also complement each other. "People worry about, and debate, ways to protect and preserve zones of intimacy and seclusion in a world with satellite eyes," as the legal historian Lawrence Friedman has observed. That debate—which often amounts to an alarmist muddle—has become a defining feature of life in what Friedman has called a horizontal society, in which identity is peculiarly open and authority is increasingly based on celebrity rather than on traditional notions of hierarchy.

In a horizontal society, being famous is a surer way of achieving status and authority than conforming to preordained social roles, and therefore the distinction between fame and infamy is elusive. Getting on television is itself a form of authority, regardless of whether one is there for behaving well or behaving badly. Those who exercise power in a horizontal society become celebrities, and celebrities, unlike the powerful in traditional societies, must surrender a great deal of their privacy. They must convey the impression of being accessible and familiar rather than remote and daunting, and they achieve this illusion by their willingness to share certain intimate details of their personal lives with faceless cameras.

A self-possessed private citizen has an inviolate personality, protected by boundaries of reserve that cannot be penetrated readily by strangers. A celebrity, by contrast, has an interactive personality: People feel free to approach a man like Sam Donaldson on the street. But the feelings of intimacy that celebrity generates are either misleading—we don't really know a television celebrity, even though he appears every night in our living room—or a sign of self-violation: When a celebrity leads so much of his life in public that nothing is held back for his genuine intimates, he becomes a buffoonish self-caricature, almost literally a talking head, devoid of the individuality, texture, and depth that characterize a genuinely self-possessed personality.

The culture of celebrity shows us the nature of the challenge to privacy that changes in law and technology are exacerbating at the dawn of the 21st century.



Twenty-four-year-old Jennifer Ringley hosts a round-the-clock Webcast from her apartment. "I don't feel I'm giving up my privacy," she says. "Just because people can see me doesn't mean it affects me—I'm still alone in my room, no matter what."

When we think we know Sam Donaldson, it is because we have confused information with knowledge—we have formed an idea about him on the strength of isolated pieces of information. In an age when thinking, writing, reading, and gossip increasingly take place online, and when all kinds of disaggregated personal information is widely recorded and permanently retrievable in cyberspace, private citizens run the risk of being treated like celebrities in the worst sense, defined by characteristics that have been wrenched out of context, or reduced to a set of inadequate data points.

If I buy a home in Washington, D.C., for example, the purchase price is recorded online, and if I teach at a state university, my salary, too, may be available. And if, in a moment of youthful enthusiasm, I once posted intemperate comments to an Internet newsgroup, those comments are likely to be recorded on a Web service such as Dejanews, where anyone can retrieve them years later simply by typing my name into a popular search engine. In certain social circles, it is not uncommon for prospective romantic partners to perform Internet background checks on each other, and it's not unheard of for former partners to post reports in cyberspace about each other's performance.

In the past, these bits of information were strictly the stuff of gossip, and its subjects enjoyed a certain protection from easy judgments. When intimate personal information circulates among a small group of people who know us well, its significance can be weighed against other things they know about us. But when information is separated from its original context and revealed to strangers, we are vulnerable to being misjudged on the

basis of our most embarrassing, and therefore most memorable, tastes and preferences. In a world where people are bombarded with information, they form impressions quickly, based on sound bites, and those impressions are likely to misrepresent our complicated and often contradictory characters.

Privacy protects us from being judged out of context in a world of short attention spans. Genuine knowledge of another person is the culmination of a slow process of mutual revelation. It requires the gradual setting aside of social masks and the incremental building of trust, which leads to the exchange of personal disclosures. It cannot be rushed, which is why, after intemperate self-revelation in the heat of passion, one may feel something close to self-betrayal. True knowledge of other people, in all their complexity, can be achieved with only a handful of intimate friends, lovers, or family members. To flourish, the intimate relationships on which true knowledge of others depends need time and private space—sanctuary from the gaze of the crowd, where mutual self-disclosure, measured and gradual, is possible.

In the vertical society of the 18th century, before the onset of modernity, notions of private property were a safeguard to privacy. If you wanted to read my diary, you had to break into my house, and if you broke into my house, I could sue you for trespass. The framers of the Fourth Amendment to the Constitution considered the search for a private diary without the permission of its author the paradigmatic example of an unconstitutional search. By the end of the 19th century, Louis D. Brandeis, the future Supreme Court justice, and Samuel D. Warren, his former law partner, worried that changes in technology as well as law were altering the nature of privacy. What had been seen as a physical threat now looked like a more insidious danger. "Instantaneous photographs and newspaper enterprise have invaded the sacred precincts of private and domestic life," they lamented in the most famous essay on privacy ever written. In that 1890 article they invoked the right to an "inviolate personality" to constrain the press.

But technological and legal change continued apace as the 20th century unfolded, eroding the protections for privacy to an extent that only became clear during President Bill Clinton's impeachment. The Supreme Court invoked a constitutional right to privacy in *Roe v. Wade* (1973), but the Court relied upon an amorphous vision of privacy—it was really a misnomer for the freedom to make intimate decisions about reproduction. Meanwhile, the Court neglected a more focused vision of privacy that has to do with our ability to control the conditions under which we make different aspects of ourselves accessible to others. Thus it was during the 1970s and 1980s that the long-standing principle that private diaries couldn't be subpoenaed as "mere evidence" in civil or white-collar criminal cases was quietly allowed to wither away.

And it was during the 1980s and 1990s that the Supreme Court's vague definition of sexual harassment (in addition to sexual extortion, the Court rec-

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ognized a more ambiguous category known as "hostile environment" harassment) paved the way for increased monitoring of private speech and conduct. The Lewinsky investigation showed just how completely the legal climate had been transformed. Monica Lewinsky's own fate revealed the personal price, and pointed up the central value of privacy that had been lost. "It was such a violation," she complained to her biographer, recalling the experience of having her bookstore receipts subpoenaed and drafts of love letters retrieved from her computer. "It seemed that everyone in America had rights except for Monica Lewinsky. I felt like I wasn't a citizen of this country anymore."

Much has been made of the fact that transactions in cyberspace tend to generate detailed electronic footprints that expose our tastes and preferences to the operators of Web sites, who can then sell the information to private marketers. But to the frustration of professional privacy advocates, Americans don't always seem terribly concerned about the commercial exploitation of clickstream data. It is personal misinterpretation, as Lewinsky's ordeal so forcibly reminded us, that is the deeper threat. What individuals want in an exhibitionist society is not the right to be left alone, but the right to control the conditions of their own exposure. And that is what the new technology, along with legal developments, is making so difficult.

> PRIVACY PROTECTS US FROM BEING JUDGED OUT OF CONTEXT IN A WORLD OF SHORT ATTENTION SPANS. GENUINE KNOWLEDGE OF ANOTHER PERSON IS THE CULMINATION OF A SLOW PROCESS OF REVELATION.

Defenders of transparency argue that more information, rather than less, is our best protection against misjudgment. We might think differently about a Charles Schwab employee who ordered *Memoirs of a Geisha* from Amazon.com if we knew that she also listened to the Doors and subscribed to *Popular Mechanics*. But even if we saw the logs of everything she had read and downloaded for a week, we would not come close to knowing who she really was. Instead, we would misjudge her in all sorts of new ways. If complete logs of every citizen's reading habits were available on the Internet, the limits of the average attention span would guarantee that no one's logs were read from beginning to end. Overwhelmed by information, citizens would click to a more interesting Web site. When attention spans are so short, privacy protects citizens from the misjudgments that can result from the exposure of both too much information and too little.

Defenders of transparency, however, question the social value of privacy. Richard Posner, the federal appeals court judge, argues that privacy can be inefficient and contribute to social fraud and misrepresentation, because it allows people to conceal true but embarrassing information about themselves

from other people in order to gain unfair social or economic advantage. Philosopher Richard Wasserstrom suggests that our insistence on leading dual lives—one public, the other private—can amount to a kind of deception and hypocrisy; if we were less embarrassed by sexual and other private activities that have traditionally been associated with shame, we would have less to fear from disclosure because we would have nothing to hide. David Brin argues in the same vein in *The Transparent Society* (1998), and quotes John Perry Barlow, former lyricist for the Grateful Dead, now an advocate on cyberspace issues: "I have no secrets myself, and I think that everybody would be a lot happier and safer if they just let everything be known. Then nobody could use anything against them."

These defenders of transparency are confusing secrecy with privacy. But secrecy is only a small dimension of privacy if privacy is defined as the ability to control the conditions under which personal information is disclosed to others. Even those who claim that society would be better off if people were less embarrassed about discussing their sexual activities in public manage to feel annoyed and invaded when they are solicited by telemarketers during dinner. Moreover, the defenders of transparency have adopted a view of human personality as essentially unitary and integrated. They see social masks as a way of misrepresenting the true self. But that view of personality is simplistic and misleading. Instead of behaving as a single character, people display different characters in different contexts. I may (and do) wear different public masks when interacting with my students, my close friends, my family, and my dry cleaner. Far from being inauthentic, each of those masks helps me to act in a manner that suits different social settings. If the masks were to be violently torn away, what would be exposed would not be my true self but the spectacle of a wounded and defenseless man, as the ordeal of Clarence Thomas shows.

THE HEIGHTENED SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING THAT GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS EXPERIENCE ARE INCREASINGLY COMMON IN PRIVATE WORKPLACES.

If this "dramaturgical" view of character is correct, and if privacy is defined broadly as the ability to protect ourselves from being judged out of context, then there are clear political, social, and personal costs attached to the changes in the architecture of privacy. First, let's consider the political costs. The philosopher Judith Shklar gave a helpful example of the political value of privacy when she argued that, in a democracy, we don't need to know someone's title to avoid giving offense. The democratic honorifics *Mr.* and *Ms.* suggest that all citizens are entitled to equal respect, without revealing their rank or family background or pro-

Room in New York *(1932), by Edward Hopper*

fessional accomplishments. Democracy is a space where citizens and strangers can interact without putting all their cards on the table—and privacy allows citizens who disagree profoundly to debate matters of common concern without confronting their irreconcilable differences.

There are also social costs of privacy's erosion. The heightened surveillance and monitoring that government officials experience in the political sphere are increasingly common in private workplaces as well, with similarly inhibiting effects on creativity and even productivity. Several surveys of monitoring in the workplace have suggested that electronically monitored workers experience higher levels of depression, tension, and anxiety, and lower levels of productivity, than those who are not monitored. It makes sense that people behave differently when they fear their conversations may be monitored. As the philosopher Stanley Benn noted, the knowledge that you are being observed changes your consciousness of yourself and your surroundings; even if the topic of conversation is not inherently private, your opinions and actions suddenly become candidates for a third party's approval or contempt. Uncertain as to when electronic monitoring may take place, employees will be more guarded and less spontaneous, and the increased formality of conversation and e-mail makes communication less efficient. In certain occupations, moreover, individuals will exaggerate the risks of public exposure: How many ambitious lawyers and law professors have changed their e-mailing habits in anticipation of U.S. Senate confirmation hearings that may never materialize?

Finally, there are the personal costs of the erosion of privacy. Privacy is

important not only, or even primarily, to protect individual autonomy but also to allow individuals to form intimate relationships. In one of the most thoughtful essays on the subject, the Harvard University legal philosopher Charles Fried has written that, without a commitment to privacy, "respect, love, friendship, and trust" are "simply inconceivable." Friendship and romantic love can't be achieved without intimacy, and intimacy, in turn, depends on the selective and voluntary disclosure of personal information that we don't share with everyone else. In her story "The Other Two," Edith Wharton coolly describes a twice-divorced woman who finds herself serving tea to all three of her husbands at the same time. "She was 'as easy as an old shoe'—a shoe that too many feet had worn," Wharton writes. "Her elasticity was the result of tension in too many different directions. Alice Haskett—Alice Varick—Alice Waythorn—she had been each in turn, and had left hanging to each name a little of her privacy, a little of her personality, a little of the inmost self where the unknown god abides."

Properly shielded, friendships and loving relationships provide us with opportunities to share confidences and test ideas because we trust that our confidences won't be betrayed. ("A friend," said Emerson, "is someone before . . . [whom] I can think aloud.") To the degree that jokes, rough drafts, and written confidences can be wrenched out of context and subjected to public scrutiny, it is less likely that those confidences will be shared in the first place. Friendship, of course, will survive the new technologies of monitoring and surveillance. If I fear that my e-mail to my friends may be misinterpreted, I will take care to talk to my friends over the telephone or in person. But instead of behaving like citizens in totalitarian societies, and passively adjusting our behavior to the specter of surveillance, we should think more creatively about ways of preserving private spaces and sanctuaries in which intimate relationships can flourish.

There is also an important case for privacy that has to do with the development of human individuality. "Without privacy there is no individuality," Leontine Young noted in *Life among the Giants* (1966). "There are only types. Who can know what he thinks and feels if he never has the opportunity to be alone with his thoughts and feelings?" Studies of creativity show that the most creative thought takes place during periods of daydreaming and seclusion, when individuals allow ideas and impressions to run freely through their minds, in a process that can be impeded by the presence of others.

We are trained in this country to think of all concealment as a form of hypocrisy. But we are beginning to learn how much may be lost in a culture of transparency: the capacity for creativity and eccentricity, for the development of self and soul, for understanding, friendship, even love. There are dangers to pathological lying, but there are dangers as well to pathological truth telling. Privacy is a form of moral opacity, and opacity has its value. We need more shades and more blinds and more virtual curtains. Someday, perhaps, we will look back with nostalgia on a society that still believed opacity was possible—and was shocked to discover what happens when it is not. ❑

The Genetic Surprise

by Phillip J. Longman and Shannon Brownlee

So strong is the American aversion to "socialized medicine" that neither major candidate in this year's presidential election has dared question the fundamental role of the private sector in underwriting the U.S. health care system. Indeed, most health care reform proposals on the table involve attempts to make private health care insurance more widely available through the use of various subsidies and other incentives. Yet the collision of two well-established trends in medicine and law may soon make the private sector's role in spreading the risk of health care costs unworkable, and government provision of universal health care coverage increasingly difficult to avoid.

The first of these trends is the rapid advancement of genetic testing and other means of determining proclivity to disease. Ten years ago there were fewer than a dozen genetic tests available, mostly for relatively rare inherited disorders such as retinoblastoma, a cancer of the eye, and cystic fibrosis. Today, tests have come on line for approximately 400 genetic disorders, including common diseases such as Alzheimer's and cancer, and many more are in the offing. For example, one supplier of genetic tests, Myriad Genetics, a biotech company in Utah, markets a test for a gene that governs which drug is most likely to help a patient with high blood pressure. Within a year, the company hopes to launch tests for genes that contribute to melanoma, an inherited form of colon cancer, and perhaps 20 percent of heart attacks. Within three years, the company hopes to offer tests that predict the risk of asthma, insulin-dependent diabetes, obesity, and osteoporosis.

Other companies are racing to develop tests for the genes that contribute to a rogues' gallery of diseases such as Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, lung cancer, and depression. With the completion of the map of the human genome last July, geneticists expect that hundreds more genetic tests will soon be available. Moreover, the tests are likely to be cheap and easy to administer. Your doctor will scrape a few cells from the inside of your cheek, place them in a device on a tabletop, and look into your medical future. New gene-chip technology, which marries DNA sequencing with the silicon chip inside computers, promises not only to speed the search for additional genes but to bring down the average cost of genetic tests

The Faith Healer ***(diptych, panel one, 1998), by Geoff Laurence***

from several hundred dollars to just a few. Eventually, discovering your genetic destiny, or at least your genetically probable fate, may become as simple and easy as checking your cholesterol.

The second trend that will have an impact on private health insurance is the plethora of "right to privacy" laws passed in response to widespread fears that genetic tests will be used as a basis for discrimination. So far, 37 states have passed legislation that tries, in one way or another, to limit an insurer's access to genetic information, and there are approximately 200 similar bills pending in various state legislatures. In February, President Bill Clinton issued an executive order that forbids federal agencies from using genetic testing in any decision to hire, promote, or dismiss workers. Clinton also endorsed congressional legislation sponsored by Senator Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) and Representative Louise M. Slaughter (D-N.Y.) that would make it illegal for employers to discriminate on the basis of genetic testing. A similar bill introduced by Representative Slaughter had more than 200 bipartisan supporters in the House and was endorsed by 100 public-interest groups representing a broad swath of the American public.

The political appeal of such bans can hardly be overstated. Many studies have shown that fear of discrimination discourages individuals from undergoing genetic tests that could be useful in prolonging their lives. Genetic counselors report, for instance, that many women at risk for an

inherited form of breast cancer are reluctant to get tested for fear they will lose their insurance. At the same time, discrimination on the basis of genetic endowment violates most people's fundamental sense of fairness. As Carroll Campbell, president and CEO of the American Council of Life Insurance (ACLI), told an industry meeting two years ago: "Our Achilles' heel is that we haven't been able to successfully explain why it's fair to penalize applicants for risk factors they can't control." In fact, Campbell confided that, according to internal polling by the ACLI, fully 80 percent of life insurance industry employees (not including actuaries and underwriters) oppose the use of genetic testing by insurers.

The fact that many genetic markers for disease are strongly associated with specific ethnic groups adds to the potential controversy. Jews of eastern European origin, for example, are far more prone to several harmful genetic mutations than the general population. They face a three- to four-fold increased risk for three mutations associated with breast cancer and approximately a six-fold increase in risk for colon cancer. African Americans are more likely to suffer from hypertension, coronary artery disease, and sickle cell anemia, a disease that almost never strikes northern Europeans or Asians. Caucasian children, meanwhile, face at least a 10-fold increased risk of cystic fibrosis compared with nonwhites.

Yet the ever-tightening legal prohibitions against genetic discrimination create perverse side effects when combined with the trend toward cheap and effective genetic testing. Specifically, the ability of people to keep the results of genetic tests secret causes an asymmetry of information between insurers and insurees that threatens to unravel the very logic of private health insurance markets and, by extension, the viability of the U.S. health care system as a whole.

This mighty threat arises chiefly from a phenomenon known to actuaries as "adverse selection." People who know, for whatever reason, that they face an increased risk of disease or premature death tend to load up on insurance. This presents no threat to the sustainability of insurance markets so long as insurers have access to the same information and can use it to adjust the premiums offered such people to a level commensurate with the risks they present. But when insurers are denied meaningful information about the risks they are underwriting, or are forbidden from practicing price discrimination based on different probabilities of risk, then adverse selection sets in motion a process that at best makes insurance markets highly inefficient, and at worst dysfunctional.

To see why, consider the following thought experiment, inspired by an

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example from David Holland, president and CEO of Munich American Reassurance Company of Atlanta. For simplicity's sake, imagine not a health insurance company, but a life insurance company, called PetLife, which has three types of customers: 1,000 dogs, 1,000 cats, and 1,000 mice. Each customer holds a policy that will pay $1 in the event of death, but life expectancies vary widely. The cats, blessed with nine lives, enjoy the lowest mortality rates. Only 10 percent of all cat customers die each year. Dogs, prone to chasing cats into the street, suffer a higher mortality rate, with 20 percent dying annually. Finally, there are the poor mice, who, largely because of the cats, have the shortest life expectancy. In any given year, fully 36 percent of mice customers expire.

Obviously, the mice pose the highest risks and the highest costs for PetLife. Indeed, since they are more than three and a half times more likely to die in any given year than cats, many mice find that they can only obtain life insurance at rates that are very high, at least compared with the rates quoted to cats. Sensing an injustice (after all, they had no choice about being born mice), the mice band together as a special-interest group and push a law through Congress that prohibits discrimination on the basis of genetic endowment. From now on, all life insurers will have to offer policies to cats, dogs, and mice at the same price.

KEEPING THE RESULTS OF GENETIC TESTS SECRET MAY THREATEN THE VERY LOGIC OF PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE MARKETS.

How will insurance markets respond to this mandate? Given the different mortality rates for its 3,000 customers, PetLife can expect 100 cats, 200 dogs, and 360 mice to die by the end of the first year, for a total of 660 claims. Ignoring the cost of overhead and any need for profits, PetLife will need to collect premiums of $660 to cover each of the $1 death benefits it can expect to owe each year. Since it is prohibited from practicing genetic discrimination, it must select a single premium price that covers its expenses. After dividing the total amount of expected claims ($660) by the total number of customers (3,000), the company will discover that the premium it must charge for each policy is 22 cents.

But there is a problem with these single-price policies, especially if you are a cat. With their comparatively long life expectancy, the cats collectively will pay some 45 percent more in premiums than they will collect in benefits. By contrast, the short-lived mice will collect some 61 percent more benefits than they pay in premiums. What would you do if you were a cat? Obviously, you'd be inclined either to look for a new plan with more cats and fewer mice, or perhaps go without life insurance altogether.

And what would you do if you were a mouse? With the company pay-

ing the average mouse $1 in benefits for every 22 cents it contributes in premiums, PetLife policies are highly popular among mice. It is such a good deal that, unlike cats, few mice ever let their policies lapse. Consequently, over time PetLife's risk pool comprises an ever larger share of high-cost mice, and an ever smaller share of low-cost cats.

As this happens, PetLife will have no choice but to keep raising its premiums to cover the increasing average death rate of its remaining (mostly mice) customers. And each time it does so, its remaining cat customers will face a worse deal, causing still more to flee and requiring a new round of premium increases. Eventually, either PetLife will go broke or the mice will again find themselves paying very high premiums, with many of them perhaps priced out of the market.

IF THE GENETICALLY FIT ARE CHARGED THE SAME PREMIUMS AS THE GENETICALLY UNFIT, THE FORMER WILL CONSIDER HEALTH INSURANCE OVERPRICED.

The moral of the story is that for all insurance markets, not just life insurance, a failure to practice price discrimination against different classes of risks can lead quickly to market failure. This isn't just a matter of theory. In the 19th century, adverse selection created by an antiquated system of one-price-for-all underwriting made life insurance extremely attractive to the old and sick, and too expensive for the young and healthy. As insurers' costs rose, so did prices, until the product was so expensive only the affluent could afford it.

Something similar is happening today in New York State, where health insurers have been forced by law to charge everyone the same price, based on the average cost of insuring people in each of nine regions across the state. The 1992 community rating law applied not only to insurance for individuals but to rates offered to small businesses. Health insurers had to stop offering better rates to small businesses with young (and therefore generally healthier) workers and charging higher premiums to those with older, sicker workers. The legislation was aimed at bringing prices down so more businesses and individuals could afford health insurance. "What happened was just the opposite," says Mark Litow, an actuary with Milliman & Robertson, an employee benefits consulting firm. Instead, says Litow, "It raised average prices and wiped out the individual market in New York State." Within the first 18 months after passage of the bill, an estimated 365,000 New Yorkers lost or dropped their health insurance. Most of them were young, a pattern that caused prices to rise even more.

Though most Americans receive their health care through group policies in which adverse selection is less of a concern, even group plans are affected by the phenomenon, say industry experts. Individuals who know

they are at elevated risk for genetic disease will seek out employers offering gold-plated health insurance plans (the government, for instance), or will choose to stay with an employer whose health plan is more likely to cover them. Employees with genetic conditions who can pick and choose among different health insurance options will select the plan that best covers the treatment they need.

It isn't just fear of adverse selection that creates a strong incentive for insurers to use genetic information in setting prices. Potentially, price discrimination based on the results of genetic testing could make insurance markets much more efficient, and the price of health and life coverage much lower for most people, albeit much higher for more than a few. It is a well-established principle of economics that when consumers have vastly different demand curves for a product, charging higher prices to those who need the product intensely, and lower prices to those who want it only weakly, often leads to lower average prices.

An example is the airline industry, which fills seats that would otherwise go empty by offering steep discounts to people who have no urgent need to travel and can purchase tickets far in advance. The presence of such people makes the average cost of tickets lower than it otherwise would be, because the cost of the flight is spread among more passengers. The public benefits that can accrue from price discrimination against different classes of customers were widely recognized as far back as the late-19th century, when government regulation of railroad freight and passenger fares embraced the principle.

The same tenet applies to the use of genetic tests in pricing insurance, and more broadly than one might suppose. Those who know they are blessed with few deleterious genes will have lower demand for health care insurance than those who know they are not, all else being equal. If the genetically fit are charged the same premiums as the genetically unfit, the former will consider health insurance overpriced, and many will simply choose to go bare. The only way to tempt them into a risk pool is to offer them discounts commensurate with the lower risks they present, or, to put it another way, to charge the genetically unfit more.

The use of genetic tests potentially increases the efficiency of insurance markets for another important reason: In effect, it reduces the amount of unknown risk, or uncertainty, insurers must absorb, and thereby allows them to charge lower average prices. Just having additional genetic information about the pool as a whole reduces uncertainty about future claims, notes James Hickman, dean emeritus of the School of Business at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and to that extent reduces the risk premium that must be built into insurance prices. Even if a pool of employees turns out to have a higher-than-average number of workers with potentially expensive gene defects, the reduction of uncertainty achieved by sharing that information with insurers may well be enough to reduce the cost of insuring the pool to

below what it would be were insurers simply left in the dark about the risks involved.

To see this principle at work in another context, consider which would be the more attractive bet for you: (a) You encounter a person on the Internet of unknown sex, age, and health habits who offers you $100 in return for your promise to pay his or her estate $1,000 in the event he or she dies next year, or (b) your 55-year-old neighbor, who you know is at least fit enough to mow his own lawn, but whom you also see smoking on his porch from time to time, offers you the same bargain, with the only difference being that the most he will pay you upfront to take the deal is $75. Perhaps both proposals are bad bargains, but the second should seem more tempting than the first. That is because the attractiveness of a bet increases as its uncertainty decreases, even when comparatively high real risks are involved. This example shows why laws protecting privacy incur such great costs, and why it should be an open question whether the price is always worth paying.

Allowing genetic discrimination in insurance underwriting would be far less revolutionary than it might seem. Starting in the 1980s, blood testing of life insurance applicants became widespread, as did price discrimination based on the results. Today, some insurers have as many as nine classes of preferred rates based on factors such as blood pressure, cholesterol levels, age, sex, and smoking habits. Far from generating political opposition, such price discrimination has become a marketing tool. As John Krinik, editor and publisher of *Underwriter ALERT*, has noted, "Cultural attitudes dealing with financial status (i.e., preferred, gold, and platinum credit cards, club memberships, etc.) made life insurance marketers believe that competitive advantage would accrue to the insurer who played to these social stratifications."

No insurance company yet offers discounts to the "genetically fit," but many industry observers believe it's only a matter of time before some renegade firm makes the pitch. A sample ad has already appeared in an article on future trends in insurance published in *Contingencies*, a trade magazine for actuaries: "Your genetic profile may qualify for the lowest insurance rate ever offered! You don't have to subsidize anyone else's inferior genes again! DNA Life Insurance Company introduces Immortal Life, the policy for the superior man or woman with unsurpassed gene fitness."

In pondering how health and life insurance markets might evolve if left to their own devices, it is worth noting that many consumers may well want to offer the results of genetic tests to insurance companies. Privacy laws increasingly allow individuals who get unhappy test results to keep that information to themselves. But those who discover they are genetically well-off may want to share that information with insurers in order to obtain lower rates. Similarly, in the future, employers may be tempted to reduce their health care costs by offering the prospect of lower premiums to employees who voluntarily submit to a genetic test.

Many states restrict insurers' access to genetic and other medical information, but individuals can still be required to release such data to their employers.

Lawmakers may try to prohibit such transactions, but arguably this would in itself be a form of genetic discrimination. Why should people who happened to be born without many gene defects (but who may be poor or suffering from nongenetic disease) be forced to pay more for health insurance than is warranted by the actuarial risk their genes are known to present? Alternatively, if those who are prone to genetic disease require a subsidy for their health care needs, why should the burden of paying that subsidy fall exclusively on the genetically fit as a class without regard to their individual health or economic status?

Breast cancer provides a concrete example of how bans on genetic discrimination can cause inequities. About 80 percent of the women who carry BRCA1, a gene associated with breast cancer, will develop the disease. But women with this inherited form of cancer constitute only a fraction of all breast cancer patients. Why should women who carry the BRCA1 gene be a protected class, effectively entitled to insurance priced below the actuarial cost of their benefits, while those who develop breast cancer from other causes are not?

Many people believe that genetic discrimination should be banned

because individuals have no control over the gene defects they inherit. But while the content of our DNA may be a matter of fate, genetic disease usually isn't. Some genetic defects, to be sure, do lead inexorably to disease. For example, people who test positive for the rare gene mutation that causes retinitis pigmentosa know for certain that they will go blind by about age 60. But the results of most genetic tests are expressed in terms of probability. Part of this variability stems from the vagaries of genetics. The same genetic mutation may express itself differently in different people; one identical twin, for example, may develop juvenile diabetes while the other escapes it. The expression of genes is also affected by lifestyle and environment. If you have a genetic predisposition toward high blood pressure, you may not develop the condition if you exercise and hold down your calories. Many persons carrying the gene associated with familial adenomatous polyposis colon cancer can achieve a nearly normal lifespan if they receive regular colonoscopies and have their polyps removed. An inherited predisposition to lung cancer or emphysema can be diminished by giving up cigarettes.

THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY FACES HUGE RISKS OF POLITICAL BACKLASH IF IT ADOPTS WHOLESALE GENETIC TESTING.

The fact that most genetic tests establish only a predisposition to disease causes some observers to object that such tests should never be used as a basis for discrimination. Doing so, they say, is equivalent to charging blacks higher life insurance premiums just because blacks, on average, have lower life expectancies—actuarially sound, but morally unacceptable. Yet insurance has always been based on probabilities determined through group membership, variously defined. People who have only recently obtained their first driver's license, for example, are often very careful drivers, yet as a class such drivers present enough of an elevated risk of accidents that they are charged dramatically higher premiums than the general population, and without stirring much political objection to the implicit age discrimination either.

Similarly, many, if not most, occasional smokers don't develop lung cancer or other smoking-related illnesses, but enough do so that price discrimination by life insurance companies against all smokers, whether they smoke one cigarette a day or 60, is well established and widely accepted. More significantly, insurers now routinely charge higher prices to people who, while not actually ill, carry mere markers or precursors of disease, such as high cholesterol or high blood pressure. The fact that such conditions often have a genetic component further undermines any attempt to draw moral or legal distinctions between genetic testing and routine medical screening. "The arguments I don't like are the ones that say genetic information is so special that it deserves particular pro-

tection," says Hank Greely, codirector of the Stanford Program in Genomics, Ethics, and Society. "It's just another form of predictive information, like sex, age, weight, and past medical history."

Adding to the pressure on insurers to use genetic information in underwriting is the reality that once one company does it, they all have to, or they run the risk of huge increases in cost. In the early 1980s, for example, when some life insurance companies first charged higher premiums to smokers, insurers that delayed implementing the policy found that the percentage of smokers in their risk pools increased to as much as 60 percent, because smokers sought out the companies that did not practice price discrimination against them.

Yet the insurance industry also faces huge risks of further political backlash if it adopts wholesale genetic testing. This is particularly true when it comes to health insurance, because of the widespread conviction that access to health care is a right of citizenship. "Health insurance carriers are more likely to react in a political fashion than in an actuarial fashion," says Alex Capron, professor of law and medicine at the University of Southern California. "They are likely not to want to use genetic information even if they could, because they recognize extensive use of it would create a situation of larger numbers of uninsured people, and all that does is feed the demand for health care reform."

Some observers believe the tradeoffs between equity and efficiency can be reconciled if the government allows for genetic discrimination in underwriting but also creates special benefits or subsidies for people who are thereby left unable to afford insurance. Patrick Brockett, director of the Risk Management and Insurance Program at the University of Texas, advocates a voucher system, similar in method to food stamps, which he believes would be far preferable to an outright ban on genetic discrimination. "We don't ask supermarkets to sell food at a lower price to disadvantaged people; we give disadvantaged people food stamps," notes Brockett. "Similarly, we may want to give vouchers to people who, because of genetic tests, can't afford insurance." Brockett thinks such a system will start with health care, "because so many people now think it is a right," and soon spread to types of insurance against human frailty, such as workers' compensation and life and disability insurance.

Other observers believe that there ought to be a tax on genetic tests that funds a social insurance program for people who flunk them. This would satisfy some people's sense of justice, to the extent it would require everyone to share the risk of genetic mutations before anyone knew his or her specific genetic liabilities. But others regard such schemes as, at best, half-steps. "That would be the usual American solution," says Arthur Caplan, director of the Center for Biomedical Ethics at the University of Pennsylvania. "Don't fix the problem, just enact horrendously costly stopgap measures that bury everyone in red tape."

In the end, Americans may well decide that the amount of such red

tape, combined with the loss of privacy and the genetic discrimination required to preserve private health insurance markets, is just too high a price to pay, and demand the obvious alternative. One virtue of a publicly funded, universal entitlement to health care, which is likely to assume ever greater support as advances in genetic testing continue, is that it instantly solves the problem of adverse selection. Under such a scheme, individuals who are genetically and otherwise fit would still, in a strictly actuarial sense, wind up cross-subsidizing those who are not. But at least the financing of such a system wouldn't be prone to the death spiral that occurs in private insurance markets when cats can walk away and mice pile on.

This is not to suggest that universal health care coverage would be free of problems of its own. Health care, as Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.) has suggested, is a "maximum entitlement." Whether it is provided under a program like Medicare, or by private insurance, health care coverage is essentially an open-ended contract that induces the very events (e.g., visits to doctors) it attempts to insure against. If an underwriter offers you a $100,000 life insurance policy, there is no ambiguity about what is promised, or how much it will cost in the event of your death. But since few individuals desire their own death, and, in any event, death by suicide invalidates the contract, what actuaries call "moral hazard" (or a situation in which insurance itself makes the insured event more likely to occur) is a comparatively minor issue in life insurance underwriting.

By contrast, when someone offers to pay whatever health care bills you deem necessary to maintain what you consider good health, the obligation is underdefined and totally subject to moral hazard. Because the insured event is something you desire, i.e., medical and mental health care services on demand, the contract or entitlement gives you an incentive to make sure it comes about. Worse, since there is no society-wide agreement on what constitutes good health, or on what medical measures are most effective in achieving it, the cost of your benefits becomes virtually limitless.

Still, what is the alternative? The American health care system is a tangle of contradictions and compromises, reflecting our conflicting tendencies to regard access to health care as a right of citizenship and to rely on market forces as much as possible as a means of pricing and allocating medical services. But these contradictions will become increasingly stark as information about individuals' genetic proclivity to disease becomes more common, accurate, and inexpensive. If genetic information is shielded by privacy laws, adverse selection alone will cause the cost of private health insurance to spiral upward, aggravating the problems of access. If such information isn't shielded, health insurance markets will operate efficiently, but they will also deny a different group of people access. Either way, mitigating such effects will require increased government subsidies or outright socialized medicine. ❑

Our Data, Our Selves

by Douglas Neal and Nicholas Morgan

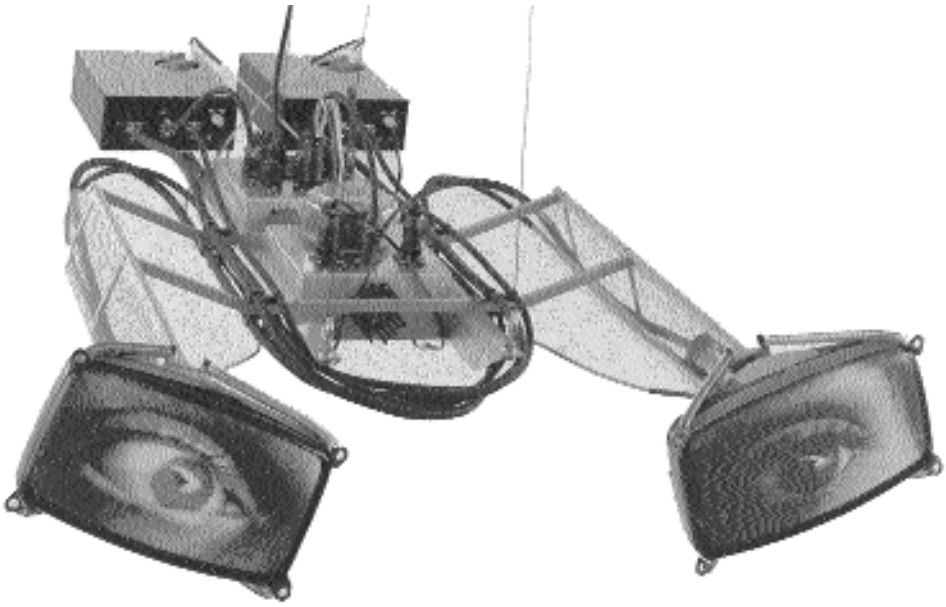
It's Friday night, the end of a tough week. You're ready to relax with your family, and you've enjoyed cooking a meal together. A wonderful aroma of spices and sesame oil fills the kitchen.

Just as you sit down to dinner, the phone rings. A computer half a continent away has turned up your name and telephone number on the screen of a telemarketer. The computer has data about you that suggest you might be interested in purchasing new aluminum siding. "How are you this evening?" comes the telltale telemarketer greeting when you pick up the phone. In a tone that is louder and angrier than you intended, you blurt out, "I was fine, until you called," and then you hang up and stalk back to the table. Once again, your privacy has been invaded.

In this era of rapidly expanding information technologies, telemarketing is only one of the more annoying ways a person's privacy can be breached. There's "junk" mail and e-mail, as well as other intrusions that are less immediately irritating but often more ominous. It is now possible, for example, for companies, governments, and other interested parties to track surreptitiously an individual's virtual travels on the Web and even, by determining his location when he uses his mobile phone, in the nonvirtual world. In London, with its 800 cell phone towers, it will soon be possible to determine a user's location within 50 meters. It is conceivable that in the near future aggressive marketers will be able to use your cell phone to send you advertisements and special offers from stores and restaurants as you pass by.

The list of privacy threats goes on. It's not uncommon for Web site hosts to send out data they have collected for analysis (and thus possible misuse) by another firm. Data that people have allowed others to collect for one purpose may be used for another, unauthorized purpose—a possibility highlighted earlier this year when bankrupt Toysmart.com announced its intention to sell personal information it had gathered about its Web customers. Private information may be disclosed inadvertently in a "data spill" and information about a person's preferences—has she been searching the Web for information about Vivaldi? about new sport-utility vehicles?—can also be released.

For most casual observers, such threats came sharply into focus only last year, when the Web tracking and advertising firm DoubleClick



Soar Eyes *(1994), by Alan Rath*

announced its purchase of a company called Abacus Direct. DoubleClick gathers data that allow it to track the Web browsing of individuals—data linked only to browsers' online identity, but not including their e-mail addresses. Abacus has vast data banks of personal information, including names and addresses, about some 88 million people who have made purchases through mail-order catalogues. DoubleClick's plan was to merge its data with Abacus's, allowing it to compile dossiers on individuals that would link information compiled from the relatively anonymous world of the Web to Abacus's names, addresses, and other data. The reaction from the public and the federal government was swift, loud, and emphatically negative. DoubleClick backed off.

Since the DoubleClick scare, new controversies—including one sparked by the revelation that the U.S. National Office of Drug Control Policy was secretly tracking the Web surfing of people who had visited its Web sites—have helped create a national debate about the protection of personal information in the electronic world.

The United States has long relied on industry self-regulation in this area, but that may be changing. In May, Robert Pitofsky, chairman of the U.S. Federal Trade Commission, describing industry efforts at self-regulation as inadequate, called for new federal legislation to establish "basic standards of practice for the collection of information online." Dozens of separate privacy-related measures are now pending on Capitol Hill, and threaten to create a patchwork national privacy policy. A number of new laws are already in place. The 1999 Gramm, Leach, Bliley

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Act, for example, requires all financial services firms to provide annual notices about their data-use policies to all of their customers, and also to provide mechanisms for customers to "opt out"—to decide that they no longer want information about them to be used in certain ways. In order to comply with the act, these companies will need to send their customers some 2.5 billion pieces of mail by November 12 of this year—a boon to the U.S. Postal Service, perhaps, but for consumers and businesses alike a costly (and probably ineffective) measure.

In Europe, the predisposition has been to deal with the issue through legislation. There are now strict prohibitions on what information may be recorded and how, if at all, it may be used. For example, under Britain's 1998 Data Protection Act (which only comes into full effect in October of this year) firms typically are required to provide notice and gain explicit permission before they can make use of any personal data. The European Union is putting similar policies in place. All of these policies affect American companies doing business in Europe, and while the U.S. government is negotiating an agreement with the EU to avoid the need for similar laws in this country, the potential restrictions are still significant. The Marriott hotel chain, for example, recently had to seek clarification to see if it was permissible to do something as simple and useful as keep track of its customers' preferences for nonsmoking rooms and king-size beds.

RATHER THAN TRYING TO SET ABSTRACT STANDARDS FOR PRIVACY IN THE MARKETPLACE, WE CAN BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT PERSONAL INFORMATION AS PERSONAL PROPERTY.

Who will draw the privacy line, and where will they draw it? If governments do it, then in all likelihood it will be a stark line, one that errs on the side of restricting the availability of information and lacks the flexibility to adapt to changing economic circumstances and individual preferences. But what is the alternative? Few Americans would be comfortable allowing businesses to make all the privacy decisions.

There is a third option. Rather than trying to set abstract standards for privacy in the marketplace, we can begin to think about personal information as personal property. A large part of the threat to privacy today arises from the fact that in an increasingly networked world, data about individuals—everything from their age and sex to their buying habits—have increasing monetary value. Corporations, as well as charities, advocacy groups, and other organizations, want such information because they think they can use it to make money. So why not make them pay for it? More important, why

not use the system to allow every individual to draw his or her own privacy line?

These things become possible in a world where personal information is treated as property that individuals have the right to control, just as they control their household possessions. In a way, such a scheme takes us back to the 19th century, before changing cultural mores and technology (e.g., the telephone and the wiretap) vastly complicated the definition of privacy. In that era, before inquisitive media began regularly peering into private lives, one could largely protect privacy by protecting tangible property, such as personal papers and diaries. In the marketplace, and perhaps in other realms of existence, we may be able to recover some of that simplicity.

The advantages of such an approach are considerable. Calling upon government to draw what would inevitably be an overly restrictive privacy line would undermine the information revolution that is driving the new economy. The cost in lost jobs, income, and choices would be high, the blow to America's competitive advantages in the world marketplace severe. As Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said last year, America's economic surge since the early 1990s has largely been a consequence of bringing more and better information to bear on economic life. Companies that don't know who their customers are, what they want, or when they want it, he noted, invariably do a number of things to hedge against uncertainty. These hedges lead to costly mistakes: excessive stockpiling, flawed decisions about what products to produce, and inappropriate delivery times. By contrast, the near real-time nature of the Internet enables manufacturers to respond to real "pull" signals rather than someone's guesses. The key to the future, Greenspan continued, lies in using information "to detect and to respond to finely calibrated nuances in consumer demand."

> THE LINE DIVIDING WHAT YOU WANT TO SHARE FROM WHAT YOU DON'T CAN BE VERY SHARP AT SOME TIMES—AND ALMOST INVISIBLE AT OTHERS.

Rigid rules governing information would also deprive consumers of many of the choices and efficiencies that the information economy is beginning to offer. While one's instinctive response might be that, given a choice, people will elect never to release any personal information, experience shows that this is not the case. A sense of urgency surrounds the privacy debate precisely because vast quantities of personal information are already in circulation. Look, for example, at all the people who are willing to share information about themselves and their buying habits with Internet companies that offer discounts or free merchandise in exchange. A recent survey by the Pew Internet and American Life Project found that while most of those polled said they were concerned about online privacy, two-thirds said they had given out personal information online or would be willing to do so.

Many Web users express concern about online privacy, but only 10 percent set their browser software to reject the "cookies" used to monitor Web travels.

Eighty-one percent of those polled favored stricter privacy rules, but only 24 percent wanted the federal government to formulate them. Most said Internet users should make the rules.

There is enormous variation in the privacy preferences of individuals. Just as there are certain details you would like your co-workers to know about you and others you prefer to keep confidential, so there is some information you would like the world to know about you and other information that you want to keep to yourself. The line dividing what you want to share from what you don't can be very sharp at some times—and almost invisible at others. Your personality, ethnic background, and stage of life, among many other factors, all play a role in determining whether you believe a certain piece of information should be kept private. Equally important are the purposes for which the information is to be used and who will use it—as well as the compensation you will receive for granting access to it.

In the future, marketing will be only one of many valuable uses of personal information. Ohio-based Progressive Auto Insurance, for example, is now testing a system that will closely tie the cost of its customers' insurance premiums to their actual use of their cars. Progressive installs in the customer's car a mobile telephone that is tied into the Global Positioning System. Every six minutes the device records the car's location in its database; once a month the company computer connects to the onboard telephone and downloads information about when and where the car has been driven. The company can then send a custom-tailored bill based on a variety of pricing factors, including distance and time of day driven. For example, since actuarial studies show that accident rates at 2:00 A.M. are four to five times higher than at 7:00 A.M., drivers who stay off the roads during the wee

hours will pay less. Prudent drivers will reap big rewards. With this technology, insurers would no longer need to group drivers into large pools, with the good drivers subsidizing the bad.

Progressive's plan may prove very attractive, but not if there is any doubt about who owns the information about policyholders' travels. If the policyholder has clear title to it, the plan becomes more palatable. (But anybody engaged in criminal activities or adulterous affairs would be well advised to look elsewhere for auto insurance—there is no guarantee at present that such information could not be used in a legal proceeding.)

In the near future, however, personal information will be most useful in providing Web sites that are highly personalized, based on the site's knowledge of such things as the visitor's interests and buying patterns, and in reaching out more actively to consumers. Instead of receiving a steady deluge of junk mail, for example, you should be able to signal an interest in, say, a new car during that brief period when you really are in the market for one. You, or a software agent that you would program, could stipulate the conditions and prices for which you would provide access to your data (including perhaps your background, demographic characteristics, attitudes, and preferences, as well as specific instructions about how you may be contacted). Many companies would gladly pay for such high-quality information—and would likely provide much more useful information and offers.

INSTEAD OF RECEIVING A STEADY DELUGE OF JUNK MAIL, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO SIGNAL AN INTEREST IN, SAY, A NEW CAR DURING THAT BRIEF PERIOD WHEN YOU ARE REALLY IN THE MARKET FOR ONE.

This system would also have the advantage of breaking the current deadlock between business and consumer advocates who call for "opt in" requirements—banning all uses of personal information to which the individual hasn't actively consented. Business responds that such requirements are so costly that many services will become uneconomical. A system in which information is property offers consent *and* efficiency.

To make a system of this kind work, a third party trusted by both consumers and potential purchasers of the information would be needed. Financial services firms are obvious candidates, with their long experience handling sensitive data and complying with privacy regulations, but other institutions might also do the job. Together, the institution and each customer would create a Web page that would function as a secure "storefront" for data about that person. After an initial setup, little would be required of the consumer, since software would infer his or her pref-

erences (about, say, breakfast cereals) from purchases and other behavior; the host institution would have every incentive to keep other information up to date.

To protect privacy, the Web site could issue a digital certificate of authenticity—perhaps in the form of a digitally encoded "watermark"—to those who purchase data. Stipulating where the data were purchased and under what conditions they may be used (including how many times and by whom), the certificate could include the possibility of allowing future information updates. Because the Web sites would be the most authoritative and detailed source of data about each person, organizations would soon come to choose them over other possible sources. Marketing offers arriving via e-mail, telephone, or videophone from companies that failed to carry a digital watermark of authenticity would be blocked by automated filters.

But the system would do a lot more, increasing the flow of information about things in which the person had expressed an interest, from bulk dog food to European travel opportunities. The free flow of more accurate information would have other effects throughout the economy. Consider the fact that the interest rates Americans pay on their home mortgages are from one-half to two percentage points lower than those paid by Europeans. Why? The major reason is that American mortgage lenders are allowed to collect extensive information about their borrowers and pass it on when reselling the mortgage in the secondary market. More information means less risk for the buyer and a more liquid market. Digital certificates would solidify and expand these advantages. If buyers in the secondary market get a digital certificate authenticating the data and permitting them to visit the borrower's Web site for more up-to-date information about, say, the borrower's income and occupation, costs will drop further.

The technological groundwork for such a system is already being laid. Micropayment technologies are making it possible for a person's interest in a new dishwasher, for example, to be sold over the Internet for a few pennies. And Internet markets are being developed in which software "agents" negotiate with other software agents to complete such transactions.

The great benefit of combining market technologies with individual control of personal information is flexibility. Legislation cannot respond to rapid or frequent changes in personal preferences about privacy—but markets can. Yet the privacy line is different for each individual, which is why most people don't want businesses to draw the line for them. So individuals must draw it themselves. Now, with the advent of technologies that are creating new markets for information, it is possible to begin thinking about giving people that opportunity.

In the future, you could have an option when a telemarketer calls on a Friday night. Your "agent" would answer the phone before it rings, saying, "Yes, my client is having dinner. She will be happy to interrupt her dinner to take your call for $200 for the first three minutes. Please deposit the amount on her Web site, *janeqcitizen.com*, now, or disconnect. Thank you." ❑

Lincoln and the Abolitionists

History records Abraham Lincoln as the Great Emancipator, yet ardent abolitionists of his day such as William Lloyd Garrison viewed him with deep suspicion. That the 16th president eventually achieved the abolitionists' most cherished dream, says biographer Allen Guelzo, happened through a curious combination of political maneuvering, personal conviction, and commitment to constitutional principle.

by Allen C. Guelzo

One of the ironies of the Civil War era and the end of slavery in the United States has always been that the man who played the role of the Great Emancipator was so hugely mistrusted and so energetically vilified by the party of abolition. Abraham Lincoln, whatever his larger reputation as the liberator of two million black slaves, has never entirely shaken off the imputation that he was something of a half-heart about it. "There is a counter-legend of Lincoln," acknowledges historian Stephen B. Oates, "one shared ironically enough by many white southerners and certain black Americans of our time" who are convinced that Lincoln never intended to abolish slavery—that he "was a bigot . . . a white racist who championed segregation, opposed civil and political rights for black people" and "wanted them all thrown out of the country." That reputation is still linked to the 19th-century denunciations of Lincoln issued by the abolitionist vanguard.

It has been the task of biographers ever since to deplore that image of Lincoln as the sort of extremist rhetoric that abolitionism was generally renowned for; or to insist that Lincoln may have had elements of racism in him but that he gradually effaced them as he moved on his "journey" to emancipation; or to suggest that Lincoln was an abolitionist all along who dragged his feet over emancipation for pragmatic political reasons.

Still, not even the most vigorous apologists for Lincoln can entirely escape the sense of distance between the Emancipator and the abolitionists. Indeed, they underestimate that distance, for the differences the abolition-

Matthew Brady took this photograph of Abraham Lincoln in 1862. A contemporary observer, Colonel Theodore Lyman, remarked that Lincoln "has the look of sense and wonderful shrewdness, while the heavy eyelids give him a mark almost of genius."

ists saw between themselves and Lincoln were not illusory or mere matters of timing and policy. They involved not just quarrels about strategies and timetables, but some genuinely unbridgeable cultural divides. Only when those differences are allowed their full play can we begin to recognize Lincoln's real place in the story of slavery's end. And only when those differences are not nudged aside can we see clearly the question Lincoln poses to the fundamental assumptions of American reform movements, which have drawn strength from the abolitionist example, rather than Lincoln's, ever since.

That the abolitionists disliked Lincoln almost unanimously cannot be in much doubt. They themselves said it too often, beginning as early as the mid-1850s, when Illinois abolitionists regarded Lincoln as a suspect recruit to the antislavery cause. The suspicions only deepened from the moment he stepped into the national spotlight as the Republican candidate for the presidency in 1860. Charles Grandison Finney, the Protestant evangelical theologian and president of Oberlin College, the nation's abolitionist hotbed, scored Lincoln in the first issue of the *Oberlin Evangelist* to appear after the nominating convention:

> The Republican Convention at Chicago [has] put in nomination for President Abraham Lincoln of Illinois, a gentleman who became widely known a year and a half ago by his political footrace against S.A. Douglas for the place of United States Senate from their state. In that campaign he won laurels on the score of his intellectual ability and forensic powers; but if our recollection is not at fault, his ground on the score of humanity towards the oppressed race was too low.

In the eyes of black abolitionist H. Ford Douglass, Lincoln's stature showed no improvement during the 1860 presidential campaign:

> I do not believe in the anti-slavery of Abraham Lincoln. . . . Two years ago, I went through the State of Illinois for the purpose of getting signers to a petition, asking the Legislature to repeal the 'Testimony Law,' so as to permit colored men to testify against white men. I went to prominent Republicans, and among others, to Abraham Lincoln and Lyman Trumbull, and neither of them dared to sign that petition, to give me the right to testify in a court of justice! . . . If we sent our children to school, Abraham Lincoln would kick them out, in the name of Republicanism and anti-slavery!

Lincoln's election did not mute abolitionist criticism. His unwillingness to use the outbreak of the Civil War in the spring of 1861 as a pretext for immediate abolition convinced William Lloyd Garrison that Lincoln was "unwittingly helping to prolong the war, and to render the result more and more doubtful! If he *is* 6 feet 4 inches high, he is only a dwarf in mind!" Garrison had never really believed that Lincoln's Republicans "had an issue with the South," and Lincoln himself did nothing once elected to convince him otherwise. Frederick Douglass, who had parted fellowship with Garrison over the issue of noninvolvement in politics, hoped for better from Lincoln, but only seemed to get more disappointments. Lincoln's presidential inaugural, with its promise not to interfere with southern slavery if the southern states attempted no violent withdrawal from the Union, left Douglass with "no very hopeful impres-

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The abolitionist John Brown is shown in this 1863 Currier & Ives lithograph on the way to his execution in 1859 for murder and treason, an event that galvanized the abolitionist movement.

sion" of Lincoln. If anything, Lincoln had only confirmed Douglass's "worst fears," and he flayed Lincoln as "an itinerant Colonization lecturer, showing all his inconsistencies, his pride of race and blood, his contempt for Negroes, and his canting hypocrisy."

Even in Lincoln's Congress, Republican abolitionists—such as Zachariah Chandler, Henry Wilson, Benjamin Wade, George W. Julian, James Ashley, Thaddeus Stevens, and Charles Sumner—all heaped opprobrium on Lincoln's head. Wade, according to Ohio lawyer and congressman Joshua Giddings, "denounced the President as a *failure* from the moment of his election." It mattered nothing to Wade if the war "con-

tinues 30 years and bankrupts the whole nation" unless "we can say there is not a slave in this land," but he could not convince Lincoln of that. "Lincoln himself seems to have no *nerve* or decision in dealing with great issues," wrote Ohio Congressman William Parker Cutler in his diary. And even the middle-of-the-road Maine senator William Pitt Fessenden erupted, "If the President had his wife's *will* and would use it rightly, our affairs would look much better." Sometimes, the attacks were so biting that Lincoln (in a comment to his attorney general, the Missourian Edward Bates) found the radical Republicans "almost fiendish." "Stevens, Sumner, and Wilson simply haunt me with the importunities for a Proclamation of Emancipation," Lincoln complained to Missouri senator John B. Henderson. "Wherever I go and whatever way I turn, they are on my trail."

None of the abolitionists, however, were more vituperative in their contempt for Lincoln than the Boston patrician Wendell Phillips. A self-professed "Jeffersonian democrat in the darkest hour," Phillips was disposed from the start to suspect anyone like Lincoln, who had belonged to the old Whig party of Henry Clay (Lincoln's "beau ideal of a statesman") and then to the Republicans. Once Phillips had Lincoln firmly in his sights after the Chicago nominating convention, his estimate of Lincoln only dropped. "Who is this huckster in politics?" Phillips exclaimed. "Who is this county court advocate?"

> Here is Mr. Lincoln. . . . He says in regard to such a point, for instance, as the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, that he has never studied the subject; that he has no distinctive ideas about it. . . . But so far as he has considered it, he should be, perhaps, in favor of gradual abolition, when the slave-holders of the district asked for it! Of course he would. I doubt if there is a man throughout the whole South who would not go as far as that. . . . That is the amount of his anti-slavery, if you choose to call it such, which according to the Chicago thermometer, the Northern states are capable of bearing. The ice is so thin that Mr. Lincoln, standing six feet and four inches, cannot afford to carry any principles with him onto it!

It has been tempting to write off much of this to the not inconsiderable egos of many of the abolitionist leaders, or to the impatience that three decades of agitation had bred into the abolitionist faithful, or to the presumably forgivable political naiveté of the abolitionists, who simply did not realize that Lincoln was on their side but had political realities to deal with that they did not understand. For most interpreters, Lincoln and the abolitionists were simply a convergence waiting to happen; this has become, for the most part, the familiar cadence of the story.

Lincoln himself deliberately fed such perceptions from time to time. "Well, Mr. Sumner," Lincoln remarked to the florid Massachusetts radical in November 1861, "the only difference between you and me on this subject is a difference of a month or six weeks in time." He told the Illinois businessman and politician Wait Talcott that the opinions of "strong abolitionists . . . have produced

a much stronger impression on my mind than you may think." And John Roll, a Springfield builder and longtime acquaintance of Lincoln's, heard him reply to a question as to whether he was an abolitionist, "I am mighty near one."

But being "near one" was precisely the point. If to be opposed to slavery was to be "near" abolitionism, then almost the entire population of the northern free states was "near" abolitionism too. But opposition to slavery never necessitated abolition. Antislavery might just as easily take the form of containment (opposing the legalization of slavery in any new states), colonization (forced repatriation of blacks to Africa), gradual emancipation (freedom keyed to decades-long timetables), or in the minds of most Northerners, nothing at all, so long as slavery got no nearer than it was. "I am a whig," Lincoln wrote to his longtime friend Joshua Speed in 1855, "but others say there are no whigs, and that I am an abolitionist." But this Lincoln denied: "I now do no more than oppose the *extension* of slavery." Even when he would finally contemplate emancipation, it was not on the abolitionists' terms. His ideal emancipation legislation would "have the three main features—gradual—compensation—and the vote of the people," all of which abolitionists abhorred.

Lincoln's analysis of the abolition radicals as "fiends" had long roots in his own personal history. His parents were Separate Baptists, a small denomination that taught God's absolute control over each and every human choice, down to the smallest events, so that no one really exercised free will in choosing. The Separates were antislavery; but they were deeply hostile to reform movements as well, since such movements (like abolitionism) smacked too strongly of human efforts at self-improvement by strength of human will, apart from God. The Separates supported "no mission Boards for converting the heathen, or for evangelizing the world; no Sunday Schools as nurseries to the church; no schools of any kind for teaching theology and divinity, or for preparing young men for the ministry," and especially no "Secret Societies, Christmas Trees, Cake-Walks, and various other things." If the world required reforming, God would undertake it; humanly constructed reform movements were not needed.

Lincoln rebelled against his parents' religion early in adolescence. When he moved to Springfield, Illinois, in 1837 to begin practicing law, "he was skeptical as to the great truths of the Christian Religion." But he remained just as doubtful as the Separates about how free the human will really was. Even if he could no longer believe in the Separates' God, he still believed that "the human mind is impelled to action, or held in rest by some power, over which the mind itself has no control." And he continued all through his life to retain a vivid sense of "a Superintending & overruling Providence that guides and controls the operation of the world." This "Providence" might be a personality of sorts, for all that Lincoln knew. But he spoke of "Providence" more often in faceless terms, as though "Providence" was "more akin to natural law." In that way, Lincoln understood that the universe was run not by a God who could be influenced by prayer to change the course of human events, but by "Law & Order, & not their violation or suspension."

Even when he was inclined to speak of God as a divine person, as he did in many of his presidential utterances, it was invariably a God who was a "Judge," weighing out the balances of justice according to law.

By midlife, Lincoln had tempered some of his early religious skepticism, partly because of the political tax it laid on him among Illinois voters and partly because of a maturing of his own religious questions. But he still never joined a church, and the churches he did more or less attend, mostly for the sake of his family and for political appearances, were Presbyterian, where the theology, like that of the Separate Baptists, pinned its focus on God's absolute control of all human affairs, shorn of any interest in reform movements—especially abolition. Asked by Judge William Denning whether he "belonged to any secret society . . . his answer was I do not belong to any society except it be for the good of my country."

That one exception was filled in Lincoln's life by his political allegiance to the Whig Party. Like the Whigs, Lincoln was a liberal nationalist; he looked for his political identity not in regional or ethnic sources but in an expansive sense of American nationality. In his 1852 eulogy for the Whigs' founder, Henry Clay, Lincoln extolled Clay as "that truly national man" whose devotion to liberty and equality led him to walk a middle path of compromise to save the Union. "Whatever he did, he did for the whole country," rather than for any particular section or interest. Clay "loved his country, but mostly because it was a free country . . . because he saw in such, the advancement, prosperity, and glory, of human liberty, human right, and human nature."

If there was such a thing as an American identity for Lincoln, it was founded on appeals to a universal human nature and universal human rights, and discovered not in the passionate romanticist ideals of race or gender but by reason. Lincoln's most famous utterance, the Gettysburg Address, began with the assertion that the American republic was founded on a universal "proposition, that all men are created equal." For Lincoln, the "happy day" in human history would come "when, all appetites controlled, all passions subdued, all matters subjected, *mind*, all-conquering *mind*, shall live and move the monarch of the world. Glorious consummation! Hail fall of Fury! Reign of Reason, all hail!"

The place Lincoln gave to the centrality of propositions was underscored by the reverence with which he approached the Constitution. As early as 1848, as a congressman advocating Clay's programs of tax-supported "internal improvements," Lincoln attacked proposals to amend the Constitution as a mistake leading to ruin. "Better, rather, habituate ourselves to think of it as unalterable," Lincoln said. "The men who made it have done their work, and have passed away. Who shall improve on what *they* did?"

On this point more than any other, Lincoln expressly condemned the abolitionists. One of his earliest comments on the movement, in the Henry Clay eulogy, criticized abolitionists as the enemies of constitutional government. "Those who would shiver into fragments the union of these States; tear to tatters its now venerated constitution; and even burn the last copy of the Bible, rather than slavery should continue a single hour," Lincoln said, "together

with all their more halting sympathizers, have received and are receiving their just execration." Once he abandoned the sinking ship of the Whig Party in 1856 for the Republicans, he warned, "If . . . there be any man in the republican party who is impatient of . . . the constitutional obligations bound around it, he is misplaced, and ought to find a place somewhere else." Much as he appealed to Stephen Douglas's followers in 1856 to "Throw off these things, and come to the rescue of this great principle of equality," he also added, "Don't interfere with anything in the Constitution. That must be maintained, for it is the only safeguard of our liberties."

It was not that Lincoln's cautious constitutionalism made him indifferent to slavery. He was not exaggerating when he said, "I have always hated slavery," during his great debates with Douglas in 1858. But what he meant by slavery before the 1850s was any relationship of economic restraint or any systematic effort to box ambitious and enterprising people like himself into a "fixed condition of labor, for his whole life." This slavery was what he experienced as a young man under his father, and he came to associate it with agrarianism. "I used to be a slave," Lincoln said in an early speech; in fact, "we were all slaves one time or another . . . and now I am so free that they let me practice law." Slavery, in this sense, included anyone, even a "freeman," who is "fatally fixed for life, in the condition of a hired laborer."

> Lincoln's fundamental approach to slavery as a political-economic problem, as much as a moral one, stands in dramatic contrast to the most basic instincts of American abolitionism.

Beyond that, until the 1840s it is difficult to see that Lincoln had any corresponding concern about slavery as a system of personal injustice when only blacks were the slaves. When the Illinois legislature resolved in January 1837 that "property in slaves is sacred to the slave-holding states by the Federal Constitution," Lincoln and Whig judge Daniel Stone protested that "the institution of slavery is founded on both injustice and bad policy." But Lincoln's protest bent obligingly in the other direction far enough to add that "the promulgation of abolition doctrines tends rather to increase than to abate its evils." It was one of the things Lincoln pointed out for praise in Henry Clay, that although Clay "was, on principle and in feeling, opposed to slavery," he was no abolitionist, and had no workable plan "how it could at *once* be eradicated, without producing a greater evil, even to the cause of liberty itself." Lincoln insisted that "I can express all my views on the slavery question by quotations from Henry Clay. Doesn't this look like we are akin?"

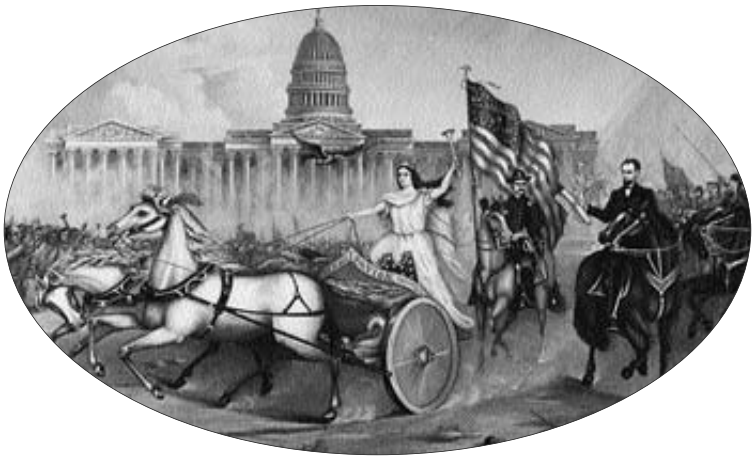
Lincoln was not galvanized into open opposition to black slavery until 1854 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act, when it became evident that black slavery was not going to accept confinement to the southern states but intended to

extend itself across the western territories, and perhaps even into the free states, where slave labor could then compete with free wage labor. Even so, the only solution he could imagine was to "send them to Liberia—to their own native land." As late as 1863, as president, Lincoln was still experimenting with colonization schemes; by the testimony (admittedly unreliable) of Massachusetts politician-turned-general Benjamin F. Butler, he was still toying with them within weeks of his death.

Lincoln's fundamental approach to slavery as a political-economic problem, as much as a moral one, stands in dramatic contrast to the most basic instincts, and not merely the specific goals, of American abolitionism. Dangerous as it is to generalize about a movement as fissiparous as American abolitionism proved to be over 30 years, it had, nevertheless, certain common reflexes, and almost all of them ran counter to Lincoln's. The most fundamental difference was the centrality of religion and religious language to the abolitionist movement. Although many abolitionists (such as Garrison) turned their backs on organized Protestantism, it provided abolitionism with its imagery, its tactics, and its uncompromising urgency. The day that Garrison burned a copy of the Constitution at the annual Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society picnic was the day the southern-born abolitionist Moncure Conway "distinctly recognized that the antislavery cause was a religion" and "that Garrison was a successor of the inspired axe-bearers—John the Baptist, Luther, Wesley, George Fox."

But this was a position for religion in public life that Lincoln, who was almost pathologically shy about bringing his religious ideas into public view, deplored. Although, as an erstwhile Whig and a Republican, Lincoln as president was more receptive to public affirmations of religious postures than his Democratic predecessors, he adamantly refused to allow religious denominations or denominational leaders to dictate policy. The religious sentiments that pervade his Second Inaugural Address are more substantial than any American president's before or since, but they are also remarkable for their message of restraint: No one has sufficient insight to understand God's intentions, and the only appropriate response is charity for all and malice toward none.

Lincoln experienced even greater distance from the abolitionists once some of the specifics of abolitionist religion came more clearly into view. A swelling confidence in the human will to achieve salvation by its own efforts had marked much of evangelical Protestant thinking in the 19th century, as Methodists, Baptists, and even many Presbyterians turned to the aggressive promotion of revivals, awakenings, and mass conversions to expand Protestantism's cultural and spiritual influence in American life. Revivalism, in the hands of celebrated preachers such as Charles Finney, was built on the assumption that conversion to God was a spiritual act one could perform for oneself, instead of waiting patiently for God to do it as *his* choice. That, in turn, allowed preachers to demand immediate and unconditional compliance with their moral directives. After all, since conversion was a matter of rational choice, there was no reason for delaying that choice. For the revivalists, this kind of immediatism translat-



Emancipation Proclamation *(1864), by* A. A. *Lamb*

ed into demands for "the great fundamental principle of *immediate abolition*" in the hands of abolitionists such as Garrison, Henry Ward Beecher, Elizur Wright, and Theodore Dwight Weld. But immediatism was exactly the attitude that had alienated Lincoln from his ancestral Protestantism. "Probably it is to be my lot to go on in a twilight, feeling and reasoning my way through life, as questioning, doubting Thomas did," Lincoln once remarked, not expecting immediate conversion either to Christianity or to abolition.

Immediatism was not the only religious attitude among the abolitionists that alienated Lincoln. The great obstruction on the road to repentance, according to both the revivalists and the abolitionists, was selfishness. To a certain extent, Lincoln agreed: "His idea was that all human actions were caused by motives," recalled his law partner, William Herndon, "and that at the bottom of these motives was self." The difference was that Lincoln's notion of selfishness in human nature was the great, unmovable characteristic of human life. "He defied me to act without motive and unselfishly," Herndon remembered, "and when I did the act and told him of it . . . . I could not avoid the admission that he had demonstrated the absolute selfishness of the entire act." For Lincoln, selfishness described the full extent of human motivation and action. In the lexicon of revivalism, however, the power of free human choosing allowed people to transcend selfishness. And the abolitionists, likewise, expected slaveholders similarly to transcend the selfishness of slaveholding by a tremendous act of an awakened will. "We have no selfish motive to appeal to," Wendell Phillips asserted in 1852. "We appeal to white men, who cannot see any present interest they have in the slave question," asking them to "ascend to a level of disinterestedness which the masses seldom reach, before we can create any excitement in them on the questions of slavery." Herndon had thought exactly the same way until Lincoln "divested me of that delusion."

For that reason, Lincoln did not share Phillips's hope that excitement in the masses would do much to wean slaveholders from slavery. Excitement was, if anything, precisely what Lincoln feared to inject into public dis-

course. In 1838, he warned that the chief threat to liberty was "the increasing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions, in lieu of the sober judgments of the Courts." Twenty-three years later, on the eve of the secession of the southern states from the Union, he was still warning, "Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection."

Lincoln did find his way to the abolition of slavery, first emancipating slaves who served the Confederacy's military interests through the Confiscation Acts of 1861 and 1862, then abolishing slavery in the Confederate states through the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, and finally eradicating slavery forever in the entire United States through the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865. By the same token, some of the abolitionists, especially Garrison, gradually warmed to Lincoln and openly supported his re-election in 1864. "There is no mistake about it in regard to Mr. Lincoln's desire to do all that he can see it right and possible for him to do to uproot slavery," Garrison assured his wife after meeting with Lincoln at the White House in the summer of 1864. Much as he had dreaded the importunities of the radicals in his own party, Lincoln finally had to concede that although they were "bitterly hostile" to him personally, and "utterly lawless—the unhandiest devils in the world to deal with . . . after all their faces are set Zionwards." As he told John B. Henderson, "Sumner and Wade and Chandler are right about [abolition]. . . . We can't get through this terrible war with slavery existing."

But cooperation was not affection. Even after emancipation, Lincoln continued to speak of the abolitionists as though Zion were only occasionally their destination. He told Pennsylvania political chieftain William D. Kelley that he loathed "the self-righteousness of the Abolitionists," and spoke of them to Massachusetts antislavery activist Eli Thayer "in terms of contempt and derision." Army chaplain John Eaton remembered Lincoln exclaiming of a "well-known abolitionist and orator" (probably Phillips), "I don't see why God lets him live!"

Lincoln came to emancipation at last, but by a road very different from that taken by the abolitionists. Where they built their argument on the demand of evangelicalism for immediate repentance, Lincoln was reluctant to make revivalistic demands in the public square and instead preferred gradualism and compensation for emancipated slaves. Where the abolitionists preached from passion and choice, Lincoln worked from reason and patience. Where they called for immediatism without regard for the consequences, it was precisely the economic consequences of slavery and its extension that kindled Lincoln's opposition in the 1850s. And where they brushed aside the Constitution's implicit sanctions for slavery—and with them the Constitution—Lincoln would proceed against slavery no further than the Constitution allowed. They were racial egalitarians in an age of unthinking racism. Lincoln was only a natural-rights equalitarian in the tradition of John Locke, and there is little in Lincoln's writing between 1863 and his death that allows us to predict accurately what his policies on the freedmen's civil rights would have been.

And yet, it was the name of Abraham Lincoln—restrained, emotionally chilly, with an unblinking eye for compromise—that ended up at the bot-

tom of the Emancipation Proclamation. This raises the large-scale question, posed recently by historian Eric McKitrick, that has so often haunted the literature of the abolitionist movement: "What exactly was the function of William Lloyd Garrison, and those who acted similarly, in preparing the way for the ending of slavery, and in relation to the other influences converging toward the same end? Where does the extremist—the fanatic, the single-minded zealot—fit in?"

The most recent neo-abolitionist histories, by Henry Mayer and Paul Goodman, have joined older neo-abolitionist works by historians such as Howard Zinn and Martin Duberman in answering that question with a resounding affirmation of the strategic centrality of the abolitionists to the end of slavery. Mayer, for instance, identifies the abolitionists as the sine qua non. "William Lloyd Garrison," he writes in the second sentence of his recent biography of the abolitionist, "is an authentic American hero who, with a biblical prophet's power and a propagandist's skill, forced the nation to confront the most crucial moral issue in its history." And if the abolitionists are central, so are their culture, their strategy, and their rhetoric. By hallowing zealotry, the neo-abolitionists identify direct (even if nonviolent) action as the only morally legitimate stance in American reform. Only by means of incessant pushing of the most radical kind was the nation made ready for abolition; only by means of the dauntless radicalism of *The Liberator* was justice achieved and the way paved for further reform in American society. By extension, we are encouraged to go and do likewise.

This is a comforting, and yet troubling, view. It forgets how many other strands of thinking besides moral rectitude went into the making of slavery's end and ignores the potency lent to the antislavery cause by the liberal capitalist argument for free wage labor. Even worse, it sanctions a political philosophy built on romantic Kantianism and hallowed in our times by John Rawls that stands in stark opposition to the Enlightenment politics of prudence so vital to Lincoln's Lockean sense of politics. The politics of the abolitionists is the politics of the imperative. It is built on the assumption that social solutions are perfectly within the command of the will, that we already know what right is, that the rational calculation of possibilities is an unlawful restraint on the commission of virtuous deeds, that wishing well is an acceptable substitute for paying attention to how on earth good can be done without spawning greater evils. And in practical terms, it allows those who would follow in the abolitionists' path more than a whiff of self-satisfied wisdom and a willful ignorance of the contention, subdivision, and dissipation of forces that so often squandered abolition's real strengths and focus.

Lincoln, by contrast, embodied the complexity of American opposition to slavery. He came at the problem only when slavery ceased being content with living under compromises and tried to assert its extension as a solution to the South's dwindling political influence. The end of slavery owed something to a sense of awakened moral responsibility, but it also owed far more than we have been willing to admit to the long swing of ideas about political economy, and to the public revulsion toward specific public events, such as the efforts of slaveholders to

"gag" debate over slavery in Congress, and the resort to proslavery terrorism in the organizing of the Kansas Territory in the 1850s. Above all, Lincoln was willing to subordinate his own preferences (including his "oft-expressed wish that everyone ought to be free") to the need to build coalitions rather than purify sects. Lincoln had no illusions about his own sanctity or his enemies' depravity, and he was constantly in mind of the price being paid in human lives and treasure for even the noblest of results.

"If I had had my way, this war would never have been commenced," Lincoln told the English Quaker activist Eliza P. Gurney a month after issuing the Emancipation Proclamation. "If I had been allowed my way," he continued, "this war would have been ended before this," perhaps before the Proclamation had even been contemplated. That sentiment has earned him the execration of every abolitionist and neo-abolitionist, from Garrison to (most recently) *Ebony* editor Lerone Bennett, whose book *Forced into Glory: Abraham Lincoln's White Dream* depicts Lincoln as a callous white racist, the kind of fence straddler "we find in almost all situations of oppression." For all of his rant, Lincoln biographers will ignore Bennett at their peril, because both Garrison and Bennett had a point: Lincoln's best plan for emancipation (without the helping hand of the war) was a gradualized scheme that would have allowed the grandparents of some of today's adult African Americans to have been born in slavery.

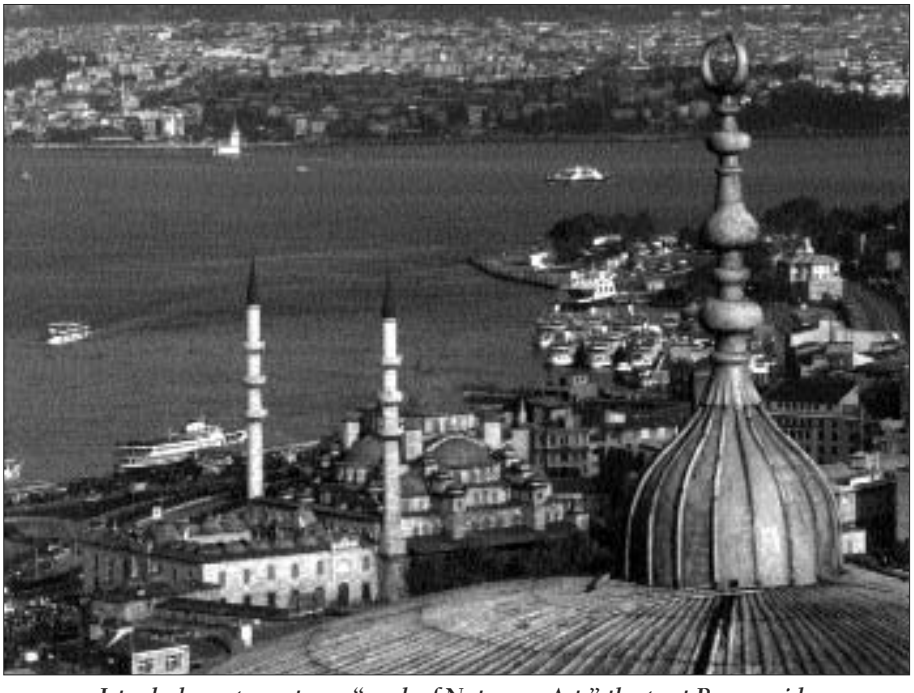
The question Lincoln might have asked the neo-abolitionists was whether the costs of their way of immediate emancipation—costs that included a civil war, 600,000 dead, a national economic body blow worse than the Great Depression, and the broken glass of reconstruction to walk over—were actually part of the calculation of results. Neither alternative was particularly pretty. (And of the two, I must be candid enough to confess that I cannot see myself in 1861 applauding Lincoln's alternative). Lincoln never doubted that emancipation was *right* and that slavery was *wrong*. But he had an inkling that it was possible to do something right in such a way that it fostered an infinitely greater wrong. "If I take the step" of emancipation purely because "I think the measure politically expedient, and morally right," Lincoln asked Salmon Chase in 1863, "would I not thus give up all footing upon constitution or law? Would I not thus be in the boundless field of absolutism?"

There is a zeal that is not according to knowledge; many of the abolitionists had it in spades and reveled in it. To be pushed into reform merely by the exigencies of war, politics, and the long movement of economies was, for them, not to have zeal at all. Still, because their relentless campaign was followed in 1865 by abolition, it has been easy to conclude that zeal earned its own justification simply through the end of slavery.

But this may be the greatest *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* fallacy in American history. Between the word of abolition and the deed of emancipation falls the ambiguous shadow of Abraham Lincoln. For more than a century, the genius of American reform has been its confidence that Garrison and Phillips were right. The realities of American reform, however, as the example of Lincoln suggests, have been another matter. ❑

THE TURKISH DILEMMA

In Turkey's geography one can read its persistent political dilemma. The country exists on both sides of the great channel dividing Europe from Asia, West from East. Since 1923, when Mustapha Kemal Atatürk created the modern secular republic of Turkey after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, Turks have sought to preserve his political legacy and find a balance between secularism and Islam, democracy and authoritarianism, aspirations to join the West and a long heritage that ties the nation to the East. Turkey is now a candidate for admission to the European Union, and ironically, at this critical moment, it is not Atatürk's political heirs but Turkey's Islamists who seem most eager to have the country cast its lot with the West.



Istanbul compares to no "work of Nature or Art," the poet Byron said.

Martin Walker *describes the course of Turkey's westward turn*
Cengiz Çandar *recalls Atatürk's lasting legacy*

The Turkish Miracle

by Martin Walker

Earthquakes, usually the most costly in human lives of all natural disasters, tend to be utterly unrelieved calamities. But the deaths of some 18,000 Turks on August 17, 1999, may be remembered as a sacrifice that inspired a kind of miracle. Measuring 7.4 on the Richter scale, the quake devastated the grim but bustling industrial city of Izmit and the packed tenements around the nearby Turkish naval base of Gölcük on the Sea of Marmara. Across the Bosporus in Istanbul, now the most populous city in mainland Europe, shoddily built apartment blocks crumbled from the shock. The miracle occurred when Turkey's tragedy inspired an outpouring of human sympathy and official aid from its neighbor and long-time nemesis, Greece, which was swiftly reciprocated by Turkey when Greece lost 120 lives in its own earthquake three weeks later. The aid also shifted something fundamental in the power politics of Europe. "All ideological arguments were flattened by the earthquake," said Turkey's young minister of tourism, Erkan Mumçu. "Lying under the rubble is the Turkish political and administrative system."

Only two years earlier, Greece and Turkey had been on the brink of war over the ownership of some uninhabited rocks in the Aegean Sea. But now the mayors of Greek islands whose prosperity rests on military bases that guard against the Turkish threat were taking up collections to help their neighbors. When Turkey's health minister, Osman Durmus, declared that his country had no need of foreign help, least of all from Greece, he was widely denounced as an ignorant buffoon. "Thank You, Friends," ran the headline, printed in the Greek alphabet, in Turkey's largest-selling newspaper, *Huriyet*. Within the year, Greece and Turkey had signed a number of agreements to cooperate on tourism and protect the environment, to safeguard investments and fight organized crime. The Greek and Turkish foreign ministers exchanged friendly visits, and bilateral talks began on military cooperation. Above all, after long blocking Turkey's hopes of eventual membership in the prosperity club of the European Union (EU), Greece reversed course. Foreign Minister George Papandreou declared it was time for his country to bury the hatchet and "pull the cart" to help Turkey into Europe.

The thaw with Greece was not the only miracle of that Turkish summer of 1999. The long cold war against Greece to the west had been matched by a 15-year anti-insurgency campaign against Kurdish separatists in the east. Indeed, the two struggles had recently seemed to come ominously together. In February 1999, Turkish special forces had seized Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the PKK

Three Turkish women in Muslim dress gaze across the Golden Horn at one of the many mosques that grace the shores of the Bosporus, the traditional divide of East and West.

(Kurdish Workers Party), the most militant and effective of the Kurdish guerilla groups, at his hideout in Kenya—a hideout, it emerged, that had enjoyed the protection of the Greek embassy. But Öcalan, who had proposed political negotiations even before his capture, called during his trial for a cease-fire. The earthquake gave his PKK a political opportunity to endorse this appeal, and amid the national mood of grief and redemption, it announced in September the end of the armed struggle.

That wasn't the only significant change to result from Öcalan's capture. In Greece, the breach of international agreements against cooperation with terrorist groups cost the foreign minister his job and lifted the U.S.-educated Papandreou into his place. Papandreou has now staked his career on the belief that Greece's long-term interests are best served by a Turkey locked into prosperity and democracy through the EU.

The Kurdish political problem is far from resolved, even if the war has gone quiet. The struggle against Kurdish separatism, which cost some 37,000 lives and saw repeated Turkish military incursions against Kurdish bases in Iraq, was fought with great ferocity on both sides. At least 2,000 Kurdish villages were razed or cleared, adding floods of refugees to those Kurds already leaving the harsh land for the cities. Thousands of Turkish soldiers lost their lives in the conflict. Feelings on both sides ran high. Despite the cease-fire, angry demonstrations erupted when an appeal to the European Court of Human Rights spared Öcalan from the death sentence resulting from his trial.

With a characteristic lack of political delicacy, and convinced that it finally had the PKK on the run, the Turkish military helped ensure that the miracle was somewhat clouded. It arrested the popular Kurdish folk singer Ali Aktas, a familiar figure on Turkey's government-run TV channel, and threatened to charge him with singing inflammatory political songs. Earlier this year, the leader of the only legal Kurdish party, Ahmet Demir of the People's Democracy Party, was sentenced to a year in prison for a speech proposing an independent Kurdish state.

Education and broadcasting in the Kurdish language remain illegal; only nine years ago did Turkey drop the derogatory official term "mountain Turks" as a classification for the Kurds. Yet many of the roughly 12 million Kurds—perhaps a fifth of Turkey's population—are fully integrated into Turkish society. Prime ministers, presidents, and chiefs of the military staff, and about a quarter of current parliamentary deputies, have all proudly claimed some Kurdish ancestry. Some degree of limited autonomy and a relaxation of laws against Kurdish culture now seem to be on the political agenda, if the military can be induced to agree.

The cease-fire loosened a logjam. Four months after the earthquake, in December 1999, it broke dramatically when the 15 heads of government of the EU, meeting in Helsinki for one of their biannual summits, formally agreed that Turkey was now a candidate for membership. They were reacting in part to the lifting of the Greek blockade on Turkish hopes, in part to sustained pressure from successive American administrations, and in part to the clear signs that the end of the Kurdish war was opening the way for crucial improvements in human rights in Turkey. According to Finnish officials, who were the hosts of the summit and in possession of the rotating presidency of

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Kurdish-language television, beamed by satellite from Brussels, is one of the forces that have helped the scattered and beleaguered Kurds maintain a strong cultural identity.

the EU Council, the decision was not easily achieved. There were long wrangles, and direct pressure from Washington, before agreement was reached on the wording of the EU's position on Turkish accession. Even then, Turkey's response was uncertain, and Finnish and EU officials flew overnight to Turkey for a tense meeting. The eventual formula of the Helsinki Declaration welcomed "recent positive developments in Turkey" and concluded: "Turkey is a candidate state destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate states."

It should be stressed that Turkey's full membership is not an immediate prospect. Under EU rules, the long and stately minuet of the accession process can only begin once a candidate country has met Europe's "Copenhagen criteria": democratic institutions, a free press, the rule of law, and property rights. But if the Kurdish cease-fire holds, the formal accession process could probably begin around 2005, to be followed by long and tortuous negotiations while Turkey incorporates more than 80,000 pages of EU rules and regulations, the *acquis communautaire*, into its national law. Formal membership could then follow between 2010 and 2020, depending on the pace of Turkey's economic adjustment.

The implications of Turkey's candidacy are profound for the geopolitics of the Middle East, and for the cultural mix of a Europe that can now expect some 15 to 20 percent of its citizens to be Muslim, including Asians in Britain, North Africans in France, and more than 1.5 million Turks working in Germany.

The bid for EU admission is already beginning to change Turkish politics. Last May, the head of Turkey's constitutional court, Ahmed Neçdet Sezer, took

office as the country's new president, despite some concern in the armed forces over his liberalism. (While the prime minister governs, the president chairs the National Security Council, which directs Turkey's foreign and security policies, and on which the president holds the deciding vote between the elected civilian politicians and the unelected generals.) Sezer had called for a constitutional amendment to drop the laws that limit free speech, for Kurdish families to have the right to educate their children in their own language, and for rulings in military courts to be open to appeal. Above all, he had suggested that the 1982 Constitution, installed by the Turkish military after the coup of 1980, "imposed unacceptable restrictions on basic freedoms" and should be revised to bring it into harmony with the European Convention on Human Rights. One key sign of the new political climate was the publication this past June of an official report from a parliamentary committee which acknowledged that the use of torture was systematic in Turkish jails, and could be stopped only by bringing the security forces under civil and judicial control.

The EU's long refusal of candidacy status to a staunch North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally, even when former Warsaw Pact members with uneven or flimsy democratic credentials were welcomed into the accession process, had given prolonged offense to successive Turkish governments. Turkey had first announced its desire to join in 1963. The 1997 EU summit in Luxembourg added humiliation to Turkish discomfiture when the summit host, Premier Jean-Claude Juncker, said that he did not wish "to sit at the same table with a bunch of torturers." Helmut Kohl, then chancellor of Germany, had earlier signaled a more subtle exclusion for Turkey when he declared that the EU was "a Christian club."

Greece was not the only obstacle to Turkey's plan to join the EU, but the apparently implacable opposition of Athens allowed others to take shelter behind the Greek veto. In the short term, this was politically useful; repeated nudgings from Washington that EU members should have due regard for Turkey's strategic importance and recognize that a fellow member of NATO deserved better of its partners could be deflected by blaming Greece. But reluctant EU governments were left with little justification for exclusion once Athens softened its opposition last year.

For what seemed reliable historical reasons, the Greek veto had appeared immutable. Greece was the first of the provinces of the old Ottoman Empire within Europe to win its independence, after a long, cruel war of liberation (1821–29)—a cause that engaged the sympathies of liberal Europe and tens of thousands of Hellenophile volunteers, and cost the poet Lord Byron his life. Greek politics and national interests had ever since been defined by hostility to the Turks. Other NATO allies were startled by Greek sympathy for modern Serbia during the 1999 air campaign over Kosovo, forgetting Greek support of the other Ottoman provinces in the Balkans in their 19th-century campaigns for national liberation. In World War I, Greece joined the Allies once Turkey entered the fray on the German side. At the Versailles peace negotiations, Athens sought to win the last Turkish enclave in Europe, the great city of Constantinople and its shrunken hinterland, and sent its troops onto

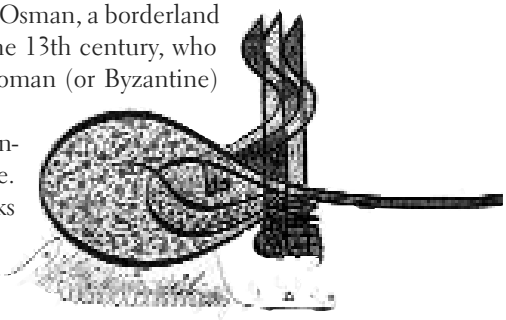
Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent (1520–1566), portrayed here in a 1559 engraving by Melchior Lorichs, presided over the expansionist golden age of the Ottoman Empire.

the Turkish mainland to occupy much of the Aegean coast. The successful campaign to drive them out was led by the founding father of the modern, post-Ottoman Turkish Republic, General Mustapha Kemal, known thereafter as Atatürk, "the father of Turks."

The histories of modern Greece and modern Turkey were thus each born in war against the other. And despite the age-old fear of Russian designs on the Black Sea outlet to the Mediterranean at Constantinople (which became Istanbul under Atatürk) and the newer fear of communism that led them both to join the NATO alliance, the hostility has continued. Cyprus has been a

The Ottoman Past

Like a ruined temple of classical antiquity, with some of its shattered columns still erect and visible to tourists, the Ottoman Empire in the decades before World War I was a structure that had survived the bygone era to which it belonged. It was a relic of invasions from the east a millennium ago: Beginning around A.D. 1000, waves of nomad horsemen streamed forth from the steppes and deserts of central and northeast Asia, conquering the peoples and lands in their path as they rode west. Pagan or animist in religious belief, and speaking one or other of the Mongolian or Turkish languages, they carved out a variety of principalities and kingdoms for themselves, among them the empires of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. The Ottoman (or Osmanli) Empire, founded by Turkish-speaking horsemen who had converted to Islam, was another such empire; it took its name from Osman, a borderland *ghazi* (warrior for the Muslim faith) born in the 13th century, who campaigned on the outskirts of the Eastern Roman (or Byzantine) Empire in Anatolia.



The* tuğra *(official seal) of Sultan Süleyman, c. 1555–1560

In the 15th century Osman's successors conquered and replaced the Byzantine Empire. Riding on to new conquests, the Ottoman Turks expanded in all directions: north to the Crimea, east to Baghdad and Basra, south to the coasts of Arabia and the Gulf, west to Egypt and North Africa—and into Europe. At its peak, in the 16th century, the Ottoman Empire included most of the Middle East, North Africa, and what are now the Balkan countries of Europe—Greece, Yugoslavia, Albania, Romania, and Bulgaria, as well as much of Hungary. It stretched from the Persian Gulf to the river Danube; its armies stopped only at the gates of Vienna. Its population was estimated at between 30 and 50 million at a time when England's population was perhaps four million; and it ruled more than 20 nationalities.

The Ottomans never entirely outgrew their origins as a marauding war band. They enriched themselves by capturing wealth and slaves; the slaves, conscripted into the Ottoman ranks, rose to replace the commanders who retired, and went on to capture wealth and slaves in their turn. Invading new territories was the only path they knew to economic growth. In the 16th and 17th centuries, when the conquests turned into defeats and retreats, the dynamic of Ottoman existence was lost; the Turks had mastered the arts of war but not those of government.

The empire was incoherent. Its Ottoman rulers were not an ethnic group; though they spoke Turkish, many were descendants of once-Christian slaves from Balkan Europe and elsewhere. The empire's subjects (a wide variety of peoples, speaking Turkish, Semitic, Kurdish, Slavic, Armenian, Greek, and other languages) had little in common with, and in many cases little love for, one another. Though European observers later were to generalize about, for example, "Arabs," in fact Egyptians and Arabians, Syrians and Iraqis were peoples of different history, ethnic background, and outlook. The multinational, multilingual empire was a mosaic of peoples who did not mix; in the towns, Armenians, Greeks, Jews, and others each lived in their own separate quarters.

Religion had some sort of unifying effect, for the empire was a theocracy—a Muslim rather than a Turkish state—and most of its subjects were Muslims. The Ottoman sultan was regarded as caliph (temporal and spiritual successor to the Prophet, Muhammad) by the majority group within Islam, the Sunnis. But among

others of the 71 sects of Islam, especially the numerous Shi'ites, there was doctrinal opposition to the sultan's Sunni faith and to his claims to the caliphate. And for those who were not Muslim (perhaps 25 percent of the population at the beginning of the 20th century), but Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Armenian Catholic, Armenian Gregorian, Jewish, Protestant, Maronite, Samaritan, Nestorian, Christian, Syrian United Orthodox, Monophysite, or any one of a number of others, religion was a divisive rather than a unifying political factor. . . .

Until the early 20th century, the Ottoman Empire was for most of the time under the absolute personal rule of the sultan. In at least one respect he was quite unlike a European monarch: As the son of a woman of the harem, he was always half-slave by birth. Under his rule, civil, military, and Holy Law administrations could be discerned in an empire carefully divided into provinces and cantons. But the appearance of orderly administration—indeed of effective administration of any sort—was chimerical. As Gertrude Bell, an experienced English traveler in Middle Eastern lands, was later to write, "No country which turned to the eye of the world an appearance of established rule and centralized Government was, to a greater extent than the Ottoman Empire, a land of make-believe." There were army garrisons, it is true, scattered about the empire, but otherwise power was diffuse and the centralized authority was more myth than reality. Gertrude Bell, in the course of her travels, found that outside the towns, Ottoman administration vanished and the local sheikh or headman ruled instead. There were districts, too, where brigands roamed at will. The rickety Turkish government was even incapable of collecting its own taxes, the most basic act of imperial administration. . . .

What was more than a little unreal, then, was the claim that the sultan and his government ruled their domains in the sense in which Europeans understood government and administration. What was real in the Ottoman Empire tended to be local: A tribe, a clan, a sect, or a town was the true political unit to which loyalties adhered. This confused European observers, whose modern notions of citizenship and nationality were inapplicable to the crazy quilt of Ottoman politics. Europeans assumed that eventually they themselves would take control of the Ottoman domains and organize them on a more rational basis. In the early years of the 20th century it was reasonable to believe that the days of Turkish dominion were numbered.

By 1914 the much-diminished Ottoman Empire no longer ruled North Africa or Hungary or most of southeastern Europe. It had been in a retreat since the 18th century that finally looked like a rout. For decades, in the Ottoman army and in the schools, discontented men had told one another in the course of clandestine meetings that the empire had to be rapidly changed to meet the intellectual, industrial, and military challenges of modern Europe. Stimulated but confused by the nationalism that had become Europe's creed, intellectuals amongst the diverse Turkish-speaking and Arabic-speaking peoples of the empire sought to discover or to forge some sense of their own political identity.

In the final years before the outbreak of the First World War, obscure but ambitious new men took power in the Ottoman Empire, relegating the sultan to a figurehead position. The new men, leaders of the Young Turkey Party, were at once the result and the cause of ferment in Constantinople, the Ottoman capital, as they tried to meet the challenge of bringing Turkey's empire into the 20th century before the modern world had time to destroy it.

—David Fromkin

David Fromkin is an international lawyer and writer. Excerpted from A Peace to End All Peace *(1989)*

major irritant. The island's Greeks and the Turks who joined them after the Ottoman conquest in the 14th century coexisted reasonably enough after the British took over in 1878. But United Nations peacekeepers arrived four years after Cyprus won its independence in 1960, and in 1974 extremists among the Greek majority, backed by the unsavory regime of the Greek colonels, sought through a coup d'état to bring about union with Greece. Turkey invaded the north to protect the Turkish minority, establishing an occupation that continues today under the fig leaf of nominal independence for the northern third of the island, which is recognized only by Turkey.

Turkey nonetheless has a claim to share Europe's cultural identity that reaches back more than 2,000 years. Troy, the city of Homer's *Iliad* and, later, Virgil's *Aeneid*, was built on what is now Turkish soil, across the narrow Dardanelles straits from Istanbul. The letter of Paul to the Ephesians, which commands an honored place in another of the prime texts of European civilization, was addressed to subjects of ancient Rome who inhabited the Greek city of Ephesus on what is now the Aegean coast of Turkey. Magnificent Greek and Roman ruins still testify to Turkey's ancient connection to the West. The fall in 1453 of the imperial Byzantine capital of Constantinople to the siege cannon of the Ottomans, fighting under the banner of Islam, was a religious interruption of a far older cultural association with Europe.

The Sublime Porte, as the seat of Ottoman power was known in the chancelleries of post-Renaissance Europe, may not have been a part of Christendom, but it held a prominent place in the councils and calculations of European power politics. Having laid siege to Vienna in the 16th and 17th centuries, the empire commanded the Balkans into the late 19th century. Modern Turkey retains a foothold there to this day in the province of Thrace, the hinterland of the giant city of Istanbul. As an ally of Britain, the Ottoman Empire helped defeat Napoleon at the siege of Acre in 1799, and as an ally of France and Britain in 1854, it helped defeat Russia in the Crimean War. Indeed, even during the erosion of its Balkan rule in the 19th century, as Greece (1827), Romania (1866), Serbia (1882), and Bulgaria (1908) won their independence, the Sublime Porte sustained a crucial element of the European balance. With the backing of most of the European powers, it fought off Russia's efforts to escape the confines of the Black Sea through the Dardanelles. This tradition of deep involvement in European affairs, continuing to the present day, illustrates the way that both the old Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey, while never quite being seen as a component of Europe's cultural family, always played the role of a European power.

This ambiguity in Turkey's position has been matched by its equally uncomfortable connection to the wider Islamic family. Atatürk first rebelled against the old Ottoman system in the Young Turks' revolt of 1908, in the name of modernizing an antique government whose claim to its broader Arab empire rested on a dynasty that traced its ancestry back to the Prophet Muhammad. After World War I, and the loss of the empire that had stretched through Syria to regions that are now Saudi Arabia and Iraq, Atatürk founded modern Turkey as a resolutely secular state. He went so far

as to ban the fez and replace Arabic script with the Latin alphabet. After 1945, when Turkey was connected to the Western security system through NATO, its secular system of government kept the country officially (but not always politically) aloof from the surges of Arab nationalism and Islamic fundamentalism that coursed through the Middle East. The Turkish armed forces, which stand to this day as guarantor of Atatürk's secular constitutional legacy and have mounted three military coups to preserve it, have resisted the growing influence of Islamic political parties and have even banned them at various times. These military interventions served to justify some of the EU's long reluctance to accept Turkish membership; so did the political instability that inspired them.

The state of its economy is another hurdle for Turkey's European hopes. With a per capita gross domestic product that is less than a third of the EU average, Turkey is far more prosperous than either Bulgaria or Romania, whose formal candidacies for EU membership were accepted in 1998. It can plausibly claim to be in the same economic league as Poland or the Czech Republic, which expect to be full members by 2005. But Turkey's prosperity is unevenly distributed. Its industrial and service jobs are concentrated in the western districts and in the booming textile industry of the south. The plateaus and mountains in the east, largely inhabited by Kurds, are desperately poor. More than 40 percent of the work force remains on the land; the EU average is less than five percent. While the econ-

Turkey, with 65 million inhabitants, may one day represent the European Union's eastern border.

omy grew at an average rate of more than four percent annually during the 1990s, inflation has touched 100 percent, and interest payments on the national debt claim more than 40 percent of government revenues.

These are the economic contours of an unstable and developing economy, which is precisely why Turkish governments have been so eager to join the EU's great sphere of affluence. Having seen the strains imposed on the vigorous German economy by the still-incomplete absorption of the former German Democratic Republic, the EU is already bracing itself for the accession of Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, the Baltic states, and Slovenia over the next decade. Then, along with the costly and difficult task of rebuilding the shattered Balkans, will come the accession of the much poorer Bulgaria and Romania. Adding Turkey to this list means that the EU will be investing heavily in the development business for a generation to come.

EUROPEANS SUSPECT THAT TURKEY'S RELIGIOUS, CULTURAL, AND ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES MAKE IT A MOST DIFFICULT CANDIDATE FOR THEIR CLUB.

The picture is not entirely bleak. As the new members become richer and their markets more attractive, they may themselves become growth locomotives, just as the recovering economies of Western Europe were during the 1950s and 1960s. Turkey's youthful population, with a third of the citizenry below the age of 15, promises some relief from the demographics of a Europe that is aging so fast that it fears having too few adult workers to sustain its swelling ranks of pensioners. Overall, however, and despite their stunning record in bringing stability and prosperity to Spain, Portugal, and Greece, Europeans might be forgiven for suspecting that the combination of Turkey's religious, cultural, and economic differences makes it a most difficult candidate for their club.

One aspect of the modern Turkish identity has never been in doubt. Turkey's reliability as a NATO ally and as a bulwark against the spread of fundamentalist Islam, along with its strategic location in the Middle East and on the southern flank of the former Soviet Union, has made it a particularly valued ally of the United States. At an annual cost of more than $2 billion in lost trade and pipeline transit fees, Turkey continues to enforce the embargo against Iraq that began after the 1990 invasion of Kuwait. It also made its airfields available for military operations during and after the Persian Gulf War. The Clinton administration worked closely with Turkey on the agreement to open a route to the West for oil from the Caspian Sea that would not be dependent on Russian pipelines. Ankara further endeared itself to the Americans by reaching a military agreement with Israel in 1996 that opened Turkish airspace to Israeli air force exercises and included the sharing of military intelligence and personnel. An

The Kurdish Question

Kurdistan is real, and Kurdistan is a dream. The physical region of Kurdistan covers an area of some 200,000 square miles, roughly the size of France, and includes portions of eastern Turkey, northern Syria, northeastern Iraq, southern Armenia, and northwestern Iran. The dream Kurdistan is the sovereign state to which the the Kurdish people who inhabit the region have aspired for the past century. Slightly more than half of the world's estimated 25 million Kurds live in Turkey, where they were present as farmers and herders in the rugged mountains and plateaus of the southeast long before the arrival of ethnic Turks.

"A thousand sighs, a thousand tears, a thousand revolts, a thousand hopes": That's said to be the lot of a Kurd in an old poem, and the poem takes its cue from reality. The Kurds have fought invaders and oppressors throughout several thousand years of history, extending back at least to the time of the Sumerians and the Hittites in the 14th century B.C. That fierce warrior tradition continues to the present day. The campaign waged by the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in the 1980s and 1990s against the Turkish government was but the latest and longest and deadliest of a series of rebellions the Kurds have mounted in Turkey since the end of World War I.

In the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres, the victorious Allies forced the government of the Ottoman Empire to consent to a semiautonomous Kurdistan. But Atatürk's new Turkish nationalist government predictably rejected the treaty. Atatürk insisted on Kurdish assimilation, and his policy was brutally enforced. The government banned the Kurdish language, Kurdish music, and even Kurdish place names as it set about destroying the cultural and political identity of the Kurds. But the memory of the independence the Treaty of Sèvres had promised did not fade among Turkey's Kurds.

There was a period, from the 10th to the 12th centuries A.D., when, thanks in part to Kurdistan's strategic location on the overland trade routes between Europe and Asia, the Kurds knew some success in architecture, astronomy, history, music, mathematics, and philosophy. But the success was not sustained. In later centuries, Kurdistan suffered the Black Death and became a ravaged battlefield on which Mongols, Ottomans, and Persians successively fought. After Ottoman victories in the 15th century, the Kurds became part of their empire. And they suffered a worse disaster still. When Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1497 and made the sea the primary trade route between Europe and East Asia, the Silk Road became obsolete. As Jonathan Randal notes in his book *After Such Knowledge, What Forgiveness?: My Encounter with Kurdistan* (1997), along with the calamities of pestilence and war, the abandonment of the traditional East-West trade route helped turn a reasonably cultivated and prosperous region into an enduring economic and political backwater.

The Kurds were never able to establish a durable and unified state of their own, and not just because of external aggression or the harsh physical terrain that isolates and divides Kurdistan's tribes. There's a long record as well of internal dissension and of rival Kurdish tribes collaborating with outside governments against one another. With the end of the PKK's struggle in 1999, Kurdish nationalists seem to have abandoned their dreams of a Kurdish state in favor of a future within the Turkish Republic. But they remain wary. Ankara's promises of massive postwar aid for Kurdistan have already been forgotten, and most Kurds displaced by the conflict have still not been allowed to return to their homes. Ironically, the nations of the West, which let down the Kurds after World War I, may turn out to be their best hope of fair treatment by the Turkish government: A Turkey that fails to do right by its Kurdish population stands little chance of acceptance by the European Union.

important step in reducing Israel's military isolation, the agreement also left Syria militarily sandwiched between the two countries. Indeed, Turkey was able to use this new leverage to demand that Syria expel the PKK's Öcalan from his sanctuary in Damascus, the event that led to his eventual abduction from Kenya.

Ankara's efforts were rewarded with the staunch support the Clinton administration gave to Turkey's hopes of joining the EU. This support has gone far beyond routine diplomatic pressure. During the 1996 EU summit in Cardiff, Wales, President Bill Clinton startled some European leaders by his unprecedented intervention into their affairs. He telephoned the Greek premier, Constantine Simitis, to urge him to soften his opposition to EU efforts to resolve a tariff dispute that had cost Turkey some $350 million. Acknowledging that on EU membership "the United States doesn't have a vote but it certainly has interests," Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott issued a firm warning in May 1997: "There are those who resist vehemently the idea that any nations to the east of what might be called 'traditional Europe' can ever truly be part of a larger, 21st-century Europe. We believe that view is quite wrong—and potentially quite dangerous."

President Clinton has pressed Turkey's claims repeatedly in meetings with EU leaders. Along with the Clinton administration's efforts to mediate the problem of Cyprus, largely by leaning on the Greeks, this has been the most assiduous use of American leverage upon the European allies in behalf of another country since the Kennedy administration's support of British attempts to join the European Economic Community during the early 1960s.

Why this extraordinary effort? No doubt it owes something to Turkey's loyalty. But part of the answer seems to be a deliberate American strategy to help set the future direction of the enlarged EU in a way that will be friendly to the United States and the Atlantic alliance. The alternative course for Europe, to become a counterweight to American power, has long been a goal of French foreign policy. In a tradition that dates back to President Charles de Gaulle (1959–69), France has tended to see a united Europe as an independent strategic player on the global stage, and as the political as well as the economic equal of the United States. De Gaulle took this to extremes, evicting NATO troops from French soil, for example, and redefining French strategic doctrine as aimed "*à tous azimuths*," or in all directions, not just against the Soviet threat. Successive French governments have adopted a softer version of this strategy, a prickly independence rather than de Gaulle's open suspicion of "the Anglo-Saxons" of Washington and London. Current French foreign minister Hubert Vedrine has complained of "the overriding predominance of the United States in all areas and the current lack of any counterweight"—what he has dubbed American "*hyper-puissance*" (hyper-power)— and has been eager to offer the EU as an alternative pole.

The French vision of Europe worries the United States, which insists that it too should be seen as a European power. Washington's long and bipartisan support of European integration, dating to the 1940s, has been predicated

Chess *(1999), by Nevzat Akoral*

on the prospect of a close and mutually rewarding partnership. On July 4, 1962, speaking in the same Independence Hall in Philadelphia where the Declaration of Independence was signed, President John F. Kennedy announced a "Declaration of Interdependence" with the European allies. In Frankfurt the next year, Kennedy even held out the prospect of an eventual political union between Europe and the United States. Insofar as the French conception of Europe threatens that long-held idea of transatlantic partnership, American policymakers have always been ready to rally their friends in Europe (in particular the British and Dutch) to support the Atlanticist rather than the Gaullist tradition. American support for the EU's enlargement into central and eastern Europe has thus carried the subtext that a Europe that includes pro-American and NATO allies such as Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic is a Europe that will be more reliably Atlanticist. The same logic, in Washington's thinking, applies to the inclusion of Turkey.

But Turkey's membership has some serious geopolitical implications. With Turkey, the EU suddenly acquires as immediate neighbors Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Azerbaijan. This thrusts Europe directly into the tangled politics of the Middle East, a region where Europeans and Americans have seldom seen eye to eye. So long as their strategic relationship was based in mainland Europe, and anchored in NATO, European and American foreign policy interests were closely aligned. In the Middle East, European and U.S. poli-

cies toward Israel, toward terrorism, and toward Iran and Iraq have often been opposed, and not only because of Europe's dependence on Arab oil. It was in the Middle East that the defining clash of interests took place. France's double decision to commit its strategic future to the new European Community and to develop its own nuclear weapons was a direct result of the American refusal in 1956 to support the Anglo-French invasion of Egypt to recapture the Suez Canal. The Eisenhower administration engineered runs on the pound and the franc, and refused to support Britain and France against Soviet threats to "rain missiles" on Paris and London. America's blunt insistence that its principal allies could not be permitted, in the context of the Cold War, to embark on independent strategic adventures, remains a watershed in transatlantic relations. Britain responded by pursuing its vision of a special relationship with the United States, accepting an increasingly subordinate role, while France sought freedom from American tutelage, and under de Gaulle bitterly resisted American efforts to steer Britain into Europe.

Successive oil crises sharpened these transatlantic tensions. The Europeans, including usually loyal Britain, refused to allow the United States to use their airfields to resupply Israel during the 1973 Yom Kippur War. In the U.S. air strike on Libya in 1986, U.S. warplanes were forced to fly a dogleg around French and Spanish airspace. More recently, American sanctions on Iraq and Iran, and the threat to punish under U.S. law offending European business executives who defy them, have provoked serious arguments. The prospects for a clash of interests, between a United States committed to its Israeli alliance and an EU that has traditionally been more sympathetic to the Arab cause, are serious. With its close links to Israel and the United States, Turkey would face difficult choices if its EU partners urged it to support the Arabs.

Turkey's accession also would make the EU an immediate neighbor of the turbulent lands between the Black and Caspian Seas. Attractive for the energy resources of the Caspian basin, the Transcaucasus region is forbidding for the ethnic clashes that have in the past decade led to wars between Armenia and Azerbaijan, between Georgia and the Abkhazian separatists, and between Russia and the Chechen rebels. After the dispiriting and often divisive experience of coping with a war on its borders in the Balkans throughout the 1990s, the EU is very wary of proximity to another unstable region. South of the Caucasus, Turkish membership involves further security problems. Even if a reformed Turkey achieves reconciliation with its Kurdish minority, the Kurds across what would become the new EU border in Syria, Iraq, and Iran have their own political agendas, and their own histories of uprisings against national rulers.

The EU is an extraordinary experiment, which is changing and growing apace. Americans have been accustomed to think of it as a plump and complacent club of wealthy Western European allies, an economic giant and political dwarf, content to leave the great dramas of defense and grand strategy to the United States. But the EU is no longer a Western European body with its center of gravity in Brussels and its strategic loyalties fixed on the Atlantic

alliance. It is within measurable distance of expansion to more than 500 million citizens from 28 different countries, with a greater combined GDP than that of the United States, with its own currency, and with a geographic reach that includes the Baltic, the Black Sea, Central Asia, and the Middle East. While NATO, trade and investment links, cultural values, and sheer habit keep it tied to the United States, its strategic concerns now drive it to the east and south, into intimate and neighborly relations with Russia, the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, and Central Asia. These are regions where the United States is accustomed to primacy. But like it or not, and thanks in no small degree to consistent American policy, future administrations are going to have to come to terms with the EU as a Eurasian power, with its own interests to assert.

The irony is that the United States has brought this new and potentially delicate strategic situation upon itself. By pushing steadily for Turkish membership, it is deliberately steering the Europeans into commitments and neighborhoods that it has been at pains to keep to itself. American pressure on Europe to enlarge has not stopped with the campaign for Turkish membership. In June, President Clinton urged the EU to "leave the door open" for Ukraine and Russia, echoing the Bush administration's 1990 call for a "transatlantic security system that stretches from Vancouver to Vladivostok."

Irony piles upon irony. Europe's new military capability, feeble as it is, follows directly from American demands that Europe shoulder more of the responsibilities of the Atlantic alliance. But when the EU, at its Cologne summit in June 1999, agreed in principle to establish its own "European Security and Defense Identity," Washington was deeply alarmed that the official communiqué suggested that such an identity might be "autonomous" from NATO. The next EU summit in Helsinki, six months later, stressed that "this does not imply the creation of a European army," and promised "full consultation, cooperation, and transparency between the EU and NATO." Nonetheless, the Helsinki Declaration emphasized that "the European Council underlines its determination to develop an autonomous capacity to take decisions and, where NATO as a whole is not engaged, to launch and conduct EU-led military operations in response to military crises."

The Turkish miracle has been an extraordinary and striking moment, a triumph of Greek vision, Turkish dreams, and American diplomacy. But in the process Europe is being molded into a new shape, pushed into a new role, and directed into new terrain—and Americans may one day come to regret this. All great strategic decisions are something of a gamble. The prospect of a Greater Europe's one day becoming a serious rival to U.S. interests in the Middle East has to be balanced against the possibility of a happier outcome, with a democratic and prosperous Turkey exercising a liberalizing, even civilizing influence in Central Asia and elsewhere. This has to be the policy goal of future U.S. and European leaders, because the alternative to such a benign outcome would be unpleasant, for Turkey and its neighbors alike. ❑

Atatürk's Ambiguous Legacy

by Cengiz Çandar

As if nature had not been generous enough, history has endowed Istanbul with extraordinary beauty. Its skyline is a parade of mosques, with pencil-like minarets that climb toward the sun, more than a few of them touched by the genius of Sinan (1489–1588), the Michelangelo of the Ottoman Empire. Its streets and avenues are graced by aqueducts, obelisks, and great churches that survive from the Byzantine era, including the spectacular domed Hagia Sophia, completed by the emperor Justinian I in A.D. 537. This is the only city in the world that has served as the seat of two great empires.

Yet the first thing a visitor to Istanbul today would notice is the dominating presence of modern Turkey's founder, Mustapha Kemal Atatürk. A traveler arriving on the Turkish national airline would see the founder's picture on the wall of the passenger cabin and his name on the façade of Istanbul's perennially renovated airport. To reach the heart of the city he would take a taxi to Taksim Square, which is dominated by the imposing Atatürk Cultural Center. At some point he would have to cross Atatürk Boulevard; in almost every Turkish city the pattern is more or less the same. The personality cult surrounding Atatürk is perhaps as strong as the cults that existed in the Soviet Union, and is rivaled—though many Turks would consider it blasphemous to say so—by the officially orchestrated adulation that has been showered on some Arab leaders.

For the past 10 years, however, the sanctity of Atatürk and the domination of his self-proclaimed successors over this complex land have grown ever more precarious. Coming to power amid the debris of the 600-year-old Ottoman Empire in 1923 by leading a successful national struggle against invading foreign forces, the former general embarked on an ambitious program of modernization, replacing an absolute monarchy with

In Istanbul, Turkish soldiers march past an image of Atatürk in the annual Zafer Bayrami (Victory Day) parade that celebrates his crucial 1922 victory over Greek invaders.

a constitutional republic, a fractured administrative system with a centralized bureaucracy, and an Islamic identity with a commitment to secularism. There is no doubt that Atatürk's guiding principles were instrumental in the making of modern Turkey. But in the hands of the Kemalist elite, the soldiers and the bureaucrats who have retained control over Turkey since his death in 1938, those principles have hardened into an unyielding orthodoxy that has become an obstacle to further democratic and economic progress in a changing world.

The Kemalist elite that followed Atatürk envisaged a militantly secular, ethnically homogeneous republic ready to join the Western world. It banished Islam from school curricula, glorified Turkish history, and "purified" the Turkish language in order to foster national pride and unity. Intent on creating a new Turkish national consciousness, this elite denied the existence of the many non-Turk ethnic identities within Turkey, most notably that of the Kurds. Above all, Kemalists were determined to banish Islam from the public sphere. Only with religion confined to the home and mosque, Kemalists believed,

could Turkey become a functioning nation-state. The Caliphate was abolished in 1924, and with it, religious courts and schools. The reforms touched virtually every aspect of Turkish life. A 1925 law banned the fez, replacing it with the Western-style hat, and also banned Muslim religious leaders from wearing clerical garb outside of places of worship. As Atatürk explained two years after the fact: "It was necessary to abolish the fez, which sat on the heads of our nation as an emblem of ignorance, negligence, fanaticism, and hatred of progress and civilization, to accept in its place the hat, the headgear used by the whole civilized world, and in this way to demonstrate that the Turkish nation, in its mentality as in other respects, in no way diverges from civilized social life."

There are striking resemblances between Turkey's Republican People's Party (CHP), founded by Atatürk, and Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Both were revolutionary-nationalist movements that emerged from violent struggles in the 1920s. Both believed that the solution to their national problems lay in rapid economic and political modernization. Both resorted to autocratic rule, and both enjoyed unusual political longevity. (The PRI's reign ended only this past summer, when it lost a presidential election for the first time in 71 years.) The two parties' experiences diverged in one highly significant respect, however: While Mexico relied on a political party to modernize the nation, Turkey looked to the military. It abandoned one-party rule in the years after World War II in an effort to win the favor of the Western allies whose support it desperately needed to help keep the neighboring Soviet Union at bay. In the nation's first multiparty elections, in 1950, Atatürk's party was promptly voted out of office.

> Turkey, as the writer Çetin Altan observes, is "squeezed in the struggle between the mosque and barracks."

The Turkish military, which had launched Atatürk into power, became the self-styled guardian of Kemalist values, particularly secularism. The army, which is the most respected institution of the Turkish state, vigorously defends the republic against what it perceives as imminent threats from Islamic fundamentalism. Three times between 1960 and 1980 the military overthrew governments it judged to be a danger to the secular state. Most recently, in 1980, a rash of violent, politically radical dissent prompted the army to suspend the constitution, impose martial law, arrest leading politicians, and dissolve the parliament, political parties, and trade unions.

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On the streets of Istanbul, 1994

However, as they have after each takeover, the generals voluntarily restored civilian rule, and in 1983 a newly elected government took office.

The army draws support from two vitally important groups in Turkish society: the urban middle class, which has reaped many of the economic benefits of Atatürk's modernization, and the formidable state bureaucracy, which is itself a product of Kemalism's strong centralizing tendencies. The military has carte blanche to intervene when these groups feel threatened by public manifestations of Islamic sentiment. Few in the Turkish elite objected in 1997, for example, when the army engineered the removal of the elected coalition government led by Necmettin Erbakan, the leader of the Islamist Welfare (Refah) Party. The constitution promulgated by the generals who carried out the 1980 coup also provides formal channels for military influence, notably through its five seats on the National Security Council, which oversees national defense, a term defined so broadly that topics from education to foreign policy fall under its umbrella.

Turkey, as the writer Çetin Altan observes, is "squeezed in the struggle between the mosque and [military] barracks." But Islam is not the only problem for Kemalist orthodoxy. The rise of supranational governments such as the European Union (EU) has reduced the primacy of the nation-state and unleashed new centripetal forces, while the advent of a global free-market economy has rendered Kemalism's statist economic policies increasingly obsolete. In the decades after Atatürk's rule, Turkey's large government-owned industrial sector and its fervent pursuit of a policy of "import substitution" (building the capacity to manufacture goods at home rather than buy them abroad) helped transform the agrarian cradle of the Ottoman Empire into

The Father of the Turks

Among dictators of recent times, Mustapha Kemal, who later took the honorific name Atatürk, is the exception. In common with the others, he believed that social engineering justified whatever means were required, and he had no qualms about destruction and murder. But where the others left behind nothing but the memory of their evil, Mustapha Kemal, out of the wreck of the Ottoman empire, fashioned Turkey into the thriving nation-state it is today. Official photographs of his handsome if haughty face, prominent in public places throughout the country, attest to his enduring and genuine popularity. The Turkish military, in particular, sees itself as the steadfast guardian of the nationalism he taught Turks to value above other ideals. . . .

Mustapha Kemal was born about 1880, in Salonika, then a cosmopolitan city. The empire was already in its last throes. For 13 years, he attended a military school. As a junior officer, he served in Syria, in Libya against the Italians, and afterward as military attaché in the formerly Ottoman-held city of Sofia, Bulgaria. Like many in his position, he despaired of reform, and dabbled in conspiracy to overthrow the regime.

In 1908, other officers undertook an unfinished or rolling coup against the sultan. These so-called Young Turks proved as incompetent as they were ambitious. At the outbreak of World War I, they struck an alliance with Germany that would consummate the ruin of the empire they meant to save.

In the meantime, recognizing in Mustapha Kemal someone as ambitious as themselves, they kept him at arm's length. Much of his career during the war would consist of skillful maneuvering to capitalize on the mistakes and limitations of the Young Turks, to come out on top at the end. . . .

After the war, extreme foolishness on the part of the victorious Allies played into his hands. They had already occupied the empire's Arab and European provinces. In search of spoils, French, British, Italian, and Greek forces then invaded the Ottoman heartlands. As the sultan and his ministers in Istanbul pursued a policy of appeasement and surrender, Mustapha Kemal built in Anatolia the means of resistance. In a brilliant solo performance, he set up a tame assembly to certify his powers and mobilized the Turkish army to pick off the invaders one by one. Undoubtedly, this was his finest hour.

Though he might with justice have despised the European countries in whose imperial quarrels and vanities his people had been so disastrously caught up and ruined, Kemal was no hater of Europe. On the contrary: In many a speech and many an incident, he revealed that he admired his enemies almost uncritically, while at the same time he viewed his own compatriots as contemptibly backward and superstitious, "ignoramuses" living in dirty and tightly packed "oriental" towns. This shame could no longer be endured. Turkey, he insisted, had to become "a progressive member of the civilized world," and by "civilization," a favorite word of his, he meant Westernization. There was to be no distinctly Turkish or isolationist future.

In 1923, Mustapha Kemal declared himself president of the new Turkish republic. The sultan, accepting the loss of his temporal power, pleaded to be allowed to continue as caliph, even if this was only "fancy-dress," as Andrew Mango wrote recently in *Atatürk: The Biography of the Founder of Modern Turkey*. He was instead sent into exile, and would die in Paris in 1944. At home, the changes introduced by Mustapha Kemal were radical and immediate. New legal and penal codes were imported from countries like Switzerland and Italy. The Roman alphabet replaced traditional Arabic script, effectively cutting off much of the Ottoman past. Culture, manners, and dress were Westernized,

down to such apparently insignificant details as the compulsory replacement of the fez by a hat. Atatürk himself read and wrote French, and frequently resorted to that language among friends. A womanizer, he enjoyed nightclubs, waltzing, and drinking with his cronies. Alcoholism would contribute to his premature death in 1938.

There seems to be no explanation for the ferocity with which Mustapha Kemal attacked Islam. "The evils which had sapped the nation's strength," he declared, "had all been wrought in the name of religion." In a swift and brutal reversal, Turks were obliged to repudiate the Ottoman assumption that their faith had entailed superiority over others.

Revolutionary as all these changes were, however, they concerned only the outward forms of Westernization, and were at a complete remove from its spirit. Western strength derived in the final analysis from the spectrum of institutions, political and otherwise, through which a citizenry could express its energy. The Ottomans had had no such institutions, and the Turks did not now acquire them. Mustapha Kemal's powers were every bit as absolute as the sultan's, but, thanks to improved techniques of communication, far more effectively applied. Much as the sultan had relied on faithful janissaries to execute orders, Atatürk recruited his People's Party, which held all but one seat in the assembly, to do his bidding.

Atatürk framed by a train window, in 1932

Tailored to one-man rule, the resultant party-state had no place for a loyal opposition, for accountability, for free association, for civil rights, or indeed for any of the essentials of democracy. Whoever stood in Mustapha Kemal's way was murdered, either secretly or through scandalous judicial fixes. . . .

Luckily—and it has been as much by luck as by skillful management—Mustapha Kemal's heirs have been able to proceed further down the road to Westernization. Turkey is now the only Islamic country (leaving aside the questionable example of Pakistan) in which a free and fair election has led to a change of government. Even so, it still suffers from the repercussions of Atatürk's rule. The military has taken power several times on dubious nationalist pretexts, while extremists of one kind or another have engaged in campaigns of mutual and reciprocal murder. Kurds, even if they do not engage in terrorism but strive for a pluralist solution to their plight, encounter state terror in response. Immune to extirpation by decree, Islam has made a comeback, and about a quarter of the Turkish electorate now votes for the Islamic fundamentalist party.

—David Pryce-Jones

David Pryce-Jones is the author of The Closed Circle: An Interpretation of Arabs *(1989).*

a semi-industrial nation, but in more recent times they have bred budget deficits and runaway inflation. Economic development has suffered. In 1950, Turkey's gross domestic product per person was greater than Spain's; today Spaniards can claim four times the wealth of Turks.

Even as the Turkish economy sputters, the Kemalist tenet of a homogeneous Turkish identity has come under challenge. Turkey is hardly alone among the nations of the world in confronting a revival of ethnic loyalties, but its historical circumstances are certainly unique. The territory occupied by modern Turkey was once the heartland of the Ottoman Empire, serving as the refuge for a variety of Muslim peoples. Crimean Tatars arrived in Anatolia following Russia's invasion of the northern shores of the Black Sea in 1774. They were succeeded by wave after wave of Muslim communities from the Northern Caucasus once Russia's greedy eyes turned in their direction. Beginning in the 1860s, these Circassians, from the Abkhaz to the Chechens, were forced to flee to the Ottoman Empire. Tens of thousands of Muslims came from Bosnia-Herzegovina when it was annexed by Austria in 1877. The Balkan Wars of 1912–13, which ended Ottoman Turkey's dominion over present-day Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, Greece, Romania, and Bulgaria, brought yet another flood of immigrants. Finally, under the terms of the Lausanne Treaty of 1923, Muslim Turks living in parts of Greece exchanged places with a sizable portion of the Greek Orthodox population of Turkey. All of these groups lived easily under the Ottoman mantle and had little difficulty shifting their allegiance to Atatürk's new nation. And why not? To the outside world, the Ottoman, the Turk, and the Muslim were all one and the same anyway. But today, many of these groups, including the Circassians, Georgians, and Laz, express a heightened awareness of their distinct identities (although not to the same extent as the Kurds).

TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD, THE OTTOMAN, THE TURK, AND THE MUSLIM WERE ALL ONE AND THE SAME. . . . BUT TODAY, MANY ETHNIC GROUPS EXPRESS A HEIGHTENED AWARENESS OF THEIR DISTINCT IDENTITIES.

However momentous these new challenges to Kemalist orthodoxy may be, one looms over all the others: the challenge to the Kemalist concept of secularism. Western observers praise Turkey's secularist commitments, holding the Turkish example up as a model for other Muslim states. The eminent Princeton University historian Bernard Lewis, for example, approvingly points out that "Turkey alone [among Muslim countries] has formally enacted the separation of religion

and the state." Yet Turkey's secularism is not what it seems to be. Many outside political observers have been seduced by a simplistic understanding of the clash between "secularism" and "fundamentalism." In reality, Turkish secularism is not as democratic as it appears to some Westerners, and Turkish Islam is not as fundamentalist as it is portrayed.

In their secularism (and in their statecraft generally), Atatürk and the Kemalist elites were powerfully influenced by French ideas, particularly those of French revolutionary Jacobinism. There is no word in Turkish for "secularism," for example, except for the approximations *laisizm* and *laiklik*, which are borrowed from the French *laïcisme*, a term steeped in the French Revolution's anticlericalism and hostility to religion. Unlike the secularism of the Anglo-Saxon tradition, with its emphasis on religious tolerance and pluralism, this idea of secularism carries overtones of irreligion and atheism. The advocates of this radical secularism consider Islam a totalist worldview that is incompatible with pluralism and democracy—a view bolstered by the Euro-Christian perception of Islam as an inherently militant or subversive faith.

In the late 19th century, a number of the army's reform-minded Young Turks—a group to which Atatürk belonged—absorbed such ideas directly as exiles in Paris. They concluded that, just as the Catholic Church was said by French liberals to pose a threat to the French Third Republic, so Islam presented a threat to modern Turkey. Since Islam does not have an institution that functions as a church, their attempt to enforce secularism was transformed into a quasi-atheist crusade against individuals. The Kemalist authorities ruthlessly manipulated the law to quiet those they considered dangerous, a practice that continues today. In 1998 Tayyip Erdogan, the popular Islamist mayor of Istanbul, was banned from politics for quoting a poem that allegedly "fomented public discord," an accusation that is broadly interpreted and widely invoked by Kemalists. Necmettin Erbakan, former prime minister of Turkey and chairman of the banned Welfare Party, was barred from political life for five years in 1999 and is now under the threat of a ban from politics for life. Many of Turkey's universities have expelled students and instructors who wear headscarves, the garb of observant Muslim women. In the hands of today's leaders, secularism has become as "radical" as the purportedly "fundamentalist" Islam it aims to defeat. Kemalism is now a kind of state religion in its own right.

Surprisingly, political Islam in Turkey takes perhaps the most benign and benevolent form found in the Muslim world. Although three major Turkish Islamist parties have been banned during the past 30 years—most recently the Welfare Party in 1998—activists have never resorted to subversive activities or violence but have simply established new parties. Erbakan is perhaps the closest equivalent in Turkish public life to a fundamentalist Islamist, but it is he who established, led, and then re-established each of these parties, actively participating in Turkey's electoral process and always remaining well within the limits of the constitution-

al system. His "fundamentalist" credentials mainly consist of his efforts to foster closer relations with Islamic nations such as Iran and Libya, yet he has served as vice premier in many of the coalition governments led by secularist politicians, including one led by Bülent Ecevit, the current prime minister of Turkey. From 1996 to 1997 he briefly served as prime minister, leading a coalition government with one of the most pro-Western politicians in Turkey, Tansu Çiller, until he was ousted in response to pressure from the military.

Turkey's Islamic parties, most significantly the Virtue (Fazilet) Party, resemble Europe's Christian Democratic parties far more than they do the fundamentalist Islamic political organizations found elsewhere in the Middle East. The Virtue Party embraces the free market and electoral democracy, advocates social justice, and frames its defense of Islam in terms of civil liberties, arguing, for example, that it is a violation of individual rights to deny Turks the freedom to wear a headscarf or military officers the freedom to express Islamic sentiments. Its ranks include conservative technocrats and some secular-minded women, as well as many of the more traditional Muslim faithful.

It is the unwillingness of the Kemalist "secular fundamentalists" to endure a peaceful cohabitation with the country's popular Islamic groups that has kept Turkey in a state of political turmoil. And, ironically, that unwillingness is now one of the major obstacles to securing a place for Turkey within the EU, and thus to fulfilling the Kemalist dream of winning a secure place for Turkey in the Western constellation. Just as ironically, Turkey's traditionally anti-Western Islamists have become enthusiastic supporters of accession to the EU, which they view as the best path to strong guarantees of civil liberties, through institutions such as the European Court of Justice. No group now seems less enthusiastic about joining the EU than the traditionally pro-Western Kemalists, who are anxious about sacrificing "national sovereignty" and object to democratizing political reforms that might reduce the military's role in the political process.

Kemalism today finds itself in the absurd position of threatening to negate the ultimate purpose of its founding figure and of denying the Turkish people the democratic rights and responsibilities treasured elsewhere in the "civilized world" Atatürk was so eager to have Turkey join. This is not a Kemalism of Atatürk's making. It is the product of a narrow, authoritarian interpretation of his ideas and policies by successors who transformed Atatürk into an untouchable national icon and Kemalism into an inflexible dogma. Turks must begin to see Atatürk clearly, not as an icon but as an outstanding historical personality who invented the tools necessary to make an empire into a republic. Now Turks must use those tools to become a more inclusive and flexible democracy. Only then can Turkey hope to contain its many contradictions and complete its transformation into a fully modern nation—democratic, secular, European, and Muslim. ❑

The Periodical Observer

Reviews of articles from periodicals and specialized journals here and abroad

What Will America Risk?

A Survey of Recent Articles

When the United States has used military force in the Balkans and other hot spots in recent years, protecting the lives of its pilots and soldiers has been a high priority—too high, some analysts contend. As several make clear in *Aerospace Power Journal* (Summer 2000) and elsewhere, they worry that the world's only superpower is losing the ability to use force effectively, thus encouraging foes and quite possibly costing many more lives.

In the Kosovo operation of 1999, President Bill Clinton early on explicitly ruled out the use of ground troops, and pilots serving under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), mostly Americans, were ordered to fly above 15,000 feet to avoid being shot down. On the ground below, the Serbian army was largely able to keep out of the bombs' way, and its "ethnic cleansing" accelerated. Thousands of Kosovar Albanians were killed and more than one million forcibly displaced. Then, after the 78 days of bombing ended in a self-proclaimed NATO victory, with nary an American life lost, U.S. troops became "peacekeepers." But once again, self-protection was paramount, R. Jeffrey Smith of the *Washington Post* (Oct. 5, 1999) reported. Whereas British soldiers, for instance, were widely dispersed and patrolled on foot in small numbers, most of the Americans were based in an isolated, protected enclave, allowed out only in helicopters or convoys of armored vehicles.

This is "force-protection fetishism," argues Jeffrey Record, a professor at the Air War College, Maxwell Air Force Base (AFB), Alabama, and one of several writers addressing U.S. attitudes toward casualties in the same issue of *Aerospace Power Journal*. "Was preserving the life of a single American pilot—a volunteer professional—worth jeopardizing the lives of 1,600,000 Kosovar Albanians and God-knows-how-many future victims of Serbian aggression?" Record asks. If protecting the lives of American pilots and soldiers is the top priority, why not just keep them home?

Vincent J. Goulding, Jr., a marine colonel, asserts in *Parameters* (Summer 2000) that in Kosovo, the United States "sent the strongest possible signal that, while it is willing to conduct military operations in situations not vital to the country's national interests, it is not willing to put in harm's way the means necessary to conduct these operations effectively and conclusively."

The excessive concern with casualties, these analysts say, not only hinders accomplishment of the mission, but also makes it harder to credibly threaten the use of force in the future. Slobodan Milosevic, Record notes, "called the West's bluff repeatedly and successfully during the war in Bosnia and later rejected NATO's ultimatum on Kosovo."

In Somalia—an example often cited by those who hold that Americans will not toler-

ate casualties—the United States swiftly withdrew its forces after 18 American soldiers were killed in Mogadishu in 1993. But while public support for the mission did fall after the deaths, it had also dropped sharply *before* the firefight, notes James Burk, a sociologist at Texas A&M University, in *Political Science Quarterly* (Spring 1999). The public did not go along when the humanitarian famine-relief effort turned into an attempt to end the civil war in Somalia and build a new nation.

Citing a 1996 RAND study, U.S. Air Force Major Charles K. Hyde writes in *Aerospace Power Journal* that Americans balance their regard for human life "within a continuous cost-benefit analysis. . . . It is only logical that [increased] casualties will result in a decline in public support unless an increase in the benefits or prospects for success offsets that cost."

A recent study by the Triangle Institute for Strategic Studies, Hyde points out, found that the public "is far more tolerant of potential casualties" than its leaders are. In one hypothetical scenario, a question was put to 623 senior military officers, 683 influential civilian leaders, and 1,001 members of the general public: How many American deaths would be acceptable to complete the mission of stabilizing a democratic government in the Congo? Though that mission might be deemed remote from U.S. vital interests, the public was willing to accept, on average, more than 6,800 deaths, while the civilian leaders would accept only 484, and the officers only 284—gaps that are revealing, even though real-life numbers might be very different.

Record traces the leaders' caution to the Vietnam War. An officer corps traumatized by the experience of fighting with declining public approval embraced the doctrine that force should be used only when vital interests are at stake, objectives are clear, public support is assured, and all alternatives have been exhausted—and then the force used must be overwhelming. "These tests effectively deny" the use of force for "coercive diplomacy," he says.

The U.S. military may be more averse to taking casualties than other nations' armed forces. But American sensitivity in that regard "long predates Vietnam," observes Daniel R. Mortensen, of the Airpower Research Institute, at Maxwell AFB. In U.S. military history, technology, especially airpower, has often been relied upon to avoid casualties, "even when airpower itself precipitates heavy [civilian] casualties, as it did in World War II."

The high level of caution among American military and civilian leaders, writes Karl P. Mueller, a professor at the School of Advanced Airpower Studies, Maxwell AFB, in *Aerospace Power Journal*, partly reflects "the increasing potential cleanliness of warfare and the West's slow, ongoing shift away from barbarism." Over the last two centuries, conventional combat has grown "less horrible," thanks to medical care and casualty evacuation, mechanization, and refinements in weaponry. "The more [that] casualties can and should be avoided, the more justification they require and the more unacceptable the profligate waste of soldiers' lives becomes."

Mueller also sees "a kernel of truth" in the belief that the American public will not tolerate casualties. "U.S. public support for wars that seem inordinately costly relative to their objectives—or that appear to offer little prospect of success—has indeed disintegrated as body counts have risen, most visibly in Korea, Vietnam, Lebanon, and Somalia." Even so, "historical experience offers no reason to believe that the American public will fail to support costly wars in which the lives of U.S. troops are not apparently being wasted."

"The real issue is reluctance to incur casualties in situations not in the national interest," Goulding argues. "But since U.S. forces are routinely employed on such missions, [that] argument is moot."

"We certainly ought to protect our forces and protect noncombatants, insofar as we can, regardless of popular opinion—not because doing so is politically prudent but because *it is morally right*," Mueller writes. "Conversely, however, there are objectives that are worth dying—and killing—in order to achieve; in such cases, it is morally wrong *not* to risk or take lives when necessary." How are national leaders to tell when and how to use military force? "Inconveniently for [them]," he says, "the answer is that these choices call not for simple rules of thumb but for actual wisdom. Deciding which causes are worth risking American lives to pursue and what amount of risk is appropriate ultimately requires a moral, not simply a political, compass."

Lifeblood of the Parties

"One Cheer for Soft Money" by Steven E. Schier, in *The Washington Monthly* (July–Aug. 2000), 1611 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Almost no one this election year has a good word to say about unregulated "soft money," that supposedly corrupting sort of moolah that corporations, unions, and individuals are allowed to pour into the coffers of political parties in unlimited amounts. State and local parties then are allowed to use the money only for "election-related activities," including "issue-advocacy" ads, but not (wink, wink) to advance the victory or defeat of individual candidates. Senator John McCain (R.-Ariz.) and other campaign finance reformers urge a complete ban on soft money. But Schier, a political scientist at Carleton College, argues that that would be going too far: Mend it, don't end it.

Unregulated "soft money" is easy to criticize, but funds are needed to strengthen the parties.

Yes, he agrees, *unlimited* soft-money contributions to parties should not be permitted, in order to avoid the appearance of corruption. But the attack on soft money is also an attack on political parties, he argues. And these crucial, already-weakened institutions need to be well funded if their electoral role is not to be further diminished.

Strong political parties perform "vital services for our democracy," Schier maintains. By simplifying and clarifying the voting choice, they encourage broad electoral participation, which is needed, he says, to make those elected more inclined to serve the common interest.

As partisan allegiance to parties has decreased in recent decades, and voter turnout has declined, interest groups have gained members and multiplied, Schier notes, and lawmakers have become more responsive to them. Strong, well-funded political parties can serve as "a 'buffer' between campaign contributions and the government officials those contributions seek to influence. The trick is to keep the money from [going] in such large quantities to parties that the buffer virtually disappears, as it has at present."

He would cap currently unregulated soft-money contributions to political parties at, say, $60,000 a year per contributor. And while keeping the current low limits on "hard-money" contributions to candidates, he would raise "considerably" the limits on hard-money contributions to parties (upping, for instance, the current $20,000-a-year maximum for individuals to $50,000 a year). Doing this, Schier believes, would help "to make our elections more about parties and their philosophies and less about individual candidates and their personalities." He also favors giving national and state parties large blocks of free TV airtime to boost their candidates, and would keep issue advocacy ads by corporations and unions off the air during election seasons. If campaign finance reformers "want robust campaigns and high turnout," Schier says, "they need to learn how to love political parties, not destroy them."

Initiatives for Sale?

"Ballot Boxing" by John Maggs, in *National Journal* (July 1, 2000), 1501 M St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Ever since Proposition 13, the controversial tax-cutting measure that California voters approved in 1978, ballot initiatives have been the rage. All sorts of hot potatoes, from affirmative action to assisted suicide, have been tossed to voters in the 24 states that allow initiatives. In

1998, 61 percent of initiatives passed, including one in Arizona to block the legislature from restricting suburban "sprawl." Veteran *Washington Post* political writer David Broder and other critics fear that the trend endangers representative government.

The ballot initiative "is alien to the spirit of the Constitution and its careful system of checks and balances," Broder warns in *Democracy Derailed* (2000). "Though derived from a reform favored by Populists and Progressives as a cure for special-interest influence, this method has become the favored tool of millionaires and interest groups that use their wealth to achieve their own policy goals." Silicon Valley millionaire Ron Unz, for instance, helped get a successful bilingual-education ban on the 1998 ballot in California, providing $650,000 to promote it. Initiatives, critics contend, bypass the deliberation that should go into the making of laws.

But Maggs, a *National Journal* correspondent, writes that political scientists don't buy the thesis that money rules. After studying 161 initiatives in eight states over six years, Elisabeth Gerber, of the University of California, San Diego, concludes in *The Populist Paradox* (1999) that while "organized interests, especially business interests, now play a greater financial role in the direct legislation process," the big spending does not necessarily pay off. Voters approved only 31 percent of the initiatives funded mainly by "economic interests" (business and professional groups)—but 50 percent of those chiefly financed by "citizen interests" (including wealthy citizens).

Perhaps rich individuals belong in the "economic interests" category because they wield so much more influence than other citizens. "But where to draw the line?" asks Maggs.

The critics, he says, "fail to show that money has been any less corrupting on the alternative they prefer—representative legislatures." And political scientist Shaun Bowler, of the University of California, Riverside, observes that if legislatures really were models of deliberation and thoroughly debated the great issues of the day, then perhaps their abysmal job-approval ratings from the public would go up a bit.

FDR, Fiscal Conservative?

"The Forgotten Legacy of the New Deal: Fiscal Conservatism and the Roosevelt Administration, 1933-1938" by Julian E. Zelizer, in *Presidential Studies Quarterly* (June 2000), Center for Presidential Studies, Texas A&M Univ., College Station, TX 77843–4349.

When President Bill Clinton embraced the cause of deficit reduction shortly after taking office in 1993, he was not betraying the tradition of New Deal liberalism but

EXCERPT

Moral Federalism

For all the talk of globalization, it matters greatly these days where you happen to live. If you are gay and want recognition of your union with a person of your own sex, it helps if you are a Vermonter. If you are poor and want public assistance to send your child to a private school, you can be thankful if you live in Milwaukee. And if you like having the Ten Commandments posted in your local courthouse, Alabama is the place to be. In the absence of national policy on some of the most contentious issues of the day, America is engaged in an experiment in moral federalism, as state and local governments take sides in the country's culture wars....

Because America requires both a common morality and respect for rights, moral federalism can never be a panacea. Yet when a society is bitterly divided over morality, allowing states and local governments to express different moral outlooks may make a lot of sense.

—**Alan Wolfe**, director of the Center for Religion and American Public Life at Boston College, writing in *The Responsive Community* (Summer 2000)

adhering to one of its "most important, yet least appreciated, legacies," argues Zelizer, a historian at the State University of New York at Albany.

Though New Deal historians usually deemphasize it, fiscal conservatism—i.e., "an agenda of balanced budgets, private capital investment, minimal government debt, stable currency, low inflation, and high savings"—was "a key component of the New Deal," he says. President Franklin D. Roosevelt knew that investors and businessmen, mainstream economists, and most of the voting public favored it. And he did himself, at least in principle.

But "the pressure [on him] to spend was enormous," notes Zelizer. "He wanted a balanced budget," Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins later reflected, "but he also wanted to do the right thing by his unemployed citizens."

Two top advisers struggled "to keep Roosevelt faithful to fiscal conservatism," says Zelizer. One was Lewis Douglas, director of the Bureau of the Budget. Douglas championed the Economy Act of 1933, which, by giving the president broad powers to cut veterans' payments and federal salaries, reduced federal spending by $500 million.

His influence was short-lived, however, as FDR sought to alleviate mass unemployment and suffering with government relief programs. Deficits widened. Only three percent of Americans paid any income tax, and Washington had only two other principal sources of revenue: excise and payroll taxes. A disillusioned Douglas resigned in August 1934.

But fiscal conservatism did not depart with him, Zelizer says. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., "promoted a vision of moderate fiscal conservatism that influenced Roosevelt for three critical years," 1934 to 1937. In contrast to the inflexibly antistatist Douglas, Morgenthau "embraced the basic tenets of New Deal liberalism," and worked for "budgetary restraint within the New Deal."

When economic conditions eased, FDR "called for a balanced budget" in the spring of 1937, Zelizer notes. Significant spending cuts were made, but the budget, in the end, was not balanced. That fall, the economy relapsed, and Roosevelt in April 1938 embraced the Keynesian idea of stimulating the economy with almost $3 billion in emergency spending.

The significance of this move has been much exaggerated, Zelizer contends. The deliberate $3 billion deficit was small, given the $100 billion economy. There is "little evidence" that FDR meant to permanently reject the goal of balanced budgets and debt reduction. And just what his "long-term position" might have been never became clear, as his final years in office "were consumed by the exigencies of war."

Foreign Policy & Defense

The Relevance of Realism

"Structural Realism after the Cold War" by Kenneth N. Waltz, in *International Security* (Summer 2000), Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Univ., 79 John F. Kennedy St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

To hear some analysts tell it, the venerable "realist" view of international politics has become obsolete. No longer do we live in an anarchic world of self-interested states concerned with power and security. Since the Cold War ended, international politics supposedly has been transformed by the spread of liberal democracies and the rise of economic interdependence and international institutions. Waltz, the noted political theorist who is now an adjunct professor at Columbia University, begs to differ.

The spread of democracy, he says, does not alter the essentially anarchic character of international politics, in which, without "an external authority, a state cannot be sure that today's friend will not be tomorrow's enemy." This would be so even if all states were to become democracies. It is true that democracies seldom have fought other democracies (though it has happened), but that is no guarantee that wars will not break

out. When a liberal democracy goes to war, he points out, it is likely to call the enemy's democratic standing into question. That happened when democratic England and France went to war in 1914 against a Germany that had seemed to some American scholars "the very model of a modern democratic state," but now "turned out not to be a democracy of the right kind," at least in British, French, and American eyes. At other times, democracies wage war in the name of democracy, as America did, for instance, in Vietnam. The spread of democracy, Waltz says, may not mean "a net decrease in the amount of war in the world."

Economic interdependence? It promotes war as well as peace, Waltz observes. Increased contacts can produce conflicts as well as mutual understanding. In any event, he says, interdependence is overrated. "Interdependence within modern states is much closer than it is across states," yet, for instance, it did not prevent the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

International institutions also remain relatively unimportant, Waltz says, having little effect independent of the states that found and sustain them. Some analysts point to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), which has survived the disappearance of its original Cold War purpose, as evidence of independent life in such institutions. In fact, contends Waltz, "the ability of the United States to extend the life of a moribund institution nicely illustrates how international institutions are created and maintained by stronger states to serve their perceived or misperceived interests." (For domestic political reasons, he says, the Clinton administration pressed for NATO expansion, even though that unwisely "pushes Russia toward China instead of drawing Russia toward Europe and America.")

Despite claims that realism is dead, Waltz concludes, "the world . . . has not been transformed; the structure of international politics has simply been remade by the disappearance of the Soviet Union, and for a time we will live with unipolarity." Realists know that "in international politics, overwhelming power repels and leads others to try to balance against it." That is already happening in Asia, he says. The American effort "to keep the world unipolar is doomed."

Spreading Sunshine

"Will Globalization Make You Happy?" by Robert Wright, in *Foreign Policy* (Sept.–Oct. 2000), Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1779 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Thanks to globalization, many of the world's have-nots are smiling a lot more these days, argues Wright, a visiting scholar at the University of Pennsylvania and the author of *Nonzero: The Logic of Human Destiny* (2000), and he has the scientific assays of global sunshine to prove it.

"Psychologists have gone to dozens of nations, rich and poor, and asked people how satisfied they are with their lives," he explains. The results indicate "a clear connection between a nation's per capita gross domestic product (GDP) and the average happiness of its citizens"—but only up to the point where GDP per capita reaches about $10,000 a year. That's about where Greece, Portugal, and South Korea are today.

Money evidently *can* buy happiness, when poor people can turn their increased income into a fairly comfortable standard of living, with improved diets, medical care, and shelter, and perhaps even more political freedom—but after that, the happiness payoff rapidly vanishes. Above the $10,000 per capita level, "additional dollars don't seem to cheer up nations," says Wright, "and national differences in happiness hinge on the intangibles of culture" (which, for instance, make the Irish, though less wealthy, significantly happier than the Germans, the Japanese, and the British).

Not only does rising national income fail to make rich nations happier, says Wright, but even as their average level of happiness stays the same, "the small fraction" suffering from chronic depression and other serious mental illnesses expands. Globalization, in short, seems "good for the poor and, if anything, bad for the rich."

Of course, globalization has its discontents, but Wright insists that growing poverty among

poor nations is not one of them. Although some poor nations "have shown alarming stagnation," Wright says, "the economic output of the average poor nation has grown in recent decades."

While the *gap* between the richest and poorest nations has increased, globalization is not to blame, he says. The most stubbornly poor nations, as in sub-Saharan Africa, seem "underglobalized." Those nations "most thoroughly plugged into the global market system," as in East and Southeast Asia, have grown the fastest. They haven't left their poorer citizens behind, either, says Wright, citing a recent study by World Bank economists, who "found that, as national income grew, the fraction of the economic pie going to the bottom fifth of the income scale didn't shrink."

The same globalization that made protesters in Seattle mad may make poor people in developing nations happier.

Still, Wright concedes, rapid modernization may be having a disorienting effect in developing nations, perhaps "neutraliz[ing] much of the happiness brought by growing income." That, he says, might be an additional argument for worthwhile policies—e.g., environmental and labor provisions in trade agreements—that have the side effect of slowing globalization down a little.

Economics, Labor & Business

The Diesel Revolution

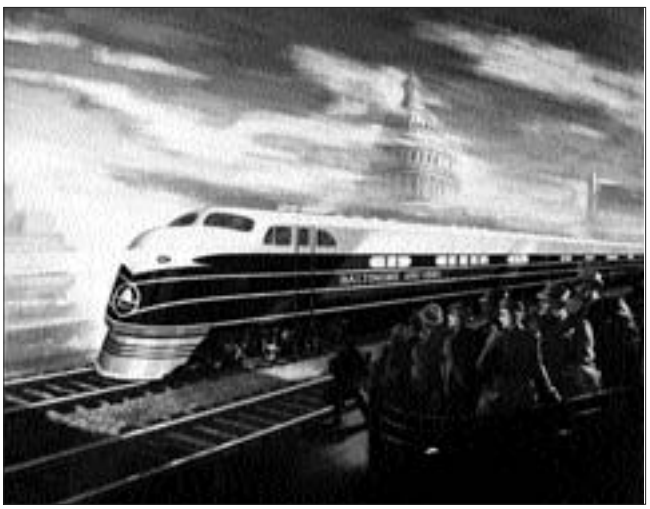
A Survey of Recent Articles

Future historians of our time may find it odd that, as Maury Klein, a professor of history at the University of Rhode Island, notes, scholars in recent decades have expended more effort assaying the social significance of TV's *Brady Bunch* than they have illuminating the great impact that the diesel locomotive had on railroading and American life. Klein and his colleagues try to rectify that imbalance in this special issue of *Railroad History* devoted to "the machine that saved the railroads."

Rudolf Diesel (1858–1913), the Parisian-born German engineer who gave the machine his name, never built more than a few crude prototypes. "The consensus is that his science was ahead of his engineering: he had to cope with poor metal and crude manufacturing that did not keep pace with his ideas," writes Mark Reutter, editor of *Railroad History*, which is published by the Railway & Locomotive Historical Society, with editorial offices at the University of Illinois. But Diesel's ideas—first advanced in an 1893 manifesto, *Theory and Construction of a Railroad Heat Engine*—eventually proved revolutionary. With the steam engine then at the height of its influence, he pointed out how extremely inefficient it was, losing most of its fuel's heat energy up the stack. He developed a theory of internal combustion, in which the fuel would be mixed and ignited in the same vessel that moved the piston—resulting in a much more efficient engine. His test engines attracted international attention in 1898; St. Louis beer baron Adolphus Busch paid him about $240,000 for exclusive U.S. and Canadian rights.

But to provide high thermal efficiency,

the diesel engine "had to be machined to a precision comparable to the work done by diamond cutters," Reutter notes. Though a workable engine was displayed at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, and Southern Pacific built and tested a diesel locomotive the following year, it would be decades before the diesel locomotive truly "arrived," in the form of the sleek, high-speed *Zephyr*, introduced by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad in late 1934. (See "The Lost Promise of the American Railroad" by Reutter, in *WQ*, Winter 1994, pp. 10-35.) Ralph Budd, Burlington president, had seen a prototype of General Motors' model 201A diesel engine and gambled that it would work. It did, and the streamlined *Zephyr* wowed the public. Other railroads quickly embraced the diesel streamliner. The streamline style—smooth, sinuous, and suggestive of speed—soon spread to all sorts of things, from autos to radios, from gas stations to bus stations, observes Jeffrey L. Meikle, a professor of American studies and art history at the University of Texas at Austin.



Embracing the diesel, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad assigned its first streamliner to the Capitol Limited line in 1937.

The streamliners helped to reverse a decline in the passenger railroads that had begun before the Great Depression. "From the peak year of travel in 1920 through 1929," Reutter notes, "the railroads had lost one-third of their passengers." From 1934 to 1938, however, ridership increased by an average of 34 million passengers a year.

The diesels aided the bottom line. "The new equipment, while more expensive to purchase," Reutter says, "was cheaper to operate once fuel and water savings, reduced maintenance charges, higher loadings, and better equipment utilization were figured in." Labor costs remained almost the same, however. "After 1936, all diesel streamliners were required to have firemen in the cabs even though there were no longer any fires for the firemen to tend."

Progress had some drawbacks, particularly for the veteran railroad men of the steam engine era. True, their work had not been glamorous, contrary to romantic myth, says the late Robert Aldag, a mechanical engineer long involved with locomotives. "It was hard, it was dirty, it was repetitive. And yet a visitor to a steam locomotive cab might pick up a sense of achievement, a feeling that the crew knew they were good at their jobs and that they, more than any others, made the trains run." Their relationship with the steam locomotive was more personal than with the diesel, observes historian Klein. "Every steam locomotive had its own character and eccentricities; it had to be serviced regularly, and parts had to be made especially for it. Engineers and crews grew attached to 'their' machine and personalized it." The more standardized diesel did not invite such connections. "The relationship between machine and crew," Klein says, "[became] cold and impersonal, a trend that in modern life is hardly confined to the diesel."

Though the merits of diesels were more or less apparent to locomotive manufacturers, the old-line ones "had trouble getting out from under their preoccupation with, and their investment in, steam locomotives," writes Wallace W. Abbey, former managing editor of *Trains*. That left an opening for newcomer Electro-Motive Co., which had a diesel freight locomotive, FT-103, for sale in 1940. By the time of Pearl Harbor, railroads had ordered 45 of the powerful freight diesels.

But the restrictions and demands of World War II slowed the diesel's spread. Diesel locomotives for freight trains "weren't produced in significant numbers until well into the war," Abbey notes, and diesels for passenger trains weren't produced at all. By the end of 1944, there were only about 3,000 diesel locomotives in service—compared with nearly 40,000 steam locomotives. When the diesel did triumph after the war, a raft of new problems confronted America's railroads.

The Paradox of Child Labor

"Eliminating Child Labor" by Miriam Wasserman, in *Regional Review* (Apr.–June 2000), Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, P.O. Box 2076, Boston, Mass. 02106–2076.

Many Americans have been horrified to learn that shoes, clothing, soccer balls, and other goods imported from developing nations were made with child labor. Yet those nations themselves strongly oppose any talk of a ban. They use child labor extensively, for much more than just exports, observes Wasserman, an associate editor of *Regional Review*. A glance at U.S. history makes the widespread practice—and the difficulty in uprooting it—easier to understand.

About 120 million children between the ages of five and 14 work full-time today in the developing world, and another 130 million work part-time. Children also do much unpaid work at home. Probably less than five percent of all child workers are employed in manufacturing or mining, producing the kinds of exported goods that attract worldwide attention. More than 70 percent work on farms. Populous Asia has the largest number of child workers (more than 150 million), while poverty-stricken Africa has the highest proportion of them (41 percent of all children aged five to 14).

"The plight of working children in the developing world today is not very different, and in some cases even less harsh, than that prevalent in countries such as the United States and England during the 19th and early 20th centuries," says Wasserman. In 1900, an estimated 1.75 million American children between 10 and 15 years old—or about 18 percent of children that age—were employed. They worked, for the most part, on farms, she notes, "but young children also worked long hours in factories and textile mills, in the anthracite coal mines of Pennsylvania, and in many other industries."

By then, however, "child labor was clearly on the decline," Wasserman points out. Americans' views had changed since the early 18th century, when work was considered helpful to "a child's character and moral upbringing," and child labor was vital to the agricultural and handicraft economy. As more children appeared in the mills, public acceptance started to diminish. Americans also came to regard play and leisure as important for children's healthy development, not as vices to be avoided. Between 1880 and 1910, 36 states established a minimum age (of 14, on average) for manufacturing workers. Pressure for federal legislation mounted, despite opposition in the South from those who claimed that the richer North was trying to limit their region's development. In 1938, a federal law setting 16 as the minimum age was finally enacted. But some economists think that such laws had less impact than other factors. The long, slow process of reducing child labor, Wasserman writes, "required a host of changes in family income, education policy, production technologies, and cultural norms."

As the American experience shows, the problem is not a simple one, she notes. Well-intended efforts can leave the children involved *worse* off. In 1993, garment manufacturers in Bangladesh, fearing a possible U.S. ban on imports made with child labor, fired an estimated 50,000 children. Some of the children turned to street hustling and prostitution. Fortunately, the International Labor Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund reached an agreement with the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association to give the fired children monthly stipends and to jointly sponsor schools. By 1997, more than 300 schools were serving 9,710 children. But in many other countries, Wasserman points out, not only are

schools unavailable, but education may not even be valued.

International pressure to reduce child labor does some good, she concludes, but ultimately, "a cultural change . . . has to come from within developing countries."

Shock Economics

"A Shocking View of Economic History" by Larry Neal, in *The Journal of Economic History* (June 2000), Karl Eller Center, 202 McClelland Hall, Univ. of Arizona, P.O. Box 210108, Tucson, Ariz. 85721–0108.

Neal, a professor of economics at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, has some earthshaking advice for his fellow economists: Act like geologists!

He urges them to stop thinking of their discipline as an exercise in applied mathematics, and look on it instead as a historical science, like geology. Just as geologists range the globe, "search[ing] in each location for the remains of catastrophic events in the history of the earth itself," so economic historians, he says, should focus more on the "shocks" to economies of the past, rather than on the longer periods of "normal" economic activity, undisturbed by depression, war, or natural disaster.

"Like modern geologists," writes Neal, "we economic historians need to become comfortable in thinking about the economic activity of the human race, not merely in terms of gradual movements of technical and economic progress occurring by insensible degrees, but also as shoved on occasion by shocks, many barely noticed, some easily absorbed, and a few with cataclysmic consequences."

Consider, for instance, Neal says, the role that immigration has played in German economic performance, as a result of major population shocks during the last century. After the loss of military-age men during World War I, Germany had no postwar baby boom, then experienced the "birth dearth" of the Great Depression, the further loss of military-age men in World War II, and again, curiously, no postwar baby boom. West Germany owed much of its economic success in the 1950s to educated, ambitious immigrants from East Germany, and met the increased demand for labor in the booming 1960s with immigrants from Yugoslavia and Turkey. But in 1990, as Germany was being reunified and the Soviet Union was collapsing, West Germany adopted a different "shock absorption" policy: It effectively stopped the flow of immigrants from the former East Germany, by artificially boosting the value of the east's currency and reducing workers' incentive to move. Instead of labor moving westward, capital moved eastward. "Ten years later," Neal says, "this policy does not appear nearly as fruitful as the policy adopted by West Germany in the 1950s." If economic historians had done more work "explor[ing] the ramifications of [the population] shocks," that might have been foreseen.

Concentrating on "normal" periods of economic activity has produced "empirical findings . . . only too reassuring" to theoretical economists committed to "a 'stylized fact' of a stable, equilibrium-seeking, self-contained economic mechanism that rules our lives," Neal says. But studying shocks, instead of shrugging them off as anomalies, "should yield insights into the shock-absorption capacities of different economic structures." That, he hopes, would lead to "a paradigm that encompasses more of the actual human experience"—perhaps even to "the equivalent of a tectonic plate revolution."

Megamerger Mania

"The Dubious Logic of Global Megamergers" by Pankaj Ghemawat and Fariborz Ghadar, in *Harvard Business Review* (July–Aug. 2000), 60 Harvard Way, Boston, Mass. 02163.

Everywhere one looks in the globalizing economy, companies seem to be rushing pell-mell to join forces with other companies: Exxon with Mobil . . . BP with Amoco and Atlantic Richfield . . . Chrysler with Daimler-Benz . . . Ford with Volvo . . . and

on and on. Executives apparently believe that bigger is better, that industries inevitably will become more concentrated as the world's markets become more integrated—and that only the few biggest firms in each industry will survive. "But there's no evidence" to support that, contend management professors Ghemawat, of Harvard Business School, and Ghadar, of Pennsylvania State University. "It seems there is often a pathology involved."

Business executives have long tended to subscribe to benign versions of Karl Marx's view that a continually dwindling number of capitalists would eventually monopolize everything, Ghemawat and Ghadar observe. The famous "rule of three," for instance, formulated by management consultant Bruce Henderson in the 1970s, was that a stable competitive market never has more than three significant competitors.

"Many business thinkers assume" that the theory of comparative advantage, originally propounded by English economist David Ricardo (1772–1823), "points toward industry concentration," write Ghemawat and Ghadar. Studying Portugal and England, Ricardo showed that so long as Portugal was better equipped to make port and England to make cloth, then both countries would benefit by specializing. But his theory, say the authors, "simply predicts the geographic concentration of production, not concentration of the number of companies in an industry." The port business is indeed centered in Portugal today—but more than 30,000 small companies and 70 shippers engage in this export trade.

Economies of scale are "perhaps the biggest driver of industry concentration," but those economies have to be very large to produce much concentration, Ghemawat and Ghadar assert. A big technological change, for instance, may allow fast-moving companies to drive out others.

But that does not often happen, they say, after studying data on more than 20 industries. Since World War II, "global—or globalizing—industries have actually been marked by steady decreases in concentration." The oil industry, with more than 20 competitors of equal size now in the field, "is . . . far less concentrated today than it was 50 years ago." And the auto industry, while much more global today, "hasn't become more concentrated" than it was then either (despite the loss of competitors in the 1990s, with the Daimler-Chrysler deal and other international mergers).

Even when a wave of mergers does reduce competition, as has happened recently in the aluminum industry, "it is often unclear whether the trend makes economic sense" for the firms, Ghemawat and Ghadar maintain. "To profit from dominating in a concentrating industry," a company must do such things as cut production costs, reduce risk, or increase volume—and these are often easier said than done. The expenses entailed in the deals may outweigh the actual savings that result. But managers, biased in favor of mega-mergers, may irrationally go ahead anyway, Ghemawat and Ghadar assert. Even if the particular industry is becoming more concentrated, they advise, managers would do better to stop first and think hard about alternative strategies. Size, after all, isn't everything.

SOCIETY

Spinning the Spinsters

"'The Best or None!' Spinsterhood in Nineteenth-Century New England" by Zsuzsa Berend, in *The Journal of Social History* (Summer 2000), Carnegie Mellon Univ., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213.

In the eyes of some historians, 19th-century New England spinsters were pioneering protofeminists who spurned marriage in the name of autonomy and feminine empowerment. Berend, a sociologist at the University of California, Los Angeles, says that portrayal is all wrong. In her study of diaries and letters of some 40 white, middle-class, Protestant spinsters of the period, she found that, though the women elected to remain single, they regarded marriage as the highest expression of God's will and "earthly happiness."

By the early decades of the 19th century, Berend says, friendship and "mutual esteem" were no longer regarded as a sufficient foundation for marriage, as they had been by 17th-century Puritans. The evangelical movement of the 19th century changed that. Love—understood as God's will—became the only legitimate basis for marriage.

Seeing love as a "spiritual union," Berend explains, "enhanced the expectation . . . of finding completeness or wholeness" in marriage. But this exalted view of matrimony also risked putting it out of reach. "It became socially and personally acceptable not to marry," Berend points out, "if marriage involved compromising one's moral standards." As Louisa May Alcott, the author of *Little Women* (1868–69), advised, "If love comes as it should come, accept it in God's name and be worthy of His best blessing. If it never comes, then in God's name reject the shadow of it."

Though less desirable than wedlock, spinsterhood was not deemed a terrible misfortune. It was rather a morally responsible alternative that let women stay true to their ideals and still fulfill God's mandate to better the world. Love, says Berend, could be "directed toward missions other than marriage and family." Having rejected their suitors because their feelings did not rise to the level of love, spinsters set out to become teachers, charity workers, and doctors.

Contrary to the interpretation of today's feminists, Berend concludes, "female self-direction, in the world of 19th-century spinsters, was not an ultimate good but a stepping stone to a life of usefulness and service, a life in accordance with God's purposes." The spinsters aimed not for autonomy but salvation.

The Anatomy of Grade Inflation

"Grade Inflation: What's Really behind All Those A's?" by Lisa Birk, in *Harvard Education Letter* (Jan.–Feb. 2000), Gutman Library, 6 Appian Way, Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

It's no secret that today's teachers hand out more high grades than yesterday's did. Though SAT scores haven't significantly improved in recent decades, 39 percent of the students taking the SAT last year reported having an A average; in 1984, only 28 percent did. But what's the underlying reason for the grade inflation? It's not that teachers are simply going easy on the kids, contends Birk, a freelance writer based in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It's rather that they are using grades to do too many things.

"Teachers," she says, "tend to give grades for many different reasons: to measure content mastery, to chart progress, to motivate students, and to provide information to a variety of audiences, from students to parents to college admissions boards." As a result, the meaning of an A on a report card is murky: It could mean the student mastered all of the assigned material, or merely that the student tried hard—or something else entirely.

Teachers often use grades to reward effort, or to penalize lack of it, Birk notes. In a 1997 survey of teachers by H. Parker Blount of Georgia State University, 82 percent said they used such a carrot-and-stick approach. But students and their parents may misinterpret an A or B as high achievement—and consequently not get the help they need, Birk points out. Grade inflation also masks the failure of many schools in high-poverty areas.

Is there a better alternative to grades? Under a pass/fail system, one teacher told Blount, most students would do only "the bare minimum to pass." Narrative descriptions of students' work, instead of grades, would enable teachers to offer more complex progress reports—but also would be very time consuming. "And, for better or worse," Birk says, "college admissions boards and employers often prefer grades and numbers over narratives."

Nevertheless, thanks to the standards-based reform movement, she notes, there is increasing pressure "to clarify exactly what grades mean." She believes that the Boston Arts Academy, a pilot school in Boston, has a promising approach. "Twice a year, teachers evaluate student achievement with a grade and every other aspect of the learner with a narrative." Students who try hard may not win A's, but their effort is noted—and they and their parents find out where they really stand.

The Housework Monster

"Why 'More Work for Mother?': Knowledge and Household Behavior, 1870–1945" by Joel Mokyr, in *The Journal of Economic History* (Mar. 2000), Karl Eller Center, 202 McClelland Hall, Univ. of Arizona, P.O. Box 210108, Tucson, Ariz. 85721–0108.

One of the great mysteries of American domestic life is why, for many decades after 1870, despite new labor-saving appliances and declining fertility, married women continued to spend at least as many hours as ever on housework and child care. Scholars have offered assorted explanations, including an academic variant of Parkinson's Law (that work expands to fill the time available for its completion). Mokyr, an economic historian at Northwestern University, does not reject all previous explanations, but adds a new one: Scientific advances in understanding the causes of disease persuaded American housewives that responsibility for their family's health rested in their hands, driving them to spend "more time cleaning, nursing, laundering, cooking, and looking after their children."

The connection between filth and disease had come to be vaguely understood by the early 19th century, Mokyr says. "The sanitary and hygienic movement that began after 1815 . . . picked up enormous momentum between 1830 and 1870, and swept the later Victorian era, leading to a widespread if unfocused war against dirt." New statistical data lent support to what had been long suspected: "the close relation . . . between consumption patterns, personal habits, and disease." In the 1850s, contaminated water was discovered to be the transmission mechanism of cholera and typhoid. After 1865, the germ theory of disease came into its own, Mokyr notes, and in the final two decades of the century, "researchers discovered pathogenic organisms at about the rate of . . . one every two years," gradually establishing how the diseases were transmitted. With the identification of the tubercle bacillus in 1882, tuberculosis ceased to be seen as "hereditary and beyond human control." So it went with other infectious diseases as the new bacteriology progressed. No longer was fate or Providence chiefly responsible for illness. Blame for the era's high infant and child mortality rates, for example, was pinned on inadequate maternal care. The new science of home economics came into being to teach women how to keep the microscopic enemy at bay.

In the 20th century came more burdens, as it became clear that certain diseases, such as rickets, pellagra, and scurvy, were the result of nutritional deficiencies. The fresh emphasis on providing family members with a "good diet," Mokyr observes, "heaped even more responsibility on the homemaker's already overburdened shoulders."

After World War II, however, the poor housewife finally got a break: The introduction of antibiotics, says Mokyr, took away some of the household responsibility for health, transferring it to doctors. The new "wonder drugs" allowed homemakers to relax their standards of cleanliness a little, without worrying that family members might fatally suffer for it.

This 1920 ad's promise of more leisure for America's housewives proved to be an illusion.

PRESS & MEDIA

Reporter, Heal Thyself

"Coverage by the News Media of the Benefits and Risks of Medications" by Ray Moynihan, Lisa Bero, Dennis Ross-Degnan, David Henry, Kirby Lee, Judy Watkins, Connie Mah, and Stephen B. Soumerai, in *The New England Journal of Medicine* (June 1, 2000), 10 Shattuck St., Boston, Mass. 02115–6094.

Medical breakthroughs and promising new treatments are a staple of health and science news coverage. But after studying a sample of 180 newspaper stories and 27 TV reports that appeared between 1994 and 1998, Moynihan, an Australian journalist, and his co-authors from Harvard Medical School and other institutions, conclude that reporters need to be more skeptical.

The researchers studied news coverage of the benefits and risks of three drugs: alendronate, used for the treatment and prevention of osteoporosis; pravastatin, a cholesterol-lowering drug used to prevent cardiovascular disease; and aspirin, also used to prevent cardiovascular disease. They found that only 124 of the news reports gave any quantitative assessments of the benefits of the drug, and 83 percent of those offered only the relative benefits, not the absolute figures (which might provide less reason to cheer). For example, in reporting the results of a study on osteoperosis treatment in 1996, three major TV networks all said that the new drug could cut the incidence of hip fracture in half, a benefit that one reporter declared "absolutely miraculous." Unreported was the fact that the incidence of hip fracture was very low in the first place—only two percent among patients who did not receive the drug.

Also left out of many news stories were the potential downsides of new treatments. More than half the reports failed to mention possible adverse side effects of the drugs, and 70 percent ignored the matter of cost.

Moynihan and his colleagues also implicitly suggest that reporters should be more skeptical of the motives of the scientists and other experts who wax enthusiastic about the latest treatments or supposed breakthroughs. Half the news reports cited experts or studies with known financial ties to manufacturers of the drug, yet 39 percent of those stories failed to mention the connection.

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

The Mystery of Aztec Sacrifice

"Aztec Human Sacrifice as Expiation" by Michel Graulich, in *History of Religions* (May 2000), Univ. of Chicago Press, 5720 S. Woodlawn, Chicago, Ill. 60637.

In the centuries before the Spanish conquest in the early 1500s, the Aztecs of Mexico ritually sacrificed at least 20,000 people a year. What was their intent? The usual explanations given by scholars are that the Aztecs wanted to propitiate their gods, to nourish them with the victims' hearts, or to revitalize these deities by symbolically killing them. Graulich, director of religious studies at the École Pratique des Hautes Études, in Paris, suggests that the Aztecs had a complex theology in which sacrifice had one basic—and what some might deem more exalted—purpose: atonement.

The primary purpose of sacrifice, Graulich maintains, was "expiation of sins or transgressions in order to deserve a worthy afterlife." Whose sins were erased? First, those of the victims, nearly all of whom came from "guilty" classes: prisoners of war, slaves, and, in a more limited way, criminals. The author notes that Aztec texts such as the myth of Quetzalcoatl's victory at Mixcoatepec "present prototypical victims of human sacrifice as transgressors."

The Aztecs killed their victims in various ways: excising their hearts, cutting their throats, beheading them, drowning them, burning

them, flaying them, or burying them alive. "Sacrifice was castigation, but also expiation, and it opened the way to a better hereafter," says Graulich. Some victims, according to Spanish testimonies from 1520, rejoiced at the prospect of being immolated, and some even volunteered to die.

But sacrifice, writes Graulich, also afforded atonement to the Aztec sacrificer. By identifying with his victim, he died symbolically through him and was thus purified.

Sacrifice as an act of atonement is "not uncommon in the history of religions," the author points out. Catholic missionaries in Mexico saw "striking similarities between Aztec religion and Christianity, including the salvation aspect." While some specialists deny that the Aztecs had a "religion of salvation" comparable to—if "morally less exacting" than—Christianity or Islam, Graulich believes that they did, to some extent. The Aztecs, in his view, were either moving toward a full-fledged religion of salvation—or perhaps moving away from one, having lost some of its original meaning.

This mid-16th century depiction of Aztec human sacrifice was drawn by an Aztec at the request of an unknown Spanish cleric.

The Pragmatist's Faith

"'Loyal to a Dream Country': Republicanism and the Pragmatism of William James and Richard Rorty" by Daniel S. Malachuk, in *Journal of American Studies* (Apr. 2000), Cambridge Univ. Press, Edinburgh Building, Shaftesbury Rd., Cambridge, CB2 2RU, England.

When they turn to politics, pragmatists from William James to Richard Rorty consistently embrace republicanism, an outlook that, with its emphasis on polis-centered civic virtue, harks back to Jefferson, Machiavelli, and Aristotle. Is there any basis for this preference? Malachuk, a professor of humanities at Daniel Webster College in New Hampshire, suggests there is: the pragmatist's underlying "religious" faith that "the universe is . . . one of contingency rather than order."

Most pragmatists, being antifoundationlists who claim that truths are made ("socially constructed") rather than found, would reject the idea that their republicanism has any such foundation, notes Malachuk. Logically, they would admit, they could as easily adopt the vocabulary of Nazism as of republicanism. In the American context, they would contend, "republicanism is simply the vocabulary that works best."

But republicanism is, for pragmatists, more than just another vocabulary, Malachuk argues. Contemporary pragmatists, he says, have forgotten the stance taken by William James nearly a century ago. In *Pragmatism* (1906), the philosopher articulated a bedrock belief in what he termed the "unfinished" nature of the universe. Malachuk calls this outlook a "religious pragmatism," resting on a faith in the world's contingency. "This vision of an unfinished universe," Malachuk writes, "is sacred to pragmatists—the one foundational belief that they will not surrender." And this vision, he says, accords with the essential republican value of civic action as the best way to deal with the contingency of history—which is why pragmatists invariably espouse republican ideas.

Acknowledging pragmatism's "religious" foundation would allow pragmatists to be more persuasive, Malachuk argues. Most could defend their republicanism only by asserting that "all beliefs are fallible though beliefs about democracy are *practically* less so." But "religious pragmatists are engaged in a straightforward program of conversion," offering "a religion of humility before Contingency . . . [that] will save the republic." This approach, he suggests, has a solid pragmatic virtue: It is more likely to work.

Science, Technology & Environment

Crowd Control

"Coping with Crowding" by Frans B. M. de Waal, Filippo Aureli, and Peter G. Judge, in *Scientific American* (May 2000), 415 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017–1111.

Ever since a psychologist in the 1960s packed a bunch of rats into a room and observed the gruesome results, the idea that overcrowding promotes increased aggression and even violence in humans has become widespread. In recent decades, however, scientists have revised their view. People, after all, somehow navigate peacefully through crowded situations every day, jamming themselves into trains and elevators without ordinarily resorting to ratlike savagery. Despite their irritation and stress, people adjust and stay calm.

But why? Is it human intelligence or culture that prompts people to behave in this civilized fashion? No, say de Waal, a psychologist who directs the Living Links Center at the Yerkes Regional Primate Research Center in Atlanta, and his co-authors. Remaining cool in overcrowded situations is part of humans' evolutionary heritage.

Studying 122 rhesus monkeys at the Yerkes center and two other locations, the authors observed that overcrowded adult males became more friendly and no more aggressive, while females did get more aggressive but also made a "concerted effort" to improve their usually antagonistic relationships with non-kin.

Even more relevant was the behavior of 100 chimpanzees—the closest human relatives—studied at the Yerkes center. Chimps "are known for deceptive behavior," de Waal and his colleagues note, and in this case, put into cramped quarters, they seemed to hold their emotions in check. In contrast to the female rhesus monkeys, the chimps showed no increase in aggressive behavior. "We found that chimpanzees in the most crowded situations had a three times *lower* tendency to react" to neighboring animals' cries—which usually provoke hooting and charging displays—than chimps with more space did, the authors say. "Chimpanzees may be smart enough to suppress responses to external stimuli if those tend to get them into trouble."

Chimps actually became less aggressive when they were put into very crowded quarters for a brief time—which is "a daily experience in human society," de Waal and his colleagues note. On a crowded elevator, people tend to limit body movement, avoid eye contact, and refrain from talking loudly. It's not simply politeness, the authors suggest. It's a way that we "and other primates handle the risks of temporary closeness."

Who Was Kennewick Man?

"Battle of the Bones" by Robson Bonnichsen and Alan L. Schneider, in *The Sciences* (July–Aug. 2000), New York Academy of Sciences, 2 E. 63rd St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Recent archaeological discoveries have opened up the startling possibility that modern-day Native Americans are not descended from the first Americans. Yet, thanks mainly to a decade-old federal law that sought—with archaeologists' consent—to recognize tribes' rights to their ancestors' remains, scientists are being hindered in their efforts to learn more.

"Biological knowledge of the earliest

humans in the Americas is amazingly thin," write Bonnichsen, an archeologist at Oregon State University, in Corvallis, and his co-author. Fewer than 10 "relatively complete, securely dated skeletons more than 8,000 years old have been unearthed in North America"—and some may not be the remains of Native American ancestors. But federal and state officials, bowing to their reading of the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, have been handing skeletons over to tribes for reburial.

Bonnichsen and other scientists have sued the federal government to prevent the loss to science of Kennewick Man, a 9,200-year-old skeleton found on federal land in Washington State four years ago. Hardly a month after the discovery, when only preliminary radiocarbon dating had been done, federal officials decided to give the skeleton to a coalition of five local tribes—a move blocked by the lawsuit (in which co-author Schneider is an attorney). It is not clear that Kennewick Man really "belongs to any existing tribe at all," say Bonnichsen and Schneider.

The possibility that the first Americans were not ancestors of modern-day Native Americans has arisen as a result of the emergence of DNA typing and other new dating technology, along with the unearthing of some very ancient, well-preserved skeletons. Until recently, most scientists strongly favored the so-called Clovis-first theory about the peopling of the New World. By the late 1960s, the authors explain, radiocarbon dating had established that the fluted spear points first found with the remains of mammoths and other animals near Clovis, New Mexico, in 1932 (and later elsewhere) were between 10,800 and 11,500 years old. Scientists theorized that then, at the end of the most recent Ice Age, a single band of mammoth hunters from Siberia crossed the Bering land bridge into Alaska and began spreading through North America. That led to the diverse array of peoples present when the Vikings and Columbus arrived.

When excavations that began in 1977 at Monte Verde, a site in southern Chile, seemed to show that humans had been present more than 11,500 years ago, many scholars were skeptical. But three years ago, a team of archaeologists, including avowed skeptics, vindicated the claim. Archaeologist Thomas D. Dillehay has uncovered flaked stone tools at the site that are apparently about 33,000 years old. Many other sites that seemed to predate Clovis were now acknowledged, as well. "Rather than signaling a distinct migration," the authors write, the Clovis spear points may simply represent "a technological innovation that took place at that time within groups of people who already lived in the Americas."

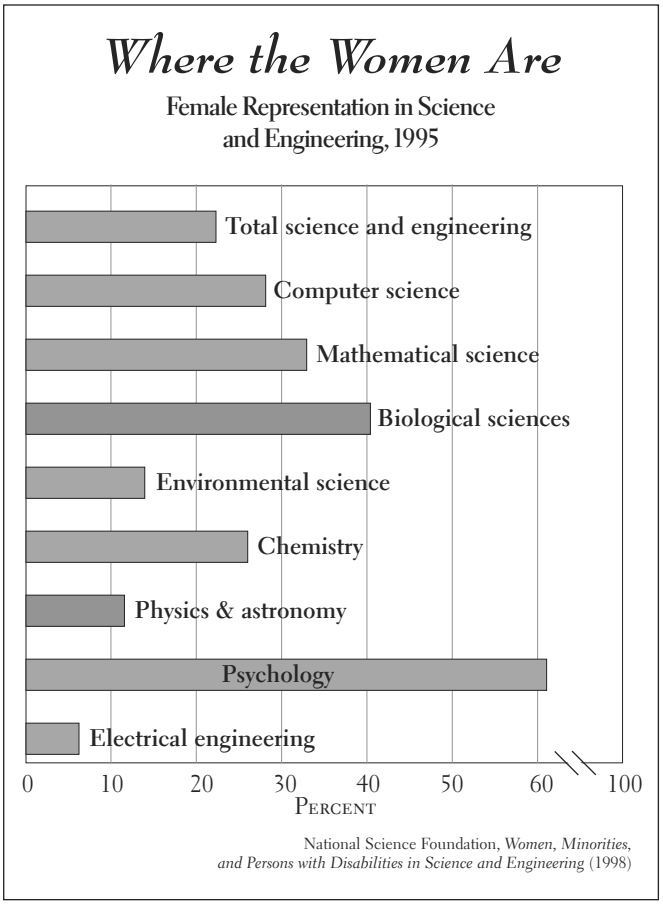
Not only were the Americas peopled earlier than had been thought, but the latest research indicates that they probably were settled more than once and by different groups, say Bonnichsen and Schneider. "The first Americans probably came from many parts of Eurasia." The early skulls "are quite distinct from the skulls of modern Native Americans," which may indicate gradual evolutionary change—or else that the skeletons "are unrelated." But without access to Kennewick Man and other remains, say the authors, scientists are stymied in their efforts to unravel the true history of the first Americans.

Women in Science

"Parity as a Goal Sparks Bitter Battle" by Constance Holden, in *Science* (July 21, 2000), American Assn. for the Advancement of Science, 1200 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

Though more and more women have opted for scientific careers in recent decades, they still constitute less than one-fourth of America's 3.3 million scientists and engineers. In physics and engineering, two of the most "hard-core" fields, the proportion is even smaller. Is this really a problem?

Many people committed to the advancement of women in science—including the members of a recent congressionally mandated commission—answer yes. Women are not inherently less capable than men in these fields, they argue, so if America wants to make use of its best scientific minds, it must not neglect the female ones. But lately, reports Holden, a *Science* staff writer, some dissenting



scholars have risen to argue that the relative paucity of women in those fields is mainly a reflection of natural male-female differences, and that efforts to fix this non-problem could have unfortunate consequences.

"The pursuit of sex [parity] in the sciences has turned into an evangelical mission that threatens to undermine science itself," discouraging vigorous exploration of "the reasons for gender differences," contends Judith Kleinfeld, a psychologist at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

To Patti Hausman, an independent social scientist who spoke at a women-in-science symposium at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta last April, the reason more women don't go into engineering is obvious: "Because they don't want to." But women evidently do want to go into psychology: 60 percent of psychologists are women, according to National Science Foundation figures for 1995. "On average," says Linda Gottfredson, a sociologist at the University of Delaware, Newark, citing studies of vocational preferences, "women are more interested in dealing with people and men with things."

That's essentially what Vanderbilt University researchers David Lubinski and Camilla Benbow have found in their three-decade study of "mathematically precocious" youths. The boys early on inclined toward the "theoretical," while the girls were more people oriented—and these preferences have played out in their career choices, with the young women less likely to go into science. Mathematically gifted girls tend to outscore comparable boys on tests of verbal abilities, say Benbow and Lubinski, and people with a greater balance of abilities are generally more likely to steer away from science.

"None of this research cuts any ice with those who see cultural and educational barriers as the chief cause of the gender gap in science," notes Holden. But Gottfredson and others warn that a heedless quest for parity could lead to injustice, "keep[ing] many men and women out of the work they like best and push[ing] them into work they don't like."

The Costs of Fish Farming

"Effect of Aquaculture on World Fish Supplies" by Rosamond L. Naylor *et al.*, in *Nature* (June 29, 2000), Porters South, 4 Crinan St., London N1 9XW, UK.

Fish farming (a.k.a. aquaculture) looks at first glance like a sure-fire way to take some pressure off the world's overfished oceans. Not necessarily, warn Naylor, a senior research scholar at Stanford University's Center for Environmental Science and

Policy, and her nine co-authors. The problem, they explain, is that some aquaculture *increases* the pressure on ocean fisheries.

Aquaculture has grown rapidly in recent years, producing 29 million metric tons of farmed fish and shellfish in 1997, more than twice the tonnage of a decade earlier (but still no more than a third or so of the 85 to 95 million metric tons of wild fish caught each year.) Roughly 90 percent of the world's fish farming is done in Asia, particularly China. Family and cooperative farms raise carp for local or regional consumption, while commercial farms produce salmon, shrimp, and other highly valued fish for tables in Europe, North America, and Japan.

But aquaculture's *net* contribution to the world's fish supplies has been much smaller than its gross one, the authors point out. In 1997, about 10 million metric tons of small wild fish—Atlantic herring, chub mackerel, Japanese anchovy, and other species—were taken from the oceans and used in compounds fed to the farmed fish. Modern compound feeds are not much used in the farming of carp (which are plant eaters), but they are needed in intensive commercial aquaculture. Commercially farmed fish are so crowded together that they cannot subsist on natural food sources alone. With the 10 types of fish most commonly farmed, nearly two kilograms of wild fish are required, on average, for every kilogram of fish ultimately harvested.

Taking ever-increasing amounts of small fish from the ocean to expand the supply of salmon and other commercially valuable fish, say Naylor and her co-authors, "would clearly be disastrous for marine ecosystems." Using small fish for fish food also reduces the supplies available for human consumption. Though humans find some small fish, such as menhaden, distasteful, they eat other varieties, such as sardine, anchovy, and mackerel. In Southeast Asia, these fish serve as important sources of protein.

Aquaculture also can adversely affect wild fisheries indirectly, Naylor and her colleagues say. Hundreds of thousands of acres of mangroves and coastal wetlands in Asia have been transformed into fish and shrimp ponds, resulting in the loss of "essential ecosystem services," including nursery habitats for fish, coastal protection, and flood control.

If aquaculture is to remain a net plus for global fish supplies, conclude the authors, governments must prevent it from degrading coastal areas, and fish farmers must curtail their use of wild fish as feed.

Arts & Letters

Toasting a Black Russian

"Soul Man" by Anne Lounsbery, in *Transition* (2000: No. 84), 69 Dunster St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138. (www.TransitionMagazine.com)

It's a curious fact, often ignored in the past by white Americans, that Alexander Pushkin (1799–1837), the celebrated father of Russian literature, was descended from a black African slave. Pushkin himself was proud of his African heritage—and African Americans have long been proud of *him*, writes Lounsbery, a lecturer in Russian literature at Harvard University.

Pushkin's great-grandfather, Avram Petrovich Gannibal, "was probably born in what is now Cameroon, just south of Lake Chad," she says. "By his own account, he was the son of a local prince. Abducted as a child from his native city and taken to Constantinople around 1705, Gannibal was acquired as a slave by a Russian diplomat." At the court of Peter the Great, his intelligence so impressed the tsar that he made him his godson and sent him to France to be educated. Under Peter's daughter, the Empress Elizabeth, Gannibal became an engineer and a general in the Russian army. His son also became a general, and his granddaughter, "known in high society as 'the beautiful Creole,'" Lounsbery says, became Pushkin's mother.

In *Eugene Onegin* (1831), Pushkin reflected on his heritage, representing himself as an African in exile longing to live again "under the skies of my Africa," only then to sigh for "gloomy Russia, where I suffered, where I

loved, where I have buried my heart." For the poet, says Lounsbery, embracing Africa became "a way . . . to reflect on his feelings of alienation—aesthetic, personal, and political—from a Russian society in which he [did] not feel entirely at home."

Had Pushkin ignored his African heritage, she writes, "it is quite likely that others would have done the same, since race—or, at least, blackness—was not a particular obsession of early-19th-century Russian society." Pushkin himself chose the nickname *afrikanets* ("the African"). He also used the words *negr* and *arap* (which referred to all black Africans) in describing both his ancestor and himself, and he termed American slaves "my brothers *negry*."

The Russian national poet "first entered American consciousness as a black man," Lounsbery notes. In an 1847 essay in an abolitionist newspaper, American poet John Greenleaf Whittier pointed to Pushkin, she says, "as evidence of blacks' intellectual abilities." And Pushkin became an "enduring presence in black American culture." In 1925, the Urban League's official publication instituted a Pushkin Prize for outstanding black poets. In 1937, the 136th Street Library in Harlem marked the centenary of Pushkin's death with an exhibit of works by and about him. Today, the African American Museum in Cleveland has a permanent Pushkin exhibition, and magazines from *Ebony* to *Black Scholar* often run articles on his life and works.

In America, said a Harlem newspaper in 1929, Pushkin would have been a victim of Jim Crow laws.

Lost in the Funhouse

"Welcome to the Funhouse" by Jed Perl, in *The New Republic* (June 19, 2000), 1220 19th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Once it was a center for the collection, study, care, and exhibition of fine art—but not any more, protests Perl, art editor of the *New Republic*. Today, the modern art museum—as exemplified by London's gigantic new Tate Modern—has become "a funhouse," in which great painting and sculpture of the last 100 years take a back seat to moving images, electronic noise, "wrap-around drama," and the museum building itself.

At Tate Modern, which opened in May in a vast transformed industrial building on the south bank of the Thames, Perl writes, "there are three enormous floors of exhibition space, containing some 80 galleries, but only enough classic modern work to fill three or four rooms." To disguise the paucity, "the curators have reached for themes that enable them to bulk up their classic holdings with humungous recent works, or else contextualized the random masterpiece until it seems less a work of art than an illustration in a history book." Though chronology is "the backbone of the historical sense," the galleries are not arranged chronologically, but according to dubious, ill-fitting categories, such as "Still Life/Real Life/Object." The museum's whole mentality, Perl complains, "seems far more keyed to movies or popular entertainment than to painting or sculpture of the past hundred years."

Tate Modern (not to be confused with the old Tate, designed to showcase British art and now known as "Tate Britain") is not Perl's only "funhouse" museum. The Pompidou

Center in Paris, which opened in 1977, represented "the dawning postmodern moment," and 20 years later, "the funhouse mentality produced its first great building, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao," whose "amazing design succeeds precisely because [architect Frank] Gehry had the wit—and the guts—to take as his subject the annihilation of the museum as we know it." People go to Guggenheim Bilbao to see the building, not the art, says Perl.

This trio of institutions may be viewed as offspring of New York's Museum of Modern Art, the original "user-friendly" art museum, Perl notes. "There is very little in the way of multimedia exhibitions, attention-grabbing alternatives to painting and sculpture, or institutional self-promotion through high-end architectural projects that the Museum of Modern Art has not done, and done decades ago." But there is, he says, a basic difference: "Nowadays, it is not art but the culture's fascination with art—and with the art business—that fuels the museums. The museum curator who was once interested in how artists were responding to the world around them has been replaced by a curator who is more interested in the environment than in the artist."

In the "funhouse" museums, Perl says, paintings cannot compete with "the enveloping atmosphere, the overheated mood." In supposedly "opening art up to new media," Tate Modern and the others, he concludes, are "closing art off from the wellsprings of tradition that have nourished artists forever."

Architecture's Class Struggle

"Class Notes" by Michael Benedikt, in *Harvard Design Magazine* (Summer 2000), Harvard Univ., Graduate School of Design, 48 Quincy St., Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

Architects believe that theirs is a *helping* profession, writes Benedikt, director of the Center for American Architecture and Design at the University of Texas at Austin. And just what is the nature of the service they provide? Well, this is seldom expressed out

EXCERPT

The Lit Crit Job Bust

At long last there is widespread talk of a crisis in literary studies, and yet in a kind of displacement the hand-wringing is directed not to the real problem, but to one of its side effects—that there are almost no college teaching jobs available for new Ph.D.s. When supply dwarfs demand, the question arises, is the problem mainly one of demand, or of supply? Everyone talks only *about supply—that is, too many people in graduate school—and nobody ever faces the dreaded possibility that the crisis is really one of reduced demand. Yet, it should be obvious that demand is the problem. If undergraduates were majoring in English at the rate of 30 years ago, their numbers would be about 60 percent greater than they actually are today. The supply of Ph.D.s would then be hopelessly inadequate to meet the demand for new professors of English. The real source of the crisis must therefore lie in the fact that undergraduates are not attracted to what college literature programs now offer them. The college literature establishment professes sympathy for its hapless graduate students, but is not prepared to do the one thing that might help them—and that is, to think again about the mix of identity politics and postmodern dogma that has made English and related departments intellectually uncompetitive.*

—**John M. Ellis,** a professor emeritus of German literature at the University of California, Santa Cruz, in *Academic Questions* (Spring 2000)

loud, but, as much as anything else, it is "to preserve or elevate the class of their clients."

Architects, of course, do not confuse class with "money or material wealth, old or new," says Benedikt. It is a matter of exhibiting "good taste and refined behavior"—and certain architects stand ready to offer their clients instruction in acquiring these. The fact that the "star system" has become so entrenched in the architecture world, Benedikt maintains, is due "at least as much to the star-architects' lifelong commitment to, and success at, promoting their own class status and that of their clients as to their hard work and design talent."

A mark of upper-class status is "the conscious suppression" of any display of need, including the need for class elevation itself, says Benedikt. "Class-wise architects . . . will appear in no need of permissions or compliments, assurances, money, or agreement—certainly in no dire need." This "neediness-denying virtue (real or dissembled)," Benedikt argues, powerfully affects "the very nature of design and the architect's choice of style."

Consider, for example, Mies Van Der Rohe's Farnsworth House (1946–50), in Plano, Illinois, and Philip Johnson's emulative "Glass House" (1949) in New Canaan, Connecticut. What do those austere glass boxes exemplify, asks Benedikt, but "the class-emblematic transcendence of ordinary human needs" for heat and privacy?

"When genuine needs are spurned rather than satisfied," the author contends, "and especially when they are spurned out of a strategic need to avoid the display of neediness, the results can only strain at, not achieve, nobility. Not only can the psychic toll be considerable, but the whole strategy is eminently cooptable by those whose real interests are economic."

Look around, he concludes, at the state of architectural culture today: "The dominant strategy for class supremacy remains attached to the ascetic/minimalist/modernist program of neediness denial, with all sensuality, all richness, all tradition, all need for physical and psychological comfort surrendered to the unadmitted need for art-world prestige, and sublimated to reading/writing about the extremely subtle charms of raw concrete and translucent glass, tall empty spaces, and light." Most artists and most Americans "aren't having it," Benedikt says.

Other Nations

Brazil's Young Democracy

A Survey of Recent Articles

The full flower of democracy came late to Brazil, nearly five centuries after Europeans first arrived, but finally, little more than a decade ago, it did come—and so far, it has survived. But its roots are shallow, and daunting social problems persist in the world's fifth largest and (with 150 million people) fifth most populous country. Sixteen scholars, writing in *Daedalus* (Spring 2000), assess Brazil's condition and prospects.

Fernando Collor de Mello was elected president in the 1989 elections that marked Brazil's becoming a full-fledged democracy. The traumatic but successful 1992 impeachment of Collor on corruption charges, and his removal from office, can be read as a sign of the democracy's strength, rather than its weakness, notes Leslie Bethell, director of the Centre for Brazilian Studies at the University of Oxford. Current President Fernando Henrique Cardoso, who won a second term in 1998, is "a distinguished sociologist . . . and a politician with impeccable democratic credentials and advanced social democratic ideas."

But Brazilians consistently hold political leaders in extremely low esteem, Bethell and historian José Murilo de Carvalho, of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, separately observe. In a 1998 poll, 94 percent said they did not trust politicians, overwhelmingly regarding them as dishonest. President Cardoso fared a bit better: Only 69 percent distrusted him. Eighty-five percent looked upon Brazil's political parties with suspicion. Those parties are numerous—30 or so, cur-

A mural in Brasília celebrates Brazilians' image of themselves as joyful and tolerant.

rently—ideologically incoherent, and highly undisciplined, Bethell points out. Nearly a third of the deputies elected in 1994 switched parties during the Congress of 1995–98, some of them more than once.

It is not surprising that, even though voting is technically mandatory, large numbers of Brazilians—38.4 million in 1998—either fail to vote or cast blank (*branco*) or spoiled (*nulo*) ballots.

"The people do not trust their leaders and institutions but do little to make the former more responsible to public needs and to change the latter, taking destiny in their own hands," writes Murilo. "All the energy and immense creativity of which they are capable is directed toward the private domain, be it to enjoy life or simply to survive." In a 1995 survey, some 60 percent of Brazilians expressed great pride in their country, but the leading source of that pride was not national institutions (mentioned by only 10 percent), but nature (mentioned by 25 percent)—Brazil's pleasant climate, big forests and rivers, beautiful beaches, fertile land, and abundant resources. Brazilians—who overwhelmingly see themselves "as more cheerful, more hospitable, more loving, and more religious than other people"—imagine their country, Murilo says, as a natural paradise open to all, "a gift to be enjoyed, not a goal to be achieved."

Brazil has "remarkably few of the regional, national, racial, ethnic, linguistic, and religious divisions, tensions, and conflicts that pose a threat to [many other] democracies," Bethell observes. But Brazil also may be the "world champion in social inequality. Can democracy be healthy, can it properly function, can it even survive in the long run, when, as in Brazil, [at least] a third of the population . . . live in conditions of extreme poverty, ignorance, and ill health and are treated at best as second-class citizens?"

Brazil's turn to democracy, writes political scientist Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, of the University of São Paulo, has been accompanied by "[an] increase in violent criminality and the spread of gangs, Mafiosi, and other criminal organizations." The homicide rate of about 25 per 100,000 people in 1996 was nearly twice the rate in 1980—and three times the U.S. rate in 1996. Among South American nations, Brazil, with 40,470 homicides in 1997, now ranks second only to Colombia.

Many North American academics and philanthropic organizations believe that racial bias is at the root of many of Brazil's woes. They say that statistics on infant mortality, life expectancy, education, income, and criminal justice show that nonwhite Brazilians fare worse than whites (who make up about half the population, according to official statistics). American-style affirmative action is the solution they favor. But racial lines are more indistinct than in the United States, notes Peter Fry,

an anthropologist at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. Most Brazilians of all colors, while acknowledging that racial discrimination exists, continue to adhere to the ideal of "racial democracy," of basically harmonious racial relations. Many, says Fry, "celebrate the virtues of 'mixture,' of both genes and cultures." Ambiguity and compromise are part of the warp and woof of Brazilians' complex racial classification system. "Where quotas have been proposed," he notes, "opposition has been virulent."

Simon Schwartzman, director of the American Institutes for Research for Brazil, sounds an optimistic note: "While some conditions have worsened in recent years, especially those related to the quality of life in large metropolitan areas, most of the basic social indicators, such as education, life expectancy, housing conditions, and sanitation, have shown steady increase and improvement."

Nevertheless, Bethell writes, "democratic government is perceived by many as having so far failed to promote a much-needed social transformation in Brazil. In this respect it is in danger of being regarded as no different from the nondemocratic governments of the past."

The Hegemonic Hamburger

"The French Exception" by Sophie Meunier, in *Foreign Affairs* (July–Aug. 2000), 58 E. 68th St., New York, N.Y. 10021.

Resistance to American-led globalization is, well, global, but the French, as usual, are a special case. Theirs is the only 21st-century nation, besides the United States, with universalist pretensions. Naturally, then, they feel especially aggrieved by the sight of the Golden Arches and the invasive presence of the Big Mac.

"[France's] political and cultural identity combines all the elements threatened by globalization," explains Meunier, a visiting fellow at Princeton University's Center of International Studies. Those elements include "a universalist culture, a language with international aspirations, a 'superior' cuisine, a sensitive view of national sovereignty, a strong, centralized state, a need for a world role, a sense of duty toward the poorer nations, and a deeply rooted anti-Americanism."

The French have worried about the invasion of American movies, music, and TV programs for years. More recently, Meunier says, their fears have grown to encompass "trade in general." The World Trade Organization (WTO) "has been por-

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Italy's Shrinking Families

People [in Italy] are not slow to put the smallness of families into a political context. "Of course children are a pleasure," says an elderly lady to me in the park at the end of my street, as we sit in the shade of a tree and watch them careening about, "but only if you can afford to pay for them." "That's right," another chimes in, "a pleasure for the rich who have everything well arranged. But my son can't start a family when he hasn't got a job." In Britain, Thatcherite values have been so thoroughly internalized that the view that if you want something—in this case a large family—then you have to create the conditions for its existence yourself is more and more unquestionably accepted. In Italy, remarkably (given a political situation which is both chaotic and frequently paralyzed), people have not stopped seeing their own daily lives in political terms. A robust and direct class antagonism persists.

—**Stella Tillyard**, a biographer and historian, writing in Britain's *Prospect* (July 2000)

trayed . . . as a Trojan horse that forces on others the low-brow uniformity of the American lifestyle—fast food, bad clothing, and even worse sitcoms." A sheep farmer who destroyed a McDonald's in France last year has become a national hero. "Resistance to the hegemonic pretenses of hamburgers is, above all, a cultural imperative," intoned the respected newspaper *Le Monde*.

The French were infuriated by two WTO rulings last year that let the United States impose retaliatory sanctions against Dijon mustard, Roquefort cheese, and other products because of the European Union's protectionist ban on U.S. hormone-treated beef and its discriminatory preferences for bananas from former French colonies in Africa and the Caribbean. "The rulings," Meunier says, "were presented in France as clear evidence that globalization puts business interests above consumer safety, international political stability, and humanitarian concerns."

Resistance to globalization has drawn widespread support in France—from farmers, labor groups, environmentalists, journalists, academics, and filmmakers. French politicians "have been forced to follow," notes Meunier. Prime Minister Lionel Jospin and President Jacques Chirac, likely opponents in the 2002 presidential election, "are both wooing the antiglobalization movement." Recent polls also show rising support in France for European integration, with 73 percent regarding it as a way of fighting globalization's ill effects.

France's anti-globalization message has found some sympathetic ears abroad, particularly in Japan and Canada. But if the French rhetoric is not to prove empty, Meunier concludes, the foes of American-style globalization will have to come up with "a sensible alternative."

The 'Populist' Batista

"The Architect of the Cuban State: Fulgencio Batista and Populism in Cuba, 1937–1940" by Robert Whitney, in *Journal of Latin American Studies* (May 2000), Cambridge Univ. Press, Journals Dept., 40 W. 20th St., New York, N.Y. 10011–4211.

Cuban strongman Fulgencio Batista y Zaldívar (1901–73), who was overthrown by Fidel Castro in 1959, is usually portrayed by historians as little more than a counterrevolutionary and reactionary figure. Overlooked, however, is Batista's "populist phase," notes Whitney, an associate fellow at McGill University's Centre for Developing Area Studies.

In the summer of 1933, Cuba "exploded in social revolution," he recalls. Joining a loose coalition of radical activists, students, intellectuals, and disgruntled soldiers, Batista, then a young army sergeant, organized a mutiny of noncommissioned officers, which toppled the Havana government. A provisional revolutionary government was formed, led by Ramón Grau San Martín, a popular university professor. Promising social justice for all classes, and the annulment of the Platt Amendment (which permitted U.S. intervention in Cuba), the Grau government gave women the right to vote, decreed an eight-hour workday, established a minimum wage for sugar cane cutters, and assured peasants of legal title to their lands.

In January 1934, however, Batista led a right-wing coalition that, with the support of the U.S. State Department, overthrew Grau. Batista ruled through puppets before being elected to the presidency in 1940. But Cuba, Whitney says, had become "a very different country" after the revolution of 1933. A new consensus on the necessity of state intervention for political and economic reform emerged. In 1937, though he had drawn his main support from the army and police, Batista suddenly entered a populist phase. "Many want to forget that I am the chief of a constructive social revolution, and see me as a mere watchdog of public order," declared the young commander in chief.

"Batista was very aware that in order to rule Cuba he had to appeal to 'the people' and to the revolutionary sentiments of 1933," writes Whitney. Since "Grau and his followers were still around to reclaim their role as Cuba's most advanced social reform-

ers," Batista did an end run around them, forming an alliance with, and legalizing, the Communist Party. (Following the Comintern's lead, the party was then in its "popular front" period.) Batista also offered a Three Year Plan, promising a host of social reforms to benefit farm workers and others, courted labor (after years of obstructing union organization), and on a visit to Mexico, even spoke about nationalizing the Cuban sugar industry.

His revolutionary credentials may have been suspect, but Batista did supervise Cuba's transition from a military dictatorship in 1934 to a nominal constitutional democracy, says Whitney. The new constitution of 1940 "proclaimed political democracy, the rights of urban and rural labor, limitations on the size of sugar plantations and the need for systematic state intervention in the economy, while preserving the supreme role of private property. Ironically, many of the demands of the failed revolution of 1933 became the constitutional edicts of 1940." The promises would not be kept, Whitney says, but at least they were made. Henceforth, Cubans "from all social classes" would expect the state to act in their behalf—and feel betrayed when it didn't.

The African Connection

"Making the Connection: Africa and the Internet" by Mike Jensen, in *Current History* (May 2000), 4225 Main St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19127.

To Americans, it may seem as if the whole world is wired. It isn't, as the case of Africa shows. But, as the same case also shows, it seems to be slowly getting there.

Only 11 of Africa's 54 countries had local Internet access at the end of 1996, but by last February all 54 did, at least in their capital cities, reports Jensen, an independent consultant based in Port St. Johns, South Africa.

With an estimated population of 780 million, Africa now has some 25,000 computers permanently connected to the Internet and about 1.5 million Internet users. One million of these wired folk are in South Africa, leaving only about 500,000 among the 734 million people on the rest of the continent—a ratio of about one Internet user for every 1,500 people. In North America and Europe, the average is about one Internet user for every four people, and the worldwide average is about one for every 38. Though Internet use is less common in Africa than in much of the rest of the developing world (Latin America and the Caribbean, for example, have one user for every 125 people), Africa is ahead of South Asia, which has one user for every 2,500 inhabitants.

"Universities were initially at the vanguard of Internet developments in Africa, and most provide e-mail services," says Jensen. But, as of early last year, "only about 20 countries had universities with full Internet connectivity"; even in those, he says, access was usually limited to staff (and often graduate students), and was not available to the general student population.

But government ministries and businesses have begun to use the Web to promote foreign tourism and investment, he says. In Egypt, Senegal, and some other countries, governments have set up official Web sites. In Zambia, the State House established a site for its press releases, after the local opposition newspaper, *The Post*, set up a Web site. More than 120 African newspapers and newsmagazines are now available on the Internet. But outside South Africa, Jensen says, opposition groups generally make little use of the Web, which has yet to reach many of their potential supporters.

"Africa now has about 26 countries with 1,000 or more dial-up [Internet] subscribers," he reports, "but only about nine countries with 5,000 or more: Egypt, Morocco, Kenya, Ghana, Mozambique, South Africa, Tunisia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe." The average cost of using a local dial-up Internet account for five hours a month is about $60—vastly more than affluent Americans pay.

The infrastructure for the Internet, satellite TV, and cellular phones "has improved dramatically in Africa in the past five years," Jensen says. But there is much more to do.

Wilson Center Digest

Summaries of recent papers, studies, and meetings at the Wilson Center

"The American Planning Tradition: Culture and Policy."

Wilson Center Press. Distributed by Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, Hampden Station, Baltimore, Md. 21211. 328 pp. $59.95, hardcover; $24.95, paper.
Editor: *Robert Fishman*

Today, the passionate talk among planners and social critics is of revitalized downtowns, suburban sprawl, edge cities, and the New Urbanism. But intense discussion about the future shape of the American city and its environs has been going on for a long time, notes Fishman, a historian at Rutgers University, Camden, New Jersey. He and 10 other specialists examine this tradition and related developments.

American "planning," Fishman says, dates from the early 19th century, when New York and rival port cities on the Eastern seaboard began forging transportation links to the interior beyond the Alleghenies. The canals and railroads they built ushered in such an urban boom that they turned to planning not only to foster growth but to avoid being destroyed by it. Major projects such as Frederick Law Olmsted's Central Park were launched.

Although Olmsted (1822–1903) "best embodies the strengths" of the planning tradition in the century after 1830, that tradition reached its height only in the decades after his death, Fishman says, when planners and others engaged in "a great debate over the future form of the nation."

On one side were the "metropolitanists," such as Chicago planner Daniel Burnham and the authors of the *Regional Plan of New York and Its Environs* (1929). They believed, writes Fishman, "that the basic urban form established in the 19th century would persist . . . even if 'the metropolitan area' grew to 20 million people and stretched 50 miles or more from its historic core." The gigantic city's economic and cultural focal point would continue to be its downtown. Most of the people would live and work in a surrounding "factory zone," with the residential suburbs beyond it "still a refuge for a relatively small elite." Beyond the suburbs was the "outer zone" of farms, forests, and parklands.

On the other side of the debate were the "regionalists," such as social critic Lewis Mumford. For them, Brown University historian John L. Thomas notes, "true regional planning . . . began not arbitrarily with the city as a unit in itself, but naturally with the region viewed as a whole." The big city—crowded, inhuman, inefficient—would go the way of the dinosaur. As central cities shrank, the regionalists envisioned planned "New Towns" springing up throughout the region, with each set in an open, green environment and providing both homes and work for the inhabitants. The dispersed New Towns would be linked by regional networks of highways and electric power.

"[The] romantic regionalist hopes for a recasting of America flared in the early years of the New Deal," writes Thomas, "flickered as the nation geared for war, and were seemingly extinguished in the war's aftermath," as regional planning became much more "theoretical and technocratic." With the onset of the Great Depression, says Fishman, American planning "entered a period of prolonged crisis. . . . [Even] at its most pro-urban, the New Deal had a bittersweet message for the cities: The era of urban leadership in national planning was over."

Only in recent decades, after the failure of urban renewal and new appreciation for what author Jane Jacobs called the "close-grained diversity" of healthy cities, has the American planning tradition been revived, says Fishman. And both the metropolitan and the regionalist wings of the tradition have been revitalized, with the one "rethink[ing] and reaffirm[ing] the meaning and importance of cities," and the other, in response to sprawl, doing the same with regard to its "commitment to human settlements in harmony with nature." Today, the debates about the future shape of the city and its environs can be heard again at the annual meetings of the Congress for the New Urbanism.

"China Environment Series, Issue 3, 1999–2000."

A report by the Working Group on Environment in U.S.-China Relations, sponsored by the Wilson Center's Environmental Change and Security Project. Editor: *Jennifer L. Turner*

China's impressive economic progress in recent decades has come at a cost: environmental degradation. The nation's "rivers, reservoirs, and other water resources are largely fouled," says Chris Nielsen, executive director of the China Project of the Harvard University Committee on Environment. "Its urban air is laden with harmful particulates, gases, and toxins."

In China's fast-growing cities, traffic congestion has gotten so bad that people traveling less than six miles often find walking or cycling faster than going by car or bus, says Robert E. Paaswell, director of the Region II University Transportation Center at City College in New York. With demand for popular cars such as the Red Flag Auto rising, Beijing is "investing heavily" in building highways. But while motor vehicles (half of them trucks) increase by more than 15 percent a year, roads increase by only 12 percent.

Vehicular pollution has resulted in a "drastic" rise in respiratory ailments in Beijing and other Chinese cities, note He Kebin and Chang Cheng, a professor and a graduate student, respectively, in Tsinghua University's Department of Environmental Science and Engineering.

"Policymakers in China have made great progress in setting standards for emissions and fuels," they write. "However, in order to meet these standards, national and municipal governments will need to emphasize policies to strengthen infrastructure, expand public transport, and promote the development of clean vehicle technology."

"Who Murdered 'Marigold'?—New Evidence on the Mysterious Failure of Poland's Secret Initiative to Start U.S.-North Vietnamese Peace Talks, 1966."

Working Paper No. 27 of the Wilson Center's Cold War International History Project.
Author: *James G. Hershberg*

One of the minor mysteries left over from the Vietnam War is the question of whether a genuine opportunity to open peace talks between Hanoi and Washington was lost in 1966 with the collapse of a Polish initiative code-named Operation Marigold. President Lyndon B. Johnson said North Vietnam simply was "not ready to talk to us," but many critics insisted that U.S. bombing of Hanoi that December blew the chance for negotiations. James G. Hershberg, a historian at George Washington University, says that a recently obtained 128-page postmortem by Jerzy Michalowski, a close adviser to Poland's then-foreign minister, along with other new evidence, suggests that Marigold was not a "sham."

After a series of secret indirect contacts between the warring sides, brokered by Poland's communist regime, Marigold reached a climax in December 1966, Hershberg says, "with a tentative apparent agreement on a 10-point program to end the war," and a secret U.S.-North Vietnamese meeting in Warsaw was scheduled for December 6. It appears, however, says Hershberg, that on that date—amid complaints about U.S. bombing and the American position on the tentative agreement—"senior Polish officials gave the Americans the clear impression that the conditions" for the meeting were not yet right, but that the Polish mediators would continue their efforts. Hanoi, meanwhile, sent an emissary, Nguyen Dinh Phuong, to Warsaw with instructions for the North Vietnamese ambassador. The two men, Phuong told Hershberg, waited in vain at their embassy on December 6 for a U.S. representative to show up. Hanoi, it seems, had neglected to tell Warsaw about Phuong's mission.

The meeting never came off. It was at first delayed, then, after another round of U.S. bombing, canceled. Yet even if a meeting had been held, and talks continued, Hershberg doubts that "a rapid conclusion to the war could have been achieved, given the mindsets on both sides."

Current Books

Reviews of new and noteworthy nonfiction

Prophet with a Typewriter

ORWELL:
Wintry Conscience of a Generation.
By Jeffrey Meyers. Norton.
380 pp. $29.95

Reviewed by Christopher Hitchens

The subtitle of this book is perhaps purposefully inept. George Orwell was dubbed "the wintry conscience of a generation" by V. S. Pritchett, a leading but uninspiring literary critic who had earlier written that "there are many strong arguments for keeping creative writers out of politics and Mr. George Orwell is one of them." Pritchett wrote this while denouncing Orwell for his anti-Stalinist masterpiece *Homage to Catalonia* (1938). Overcompensating later on, when the political climate was safer, Pritchett rather unctuously termed Orwell a "saint," perhaps forgetting that Orwell himself held the opinion that "saints should be judged guilty until proven innocent."

So that's what I mean by inept. By purposeful I am allowing for the possibility that the biographer wants to draw attention to the salient facts about Orwell: that he was penniless and ill and barely publishable during his lifetime, and only became a garlanded and lauded figure when his sardonic voice had been stilled. The generation of which he was a part was not looking for a conscience, wintry or otherwise. It largely traded conscience for ideology, with consequences now well understood.

The short life (1903–50), during which Orwell combated all "the smelly little orthodoxies," as he termed them, has been related by several biographers and is scheduled to be told by many more as the centennial of his birth draws close. Even those who are not Orwell buffs probably know that he was born in India, suffered terribly at a sadistic English boarding school, became a colonial policeman in Burma (and shot an elephant), fought in the Spanish Civil War and was wounded, and conceived a detestation of communism that resulted in two literary masterpieces, *Animal Farm* (1945) and

George Orwell *(1983), by R. B. Kataj*

Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949). Jeffrey Meyers, a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature who has written biographies of D. H. Lawrence, Robert Frost, Ernest Hemingway, and F. Scott Fitzgerald, takes us fairly smoothly over this familiar turf. He is perhaps the first biographer to have benefited from the availability of *Complete Works* (1998), Peter Davison's magisterial 20-volume Orwell compilation, so he has managed to thicken the plot with some new material about the man who insisted adamantly that no biography of him ever be written.

Why are we fascinated by this austere yet grimly humorous Englishman? I submit that it is for one principal reason: Not only did he get the chief issues of the 20th century right, morally and politically speaking, but he did so unaided. To the torrents of lies and propaganda he opposed a solitary typewriter, backed by no party or patron or big publisher, and managed to witness for the integrity of the individual intellect. And though it is the writerly faculty that survives, he also showed physical courage along the way.

The great issues were fascism and Nazism, Stalinism, and imperialism. (The British Foreign Office spokesman who announced after the Hitler-Stalin Pact that "all the isms are wasms" could not have been more wrong.) Having been brought up as the son of a British official responsible for exporting Indian opium to China, Orwell decided early in his life that the white race had no right to rule Asians and Africans. Of all the European writers of his time, he was the most consistent and intransigent about this. His ethical socialism, acquired while combining the roles of journalist and hobo during the Great Depression, made it axiomatic that he would loathe the advent of fascism. This belief he held in common with many others, though few were so quick to sign up for service in defense of Republican Spain in 1937.

It was there, in Barcelona, that he was put to the test. Seeing democracy and local autonomy deliberately betrayed by Stalin's agents, he had the choice of keeping quiet for the sake of unity in the ranks or of being accused of deviation and giving ammunition to the enemy. He seems not to have hesitated about which course to take, and from then on to have viewed Soviet communism and its surrogates as personal enemies. Meyers gives a fair account of this process, but inexplicably ends his chapter on it by endorsing the pro-Moscow conclusions of the historian Hugh Thomas, whose book *The Spanish Civil War* (1961) is wrong at every point that I've been able to check.

Orwell's heretical stand in Spain determined what followed: his 15-year, one-man war against Stalinism's corruption of the intellectuals. Turned down by publishers as politically orthodox as Victor Gollancz and as conservative as T. S. Eliot (who feared antagonizing Britain's wartime ally and disliked the representation of the Party leadership as pigs in *Animal Farm*), Orwell had an exhausting time of it. As is now notorious, he even composed a "list" of literary and political figures whom he suspected of succumbing to the totalitarian temptation. With the aid of Davison's research, Meyers has no difficulty disposing of the charge that Orwell did this as an informer or as the instigator of a witch-hunt. Indeed, even in the thick of a fight with the most unscrupulous opponents, he upheld all the decencies of free speech and opposed the use of police methods.

There is a fourth great issue of the 20th century, the emergence of the United States as a political, military, economic, and cultural superpower. Here, Orwell was less clear-sighted. Toward America he was somewhat incurious, somewhat distrustful, sometimes snobbish. He wrote little about the United States, and what he did write is mostly unremarkable. (I was interested to learn from Meyers that in 1947 Orwell contemplated a visit, in particular a tour of the South. He was motivated in part by the search for a warm climate where he might resist his gnawing tuberculosis, but still—what a report that might have been!) In *Nineteen Eighty-Four* he makes the contending international powers more or less morally equivalent—and shows an early intelligence about the ultimate horror of nuclear war—but he did not in reality split the difference. His preference was for a social-

democratic United Europe, but, absent that possibility, he both hoped and predicted that the Soviet system would implode.

Orwell's personality was angular and occasionally intolerant (he disliked homosexuality, perhaps after a painful experience at school), but nobody who knew him can recall his doing anything mean or base. Meyers adds to my knowledge (at least) of Orwell's relationships with women: He was far more amorous, and somewhat more successful, than most people knew at the time. This cost him something morally in guilt about his devoted first wife, Eileen O'Shaughnessy, who died during a routine operation. And toward the end, when he was desperately ill and believed that remarriage might prolong his life, he virtually proposed to certain women that they might like to become his official widow. This makes painful reading, even if a certain dignity does diminish the pathos. It also prompts the question: Has such a gambit ever worked? In Orwell's case, it did. When he was on his deathbed, the glamorous but sinister Sonia Brownell agreed to become his wife. It was she who tyrannized researchers and potential biographers and anthologists for many years, before expiring as a thwarted and embittered boozer in a shabby Parisian exile. The pall that she threw over "Orwell studies" for so long has now been definitively lifted.

But I doubt that we need to know much more than we do. Orwell's short and intense life has for years borne witness to some of those verities of which we were already aware. Parties and churches and states cannot be honest, but individuals can. Real books cannot be written by machines or committees. The truth is not always easy to discern, but a lie can and must be called by its right name. And the imagination, like certain wild animals, as Orwell himself once put it, will not breed in captivity. Actually, that last metaphor is beautiful but inaccurate. Even in the most dire conditions, there is a human will to resist coercion. We must believe that even now in North Korea, there are ideas alive inside human brains that were not put there by any authority.

In *The Captive Mind* (1953), Czeslaw Milosz wrote of his astonishment at discovering that the author of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which he had read in a samizdat edition, had never lived under totalitarian rule. Oh, but he had—in a hermetic and nasty school, and in the precincts of a colonial jail, and in the curfewed streets of Barcelona. It doesn't dilute Milosz's compliment to say that, by a sheer power of facing reality, Orwell was able to distill literature as well as great polemic from the experiences. His very ordinariness is the sterling guarantee that we need no saintly representative consciences. We would do better to make sterner use of our own.

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America's Jewish Wars

JEW VS. JEW:
The Struggle for the Soul of American Jewry.
By Samuel G. Freedman. Simon & Schuster.
397 pp. $26

Reviewed by Tova Reich

The First Temple was destroyed in Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. because of idolatry, fornication, and bloodshed, according to the Talmud, and the Second Temple was destroyed six centuries later because of *sinat hinam*, hatred without cause. Baseless hatred, then, is the equal of the other three destructive forces. Its consequences can be dire indeed.

Sinat hinam is an overarching theme of Samuel G. Freedman's book about divisiveness and rancor within the American Jewish community. Freedman, a former *New York Times* reporter who teaches at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism, sometimes translates the Hebrew phrase correctly as "groundless hatred" and other times incorrectly as "pure hatred." Pure hatred, though, may be easier to comprehend than groundless hatred, which almost never exists, at least from the point of view of the hater. Certainly the antagonists Freedman depicts hate one another not gratuitously but for what they firmly believe to be good reasons.

Pursuing, as he puts it in soft, post-Holocaust terms, "a peculiarly Jewish mission, the mission of bearing witness," Freedman reports on "the struggle for the soul of American Jewry." The outcome, he believes, is already clear: "The Orthodox model has triumphed." In an America where anti-Semitism has been effectively rendered marginal, the domain of crackpots and outcasts, an America that has taken in its Jews and absorbed them with remarkable generosity of spirit, unprecedented in any other time or place, "Jewish secularism was not defeated as much as it was loved to death." Thus, "except for religion, Jews had little to hold onto that made them feel like Jews."

To support this thesis, the author adopts a currently popular genre that straddles sociology and journalism: case studies, which he calls "parables," presumably because each illustrates a clear point. Each of the six studies is brought to life through a narrative of the history and experience of one or two individuals, in the manner of a lengthy magazine feature. The New York story, for example, focuses on Sharon Levine, a long-time camper at the secular Labor-Zionist Camp Kinderwelt in the Catskills, and juxtaposes the camp's demise with the flourishing of Kiryas Joel, a fundamentalist community of Hasidim two miles down the road. When the mayor of Kiryas Joel is told that such a place as Kinderwelt once existed nearby but folded, he is not surprised. "Secular Judaism *is* failure," he says.

From Denver, Freedman brings back a story of a failed attempt to reconcile the three branches of Judaism—Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform—over the divisive issue of conversion. (The issue is known as "Who is a Jew?" in Israel, where it is truly explosive, involving citizenship rights and an array of civil privileges.) The lesson learned from the Denver experiment, as one of the actors in the drama observes, is that "it's erroneous to build the idea of Jewish unity on religious or ideological compromise."

Freedman also relates the miserable tale of Harry Shapiro, a disturbed Orthodox political right-winger on Israel, now sitting in jail for planting a bomb in a Jewish community center in Florida where Shimon Peres, one of the architects of the Oslo Peace Accords, was scheduled to speak. The point, according to Freedman, is that "America's doves on the whole did not care about Israel as deeply as did its hawks." The implication is that the same intensity of conviction applies to religious matters as well, and that those who care the most will do whatever seems necessary to prevail.

In New Haven, Connecticut, Freedman examines the case of the Yale Five, the Orthodox Jewish students who filed suit seeking a waiver from the requirement that they live in college dormitories. He approaches the case by tracing the religious trajectory of the father of one of the plaintiffs in his rightward movement from Modern Orthodoxy, with its ideology of bridging observance and participation in worldly life, to the more insular, fundamentalist practice of the ultra-Orthodox Haredim. The case has managed to offend almost all secularists, as well as the many Orthodox Jews who see in it contempt for their manner of observance. As Freedman notes, "The hidden issue of the Yale Five case, to be found nowhere in the legal documents, was who established the definition of Jewish, and more specifically Orthodox, authenticity."

Of the six parables, three represent victories for the Orthodox. The Yale case is still in the courts; and, though the liberal or left wing may have triumphed in the remaining two, they are qualified successes at best. In Beachwood, Ohio, secular Jews succeeded in preventing the construction of an Orthodox campus in their suburb, but that is small consolation, as one of the leaders of the winning side understands only too well: "He had won for now, but he would lose in the end. Of that he was certain."

Perhaps the most interesting case is feminist Rachel Adler's ultimately successful campaign, in her egalitarian congregation in Los Angeles, to incorporate a reference to the matriarchs of the Jewish people into one of the most revered prayers in the liturgy, the Amidah. Those opposing the change believed that such a deviation from tradition, in which only the patriarchs are mentioned, would alienate them from the shared worship of the Jewish community. The struggle in Los Angeles, unlike the others that Freedman chronicles, represents on both sides "a drive toward deeper observance rather than away from it." In addition, it reflects a clash between identity groups within Judaism—in this case, feminism and Orthodoxy—that, in turn, mirrors similar clashes within American culture as a whole.

Feminism is just one of many cultural forces affecting American Jews, yet Freedman mostly limits himself to the Jewish scene, and for that matter to a relative minority within that scene, with little reference to the larger context within which these forces also play themselves out. The movement to the right by those drawn to ritual observance within Judaism, for example, can be attributed to specific factors, such as the influx into the United States of rabbinical scholars and seminarians in the wake of the Holocaust, as Freedman notes. But it is also part of a rightward, fundamentalist trend worldwide, in Islam and Christianity as well as in Judaism. Purity of observance has become the gold standard to which more and more religiously inclined souls aspire. The development may be traced to a general longing for spirituality and community in an age of technology and materialism, an age leveled and coarsened by globalization and the media.

Moreover, the increased visibility and assertiveness of Orthodox Jews is not merely a product of the sense of security and comfort Jews feel in America. It is also part of a larger picture, a legacy perhaps of the 1960s, of the civil rights movement, of the emergence and coming-out-of-the-closet of all kinds of ethnic and interest groups. Even Jews are subject to such influences, with "Jewish pride" reaching its apogee this year in the heretofore unimaginable vice-presidential nomination of Joseph Lieberman, not just a Jew but an openly observant Modern Orthodox Jew.

There is an uneasy balance in this book. At times, Freedman accepts the discord among American Jews as the normal struggle of an evolving community. He concedes early on that Jews have been a contentious lot from the days of the Golden Calf (he could have gone back even further). Jews just don't get along; it's an old story. By the end of the book, he very sensibly posits a realignment of the interested parties in this contemporary American-Jewish struggle. The Haredim emerge triumphant and set the religious standard. A group he calls "Conservadox" combines the present-day Modern Orthodox with the traditional wing of the Conservative movement. The "Reformative" comprises the left wing of the old Conservative camp and those Reform Jews drawn toward more traditional practice. All the rest, finally, he calls "Just Jews." The implication is that such shifts in alliance are a natural outcome of an ongoing, even healthy effort to adjust to new realities—nothing to get alarmed about.

Elsewhere, though, Freedman surrenders to an almost apocalyptic mode, writing of a "civil war" that "reached its most furious pitch in the final years of the millennium." Looming here is the dark cloud of *sinat hinam*, and everything the rabbis, who wrote the book and controlled the spin, claimed that groundless hatred engenders. Had Freedman focused on the religious battles in Israel, it might have been believable that dissension could lead to calamity. In America, however, the prospect is far less convincing, not least because, according to a recent study, the Jews who are at the center of Freedman's work, the ones who care about any form of ritual practice at all, probably constitute only about 30 percent of the American Jewish community.

Nor is it news that the most rigidly observant are emerging triumphant. Whether it suits us or not, the survival of the Jewish people over the generations can probably be credited to the Orthodox hard core. *Compromise* is not a word in their lexicon.

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Arts & Letters

A LIFE OF JAMES BOSWELL.
By Peter Martin. Yale Univ. Press.
636 pp. $35

If Samuel Johnson and James Boswell are looking down on us, they must be amused. Johnson (1709–84) published all of his writings during his lifetime, and critical evaluations of them became a matter of record long ago. His reputation, although buttressed by Boswell's classic biography, has settled into gentle decline. Not so the reputation of Boswell (1740–95). His journals, diaries, notes, letters, and papers began to appear in the 1850s, and new discoveries were made as late as 1939. These writings record severe and incurable depression, alcoholism, gambling, a series of impressive venereal decorations from the sexual wars, the company of illustrious people, and a host of contradictory personalities. With these candid, sometimes poignant, disclosures, Boswell's standing has risen.

James Boswell

Admittedly, it couldn't have fallen much lower. In 1831, Thomas Babington Macaulay described Boswell as "servile and impertinent, shallow and pedantic, a bigot and a sot, bloated with family pride and eternally blustering about the dignity of a born gentleman, yet stooping to being a tale-bearer, an eavesdropper, a common butt in the taverns of London." Martin, a professor of English at Principia College in Illinois, puts in the defense and files a counterclaim. Boswell, he demonstrates, is a writer in a class of his own.

Born in Edinburgh, Boswell obliged his father by becoming a lawyer. He tried a number of death penalty cases and made money, but that did not satisfy his thirst for fame or his conviction that he was born to be great. The idea of greatness drove him to meet renowned men and seek their advice on faith, self-discipline, and life's meaning. He submitted questions to the two great 18th-century Scots, David Hume and Adam Smith. In London, he consulted Samuel Johnson, Lawrence Sterne, Edward Gibbon, and Edmund Burke. He quizzed Jean-Jacques Rousseau about religion, and later accompanied Rousseau's wife to England, making love to her on the way.

The Boswell of Martin's excellent, comprehensive biography resembles Thomas Mann's picaresque adventurer, Felix Krull. Like Krull, Boswell drew people to him. He believed himself made of finer clay, and people of quality found his presence comforting. A student of the art of flattery, he could make an accomplished man believe himself great.

Like his contemporary Giacomo Casanova, Boswell was a student of the art of seduction as well. His memoirs, in their frankness about his life and loves, resemble Casanova's. The two men were in London simultaneously for a time; perhaps they passed each other on the prowl in St. James Park. But whereas Casanova was broke most of the time and living by his wits, Boswell had money and family standing and paid his own way. What a difference that makes when one wants the company of superior people.

Boswell published his *Life of Johnson* in 1791, seven years after Johnson's death. Boswell himself died four years later, at age 54, worn out, filled with remorse, his youthful hopes having turned to regrets. Yes, he had met people of consequence, but he had been a mere curiosity, incapable of achieving greatness. "There is an imperfection, a superficialness, in all my notions," he wrote. "I understand nothing clearly, nothing to the bottom. I pick up fragments, but never have in my memory a mass of any size." His pensive, self-critical journals brought the recognition that had eluded him in his lifetime. When published in 1950, his *London Journal* sold more than a million copies. Only a person with Boswell's strange mix of good and bad could have written the most interesting diaries ever struck off by the mind of man.

—Jacob A. Stein

THE MORAL OBLIGATION TO BE INTELLIGENT: Selected Essays.
By Lionel Trilling. Edited by Leon Wieseltier. Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 572 pp. $35

The reappearance of these essays and the collection's confident (not to say intimidating) title bring to mind two features of the cultural landscape that have vanished since midcentury, when Trilling (1905–75) flourished as an essayist and Columbia University professor. The first is the level of prominence a critic could attain. Trilling came virtually to symbolize literary criticism to a broad public, and he lent his voice to everything from essays and textbooks to book-of-the-month clubs. The second feature, whose passing is more to be lamented, is the public status of literary criticism itself. It was, in Trilling's day, a mode of public and political discourse, a source of large lessons on how to live.

Many would say literary criticism itself forfeited this status by descending into balkanized academic doctrines and impenetrable jargon. Still, the gap left behind is large, and it can be measured in the continuous satisfaction, even exhilaration, that this collection brings. In his 1948 analysis of Henry James's *The Princess Casamassima* (1886), for instance, Trilling moves from a soaring discussion of the European anarchist movements of the novel's era to a meditation on the tension between high culture and the hunger for social justice, the implications of recognizing that "the monuments of art and learning and taste have been reared upon coercive power." His 1952 appreciation of George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* (1938) pinpoints the author's appeal to the traditional understanding of a "democracy of the mind," the notion that common sense can pierce political orthodoxies.

Piercing such orthodoxies was also, of course, Trilling's own great vocation. Much of his better-known work is political in this sense, including many of the essays in *The Liberal Imagination* (1950), which sought to put liberalism under the kind of "intellectual pressure," including pressure from literary insights, that might ultimately strengthen it. These essays patiently pick apart contradictions in prevailing pieties without allowing the reader to pin down the critic's own overarching philosophy. In the introduction, Wieseltier, literary editor of the *New Republic*, calls Trilling "a distinguished enemy of his time." In a tradeoff that may be inevitable, the essays that most directly confront Trilling's time have somewhat less to say to ours.

Even so, one of the incidental pleasures of these essays is the cooling light they cast on the culture wars of recent years, particularly those aspects that have been linked ad nauseam to the 1960s. David Brooks's clever *Bobos in Paradise* (2000), for instance, loses much of its edge when the cultural innovation it claims to identify—the effortless merging of bourgeois and bohemian values by post-baby boomers—turns up under Trilling's lens in the classic 1961 essay "On the Teaching of Modern Literature." In 1952, decades before *Eurocentrism* became a fighting word, Trilling seeks to analyze where artists and intellectuals should look "now that they can't depend on Europe as a cultural example." Matters nowadays too polarized for rational discussion yield to the "strenuous" reading and rigorous analysis that, for Trilling, represented the moral response to literature and to life.

—Amy Schwartz

SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE.
By Frank Kermode.
Farrar, Straus & Giroux. 324 pp. $30

Fourteen years separate Shakespeare's first tragedy, the fiercely explicit *Titus Andronicus* (1594), from his last, the fiercely difficult *Coriolanus* (1608), and in that interval something astonishing happened to the playwright and his audiences. The poet's powers grew, as did the audiences' capacity to absorb and appreciate his words. Shakespeare taught them to hear more acutely—quite simply, to hear more—and the instrument of that aural and intellectual expansion was his language. In this remarkably absorbing book, Kermode, an 81-year-old English scholar and critic, brings a lifetime of judicious reflection to tracing the course of the Shakespearean transformation.

Shakespeare's language was of course English, and he possessed it as utterly as anyone ever has, as utterly, in fact, as it possessed him. And Shakespeare the dramatist used the language as a poet uses language. Those observations would once have been too self-evident to bear mention, but not any more, argues Kermode. He fears that we've lost sight of the poetry in the spate of critical studies focusing on Shakespeare's religion or sexual preference or business acumen. Whatever their incidental fascination, such topics are subordinate to the texts as dramatic poetry.

Kermode's approach is as straightforward and foursquare as his title. He considers roughly the first half of the Shakespearean corpus—the histories, tragedies, and comedies of the 1590s—in a single section of some 50 pages. He's eager to get to the years when the playwright's craft attained a higher level. The pivotal work for Kermode is *Hamlet* (1600), that great "bazaar" of a play—"everything available, all warranted and trademarked"—in which, he believes, the playwright offers the fullest exhibition of his powers. "In Shakespeare's plays, especially after 1600, say from *Hamlet* on," Kermode writes, "the life of the piece . . . is in the detail, and we need to understand as much of that as we can."

So Kermode attends to the poetic detail of 16 individual plays. He takes key passages from each—in particular, knotty and involved passages—settles their literal meaning, and suggests how they served Shakespeare's larger dramatic purpose, which was to make language present the complexity of character and motivation as it never had done before. Shakespeare's characters weigh "confused possibilities and dubious motives." They propose theories or explanations only to abandon or qualify them almost immediately. Their thoughts are rugged, intricate, even obscure, and only a new kind of poetry can do them justice. Kermode believes that much of the language was difficult even for the audiences who first heard it, but the playwright educated them to his genius even as he went on imagining and testing new possibilities.

Kermode is not afraid to admit that some passages still leave him baffled, and to argue that the poet sometimes loses his way. No one who wrote so much, he says, and for commercial purposes, could hit the mark every time. So anyone who has ever puzzled over an intractable bit of Shakespeare can take heart: The playwright may not have known exactly what he meant either, and what he meant, in any case, may not be worth the effort of excavating the sense from its muffling expression.

This would be a wonderful book at any time. It's all the more welcome now, when so much of what passes for literary criticism has the weight, the appeal, and (thank goodness) the staying power of carelessly emitted gas. Kermode honors his subject and returns us to the plays newly alert to their pleasures.

—James Morris

SILENT SCREENS: The Decline and Transformation of the American Movie Theater. Photos by Michael Putnam. Johns Hopkins Univ. Press. 102 pp. $39.95

Disused small-town and neighborhood movie theaters are to photographer Putnam what the decrepit churches and storefronts of the rural South were to Walker Evans: objects that, austerely photographed in their decline, can cause us to reflect. On what, though, I'm uncertain. Just as Evans's pictures were always too stark for mere nostalgia, Putnam's are a little too artless to transcend it. Putnam did, however, make me think about how changing values, changing technologies, and changing economic priorities are reflected first in our landscapes and then, perhaps, in our souls, which are ever yearning, not always appropriately, for the past.

As you study Putnam's well-composed and well-lit photographs of abandoned theaters, a pang for the lost past inevitably afflicts you. Even more saddening is his record of conversions—theaters turned into evangelical churches, bookshops, banks, restaurants, a swimming pool. As writer Molly Haskell observes in the best of the four brief essays included in this slender, handsome volume, the disappearance of the community theaters signaled "the passing of

a way of being together." But she also notes that the movies shown in these theaters were powerful anticommunitarian instruments: "The most engaging heroes were possessed by wanderlust; the smartest working-women heroines believed in self-betterment; the increasingly dominant tone was against provincialism." In short, content inevitably trumped architecture.

So did show-biz economics. In his introduction, New York University film professor Robert Sklar points out that the small-town and neighborhood theaters had always been a nuisance to Hollywood. They needed to change their bills more frequently than the first-run houses—as often as three times a week—which forced the studios to make more pictures. Renting films for as little as $10 a run, these theaters never contributed much to the distributors' prosperity. A big-city picture palace could generate $10,000 a week; a small-town theater might produce just $1,500 a year. Given the cost of extra prints and shipping, distributors might do no better than break even. As a result, these theaters were doomed well before television.

Which is not necessarily a bad thing. An awful lot of shoddy movies were made with an eye toward the small towns, where exhibitors tended to be noisy cultural conservatives. Beyond that, I'm not sure that community values are all that important when it comes to movies. We may go to the theater in a crowd, but once the picture begins we are alone with it, voyeurs peering into a lighted window, thinking our own thoughts, mulling our own fantasies. The structure surrounding this somewhat onanistic activity is relatively insignificant.

What's important are the movies themselves. Instead of mourning the past, we might more usefully discuss how contemporary distribution and exhibition practices—particularly the emphasis on the first-weekend grosses of movies playing on 2,500 screens—affect what we now see. And don't see. But that's a different argument, one that this pretty, but to me rather idle, book does not take up.

—Richard Schickel

Contemporary Affairs

"THAT'S NOT WHAT WE MEANT TO DO": Reform and Its Unintended Consequences in Twentieth-Century America.
By Steven M. Gillon. Norton.
288 pp. $25.95

Attention, policy wonks: University of Oklahoma historian Gillon has written a delightfully subversive book about how reform legislation goes awry. With no hand-wringing, no conspiracy theories about forces of evil undermining good works, he recounts the unintended postenactment journeys of five laws. Along the way, he demonstrates that the only thing predictable about reform is that its consequences are unpredictable.

He starts with the 1935 Social Security Act's little-debated provision to help young widows and their children. With the breakdown of the nuclear family, this modest widows' entitlement mushroomed into a $13 billion program (eventually Aid to Families with Dependent Children) that mostly benefited families with live but absent fathers. This development in turn provoked another policy shift, welfare reform, and a change in the national consensus about government aid to the poor.

With the Community Mental Health Act of 1963, Congress sought to move thousands of long-term mentally ill residents from large, out-of-the-way hospitals into community-based settings, where they would receive continuing support from a network of mental health centers. But subsequent congresses cared more about Vietnam, civil rights, low-income housing, and urban unrest than about funding the community services. The released hospital patients often ended up on the streets, and homelessness became a political issue.

Gillon also traces the curious history of racial preferences. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 expressly barred quotas, but two federal regulatory agencies claimed the authority to

implement affirmative action, a policy that in practice came very close to quotas. The courts initially supported the regulators, and affirmative action became widespread in both the public and private sectors. Then the backlash arrived. Politicians campaigned against affirmative action, state ballot measures sought to eliminate racial preferences, and the courts imposed stricter constitutional limits. A policy that had been rejected by Congress thus slipped in through the other two branches and became a defining political issue.

These and the book's other tales (about the Immigration Act of 1965 and campaign finance reform) may sound disheartening, but I found them reassuring. Policymaking is about compromise, and the compromises don't end when a bill becomes law. Even if reformers realize all their goals in Congress—and they rarely do—they still must face implementers in the executive branch, successor congresses, lawyers using the courts to muddy the waters, and evolving social mores. Consequently, getting the policy right is not the only thing, or even the most important thing. Giving voice to the diverse interests is closer to the mark. Men and women must be able to exercise their complex, varied, conflicting, and unpredictable wills through the labyrinth of politics and governance. With his stories of apparent blunders and shortsightedness, Gillon reveals that the system works.

—Marty Linsky

FROM VOTING TO VIOLENCE: Democratization and Nationalist Conflict.
By Jack Snyder. Norton.
382 pp. $29.95

ON BEING A SUPERPOWER: And Not Knowing What to Do about It.
By Seymour J. Deitchman.
Westview. 350 pp. $32

The idea that democracies do not go to war with other democracies, popularized by Princeton University historian Michael Doyle in 1986, has become a dangerous political cliché. It is dangerous partly because of its effect on international relations—the Clinton administration seems to believe that democracy-building equals peace, with dubious results from Haiti to Kosovo—but mostly because, by begging important questions about the nature of democracy, it leads us onto treacherous ground.

In his thoughtful and penetrating book, Snyder, a political scientist at Columbia University, analyzes imperial Britain, revolutionary France, Germany from Bismarck to Hitler, and 19th-century Serbia. Nationalism, he concludes, is a regular and sometimes monstrous feature of young democracies. These nations suffer a wild and even vicious youth; indeed, "the process of democratization can be one of its own worst enemies." Nominal democracies without civic institutions and a sturdy middle class are especially vulnerable to nationalist demagogues. "If nationalist conflict is to be avoided," Snyder writes, "the development of civic institutions should be well underway before mass-suffrage elections are held. Likewise, it is better if a strong middle class emerges before press freedom expands and civil society groups get organized, or else these may be easily hijacked by an elite with a nationalist agenda."

At a time when support of democracy is almost reflexive, these are startling prescriptions. But Snyder makes a powerful case, one with which ancient Greeks and classical-minded Enlightenment figures such as Burke and Gibbon would have been familiar. Although the Russian election came too late for the author's deadline, his thesis helps explain why so many Russian reformers have soft-pedaled their democratic aspirations to back Vladimir Putin's attempt to restore a strong, centralized state.

Whereas Snyder concentrates on the problems of fledgling democracies, Deitchman considers the United States. The lonely superpower, perforce responsible for global stability, is also a media-saturated democracy that is sensitive to casualties, views the United Nations with suspicion, and expects the world to be grateful. Deitchman, formerly with the Institute for Defense Analyses, a research firm based in Alexandria, Virginia, starts with three credible scenarios. First, he asks whether the United States would really risk nuclear war with China to protect Taiwan, and he ponders the price in lost credibility if Taiwan were

abandoned. Second, he asks how the United States would react to an Islamic fundamentalist rebellion against the Saudi monarchy. Finally, he wonders whether an overstretched U.S. military could still retake the Panama Canal if it fell under the control of a narco-dictatorship. He concludes that a diminished military, increasingly distant from American society as a whole, greatly complicates the effective exercise of might.

But, as Deitchman notes, America's superpower primacy will not last forever. Although post-Renaissance Western culture has dominated the three other main cultures (China, India, and the Middle East) for some 500 years, the aberration is slowly but surely coming to an end: "Because modern technology by its very nature has now become globally available, and technology-based economic strength has also diffused around the world, it appears unlikely that any one of the major regional or even global powers will be strong enough to dominate the others at any foreseeable future time." As a patriotic American, albeit one worried about the nation's moral fiber, Deitchman does not ask whether this would be altogether a bad thing. Democracies, after all, are rather good at getting along with others once they get through the distressingly violent adolescence that Snyder analyzes so well.

—Martin Walker

THUNDER FROM THE EAST: Portrait of a Rising Asia.
By Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn. Knopf. 377 pp. $27.50

Kristof and WuDunn spent five years reporting from China for the *New York Times* and won a joint Pulitzer for their brave and informative pieces on Tiananmen. Thereafter, based in Japan, they covered Asia as a whole for their paper. Their political, economic, and social reporting—well researched, closely observed, and revealing—was in the best *Times* tradition. When it comes to writing books, though, the writers prove much less surefooted.

Thunder from the East seeks to explain the Asian crisis of the late 1990s and to speculate about the region's future. The crisis, Kristof and WuDunn conclude, "was the best thing that could have happened," because it destroyed the cronyism, bad business practices, and even the ill-advised kindheartedness that had stifled Asian economic development. As for the future, the authors predict (with *perhaps* and *probably* as safety nets) that "Asia is likely to wrench economic, diplomatic, and military power from the West over the coming decades." These conclusions, though plausible, are not particularly original, and they're repeated many times, as if the authors doubt the attention span of their readers.

The book does contain a mountain of fascinating material about the vast territory stretching from Afghanistan to the Pacific, though relatively little about China and nothing about Burma or Hong Kong. Kristof and WuDunn provide an evenhanded analysis of the Japanese massacre in Nanking in 1937, an informative discussion of Asian economic affairs (drawn largely from their reporting for the *Times*), and a chilling account of the region's pollution and its terrible costs and dangers.

But *Thunder from the East* suffers from an overly personal style (the acknowledgments are a monument to cutesiness), jarring inconsistencies, and, too often, highly dubious generalizations. For example, the authors ascribe some five centuries of slow development in *Asia*, not just China, to misjudgments during the early 15th century, when Ming emperors terminated the Indian

A Ming dynasty nobleman's badge

Ocean expeditions of eunuch admiral Zheng He: "A few catastrophic calls by some Chinese emperors in Zheng He's time . . . helped send all of Asia into a tailspin from which it is only now recovering." As an even partial explanation of events from Afghanistan to Japan over many centuries, this is paltry. Elsewhere, the authors speak of the "cold, cruel discipline that . . . is one of the lubricants of Asia's great economic machine," fueling the vast region's "competitive advantage"—and cite as an illustration the practice of selling young girls into prostitution. If that were the key to prosperity, Asia would have taken off centuries ago.

—Jonathan Mirsky

Religion & Philosophy

A BISHOP'S TALE: Mathias Hovius among His Flock in Seventeenth-Century Flanders.
By Craig Harline and Eddy Put.
Yale Univ. Press. 384 pp. $27.95

As students are quick to complain, good academic histories too often make for amazingly dull reading. To the short list of exceptions for early modern Europe—including Carlo Ginzburg's *The Cheese and the Worms* (1980), Natalie Davis's *The Return of Martin Guerre* (1983), and Steven Ozment's *The Bürgermeister's Daughter* (1996)—add *A Bishop's Tale*.

The Catholic bishop of the title, Mathias Hovius (1542–1620), lived in what became the Spanish Netherlands. As a young scholar, cathedral canon, and, eventually, archbishop of Mechelen, he witnessed the great events of his age—wars and rebellions, Reformation and Counter Reformation. He was nobody exceptional, "simply a flesh-and-blood prelate," according to Harline, professor of history at Brigham Young University, and Put, senior assistant at the Belgian National Archives. But Hovius left behind voluminous records, correspondence, and a daybook that once ran to 10 volumes (all but one have been lost).

Rather than write a traditional biography of Hovius, the authors set out to immerse themselves and their readers in his world. They have freely exercised their historical imagination, piecing together hints from the archives to conjecture about the bishop's close friends, his private conversations, his food and drink, and even his nightclothes. The individuals they depict emerge as believable characters, sometimes drawn with thick brush strokes but real personalities nonetheless. We come to feel considerable sympathy for Hovius himself, even though he hounded his enemies mercilessly and once buried a woman alive for her religious beliefs.

St. Eloi Preaching *(1626), by Adriaan De Bie*

If Harline and Put know how to make historical figures come to life, they also know a thing or two about plot. The book begins in medias res, on a day that will end with Hovius hiding

in a wardrobe while Protestant troops sack his city and pillage his church. After a brief flashback to his early years, the authors move through the compelling incidents of the bishop's life. Although their account may read like a hard-to-put-down historical novel, the source notes demonstrate that Harline and Put are thoroughgoing archive rats.

A charming final chapter lays out the argument that is implicit all along: In a world where bishops were struggling to implement the decrees of the reforming Council of Trent (1545–63), "religious life was a constant negotiation among all parties rather than a simple matter of the hierarchy proclaiming and the flock obeying." Throughout the book, we see Hovius negotiating, cajoling, threatening, compromising, and bargaining, in a struggle to make the church in his archdiocese conform to his vision of what it should be, a task that sometimes pitted him against his superiors in Rome. Nothing was easy.

The book also makes a second, unstated argument. Published with the academic imprimatur of Yale University Press, *A Bishop's Tale* proves by example that a good academic history can also tell a good story. If academics take up its model of accessible yet rigorous historical scholarship, the not-so-saintly archbishop will indeed have worked a miracle.

—Laura Ackerman Smoller

GEORGE SANTAYANA: Literary Philosopher.
By Irving Singer. Yale Univ. Press.
256 pp. $25

For the dwindling handful of readers acquainted with the elegant, offbeat writings of the Spanish-born American philosopher George Santayana (1863–1952), the appearance of a serious publication about him is cause for celebration. It is both astonishing and tragic that the works of such a talented thinker should have fallen so quickly into obscurity.

Tragic, but indicative—and therefore not entirely unpredictable. Santayana was that rarest of beasts, a philosopher who was also a cultivated man of letters, with a superlative gift for producing vivid and evocative writing across the full range of forms—philosophical treatises, essays, sketches, dialogues, literary criticism, poetry, the best-selling novel *The Last Puritan* (1935), and the three-volume autobiography *Persons and Places* (1944–53). By the standards of most contemporary philosophers, who seem to regard a commitment to impenetrability, abstractness, academicism, and inaccessibility as the badge of professionalism, Santayana would appear to be not only a lightweight but an impostor and a traitor to his class. How could a refined, playful, jargon-free writer who gives so much literary pleasure have anything profound to convey?

To his credit, Singer, a professor of philosophy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the author of valuable studies of the philosophy of love, has little patience for such narrow perspectives. He has been a serious student of Santayana for many years, and with this small book he sets out to guide us to the heart of Santayana's achievement. In his view, the philosopher's flair is a matter of substance as well as style: Santayana, "more than any other great philosopher in the English language," sought to "harmonize" literary and philosophical styles of writing, making the centrality of the humanistic imagination "a fundamental resource in his doctrinal outlook." The magnificent prose was not mere ornamentation serving to soften the harsh lines of an otherwise unadorned philosophy. The literary and the philosophical components were inseparable for him.

The novelist Somerset Maugham lamented that "it was a loss to American literature when Santayana decided to become a philosopher rather than a novelist." Maugham was paying tribute to the philosopher's prodigious gifts of imagery and metaphor, as well as hinting that the writing might have been even better had it not been so laden with ideas. But that, as Singer argues, misses the point of Santayana's work, which aimed to transcend the divide that both literati and professional philosophers have been intent on preserving. Singer applies this argument to some of Santayana's chief works, reinforcing the case for the creative imagination while weighing the strengths and weaknesses of the oeuvre.

Most of the book's contents have been published before, at different times and in diverse places, and so the text often has the unfortunate feel of a collection of fugitive

essays. Had Singer reshaped some of the essays and put a bit more effort into harmonizing the others, the result would have been a far better book. But one should still be grateful for the intelligence and judiciousness of the book we do have. One should acknowledge, too, that writers who have the temerity to write about Santayana are doomed to be outshone by their subject. We can be grateful to Singer for showing just such temerity, and thereby helping to keep Santayana's vision alive.

—Wilfred M. McClay

IN THE SHADOW OF THE BOMB: Oppenheimer, Bethe, and the Moral Responsibility of the Scientist.
By S. S. Schweber. Princeton Univ. Press. 260 pp. $24.95

To understand the overlapping but divergent careers of nuclear physicists J. Robert Oppenheimer and Hans Bethe, according to Schweber, look to Immanuel Kant and educator Felix Adler. Oppenheimer and Bethe both grew up in Jewish families that sought social and cultural assimilation, and both men found physics and secular ethics appealing substitutes for traditional religion. Oppenheimer studied at New York's Society for Ethical Culture, which Adler had founded in 1876 to impart a humanitarian philosophy that might replace traditional Judaism. Adler considered Kant's ethics "a species of physics" that impelled each individual to behave as if his actions could be a universal ideal. Bethe's parents and his German education imparted a similar Kantian moral imperative that would enrich his life, but in ways more communal and familial than Oppenheimer's.

Creating the A-bomb together at Los Alamos during World War II, Oppenheimer (director of the secret laboratory) and Bethe (head of its theoretical division) personified individual responsibility for their science: Beating Nazi Germany to the bomb became their moral imperative. Afterward they went their separate ways. Oppenheimer left theoretical physics research to head the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, while Bethe returned to Cornell University, his intellectual home since 1935 and a scholarly community that would give him moral support.

"It is one of Bethe's striking characteristics," writes Schweber, a physicist and science historian at Brandeis University, "that there is only one of him—in contrast to Oppenheimer." When Cold War anticommunism struck American college campuses in the 1940s and 1950s, a duplicitous Oppenheimer so feared his conservative critics that he could not bring himself to defend publicly a former student, University of Rochester physics professor Bernard Peters, against unsupported attacks (attacks prompted by Oppenheimer's own casual remarks). By contrast, Bethe staunchly defended Cornell physicist Philip Morrison against biased accusations by the university's alumni and board members. President Dwight Eisenhower's science adviser, James Killian, spoke of Bethe's "grave nobility of character," a quality that Oppenheimer somehow lacked.

Indeed, as Schweber argues in this engaging intellectual story, the two men's lives seem like mirror images refracted by their heady years at Los Alamos. Before World War II, Oppenheimer thrived in a circle of colleagues and talented students at Berkeley; after the war, he was nearly alone in his struggles against political enemies. Before the war, Bethe was "self-sufficient and somewhat of a loner" socially and intellectually; after the war, he created a lively physics community at Cornell and "set its moral and scientific standards."

Oppenheimer, who died in 1967, is a historical icon, remembered by many as a martyr who professed that "the physicists have known sin; and this is a knowledge they cannot lose." Bethe is a living legend. He received the 1967 Nobel Prize in physics for explaining how stars produce energy. Throughout the Cold War he publicly advocated nuclear arms control and test bans, and he recently sent a letter to President Bill Clinton opposing the development of a national missile defense system. At 94, he still studies physics at Cornell.

—William Lanouette

Science & Technology

DEFENDERS OF THE TRUTH: The Battle for Science in the Sociobiology Debate and Beyond.
By Ullica Segerstråle. Oxford Univ. Press. 493 pp. $30

In his legendary *Sociobiology* (1975), Harvard University zoologist Edward O. Wilson set forth a comprehensive, theory-aware, phylogenetically ordered survey of social organization, from invertebrates to mammals. His final chapter, "Man: From Sociobiology to Sociology"—essentially an addendum, included for formal completeness—tentatively applied some of his conclusions to aspects of human behavior, including altruism, sex, the division of labor, tribalism, religion, and war.

Those concluding observations soon provoked a deluge. Critics charged Wilson and sociobiology with racism, sexism, and clandestine political aims. The first and bitterest attacks came, with great fanfare, from a local leftist band of (mainly) scientists, including some of Wilson's Harvard colleagues. Calling themselves the Sociobiology Study Group, they had been preparing, without warning to Wilson, what amounted to a show trial. The brawl—*debate* is too refined a term—erupted and spread rapidly to the delighted media.

Segerstråle, a sociologist at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, depicts the fracas in absorbing detail and with exemplary fairness. She sees in it the roots of the current wars about the validity of scientific inquiry in general, and of the passionate disputes over evolutionary psychology (a term less inflammatory than *sociobiology*) in particular. In analyzing the motives of key participants, especially Wilson and his most articulate antagonist, Richard Lewontin, she shows how moral and political presuppositions can color the scientific convictions of even very good scientists. She makes this point honorably, without either what philosopher Susan Haack calls the "old deferentialism" toward science or, at the opposite extreme, the nihilistic reduction of science to a mere congeries of interests.

Segerstråle wishes to de-emphasize the political sloganeering of Wilson's detractors, their ideological posturing, their deplorable and false charges, and their Marxist logic chopping, all of which she documents. Instead, she focuses on what she sees as the dispute's underlying cause: the collision of opposing epistemological-scientific worldviews. For Wilson (as for Thomas Jefferson), good inquiry follows truth wherever it may lead. His optimistic, Enlightenment-liberal social views encouraged him, originally in all innocence, to promote the uninhibited biological study of human behavior. Wilson's detractors, though, saw science as necessarily embedded in existing sociopolitical arrangements. They reflexively opposed any biological analysis of behavior that might justify what they deemed an oppressive status quo.

Segerstråle maintains that, by illuminating these divergent ideas of what constitutes valid science, the sociobiology battle served a public purpose. Perhaps, but the silver lining is thinner than she thinks. However interesting to philosophers and social scientists, the fight did nothing to enhance public understanding of science. Quite the opposite. And, a quarter-century after *Sociobiology*, the dispute continues—less stagy, more epistemological (there is even a specialty journal called *Social Epistemology*), but still belligerent. It has consequences every day, indirectly in the legislative halls, directly in corridors of the academy far from the science departments. Segerstråle has given us an authoritative account of how it all began.

—Paul R. Gross

THE CENTURY OF THE GENE.
By Evelyn Fox Keller. Harvard Univ. Press. 186 pp. $22.95

I considered turning in a book review that was only 85 percent complete. After all, that's essentially what Francis Collins and J. Craig Venter did earlier this year when they declared that they had decoded the human genome. The announcement was a grand event, widely publicized and celebrated, even though the "book of life" is rife with typos and missing 15 percent of its text. Great sections of

it have geneticists scratching their heads in confusion. It's in such poor shape that scientists are wagering about how many genes the genome contains—and the bets run from a few tens of thousands to a few hundred thousand. And when scientists *do* succeed in decoding the genome, producing a computer disk full of As, Gs, Cs, and Ts, they will still have to figure out precisely what those chemicals mean.

Genetics has gotten much more complicated in the century and a half since Gregor Mendel figured out heritability in his field of pea plants. Our genetic code contains the instructions for creating proteins, but proteins control the way the cell follows those instructions. In this vast, complicated web of cause and effect, genes control proteins that control genes, and proteins control genes that control proteins.

Keller, a professor of science, technology, and society at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, notes that the very concept of the gene has been muddied. In the early days of Mendelian genetics, the gene was thought of as a biological atom—an uncuttable, indivisible particle responsible for a trait in an organism. Since then, scientists have learned that a gene is not indivisible and not necessarily responsible for a trait. These and other complications make it difficult for a biologist to answer even the simple question, "What is a gene?" Indeed, the crux of Keller's book is that the word *gene* needs to be replaced because its imprecise nature may be impeding biological progress.

She presents this argument rather oddly. When summarizing the history of genetics, she pays more attention to scientists' writings than to their laboratory work. Many of her allusions to experiments are so quick as to baffle the uninitiated. It makes sense to dwell on a corpus of literature when studying Aristotle or Kant or Hume, but scientists speak most eloquently through their experiments. That is the difference between philosophy and science, and it should be the difference between a history of philosophy and a history of science.

—Charles Seife

History

COAST TO COAST BY AUTOMOBILE: The Pioneering Trips, 1899–1908.
By Curt McConnell. Stanford Univ. Press. 368 pp. $45

At 11:02 a.m. on Thursday, July 13, 1899, John and Louise Davis left New York's Herald Square in their two-cylinder National Duryea "touring cart," headed, they told reporters, "to 'Frisco or bust!" Bust it was. A one-armed bicyclist who left New York 10 days after the couple passed them in Syracuse. By the time the Davises arrived in Cleveland, their cart had been repaired at least 20 times. When they reached Chicago in October, they abandoned their transcontinental journey. An automobile, Louise Davis concluded, "is a treacherous animal for a long trip." Automobile touring demanded "plenty of pluck, patience, and profanity," her husband said, "and I think that I am becoming proficient."

Four years later, Dr. Horatio Nelson Jackson tamed the treacherous animal. After sending his wife ahead on a train, he

Stuck in the mud in Woodside, Utah

embarked from San Francisco for New York on May 23, 1903, with a mechanic named Sewall K. Crocker in a one-cylinder Winton touring car. Axles broke. Tires blew. Getting up steep grades or through deep mud required a block and tackle or a team of horses. Gasoline often proved hard to come by. So, sometimes, did food. But they persevered. At 4:30 a.m. on July 26, 63 days after setting out, Jackson and Crocker, along with a stray dog that had joined them in Idaho, pulled up before the Holland House on Fifth Avenue. They were the first to cross the continent in an automobile.

Others followed, often cutting the time of the trip. Manufacturers such as Winton, Oldsmobile, Packard, and Franklin used the publicity to demonstrate the endurance and power of their automobiles. Speed became all-important. In 1906, a team of relay drivers running their car around the clock completed the trek in 15 days. One intrepid driver crossed the country three times and served as a guide on a fourth voyage.

All of these facts come from *Coast to Coast by Automobile*. McConnell, the author of *Great Cars of the Great Plains* (1995), has studied his subject exhaustively. In addition to sifting through *Scientific American* and *Motor Age*, he has consulted such obscure sources as the *Harney Valley Items* of Burns, Oregon, and the *Daily Hub* of Kearny, Nebraska. From them he has carefully culled stories about the various trips, correcting common misconceptions and constructing detailed itineraries.

Occasionally, McConnell recounts the trips in such detail that the narrative gets a little bumpy, as when he tells us three times that a driver was stopped for speeding in Buffalo. At other times, we might wish for a larger perspective. What were Americans reading and thinking between 1899 and 1908? What other stories were reported in all those newspapers that McConnell read? But these are minor quibbles about an important, amply illustrated work. Anyone who has read accounts of early automobile travel knows how difficult it is to separate fact from fiction. Because of McConnell's meticulous research, we at last have a reliable guide to the first decade of cross-country automobile travel.

—Tom Lewis

ROBERT KENNEDY: His Life.
By Evan Thomas. Simon & Schuster. 509 pp. $28

Of the making of books about Robert Francis Kennedy (1925–68) there seems no end. After *Robert Kennedy: Brother Protector* (1997), *The Last Patrician* (1998), *Mutual Contempt* (1999), and *In Love with Night* (2000), to name just a recent few, comes this biography by a *Newsweek* journalist. Thomas believes he is the first writer since historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Kennedy's friend and admiring biographer, to gain access to important closed papers at the Kennedy Library. Thomas also has mined other resources, conducted interviews, and read the literature.

The result will not supplant Schlesinger's masterly *Robert Kennedy and His Times* (1978), but it does shed additional light here and there, offering appraisals from a more detached yet still fair-minded perspective. Of the futile, "more silly than sinister" plots by the CIA-cum-Mafia to kill Fidel Castro, for instance, Thomas writes that Kennedy's involvement, if any, was probably "peripheral," and that RFK himself later became the real victim, growing "very fearful" that the plots might have sparked his brother's assassination. The author finds Attorney General Kennedy more culpable for the Federal Bureau of Investigation's extensive use of electronic listening devices. Kennedy later insisted that he had not known about the practice, but "the evidence strongly suggests that RFK was not speaking truthfully," writes Thomas. "At the very least, [he] displayed a notable lack of curiosity about the source of the FBI's intelligence on the mob."

Under pressure from FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, Kennedy did authorize the wiretapping of Martin Luther King, Jr., whose adviser Stanley Levison was alleged to be a secret Communist and Soviet agent. The wiretapping seems to trouble Thomas much more than it did Levison, who, while denying the allegations against him, told Schlesinger that he understood the political necessity for the Kennedys to avoid any scandal, given their support for the civil rights movement. Though later remorseful about Hoover's "grotesque

smear campaign" against King, Thomas notes, Kennedy was "not personally sympathetic" to the civil rights leader. After movingly addressing an Indianapolis crowd the night King was slain in 1968, Kennedy remained dry-eyed while some of his staffers wept. "After all, it's not the greatest tragedy in the history of the Republic," he told one aide, perhaps thinking of another assassination five years earlier.

Haunted by his brother's death, Kennedy turned to displays of physical courage—climbing mountains, shooting white-water rapids, plunging into piranha-infested waters. There may have been an element of political calculation in some of those displays, a point that Thomas oddly relegates to a footnote: In a 1966 memo, adviser Fred Dutton recommended "at least one major, exciting personal adventure or activity every six months or so," which would help move Kennedy "into the 'existential' politics that I believe will be more and more important in the years ahead."

Alas, there were few years ahead for Kennedy. Had he lived, it is by no means certain that he would have won his party's presidential nomination and then the election. Nor can we know what sort of president he would have been. But, writes Thomas, "he would have surely tried to tackle the problems of poverty and discrimination, and . . . to end the killing in Vietnam long before President Nixon did." For many who were young then, and who look back yearningly on the imagined path not taken, that is enough.

—Robert K. Landers

THE MYSTERY OF COURAGE. By William Ian Miller. Harvard Univ. Press. 346 pp. $29.95

Miller first intended to write about cowardice, a subject that most of us intuitively understand. We can identify with the Confederate soldier's response to flying bullets and exploding shells at Antietam: "How I ran! Or tried to run through the high corn. . . . I was afraid of being struck in the back, and I frequently turned half around in running, so as to avoid if possible so disgraceful a wound." More difficult for us to grasp is the captain in Vietnam who, as described by an infantryman, "charged a Viet Cong soldier, killing him at chest-to-chest range, first throwing a grenade, then running flat out across a paddy, up to the Viet Cong's ditch, then shooting him to death." Later, the captain says to the infantryman: "I'd rather be brave than almost anything. How does that strike you?"

Miller kept finding himself drawn from the Confederate to the captain, from natural self-preservation to seemingly unnatural valor, and so he decided to write about courage. A law professor at the University of Michigan and the author of *An Anatomy of Disgust* (1997), he attempts to cover the entirety of the vast topic, including moral strength, civility, chastity, and the courage of the terminally ill, but it is his battlefield ruminations that prove the most compelling.

The fortunes of war depend on how troops handle the uncommon stress of combat, stress that turns out to be cumulative. During the intense Normandy campaign of 1944, one study found, troops' "maximum period of efficiency occurred between 12 and 30 days, after which it decayed rapidly through stages of hyperreactivity to complete emotional exhaustion, ending in a vegetative state by day 60." Those few men (two percent) who could keep fighting, week after week, were found to have "aggressive, psychopathic personalities." That is the great difficulty for soldiers—performing fearlessly in battle, yet managing to temper warlike impulses in ordinary life—and it arises frequently in literature and history. Norse sagas speak admiringly of heroic warriors but warn against "uneven men" who pick fights, "exercising their courage by testing that of others."

Aristotle maintains that the truly courageous man is virtuous in all ways, an assertion that strikes modern sensibilities as a bit too neat. Indeed, one admires those less-than-courageous soldiers who nonetheless get the job done. Some, though practically paralyzed by fear, pick themselves up and advance. Others act bravely because they fear court martial (though the author cites numerous examples of soldiers coming up short and receiving little or no punishment) or the goading of fellow combatants. Then there is the courage of the average soldier who, the author writes, "charges ahead assisted, but only in part, by his tot of rum."

Tales of bravery, Miller observes in a brief, somewhat wistful postscript, can elicit uneasy

self-scrutiny as well as admiration: "The courage of average people forces us to make a personal accounting; it makes a powerful demand on us to conform and sets us to fearing that we might not be up to it." If we're not up to it, perhaps we can hope to justify ourselves as well as the British private who explained, "I'm not afraid, Colonel, Sir. But I don't want to be shot at. I have a wife and pigs at home."

—James Carman

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From the Center

Many expect that the closely divided Congress convening at the start of this new year will become mired in endless bickering and accomplish little. Indeed, the perception of division and contention in Congress is a principal cause of the public's expressed lack of confidence in the institution. I've often been asked, with varying degrees of exasperation, "Why can't the members of Congress end their differences and work together?" The beginning of the 107th session seems an appropriate moment to reflect on that question.

Why is it so difficult for Congress to reach agreement on so many issues? One obvious reason is the nature of politics, plain and simple. The continual struggle for partisan or personal advantage, particularly in an election year, can stall the work of Congress substantially. That's certainly something I saw demonstrated time and again during my own 34 years of service as a congressman.

But there's a more fundamental reason. The fact is that Congress was not designed to move quickly or to be a model of efficiency and swift action. All of us need to understand that debate, disagreement, and delay are natural, and important, components of the legislative process, with a long historical tradition. The Founders intentionally devised a government that would rely on a system of checks and balances to forestall hasty action. So though legislative disputes and delays may often be frustrating to us, they are not the self-evident signs of a democracy in decay.

The job of the Congress is to reach consensus on meeting the most intractable public policy challenges of our day. When a broad consensus exists in society, Congress can move with dispatch. But such consensus is rare especially on the tough issues at the forefront of public life. We live in a complicated country, of vast size and remarkable diversity. Our people are spread far and wide, and they represent a great variety of beliefs, religions, and ethnicities. If Congress is to forge policies that accurately reflect the diverse perspectives of the American people, it must first build consensus, however slowly and painfully.

The task of achieving consensus is made additionally difficult nowadays by the sheer number of issues before Congress, by the complex and technical character of many of them, and by the staggering rapidity with which they come at members. In the Federalist Papers, James Madison wrote that a member of Congress must understand just three matters: commerce, taxation, and the militia. To a member today, that observation will seem hopelessly antiquated (and terribly appealing). A few years ago, when I sat down with the Speaker of the House to discuss the bills that should be placed on the House calendar in the closing days of the session, he remarked that most of the issues we were discussing would not even have been on the agenda 15 years earlier.

Whenever I visit with students in American government classes, I make a point of flipping through their textbooks to find the time-hallowed diagrams showing "how a bill becomes a law." In a technical sense, of course, the diagrams, with their neat boxes and relentless arrows, are accurate. Yet I can't help but think how boring they are as well. They give a woefully incomplete picture of the often untidy legislative process, and, as a result, they fail to convey its vitality.

None of the human drama of the Congress at work is in the diagrams. Missing entirely are the give-and-take among members and hard-working staff, the political pressures brought to bear on them, the obstacles put in their path, the incremental advances, the unexpected setbacks, and the eventual satisfaction when the job is done. Yes, there may be sharp division and boisterous debate along the way, and the whole procedure may take more time than an outside (or even an inside) observer might think it should. But in the end what matters is that this process of deliberation, negotiation, and compromise serves democracy well and enables us to live together peacefully and productively.

Lee H. Hamilton
Director

Wilson Center Events

Annual Benefit Dinner for the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies
With a performance by the Kozlov Ballet and remarks by Ambassador **Yuri Ushakov**, held at the Embassy of the Russian Federation, **October 18**

"Early Soviet Studies in Light of Newly Available Materials"
A seminar sponsored by the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies and the Cold War International History Project
Joseph S. Berliner, Professor Emeritus of Economics, Brandeis University
Alex Inkeles, Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution
Robert Tucker, Professor Emeritus of Politics, Princeton University,
October 19

"Paths to Regional Integration: The Case of Mercosur"
A conference sponsored by the Latin American Program, **November 9**

"Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the 20th Century"
Sponsored by the Environmental Change and Security Project,
J. R. McNeill, Professor of History, Georgetown University, and former Wilson Center Fellow, held at Georgetown University, **November 16**

"Five Years of Peacekeeping in the Balkans: Is There An End in Sight?"
A two-panel seminar, **November 17**

"The Freshman Experience: Ideals, Impressions, and Influences"
A seminar sponsored by the Congress Project,
former Representative **Tom Downey** (D-N.Y.) and Representative **Roger Wicker** (R-Miss.), **November 17**

The Director's Forum
with columnist **George Will, December 12**

This calendar is only a partial listing of Wilson Center events. For further information on these and other events, visit the Center's web site at http://www.wilsoncenter.org. The Center is in the Ronald Reagan Building, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. Although many events are open to the public, some meetings may require reservations. Contact Cynthia Ely at (202) 691-4188 to confirm time, place, and entry requirements. Please allow time on arrival at the Center for routine security procedures. A photo ID is required for entry.