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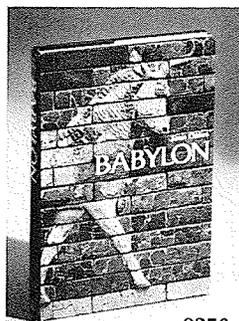
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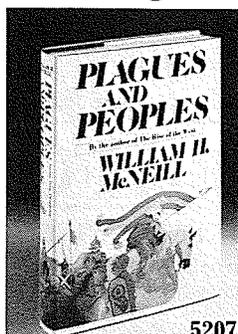
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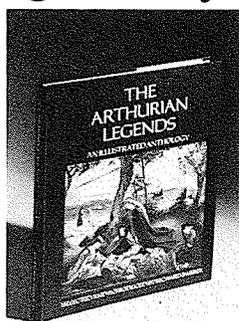
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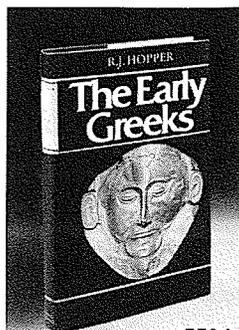
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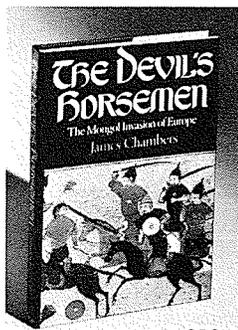
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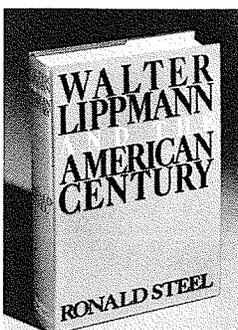
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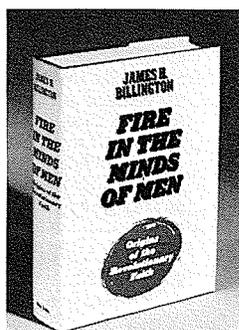
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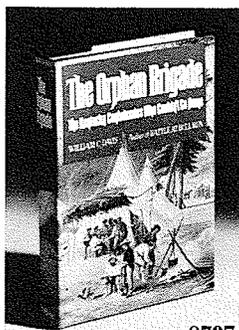
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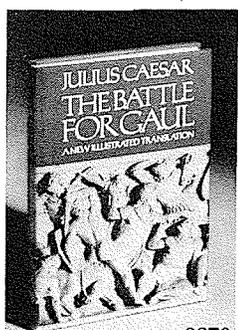
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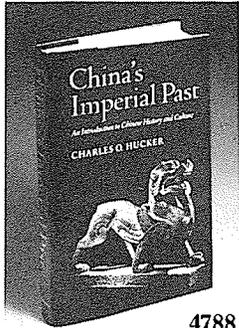
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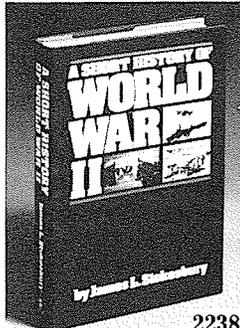
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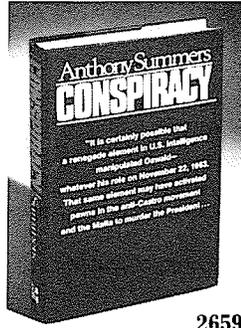
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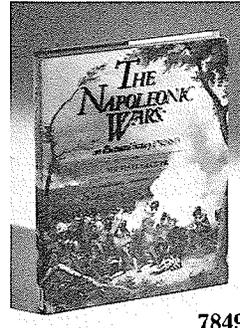
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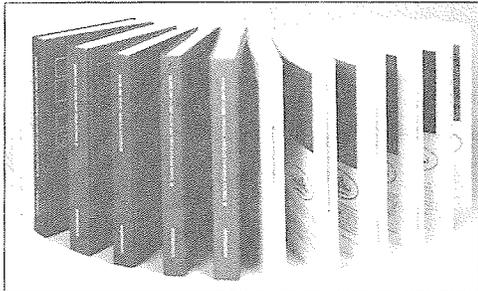
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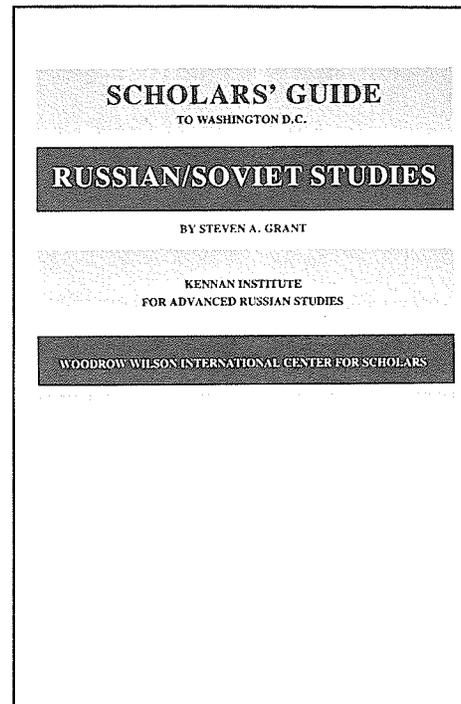


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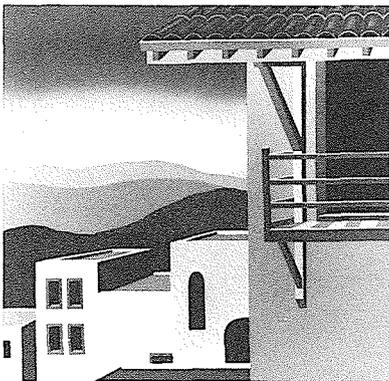
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Editor's Comment

What do we know about television? Not enough. As with efforts to gauge other outside influences on human behavior, measuring the *effects* of television on American habits, beliefs, or public opinion usually becomes a matter of conjecture. Human beings and their environments are too complicated. Take TV news. Both its critics and champions believe that the three network anchormen—Messrs. Cronkite, Chancellor, Reynolds—and their respective evening news programs exert enormous influence, if only because they draw a combined average audience of 30 million Americans every night.

But, as our contributor Lawrence Lichty has found, this statistic is a bit misleading. During a given month, half of the nation's 76.3 million TV-owning households do not watch any network evening news program. Of the households that do watch, roughly two-thirds watch about one evening a week. Only 6 percent loyally tune in as often as four or five nights a week.

Why does the TV audience fluctuate so much—far more than the audience for newspapers and news magazines? No one knows, exactly. It may be that television news is really seen by most viewers, as it is by TV executives, not as a source of "information" but as just another "show"—like *Dallas* or *Lou Grant* or the rest of television programming, not to be taken too seriously. Perhaps the new information that Americans, including TV anchormen, *think* about still comes only in print.

Professor Lichty and the other specialists who analyze "Television in America" in this issue avoid easy speculations. They do not always agree. But they do suggest that (a) television, while it may be superfluous as a communications technology, has become a vital distraction for millions of Americans; (b) it is not going to "improve" or fade away; and (c) its effects on the young, in particular, merit considerably more serious attention from parents and educators than they have received.

Peter Braestrup

PERIODICALS

Reviews of articles from periodicals and specialized journals here and abroad

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POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

Why Presidents Cannot Govern

"To Form a Government" by Lloyd N. Cutler, in *Foreign Affairs* (Fall 1980), 428 East Preston St., Baltimore, Md. 21202.

"Checks and Ballances, Jefferson . . . are our only Security," John Adams wrote to his old friend and adversary in 1813. But the wedge driven by the Constitution between Congress and the President has led to stalemated government in the 20th century, writes Cutler, former counsel to President Carter. He urges reforms that would nudge America toward a British-style parliamentary system.

The costs of the "separation of powers" have skyrocketed in recent decades, Cutler contends. A President needs to respond quickly and with authority to today's rapid-fire foreign crises. Domestically, the federal government must juggle conflicting goals more than ever before—slowing inflation, encouraging economic growth, reducing unemployment, protecting the environment. The President is expected to carry out his campaign pledges. But a consensus in Congress is hard to reach when decisions invariably create some "losers" among constituents. Watered-down measures, not vigorous policy, are the result. Cutler cites the National Energy Act of 1978 as an example.

Recent political developments have widened the chasm between Capitol Hill and the White House. During the 1960s and '70s, congressional reformers attacked the seniority system and fatally weakened the power of Capitol Hill barons to work with the President and ride herd over their colleagues. Political parties, too, have lost some of their leverage. In an age of primaries, "bosses" no longer pick candidates. And politicians today increasingly raise campaign funds on their own rather than relying on party war chests.

Cutler recommends electing the U.S. President, Vice President, Senators, and Congressmen for concurrent six-year terms. He would

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

give the Chief Executive the British parliamentary privilege of dissolving an uncooperative Congress and calling new elections—once during his single term. The legislators, in turn, could call for a simultaneous presidential election. Moreover, Cutler would limit Congress's legislative initiatives to general policy declarations and budget ceilings. The President would fill in the details. Only by turning the present process "on its head," the author concludes, can a President accomplish what he is elected to do—i.e., govern.

The Politics of Mistrust

"The Public-Interest Movement in the American Reform Tradition" by David Vogel, in *Political Science Quarterly* (Winter 1980/81), Ste. 500, 619 West 114th St., New York, N.Y. 10025.

Like the labor unions of the 1930s and the Progressive reformers before them, self-styled "public interest" organizations such as Public Citizen, Inc., founded by Ralph Nader, have pushed successfully to increase corporate accountability.

But the accomplishments of today's citizen lobbies mask some fundamental flaws, suggests Vogel, a Berkeley political scientist.

Unlike Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Dealers and their liberal successors, public interest groups formed since the early 1970s have been suspicious of Big Government as a policeman of Big Business. They contend that corporation lawyers and lobbyists dominate regulatory agencies and Congress. The movement's avowed aim is to give the unorganized majority of Americans a strong voice on regulatory issues.

Yet Nader and his allies now want Washington to subsidize citizens' groups. One proposed plan calls for a voluntary tax to finance semiofficial watchdog groups monitoring industries such as utilities, insurance, and automobiles. Moreover, though determined to share in the tougher regulation of business, public interest groups seem to shy away from the concept of majority rule. They look to the courts, not the legislatures, to give power to "the people."

Vogel argues that these approaches are, ultimately, self-defeating. The public interest movement's reliance on the courts mocks its "citizen participation" rhetoric; few Americans have the time to sue companies or federal agencies unless, like public interest lawyers, they can make a living at it. Precisely because it has made "opposing business" into a business, the movement now faces the same charges of "elitism" and "self-interest" as Big Business. And in seeking federal subsidies, public interest groups forget that such handouts are never "free" but subject to Washington's whims.

Ironically, the movement's victories in such matters as assuring cleaner air and product safety have simply produced more litigation and more regulation by more bureaucrats. This growing government intervention, writes Vogel, has gradually aroused citizens' ire as "an illegitimate interference with their lives."

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT*The Image-Makers
of 1896*

"Issues, Voter Choice, and Critical Elections" by W. Lance Bennett and William Haltom, in *Social Science History* (Nov. 1980), Sage Publications, Inc., 275 South Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212.

Why have certain American campaigns produced sharp and often lasting voter realignments? The 1896 presidential race sheds light on the phenomenon of "critical elections," write Bennett and Haltom, a political science professor and graduate student, respectively, at the University of Washington.



The Kenton Broyles Collection, Smithsonian Institution.

Republican William McKinley's 1896 presidential campaign addressed voters' fears of anarchy and economic depression.

Democrat William Jennings Bryan, a charismatic former Nebraska Congressman, and Republican William McKinley, the popular Governor of Ohio, campaigned for the White House in a crisis atmosphere in 1896. Economic recovery from the Panic of 1893 was painfully slow. Labor violence had raised the specter of anarchy. Bryan's depression cure involved a bold plan to expand the money supply by coining silver as well as gold. McKinley favored higher tariffs to protect American businesses and jobs. To the voters, however, it was the way the candidates presented their arguments that made the difference.

Bryan warned that America stood at a crossroads. He described the 1896 election as an "Armageddon between the forces of plutocracy and democracy," write Bennett and Haltom, between the working Americans of the hard-hit South and West and the "money changers of the East," between farmers and city-dwellers ("You come to tell us that the great cities are in favor of the gold standard; we reply that the great cities rest upon our broad and fertile prairies.")

POLITICS & GOVERNMENT

McKinley struck a “dignified” pose, addressing crowds from the front porch of his Canton, Ohio, home. His down-to-earth argument that free silver talk was scaring business and could spark another depression contrasted with Bryan’s mystical references to a “cross of gold.” (“A full dinner pail” was one McKinley slogan.) McKinley criticized Bryan’s appeals to class and region as divisive; meanwhile, Republicans showered the electorate with star-spangled campaign buttons and banners.

A record 14 million Americans cast their ballots in 1896. McKinley swept the North and Midwest, attracting farmers with few ties to the South or West as well as the rapidly growing mass of urban workers. Both groups had formerly voted Democratic. For a 36-year stretch broken only by Democrat Woodrow Wilson’s 1912 and 1916 victories, the GOP signified to a majority of Americans the party of unity, patriotism, and prosperity. Then, in 1932, the Great Depression brought another critical election, and the coming of the New Deal.

The Meaning of Off-Year Elections

“The Fiction of Congressional Elections as Presidential Events” by Lyn Ragsdale, in *American Politics Quarterly* (Oct. 1980), Sage Publications, Inc., 275 South Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212.

It is an article of faith among most political observers that off-year congressional elections register the President’s popularity at the half-way mark. But the facts show otherwise, contends Ragsdale, a political scientist at the University of Wisconsin.

Ragsdale studied election returns from the last three off-year House and Senate campaigns. In 1970, the moderately popular President Nixon crisscrossed the nation blasting liberal Democrats and injecting his own record into local races. The results were ambiguous: The Democrats’ Senate majority was cut by 4 seats, but the GOP’s already small House base shrank by 12. In 1974, Americans voted just months after Nixon’s Watergate-induced resignation. Congressional Republicans nearly became an endangered species. In 1978, President Carter enjoyed a healthy approval rating in opinion polls but campaigned for few House and Senate candidates. Hardly any seats changed hands.

Ragsdale compared voters’ presidential evaluations with their records of supporting incumbents, their expressed party preferences, and their actual votes. She found that individuals approving Nixon’s performance in office were no more likely to vote for Republicans than for Democrats in 1970. Voters showed a small preference for incumbents. But by far the strongest predictor of each 1970 vote was professed party loyalty. Similarly, Jimmy Carter’s popular standing had little discernable impact on voter behavior in 1978. Even in 1974, party loyalty and incumbency far outweighed disapproval of Presidents Nixon and Ford in the voters’ minds.

The congressional candidates themselves—their experience, personal

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qualities, and records—are decisive factors to most voters. A President's popularity may tip the balance in tight races, Ragsdale notes. But Americans clearly regard off-year elections as congressional events, not as a chance to "send a message" to the White House.

Lincoln and the Generation Gap

"All the Living and the Dead: Lincoln's Imagery" by James Hurt, in *American Literature* (Nov. 1980), Duke University Press Bldg., East Campus, Duke University, Durham, N.C. 27706.

Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address is short and not terribly profound, and stresses themes well-worn even by 1863. Yet its images moved the 16th President's countrymen and generations of Americans thereafter. Lincoln's personal experiences, which uncannily reflected America's frustrations at mid-century, gave his rhetoric its power, contends Hurt, an English professor at the University of Illinois.

Lincoln (1809-65) spent the most important years of his life in New Salem, Ill. He later recalled arriving there in 1831 as purposeful as a "piece of floating driftwood." He worked as a flatboatman, shopkeeper, and postmaster. Beneath his aimlessness burned a desire to reject a despised father. Thomas Lincoln was a shiftless, uneducated dirt farmer with a deep Jacksonian faith in the masses. In New Salem, his son schooled himself in mathematics, grammar, and public speaking. He studied law, belittled by frontier Jacksonians as a tool of the rich. By the time Abraham Lincoln left New Salem to practice law in Springfield in 1837, he had rejected the country for the city and embraced the Whiggish vision of a democratic society "led by a natural aristocracy of ability and reason," writes Hunt.

From the 1820s to the '60s, the nation too was embroiled in a father-son conflict of sorts. The exhilarating work of nation-building was over. Only the mundane obligation to preserve the Republic remained. As Daniel Webster complained in 1843, "Heaven has not allotted to this generation an opportunity of rendering high services [such as the Founding Fathers had]." Lincoln's countrymen at once revered and resented their predecessors' achievements. Familiar with such ambivalence, Lincoln feared that ambitious "sons," denied the chance to build, would seek glory by tearing down.

As early as 1838, Lincoln fired American imaginations by insisting that the challenge of preserving the Union against divisive forces would have taxed the powers of General Washington. Twenty-five years later, on the field of Gettysburg, he pointedly described those "brave men . . . who struggled here" as heroes. By giving "the last full measure of devotion," American sons remained true to their forefathers and perhaps outshone them in a "great Civil War." Having wrestled with his own father's legacy, Lincoln felt the truth of these images more keenly than most. The depth of his private feelings enabled him to speak for an age.

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

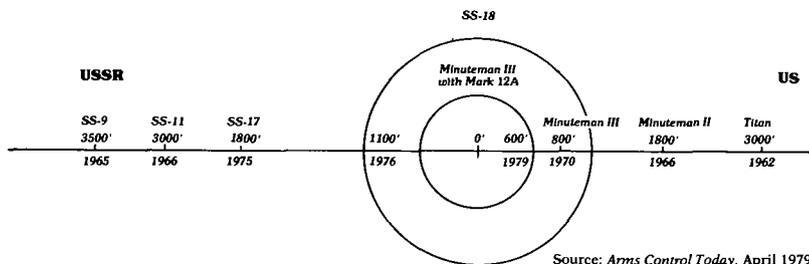
*The Margins of
Missile Error*

“The Myth of Missile Accuracy” by Andrew Cockburn and Alexander Cockburn, in *The New York Review of Books* (Nov. 20, 1980), Subscription Service Dept., P.O. Box 940, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

The belief that Soviet nuclear missiles can strike accurately enough to destroy U.S. Minuteman silos weakened support for the 1979 SALT II treaty. A similar confidence in the ability of U.S. intercontinental missiles to land on target underlay the Carter administration’s “limited war” nuclear strategy aimed at wiping out Soviet missiles, not cities. But are U.S. and Soviet weapons really that accurate?

After launch, intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) are guided by computer programs designed to compensate for natural factors that may throw a missile off course—e.g., gravity or atmospheric disturbances. But, note the authors, a contributing editor of *Defense Review* and a columnist for *The Village Voice*, respectively, these forces can be unpredictable. Since the Earth is not a perfect sphere, and varies in density, its gravitational field is uneven enough to confuse on-board missile computers. Moreover, a nuclear warhead’s shallow 25° angle of re-entry into the atmosphere requires it to travel hundreds of miles through the Earth’s turbulent air blanket. Solar flares (which change the atmosphere’s density), jet streams, and thunderstorms can each deflect a warhead traveling at 12,000 miles per hour by as much as 1,000 feet, enough to save a well-protected target.

Moreover, the authors write, the data bases for both U.S. and Soviet guidance programs are inherently faulty. In test flights, the United States fires its missiles from California westward over the Pacific. The Soviet test path extends eastward, from north European Russia to Siberia and the Northern Pacific. Yet both superpowers’ attack plans call for launching missiles *northward*, over the Pole, into a largely uncharted and untried stretch of atmosphere.



These Soviet and American missiles supposedly have a 50 percent chance of striking within distances from a target, as shown above. Even these figures may be optimistic.

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A U.S. civilian satellite network called NAVSTAR, currently being tested, could overcome many of these problems by radioing inflight data to missile guidance computers. Yet this system could easily be jammed from the ground or possibly destroyed by antisatellite weapons now being developed by the Soviets. "Missiles," remind the authors, "do not exist in the orderly universe of strategic theologians" but in a real world of accidents and imponderables.

A Better Break for South Africa

"South Africa: Strategy for Change" by
Chester A. Crocker, in *Foreign Affairs*
(Winter 1980/81), 428 East Preston St.,
Baltimore, Md. 21202.

South Africa's new white leaders recognize that the apartheid system of racial segregation must go, writes Crocker, director of African studies at the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies. U.S. South African policy should acknowledge the advent of political and economic reforms likely to hasten its end.

The stinging rhetorical attacks made by Carter administration officials have simply rallied many white South Africans behind the racial status quo and eroded America's influence, Crocker asserts. Moreover, South Africa's burgeoning economic strength (real growth has reached 7 percent annually) will neutralize any future Western trade sanctions and arms embargoes.

Since taking office in 1978, Prime Minister P. W. Botha and his pragmatic National Party have quietly rooted out many strongholds of opposition to racial change. Last year, for instance, Botha pushed through constitutional amendments abolishing the South African Senate and permitting the Prime Minister to nominate Cabinet ministers and parliamentarians. Moreover, Botha has brought professionals and business leaders into top government jobs. Keenly aware that apartheid has created a shortage of skilled workers, they have already dismantled some barriers to black workers' career opportunities.

Yet racial equality will never come as long as South Africa feels threatened by its black-ruled neighbors, such as avowedly Marxist Angola and Mozambique, which harbor Cuban soldiers and advisers. The Botha government fears that these forces will radicalize South Africa's black majority. To combat communist influence in the region, the United States should boost economic aid—but not on the basis of a "Marxist/non-Marxist litmus test." Even radical leaders such as Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe seem willing to moderate their hostility toward South Africa and snub the Soviets to gain Western assistance.

Crocker advises continuing the United Nations arms embargo against South Africa. Yet he would scrap U.S. plans for further trade and investment sanctions. Instead, American leaders should praise any limited reforms capable of leading to further progress—especially measures that strengthen blacks' economic base, improve black schools, and increase blacks' opportunities to organize politically.

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE*Is Japan
Breaking Away?*

"The Risen Sun: Japanese Gaullism?" by Isaac Shapiro, in *Foreign Policy* (Winter 1980/81), P.O. Box 984, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

According to a recent poll, most Japanese still regard the United States as "the country most important to Japan." Yet a majority also consider their nation's policies too subservient to American interests, writes Shapiro, former head of the Japan Society.

In 1950, the Japanese eagerly accepted America's offer of protection in exchange for a quick restoration of self-rule after World War II. But American setbacks in Vietnam, Iran, and Afghanistan have stirred Japanese doubts about U.S. military strength and reliability—as have recent American suggestions that Japan shoulder a greater defense burden. Broad Japanese support for a nonnuclear military build-up has resulted. The current Prime Minister, Zenko Suzuki, has hiked the fiscal 1981 military budget by 9.7 percent (it will still represent a tiny—0.91—percent of gross national product) while holding nonmilitary spending increases to 7.9 percent. Most Japanese oppose creating a nuclear force, but nearly 40 percent believe that one is inevitable by 1990.

Japanese nationalism is reviving. Since 1977, polls have revealed a growing interest—particularly among the young—in native history and culture. More than half of Japan's citizens were born after the country's 1945 surrender to the Allies. Few among the next generation of Japanese leaders will be inclined to automatically follow Western diplomatic and military leadership.

Even now, Japan seems to be pursuing an independent "resource diplomacy." Still heavily reliant on American farm products, Japan now buys most of its coal, gas, minerals, and, most importantly, crude oil from Third World nations. Senior Japanese officials now travel regularly to the Middle East. And since 1974, Japan has supported upgrading the Palestine Liberation Organization's status at the United Nations, over U.S. opposition.

As Shapiro sees it, Washington should phase out the 1950 U.S.-Japanese security treaty (increasingly a symbol of inequality to many Japanese), withdraw remaining American forces from the home islands, and accept Japan as an independent power. With U.S. military strength waning, a strong, friendly Japan could help counteract Soviet influence in Asia.

Avoiding the Draft

"How to Save the All-Volunteer Force" by Charles C. Moskos, in *The Public Interest* (Fall 1980), Box 542, Old Chelsea, New York, N.Y. 10011.

Since the start of the all-volunteer force (AVF) in 1973, the American military has struggled to attract the 350,000 men and women it needs each year, and fallen short. Today, the AVF is "on the ragged edge of survival," reports Moskos, a Northwestern University sociologist.

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The author blames the problem not on low pay but on the decline of the military as a fair cross section of American youth. Black "over-representation" has been widely publicized. But the educational attainment of recruits, in general, is low. Since 1973, only 60 percent of Army enlistees have been high school graduates, compared with nearly 75 percent of America's 19-year-old males. (The figure for black volunteers is higher—65 percent.) High school dropouts are only half as likely as graduates to complete their initial Army enlistments. And the education levels of recruits are falling. In 1964, 13.9 percent of the volunteers had completed some college. In 1979, only 3.2 percent of the recruits could say the same. And in 1980, only 276 of the Army's 339,678 first-year enlistees were college graduates.

Lower-class volunteers not only become less proficient soldiers. They also compound the AVF's inability to produce career soldiers and non-commissioned officers. The military's drive to attract new recruits with higher pay (\$501.30 a month) and fringe benefits (e.g., fewer "Mickey Mouse" regulations and fancier barracks) has narrowed the gap between privates and sergeants. Few incentives to re-enlist and rise through the ranks now exist.

The services lack middle-class youths, Moskos argues, because they are now seen by the affluent as welfare programs for an American "underclass." Rather than reinstate the draft, he proposes a new GI Bill for volunteer soldiers. He recommends making two years of military or equivalent civilian service—at low pay—a prerequisite for all federal aid to youths in financing their college educations. And he urges a two-track military personnel system. "Career soldiers" would get significantly higher wages than "civilian soldiers," in return for four-year enlistments. Offered steady pay increases, this group would provide the experienced "lifers" the Army badly needs.

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Replacing Keynes

"'Rational Expectations' as a Counter-revolution" by Mark H. Willes, in *The Public Interest* (Special Issue, 1980), P.O. Box 542, Old Chelsea, N.Y. 10011.

The notion of "rational expectations" does not sound like the basis of an economic revolution. But Willes, former president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, claims that this updated concept has already "devastated" the current economic orthodoxy developed by John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946) and will probably succeed it.

Keynes devised his theory in response to the failure of 19th-century classical economics to account for the record unemployment and long slump in output during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The British

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economist rejected classical beliefs that individuals always act in their best interests and that free markets always “clear”—that is, that prices and wages rise and fall to reach an equilibrium at which there are no shortages and no involuntary unemployment.

Keynes and, later, his disciples assumed that individuals will not react sharply even to sudden changes in prices or tax rates. They constructed economic models based on aggregate measures of economic activity, such as the money supply and the unemployment rate, rather than individual choices. Their “irrational expectations” theory accounted for involuntary unemployment, but it shed little light on a newer 20th-century phenomenon—simultaneous high joblessness and inflation. The problem: Keynesian theory assumed that individuals and businesses would continue making decisions that contributed to seemingly desirable *macroeconomic* ends, such as low unemployment and high economic growth rates, no matter what the cost in inflation.

In the 1960s, Richard Muth (now at Stanford) began devising models assuming that abrupt federal policy shifts would induce individuals to take abrupt steps, if necessary, to maintain and, if possible, increase profits. And during the '70s, several economists developed classically based models that took into account both inflation and unemployment. These economists believe that the way individual businessmen, for instance, perceive tradeoffs between ever-rising production and ever-rising costs may determine the economic future.

Rational expectations theorists cannot yet fully explain how government policy changes affect economic activity, Willes acknowledges. But, he adds, neither can the Keynesians after 40 years. The new theory casts doubt on the merits of incessant government manipulations of the money supply, taxes, and the federal deficit; it supports policies and regulations that are clear and constant. Until economic theory becomes a reliable predictor, concludes Willes, “We must choose policies that accommodate our ignorance.”

Do It Yourself

“The Slowing Down of the Engine of Growth” by W. Arthur Lewis, in *The American Economic Review* (Sept. 1980), Secretary, American Economic Association, 1313 21st Ave. So., Ste. 809, Nashville, Tenn. 37121.

Third World economic growth has long hinged on the prosperity of Europe and North America. Since 1960, for instance, the record 8 percent annual expansion of world trade—dominated by the West and Japan—has helped the less developed countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to achieve 6 percent annual growth rates.

In this edited version of his 1979 Nobel Prize acceptance speech, Lewis, a Princeton economist, argues that a dawning era of sluggish growth in the industrialized world need not slow economic progress in developing regions.

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The key, Lewis asserts, is greater trade among Third World countries. Such commerce has accounted for just one-fifth of all exports from non-oil-producing developing countries—largely because poor nations have depended on the West for food, fertilizer, cement, steel, and machinery. But many developing countries have become important producers of industrial materials. Machinery now represents at least 15 percent of industrial output in India, Brazil, Singapore, Chile, South Korea, Argentina, and Mexico. The value of Third World exports of engineering products today exceeds that of textiles and clothing.

Already, international trade agreements permit 16 of the larger, wealthier Third World nations to act as a trade bloc—negotiating mutual trade preferences that they may deny to industrial countries. But obstacles to greater intra-Third World trade remain formidable, Lewis concedes. Because many poor countries share similar climates and technological shortcomings, they export the same goods—mainly raw materials, textiles, and electric appliances.

The poor countries must boost food production, not only to sustain larger numbers of urban industrial workers but also to expand the buying power of farmers. Increasing domestic demand for local goods will help offset shrinking foreign trade revenues from the West. But this will require large domestic investments. Third World governments cannot do it alone. The West, says Lewis, will “have to be in a mood to say: We will not give you more trade; here for a while is more aid.”

Haves and Have-Nots

“Labor’s Critical Issue: The Two-Tiered Society” by Sol C. Chaikin, in *The Journal of the Institute for Socioeconomic Studies* (Autumn 1980), Airport Road, White Plains, N.Y. 10604.

America’s blue-collar work force has been rapidly polarizing. There are the “haves,” employed in historically prosperous, capital-intensive industries such as steel, oil refining, autos, and aerospace; and there are the “have-nots,” who toil in labor-intensive textile, jewelry, and furniture factories, among others. This widening split could doom organized labor’s long-standing strategy for creating prosperity—i.e., boosting the purchasing power of the working poor. So warns Chaikin, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

In 1978, “first-tier” workers’ incomes generally exceeded the U.S. median of \$17,640. But most “second-tier” laborers earned less than \$10,000. Employees in most heavy industries enjoy generous fringe benefits worth roughly 40 percent of hourly wages, while light industry laborers receive only about 35 percent of their smaller earnings. And the gap is spreading. In 1950, a typical garment worker made 67 percent of an auto worker’s wages (excluding benefits). By 1979, the figure had dropped to 46 percent.

Why the disparity? In capital-intensive industries, labor accounts for only a small fraction of total production expenses. A 10 percent wage

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increase will hike an auto manufacturer's costs by 1.5 percent or less; a similar increase will raise textile makers' costs 3 or 4 percent. Management's reluctance to see expensive equipment idled by strikes increases union bargaining power in heavy industries. Work stoppages are less damaging to light industry; here, managers can — and do — relocate plants with relative ease.

Chaikin fears that the better-paid union members will abandon their support for traditional labor causes such as special tax relief for the working poor and continuing minimum wage increases. He reminds labor's "haves" that 85 percent of Americans in private industry have second-tier jobs. Increasing these workers' ability to buy while protecting American firms from "unfair" foreign competition, he contends, is the best way to guarantee expanding domestic markets.

An End to Complacency

"Gone are the Cash Cows of Yesteryear"
by Raymond Vernon, in *Harvard Business Review* (Nov.-Dec. 1980), Subscription Service Dept., P.O. Box 9730, Greenwich, Conn. 06835.

Are American sales slumping worldwide because American scientists and engineers are out of ideas? No, says Vernon, professor of international affairs at Harvard. The problem stems from past success.

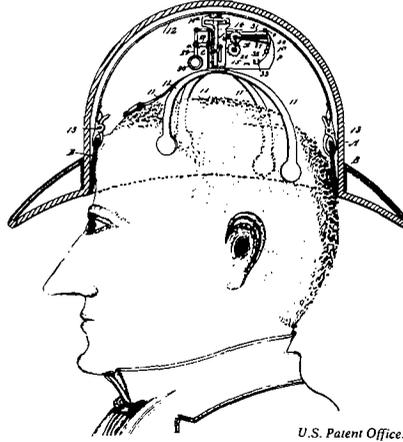
Americans are getting fewer patents relative to foreigners both at home and abroad. But inventions tell only part of the story. Vernon traces early U.S. technological superiority to a matching of capability to necessity—to an abundance of resources and a chronic shortage of skilled labor. To tap the United States's large internal market, 19th-century American manufacturers created labor-saving devices such as sewing, glass-blowing, woodworking, and metal-working machines. They were able to sate consumers' voracious appetites for new conveniences, even though much of the nation's work force remained tied up in farming and mining.

European manufacturers, on the other hand, generally had to cope with energy and resource shortages. Labor, however, was plentiful. Consequently, Europe's heavy industries pioneered innovations that conserved capital and fuel, such as oxygen-consuming blast furnaces and fuel-injection automobile engines. Consumer businesses perfected cheaper, sturdier versions of American products. Both are now racking up big sales due to the worldwide pinch on energy and raw materials.

Whereas a company like Nikon, the Japanese camera-maker, owes its success largely to American electronics research and West German lens designs, American firms have yet to make a science of adopting foreign breakthroughs. U.S. corporations have long had a potential "scanning network" in their foreign subsidiaries, some of which have already mastered valuable European know-how (notably General Motors, Chrysler, and Ford subsidiaries that have produced cheap, fuel-efficient autos). But secure in their past superiority, U.S. companies rarely

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Few American inventions have been as frivolous as this self-tipping hat, designed in the 1890s to enable a gentleman with his arms full to salute a lady. Nonetheless, too much U.S. innovation has stressed convenience, not efficiency.



sought advice from their employees abroad, and during the mid-1960s many, such as Westinghouse, replaced subsidiaries with home-based "global products divisions." Worse, Madison Avenue's sophisticated polls and product tests were seldom used overseas.

Intense foreign competition has finally pushed American businesses into monitoring foreign tastes and innovations. The size of the U.S. network abroad and America's still pre-eminent engineering establishment, Vernon predicts, will ultimately restore American competitiveness—if not the dominance of the post-World War II decades.

No-Fault Trust Busting?

"Should the FTC Break Up Monopolies Even if They Have Done Nothing Wrong?" by James W. Singer, in *National Journal* (Sept. 27, 1980), 1730 M St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

No-fault antitrust cases may one day replace today's prolonged and laborious government efforts to break up monopolies, if some legal scholars and Federal Trade Commission (FTC) attorneys get their way.

The Justice Department began investigating IBM's hold on the computer and business-machine market 16 years ago; today, no end is in sight for the 5-year-old trial. And it was 10 years ago that the FTC began investigating the dominance of the three largest breakfast cereal companies. The case is still pending, writes Singer, a *National Journal* correspondent. Why? Less than one-third to one-half of government lawyers' time in such cases is spent proving that monopoly control exists (defined as at least a 60 percent share of the market). The rest is devoted to establishing that the accused firm acquired or maintained its monopoly willfully. No-fault would drop the second requirement.

Proponents of no-fault trust busting include Alfred F. Dougherty, Jr., former head of the FTC's Bureau of Competition, and Columbia Law

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School's Harvey J. Goldschmid. They argue that justice, the economy, and the consumer could be better served by prosecuting *any* monopoly (except when success can be traced to unexpired patents or economies of scale). They contend that monopoly power is by definition "inconsistent with a free enterprise system"—that it inevitably leads to excessive prices and profits and stifles corporate innovation. The National Commission for the Review of Antitrust Laws and Procedures (appointed by President Carter in 1978) concluded that "persistent monopoly power almost always results from improper conduct." Opponents, including former Solicitor General Robert H. Bork, counter that no-fault would actually discourage competition by penalizing success.

If enacted by Congress, no-fault would probably affect fewer than 20 U.S. companies. Prime targets: Eastman Kodak (under FTC investigation since 1976 for controlling 80 percent of the American amateur film market); Gerber, the baby-food manufacturer; and Campbell, the canned soup king. Probusiness forces on Capitol Hill are still strong enough to bottle up the no-fault movement, Singer says. But as long as cases under the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890 remain 10-year affairs, no-fault will continue to attract supporters.

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The Jukes of New York

"R. L. Dugdale and the Jukes Family: A Historical Injustice Corrected" by Elof Axel Carlson, in *BioScience* (Aug. 1980), American Institute of Biological Sciences, 1401 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, Va. 22209.

During the early 20th century, several states enacted compulsory sterilization laws to protect the American "breeding stock" from the taint of "genetically defective" criminals, paupers, and degenerates. Nothing fueled the belief that genes, rather than social ills, produce society's riff-raff more than amateur sociologist Richard L. Dugdale's 1877 study of a family of misfits in upstate New York.

A leading prison reformer, Dugdale (1841–83) noticed that many members of the Jukes family (as he called them) were scattered throughout New York's county jails. [Of the 1,200 living and deceased Jukeses he traced, 280 had lived in the poor house, 140 were convicted criminals, 60 more were "habitual thieves," 50 women were prostitutes.] In *The Jukes: A Study in Crime, Pauperism, Disease and Heredity*, Dugdale blamed the family's troubles on poverty, relates Carlson, a biologist at the State University of New York, Stonybrook. And he attributed the feeble-mindedness of many family members to congenital syphilis and to alcoholism or malnutrition among their mothers. The Jukeses' criminal tendencies could be wiped out over two or three generations, he argued, by placing the children with good families and

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by providing vocational training to the adolescents and adults.

However, immediately after Dugdale's death, his study took on a life of its own. The misinterpretations started with a *New York Times* obituary that eulogized Dugdale for proving that the "question of crime and pauperism rests . . . upon a physiological basis." David Starr Jordan, a noted biologist and president of Indiana University, recalled in 1898 how Dugdale had shown that undesirable traits "reappear generation after generation."

Influential scientists selectively read Dugdale's research as evidence that efforts to help criminals, the poor, and the mentally ill were pointless. Such thinking inspired not only a rash of compulsory sterilization laws at the turn of the century, but also the immigration restrictions passed after World War I. So it was, says Carlson, that a social reformer became the "patron saint of uncritical and biased eugenisists."

The 'Me' Generation

"Egocentrism: Is the American Character Changing?" by David Riesman, in *Encounter* (Aug.-Sept. 1980), 59 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS, United Kingdom.

There is a new acceptance of self-centered behavior in the United States today, reflecting a major change in the American character, says Riesman, a Harvard sociologist. He blames the Baby Boom and the unprecedented affluence of the postwar period.

American society, writes Riesman, has become urban, secular, and transient. Many Americans are now free of the communal ties and obligations that once tempered people's individualism. As evidence, he cites the low voter turnouts of recent elections, a huge increase in youth homicides, the near epidemic of venereal disease despite readily available cures, and mounting suicide rates among young men.

Tocqueville noted in 1831 that Americans went their own way in their personal pursuits but banded together to promote greater political and social ends, such as abolition and temperance. Riesman adds that their individualism was also moderated by the "practical inhibitions of comparative scarcity." For instance, though 19th-century American children were notoriously disobedient, parents had less compunction about disowning them. And restless young adults who struck out on their own assumed, of necessity, the risk of failure.

The post-World War II Baby Boom intensified competition among students, says Riesman, which led to "predictably egocentric behavior." In some cases, he adds, "adults secretly envied the seeming freedom of the young" and were willing and able to finance it. During the late 1960s, many sociologists and psychologists (genuine and bogus) urged Americans to "do their own thing"—even if it meant behaving selfishly and aggressively. "Hypocrisy," observes Riesman, "is now regarded as a worse vice than egocentricity."

The recent appearance of critical books and articles such as Tom Wolfe's "The Me Decade" (1976) and Christopher Lasch's *Culture of Nar-*

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cissism (1978), suggests that a reaction against selfishness is underway, Riesman writes. Even so, the “undersocialised and neglected children” of the 1960s, ’70s, and ’80s may remain self-centered as adults.

Play Ball, Get Ahead?

“Professional Baseball and Social Mobility” by Steven A. Riess, in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (Autumn 1980), 14N-323, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

Americans have traditionally trusted that in baseball—and sports in general—a strong arm can propel even the poorest boy to the top. But during baseball’s Golden Age (1900–20), most major league players were carefully culled from the middle class, recounts Riess, a historian at Northeastern Illinois University.

After the Civil War and before the turn of the century, fledgling professional teams such as the Cincinnati Red Stockings were dominated by lower-class WASPs and the sons of Irish and German immigrants. These men were attracted by salaries averaging between \$1,300 and \$1,600—double and triple the wages of artisans and blue-collar laborers. But to most “respectable” citizens, a ballplayer was “an eminently undesirable person,” along with actors, boxers, and other ne’er-do-wells.

Baseball’s popularity after 1900 (attendance doubled in the century’s first decade) brought a new sort of athlete to the game. First, the bidding war for players between the new American and older National Leagues boosted salaries. By 1929, the typical ballplayer earned \$7,500, compared with \$5,224 for the average doctor and \$3,056 for professors. At the same time, managers such as Connie Mack of the Philadelphia Athletics began vigorously seeking to improve the sport’s image by recruiting college men. Between 1900 and 1919, nearly 60 percent of the players came from families headed by a professional, businessman, or farmer, twice the percentage for Americans as a whole.

Blacks had effectively been barred from professional baseball. Native-born Americans and the sons of German or Irish immigrants continued to fill major league rosters, but by the early 20th century, these groups were squarely in the middle class. Newer immigrants—Italians, Jews, and Slavs—had little luck breaking into the sport. Crammed into big-city ghettos, they lacked the coaching, fields, and leisure to compete with native-born players. Their heyday came later.



Irishman John McGraw

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Farewell, ERA

"E.R.A. — R.I.P." by Andrew Hacker, in *Harper's* (Oct. 1980), 1255 Portland Pl., Boulder, Colo. 80321.

If the Equal Rights Amendment is dead, the women of America killed it, writes Hacker, a political scientist at Queens College, New York.

Proposed repeatedly by feminists since 1923, the seemingly "innocuous" ban on sex discrimination finally passed Congress in March 1972 and soon won the approval of 22 of the 38 state legislatures needed for ratification. Yet the measure has languished three states short of the goal since 1977. In 1978, Congress extended the ERA deadline to 1982, but the holdouts are nearly all Southern and Western states where anti-ERA feeling is strong.

Why could so many opposing legislators point to bags of anti-ERA mail they received from women? The author blames the amendment's advocates for forgetting that many U.S. women are still housewives. Claims that most American wives have entered the labor force ignore the fact that the U.S. Government classifies any wife who works more than one hour per week for pay or profit as a "working woman." In fact, fewer than one-third of all married women hold full-time jobs.

Most women, Hacker claims, resent the intimations of militant feminists that women are not truly liberated until they start preparing for divorce and embark on a "serious" career. They view marriage as a fair, voluntary contract, granting them their spouse's status and financial protection in return for managing the home and raising a family. Many wives fear that the amendment would replace moral obligations, which often hold together even troubled marriages, with narrower legal provisos. "Leave him," feminist Germaine Greer has blithely advised wives unhappy with their husbands. But women divorced at age 40 have a less than 33 percent chance of remarrying. Many are unprepared for lives as wage earners.

Two-thirds of all married women but only half of all single women vote in most elections, Hacker notes. The ERA's repudiation by legislators as well as by delegates to the 1980 Republican convention was not rash defiance of public opinion, but astute politics.

PRESS & TELEVISION
The Boom in Hispanic TV

"The Special Case of Spanish-Language Television" by Jan Jarboe, in *Washington Journalism Review* (Nov. 1980), 3122 M St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20007.

What *Dallas* is to millions of American television fans, the soap opera *Los Ricos Tambien Llovan* ("The Rich Also Cry") is to many others, particularly in the Southwest.

There are an estimated 19.8 million Hispanics (including illegal

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aliens) in the United States today (9 percent of the total population). By 1990, Hispanics will comprise the nation's largest ethnic minority. Every week, roughly 12 million tune in to Spanish-language television, writes Jarboe, a reporter for the *San Antonio Light*.

Hispanics' most likely choice is SIN—the Spanish International Network. Launched in 1961 and based in San Antonio, Texas, the network currently links affiliates in 82 American cities. Its offerings include variety shows, sports, a one-hour newscast, and *novellas*—passion-drenched soap operas that may run for 200 episodes. SIN claims a 33 percent audience share in San Antonio at 7:00 on weeknights. To keep costs down, most programs, including the news, are produced in Mexico or Spain. Ironically, none of SIN's stations are minority-owned. Mexican nationals control 20 percent of SIN—the maximum share of network ownership allowed by U.S. law; the Federal Communications Commission is investigating charges that the real percentage may be higher.

Recently, SIN joined the cable stampede, and now offers its paying customers "Galavision," featuring first-run Mexican and Spanish movies. But the big money remains in network advertising. The National Association of Spanish Broadcasters claims that Hispanics in the United States earn \$51 billion annually and spend \$30 billion on consumer goods. SIN's take from advertising rose by 60 percent between 1978 and 1979. Procter and Gamble, McDonald's, and Miller Beer (*Tiempo Dorado Miller*—"Golden Miller Time") have all cooked up Spanish ad campaigns. Last year, two advertising industry giants, Young and Rubicam, and J. Walter Thompson, added Spanish-language departments.

In 80 percent of America's Hispanic households, Spanish is spoken all or part of the time. More than the Jews, Italians, and other immigrants before them, says Jarboe, Hispanics have held onto their native language. That fact, and the continuing influx of Hispanic immigrants, will keep Spanish-language television a bustling enterprise.

Newsmen as Lobbyists

"How News Business Lobbyists Put Their Press on Congress . . . But With Mixed Feelings" by Bill Keller, in *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report* (Aug. 2, 1980), 1414 22nd St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

To many Americans, "the Press" signifies reporters who prod politicians with sharp questions and expose the undue influence of special interests. But Keller, a correspondent for *Congressional Quarterly*, reports that in Washington, publishers and broadcasters come hat in hand to politicians like any other special interest.

Media lobbyists often push 1st Amendment causes (such as protection against newsroom searches). But the most powerful press lobby groups also seek economic favors. For example, the National News Association, which represents 5,500 newspapers, assigned "contact teams" of influential local publishers from nearly every congressional district to per-

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suade federal lawmakers to continue Saturday mail deliveries and postal subsidies. The powerful 6,000-member National Association of Broadcasters—with its \$7 million budget and six registered lobbyists—long convinced Congress and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to restrict cable delivery of network and local affiliate programming. (Keller suggests that most of these curbs were lifted by the FCC last July partly because broadcasters now own 30 percent of the cable systems.) And the American Newspaper Publishers' Association, which speaks for the owners of 1,370 newspapers, is urging Congress to add newspapers to the list of businesses entitled to extra gasoline under proposed standby rationing plans.

Some news organizations have even formed their own political action committees (PACs) to fund politicians' campaigns. The largest, Time Inc.'s Committee for Good Government, spent \$88,000 on 1980 office-seekers as of June 30. Time Inc. defends its moves by arguing that the company, which owns the *Washington Star*, book publishing, and cable TV concerns, as well as magazines, has extensive nonmedia holdings in timber and real estate.

Most media lobby groups still frown on PACs. And they all maintain that the media do not use their *editorial* powers to promote their financial interests. Yet politicians fear the media's power. Says former Representative Lionel Van Deerlin (D-Calif.), who chaired the House Communications Subcommittee, "There's an underlying feeling. Hell, when I go home, I don't want to be ignored by radio or television."

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A Stormy Dialogue

"The Jewish Argument with God" by Abraham Kaplan, in *Commentary* (Oct. 1980) American Jewish Committee, 165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.

"Why do You hide Yourself in times of trouble," the ancient Hebrew psalmists demanded of their God. "You [God] have done everything to stop me from believing in You. . . . Do not put the rope under too much strain," warned a Jewish freedom fighter during the 1944 Warsaw Ghetto uprising. To be sure, the Lord has returned such irritation in kind, calling the Jews a "stiff-necked people" after their flirtation with idolatry during the Exodus. The idea that man and God can quarrel, debate, and exchange barbs distinguishes Judaism from most faiths.

While most religions consist of "monologues"—of revelations from the Lord and human prayer—Judaism's essence is "dialogue." Indeed, writes Kaplan, a philosopher at Israel's University of Haifa, God himself invites human complaint: "Come now and let us reason together," He beckons in the Book of Isaiah. Moses, who managed to talk the Lord out

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of destroying those faithless Israelites who turned to the golden calf, was one of many Jews to respond.

Jews have always regarded God as an ethical as well as omnipotent being. He is not only the Creator and the locus of Power, but the Heavenly Father and the locus of Goodness. God invites service in a labor of love, as well as submission based on fear. Judaism holds that the world was established for an ethical purpose, with man as the only moral agent in the whole of creation. Moreover, as the Torah (Old Testament) repeatedly stresses, man was created in God's image. As a result, the Jews' awe of God never overwhelms their self-esteem. In fact, influential Jewish thinkers hold that God needs man. As God himself certified, "If My people decline to proclaim Me as King upon Earth, My kingdom also ceases to be in Heaven."

Throughout Jewish history, Kaplan writes, God and the Jews have been locked in a stormy "love affair" marked by "faithlessness and jealousy, anger and despair, forgiveness and reconciliation." Virtually alone among men, the author concludes, the Jew is "intimate with his God."

Long Live the King

"The Rationality of Hegel's Concept of Monarchy" by Bernard Yack, in *The American Political Science Review* (Sept. 1980), Journals Dept., Univ. of Texas Press, Austin, Texas 78712.

The great 19th-century German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's endorsement of monarchy as the freest, most rational form of government has long embarrassed his disciples—notably Karl Marx. Some thought he had pushed pure logic too far. Others excused him with a reference to the authoritarian traditions of his native Prussia. Yack, a Harvard political scientist, argues that Hegel's concept of monarchy grew naturally from his view of reason.

To Hegel (1770–1831), reason must explain reality in all of its complexity. He concluded that what was rational could only be identified through empirical study, not through logical deduction. He also believed that the spread of individual economic and political freedom had made rational government possible in Europe.

Yet Hegel asserted that man could not be truly free until he was governed by selfless leaders who would embody the rational will of society as a whole. Past democracies, such as the ancient Greek republics, maintained personal freedom. But their dependence on wise, able elected leaders left their political fates to the vagaries of nature (e.g., the talents and character of individuals). And not even the U.S. Constitution, which gives ultimate power to law, ended the competition for political advantage to Hegel's satisfaction.

The great philosopher insisted that reason would triumph when final decision-making power rested in the hands of a constitutional monarch. Then, only citizens with the nation's interests at heart (not their own) would find public service attractive. In Hegel's monarchy, the real

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decision-making power would still be held by popularly elected representatives and administrators. His monarch is essentially a rubber stamp. But by sitting atop the political system, he removes the glory from politics and permits rational policy to emerge. Hegel's belief that monarchs would accept such a role was based on the sharp curbs imposed on royal power throughout Europe by the early 19th century.

Despite the decline of monarchy, Hegel's theory carries a sobering message in the 20th century, writes Yack. The same rampant nationalism and individualism that destroyed the power of kings makes truly rational government difficult to obtain today.

Sex's Lifelong Consequences

"Premarital Sex: The Theological Argument from Peter Lombard to Durand" by John Dedek, in *Theological Studies* (Dec. 1980), P.O. Box 64002, Baltimore, Md. 21264.

In the late Middle Ages, nearly all Christian theologians condemned sexual intercourse between unmarried persons. But according to Dedek, a former Catholic University historian, their reasons for doing so changed.

Most late 12th- and early 13th-century religious thinkers based their taboo on divine positive law—God's will as gleaned from the Holy Scriptures. They held that extramarital sex was wrong because God

Troubadours and poets during the Middle Ages generally smiled on illicit love, whether they were recounting romantic affairs between nobles and ladies or describing the foibles of lusty peasants. But medieval Church fathers were not amused. They noted that children needed nurturing long after the "magic" of extramarital trysts wore off.



Heidelberg Universitätsbibliothek,
Manesse Codex, f. 249.

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had forbidden it by the Sixth Commandment, and they pointed to Jesus' reaffirmation of marriage in the New Testament. Gradually, however, theologians began to ask whether simple fornication was "bad because it is forbidden, or . . . forbidden because it is bad."

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–74) of Italy was the first major theologian to shift the basis for opposing premarital sex from divine revelation to natural law—as defined by human reason. The purpose of sexual intercourse, Aquinas held, goes far beyond producing offspring. The ultimate goal is creating children equipped to survive and prosper. Most birds and beasts are born self-sufficient or dependent on only a mother's brief care, he noted. For them, lifelong pairing is unnecessary. But human parents have an obligation to educate children that extends the required duration of their union. Moreover, since civic laws generally denied a full inheritance to illegitimate children, marriage was a must. Aquinas believed that parents' lifetime responsibilities and divine law alike prohibited divorce.

Aquinas never declared premarital sex to be *intrinsically* evil. He realized that his argument left out women wealthy enough to provide for a child, as well as sterile individuals. He responded in his *Summa Theologica* with the principle of *perseity*: Laws must be based on what *usually* occurs; for the common good, there can be no exceptions.

Eventually, notes Dedek, Aquinas's views became "the common Catholic argument" against simple fornication. The Church today still bans premarital sex as an act "opposed to the natural purpose of sexual intercourse, which is the generation and education of a child."

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Fat Equals Fertile

"Fatness, Puberty, and Fertility" by Rose E. Frisch, in *Natural History* (Oct. 1980), Membership Services, P.O. Box 6000, Des Moines, Iowa 50340.

Since the mid-19th century, children in the United States and Europe have been "growing up faster." In 1850, the typical English or American girl reached puberty at age 15 or 16; today, puberty occurs at about 12½ years. Scientists have long recognized a connection between improved health and nutrition and early female fertility. (The average *weight* of pubescent girls has not changed in a century—101 to 103 pounds.) Studies by Frisch and other demographers at Harvard's School of Public Health have revealed just how the relationship works.

A 120 percent increase in body fat during the adolescent growth spurt preceding puberty (usually amounting to 11–24 pounds) is one of the greatest physical changes women undergo before menarche, the onset

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of menstruation. Lean body weight increases by only 44 percent, cutting the ratio of "skin and bones," organs, and fluids to fat from 5:1 to 3:1. Girls of short or medium height are usually the first to reach this ratio and begin menstruating; for "stringbeans" and athletes, menarche comes later. By age 18, the average woman has accumulated 35 pounds of fat. This increase, Frisch notes, gives the body 144,000 extra calories of stored, easily mobilized energy—more than enough to offset the 50,000 calories consumed by a nine-month pregnancy and the 1,000 more per day burned up by nursing.

The author speculates that linking fat to fertility is evolution's way of controlling population during food shortages. Poorly fed women in Third World countries, for example, typically can bear only 6 or 7 children; among well-fed American women who shun contraceptives (e.g., members of the Hutterite sect), the average is 11 or 12.

The onset of puberty has probably reached its lower age limits in the United States and Europe, writes Frisch. No major changes have been recorded in the past 30 years, indicating that most children in the West today receive as much nutrition and health care as they can absorb.

Inside Color

"The Causes of Color" by Kurt Nassau, in *Scientific American* (Oct. 1980), 415 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

What makes a ruby red or an emerald green? Basic physics teaches that white light passing through a ruby emerges with a heavy share of "long" wavelengths, perceived by the human eye as red. The "shorter" wavelengths emitted by an emerald are recognized as green. But what goes on inside the gems?

Nassau, a researcher at Bell Laboratories, reviews current knowledge about the subatomic origins of color. All atoms have unenergized (ground) states and a range of higher energy states spaced apart like wildly uneven ladder rungs, to which they can be temporarily excited. Specific amounts of energy (e.g., light) are needed to boost different kinds of atoms into these states (accomplished by agitating a free electron into a more distant orbit around the nucleus); these amounts are associated with the colors in the visible spectrum of light. When an atom's free electrons are jarred away from the nucleus, the atom absorbs light or energy. When atoms fall to lower energy states and electrons tumble to positions nearer the nucleus, the energy lost is released as a photon, a quantum of light.

The colors of flames and lightning result from ionization—the brief shaking loose altogether of free electrons from an atom such as sodium by a burst of energy. When a free electron recombines and a sodium atom returns, usually by stages, to the ground state, quantities of bright light equalling 2.103 and 2.105 electron volts of energy are emitted—levels associated with the yellow band of the color spectrum. A similar process creates the red color of neon.

Ruby red and emerald green are crystal field colors, resulting from

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the excitation of atoms banded together as molecules. Because of the gems' complex crystal structures, the energy states form wide bands that can absorb a range of light waves. The excitation and subsequent grounding of rubies' chromium ions, for instance, releases energy corresponding to violet and yellow-green, but the aluminum and oxygen atoms also present in the gem absorb these colors while letting red and some blue energy pass through. Much the same process produces most pigments used in paints. In metals, the electrons are hyperactive, and not truly attached to particular atoms or ions. They are so numerous that the energy levels form a continuum. Enough photons are emitted by electrons constantly in motion that metals shine.

The subatomic processes that produce color have been a major pre-occupation of 20th-century physicists. Color is more than simply a property of matter. From the red of a rose to the yellow of the sun, color manifests matter's very structure.

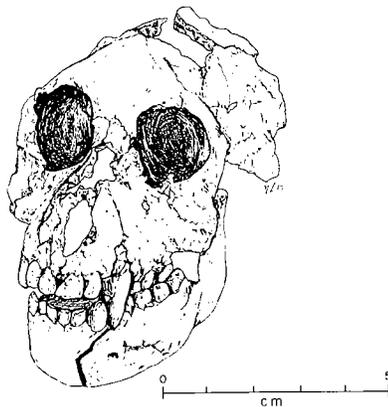
The First Polygamists

"Sexual Dimorphism in Early Anthropoids" by John G. Fleagle, Richard F. Kay, and Elwyn L. Simons, in *Nature* (Sept. 25, 1980), Macmillan Journals, Ltd., 4 Little Essex St., London WC2R 3LF, England.

Men are not naturally monogamous—at least according to some folk wisdom. This view appears to be confirmed by new fossil evidence indicating that the first primates—man's earliest direct ancestors—were polygamous.

Fleagle, of the State University of New York, Stonybrook, and Kay and Simons, of Duke, are anthropologists who have been studying the 30-million-year-old remains of the oldest known primates, found at al-Fayyūm, Egypt. They have unearthed enough jawbones and teeth at the desert site to conclude that three of the species there displayed

The 30-million-year-old skull of Aegytopithecus Zeuxis, found at al-Fayyūm, Egypt. This first known primate's remains suggest that man's earliest direct ancestors were polygamous.



Courtesy of Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1971. Drawing by M. L. Brace based on a photograph from the collection of E. L. Simons.

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sexual dimorphism—significant differences in traits such as body and tooth size, as well as in primary sex characteristics. Ancient al-Fayyūm males were perhaps one-third again as heavy as the females. Such a size discrepancy is usually found in modern times among polygamous species, notably among the apes and monkeys of Africa and Asia. Among monogamous primates, e.g., most South American monkeys, the sexes are always the same size.

Anthropologists believe that larger males with long, sharp fighting teeth evolved in order to protect predominantly female harems from predators and to survive battles over female mates with rival males. In monogamous species, males and females seem to fight off predators together. How humans came by their generally monogamous ways is still a mystery.

A New Recipe for Life

“Origin of Life: New Ingredients Suggested” by Richard A. Kerr, in *Science* (Oct. 3, 1980), 1515 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.

For nearly 30 years, chemistry texts have taught that life on Earth probably began roughly 4 billion years ago, when lightning shot through the young planet’s noxious methane and ammonia atmosphere to produce amino acids and other complex organic compounds. Most geochemists, however, have insisted that different ingredients comprised the primordial “air.” Kerr, a *Science* staff writer, reports that their opinions are starting to be heard.

Nobel Prize-winning chemist Harold Urey of the University of Chicago originally proposed the methane-ammonia hypothesis during the early 1950s. He reasoned that, since the solar system consists mainly of hydrogen, so did Earth’s original atmosphere. (Methane is composed of four hydrogen atoms for every carbon atom; ammonia consists of three hydrogen atoms and one nitrogen atom.) The carbon dioxide and gaseous nitrogen present in today’s atmosphere, he held, came only after ultraviolet radiation tore oxygen away from hydrogen in the planet’s waters. [Oxygen was produced much later, by photosynthesizing plants.] Urey’s colleague Stanley Miller soon demonstrated that amino acids—the building blocks of protein—could be produced by shooting a lightning-like electrical discharge through a mixture of methane and ammonia gases.

Despite these compelling results, geochemists note that the oldest known rocks on Earth (at Isua, Greenland) indicate that the planet’s atmosphere may have been filled with carbon dioxide—not methane—as early as 4.5 billion years ago, when the Earth was formed. These scientists believe that Urey’s hydrogen-rich atmosphere either never existed or lasted only briefly. (In fact, lab tests show that amino acids can be produced in methane- and ammonia-free gas mixtures.) One alternative to Urey’s theory of atmosphere creation: Carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen, and oxygen were all released as volcanic gases.

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Kerr reports growing support for the view that Earth's primitive atmosphere resembled today's, except that it was thinner and lacked oxygen. Sunlight, in this scenario, gradually transformed atmospheric carbon dioxide and hydrogen into molecules of liquid formaldehyde that rained into Earth's oceans; then it turned these molecules into complex organic compounds.

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Time for Natural Gas

"How to End It: Natural Gas" by Gregg Easterbrook, in *The Washington Monthly* (Oct. 1980), 2712 Ontario Rd. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Enough natural gas lies between 15,000 and 30,000 feet beneath the United States to replace oil as the nation's chief energy source for several decades and to buy time for the large-scale commercial development of renewable resources such as solar power, say energy specialists. But according to Easterbrook, a *Washington Monthly* editor, the tapping of this "clear gold" has been held up for decades, first by geologists' ignorance and federal price controls, and, more recently, by the mistaken notion that all energy resources are running out.

Recent evidence suggests that primitive bacteria, or possibly the ingredients of the primeval atmosphere — not decomposing plants and animals — produced natural gas. This means that gas deposits were formed not only near the Earth's surface but at deeper levels as well. Yet until the early 1970s, geologists assumed that gas deposits stopped where most petroleum stopped—at 10,000 feet. Requiring costly pipelines rather than trucks for transport, the only gas marketed during the 1920s and '30s was sold by oilmen who found it accidentally. Their customers were pipeline companies who bought at rock-bottom prices (3 cents per 1,000 cubic feet). Since 1938, the Federal Power Commission has kept interstate gas prices comparably low — as late as the mid-1970s, they stood at 50 cents per 1,000 cubic feet. As a result, most gas producers shunned further exploration. (The exceptions were those firms in the lucrative intrastate markets.)

In the mid-1970s, the slow rate of discovery helped confirm Washington's belief that gas, like oil, was nearly "gone." So conservation-minded did the Carter administration become that the Energy Department rejected deep drilling analyses that pegged U.S. gas resources as enough for 25 years (and possibly 1,000 years) at present rates of consumption, Easterbrook contends; instead, the Department foresaw only an 11-year supply. In 1978, Congress ordered most industries to stop burning gas by 1990.

Ironically, the federal government's attempt in 1978 to stretch gas

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supplies by permitting gas prices of \$2.55 per 1,000 cubic feet has spurred new gas finds. Thanks to partial price decontrols, energy companies now produce 19 trillion cubic feet of gas annually, meeting one-fourth of U.S. energy needs. The remaining controls are not scheduled to end for several years. Easterbrook quotes one former industry geologist as saying, "You won't believe what you're seeing when the gas starts to flow in 1985."

When the Wells Run Dry

"Oil Mining" by Richard A. Dick and Sheldon P. Wimpfen, in *Scientific American* (Oct. 1980), 415 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

In 1865, frustrated Ohio oilmen decided to dig a wide mining shaft into the ground instead of the small drill holes that were yielding little oil and much water. This first attempt at oil mining in the United States failed to produce much crude. Though some tunnels dug into a California mountainside the following year by Josiah Stanford did yield 20 barrels per day, mining for "black gold" was soon abandoned in favor of easier and cheaper drilling and pumping. Now, a revival is in sight.

Perhaps 500 billion barrels of oil are available from known conventional oil fields, heavy oil deposits, tar sands, and "dry" wells in the continental United States (oil shale formations in Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming could provide an additional 400-600 billion barrels). But only 30 billion barrels are recoverable by drilling. Most of the remaining crude could be retrieved by applying new mining methods, contend Dick and Wimpfen, an engineer and former Assistant Director of the U.S. Bureau of Mines, respectively.

"Gravity drainage," for example, can be used to mine oil reservoirs lying above solid rock formations at 500-foot depths. After digging a

THE 5 MAJOR OIL PRODUCING REGIONS OF THE LOWER 48 STATES



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grid of nearly horizontal tunnels within the rock strata, short collecting holes are drilled up into the reservoir. Gravity draws the oil down, through the tunnels, and into collection tanks, to be pumped up to the surface. When strong, low-level rock is not present, variations on this method — e.g., carving out tunnels above the deposit, drilling down, and placing pumps at each hole — have been devised. Strip, open pit, and terrace mining can retrieve oil less than 500 feet beneath the earth.

The Soviet Union has been mining oil for years. And one U.S. company plans to dig an open pit mine in California's McKittrick field. The U.S. Bureau of Mines recently estimated the average cost of oil obtained by gravity drainage to refiners at \$14 per barrel; and the average cost of pumped drainage oil is \$16 to \$22 per barrel (all figures in 1977 dollars). Surface mining estimates run between \$11 and \$21 per barrel [compared with the May 1980 \$21 per barrel cost of conventionally drilled domestic oil].

A New Source of Nuclear Fuel

"Laser Enrichment of Uranium: Does the Genie Have a Future?" by Richard K. Lester, in *Technology Review* (Aug.-Sept. 1980), Room 10-140, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Mass. 02139.

During the last decade, the nuclear industry and the federal government have spent nearly \$250 million on a new way of turning uranium into nuclear fuel—through laser enrichment.

In 1979, an Exxon Nuclear-Avco Corp. research team announced that large quantities of laser-enriched uranium could be produced by 1990. And last year, the Carter administration increased laser-enrichment funding from \$52 million to \$61 million. Some critics claim that all this will hasten the worldwide spread of nuclear weapons. Lester, an MIT nuclear engineer, disagrees, and urges accelerated development of the new technology.

Traces of uranium-235 (the "light" uranium isotope whose atomic nucleus can be split to release huge amounts of energy) are too diffuse in naturally occurring uranium-238 to fuel common light-water reactors. The concentration must be increased—from 0.7 percent to between 2 and 4 percent. To date, most such "uranium enrichment" has taken place at gaseous diffusion plants, where a manmade compound called uranium hexafluoride is heated into a gas, then passed through a series of artificial membranes (whose composition is classified) that segregate the U-235 from the U-238. More recently, the two isotopes have been separated in centrifuges.

The new laser enrichment process exploits the fact that each isotope of an element can be "excited" and isolated by amplified light of a precise frequency. Physicists in the Exxon-Avco group have successfully employed lasers to excite only U-235 atoms in a stream of superheated uranium gas. Electric and magnetic fields deflect these atoms onto collector plates while permitting the nonexcited heavier atoms to pass

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on. Lester claims that laser enrichment requires less than 10 percent of the energy used in gaseous diffusion. Moreover, the laser process needs 20 percent less natural uranium to make a ton of enriched fuel than do either of the alternatives.

Lester contends that such uranium savings could further a major goal of U.S. nonproliferation policy—retarding the spread of nuclear reprocessing technology, which can turn conventional nuclear waste into fuel-grade uranium and highly toxic weapons-grade plutonium.

Energy from the First Americans

“American Indians and National Energy Policy” by Robert E. Pendley and Charles D. Kolstad, in *The Journal of Energy and Development* (Spring 1980), 216 Economics Building, University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo. 80304.

American Indian tribes own only a small fraction (2.3 percent, or 83,100 square miles) of the land in the United States. But they are likely to play a big role in America’s energy future, according to Pendley and Kolstad, of the Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory.

Fully one-fourth of the uranium produced in the United States in 1976 (11 percent of the world total) came from mines on Indian reservations and small tribal ranches in the American West. An estimated 8 percent of American coal lies beneath tribal lands, mainly in Rocky Mountain states. And industry studies indicate that the Navajo reservation sprawling over the Southwest’s Four Corners region may contain substantial oil and gas reserves.

Tribal treaties (considered international law by the federal government) and court decisions stipulate that the United States must hold the resources on Indian land in trust for the tribes—to help develop them for the Indians’ benefit. Technically, the tribes have had the last word on leasing mining rights. But until the specter of energy shortages and higher fuel prices appeared in the early 1970s, tribal governments lacking business expertise permitted the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs to negotiate oil, coal, and natural gas leases.

Recently, some tribes have started to resist. They complain that the government arranged access to huge energy deposits at give-away prices, without provision for changing market conditions. Many Rocky Mountain tribes, for example, are locked into long-term coal leases signed during the 1950s and ’60s when coal demand was shrinking. Tribal insistence on guarding the environment has also slowed energy development. The Navajo, for instance, are dragging their feet on approving a coal gasification project on their Four Corners reservation.

Congress could revoke the Indians’ treaties and open their lands to miners and drillers. But the authors argue that this won’t be necessary. The activities of organizations such as the Council of Energy Resource Tribes—which is analyzing the markets for Indian-owned fuels—show that the Indians, although cautious, intend to exploit their energy assets to boost tribal economics.

ARTS & LETTERS

*Sherlock Holmes
as Social Critic*

"Sherlock Holmes and Sociology" by Bonnie Menes, in *The American Scholar* (Winter 1980), 1811 Q St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

"There are certain crimes which the law cannot touch [but which] justify private revenge. . . . My sympathies are with the criminals rather than with the victims." The sentiment is surprising coming from literature's greatest detective. But for Sherlock Holmes, this refusal to mourn a murdered blackmailer in "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton" is "elementary."

According to Menes, a doctoral student in sociology at Harvard, the master sleuth created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930) defends neither law nor conventional morality. Instead, Holmes delves into the problems of class, personal isolation, and property rights created in Victorian England when industrialization and rapid population growth strained old traditions. In most of his cases, the battle is between con-

Sherlock Holmes's investigation of "The Yellow Face" ends as Grant Munro embraces the mulatto child borne by his wife in a previous marriage. Conan Doyle's fictional sleuth specialized in solving social dilemmas and moral quandaries, not master crimes.



From *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* by William S. Baring-Gould. © 1967 by Lucille M. Baring-Gould. Published by Clarkson N. Potter, Inc.

flicting demands, not good and evil—as in "The Man with the Twisted Lip," where a devoted father finds that he can only sustain his family's comfortable small-town life by disguising himself and begging in the streets of London.

Holmes rarely enters a case simply because the law has been broken. Sometimes, there is no evidence of wrongdoing at all—only inexplicable behavior. In "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches," for example,

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he is intrigued by the unusually generous salary of a governess—as well as by her employers' requirement that she wear blue and cut her hair. The great detective seldom consults with the police; his "discretion" is precisely what attracts many clients. Yet Holmes passes judgments of his own on the people who cross the threshold at 221-B Baker Street. In "The Yellow Face," for example, he surely defies "respectable" opinion by tacitly helping a woman keep her mulatto child.

Like leading intellectuals of the Victorian Age, including sociologist Emile Durkheim and legal scholar Sir Henry Maine, the "slightly eccentric detective with a gift for logic" saw discrepancies among law, conventional morality, and the good of society.

The 'Artquake' of 1910

"A Postmortem on Post-Impressionism"
by Richard Cork, in *Art in America* (Oct.
1980), 542 Pacific Ave., Marion, Ohio
43302.

It was autumn 1910, and the noted English art critic Roger Fry was in a quandary. The exhibit of avant-garde European paintings he had hastily assembled for London's Grafton Galleries was about to open. What should the show be called? In a last-minute fit of exasperation, he decided, "Oh, let's just call them post-impressionists; at any rate, they came after the impressionists."

Fry intended to overwhelm an unsuspecting British public with the genius of Gauguin, Cézanne, van Gogh, Picasso, and the other painters he believed had revolutionized European art over the previous 30 years. He succeeded. Condemned at first as "the rejection of all that civilization has done" by the *London Times*, the show became a landmark in modern artists' struggle for critical and public acceptance.

Despite his impetuous christening, Fry knew what he wanted "post-impressionism" to mean. He described it as an overriding interest in abstract design, a happy disdain for painting real people and the "real world"—and his interpretation stuck. Yet Fry's views were based on appalling ignorance, claims Cork, art critic for the *London Evening Standard*. Fry had seen only a few of the works by the artists he featured. He overloaded the show with French artists in general, and Gauguins, Cézannes, and van Goghs in particular, though he knew little of these painters' aesthetic intentions.

Recently, Fry's assessment has been questioned by critics reviewing a 1979–80 post-impressionist show at London's Royal Academy (it visited Washington's National Gallery of Art in 1980). Fry wrote that Europe's artists between 1880 and 1916 considered the people depicted on their canvases only as the unavoidable "bait by which men are induced to accept a work of art." But the new collection betrays a deeper commitment. Henri Matisse's sullen, roughhewn young seaman in *Young Sailor I* (1906), Camille Pissarro's stolid peasant families, and Gauguin's colorful Breton farmers indicate that post-impressionists were obsessed with working people and their everyday surroundings.

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The post-impressionists wanted to reveal reality with "new violence and penetration," not discard nature in what Fry called a search for "spiritual purity and freedom."

The term *post-impressionism* seems here to stay, despite its inadequacies, writes Cork. But modern abstract artists should not be taken in by Fry's elitism. The great post-impressionists hoped fervently to introduce their new ways of seeing to a wide audience. Today's artists must find ways to make their own perspectives on nature meaningful to their fellow men.

Little Lies

"The Legend on the License" by John Hersey, in *The Yale Review* (Autumn 1980), 1902 A Yale Station, New Haven, Conn. 06520.

"You can do anything you can get away with in fiction," novelist Flannery O'Connor once observed. Regrettably, writes novelist Hersey, the "New Journalists" — Tom Wolfe, Norman Mailer, and others — have adopted the same creed. Their cavalier mixing of reportage and fictional license has had a bad influence on contemporary journalists.

Most specialists (including spokesmen for the U.S. space program and former astronauts) regard Wolfe's *The Right Stuff* (1979) as a fairly accurate account of the Mercury space program during the early 1960s. But throughout the book, factual and contrived statements appear side by side. Wolfe freely enters the consciousness of his subjects, using their "thoughts" to record his own. Thus, terms like "esprit" and "joie de combat" spice up the speech of rugged military flyboys. Nor does Wolfe let a fact get in the way of a gag line, as when he claims that "more fighter pilots died in automobiles than airplanes."

Norman Mailer calls his *Executioner's Song* (1979) a "True-Life Novel," a thrilling story "as accurate as one can make it." Yet this account of Gary Gilmore, the Utah murderer who demanded to be executed, rests largely on unconfirmed third- and fourth-hand information. And Mailer freely admits to tinkering with dialogue and documents, altering Gilmore's letters to his sweetheart, for instance, "to show him at a level higher than his average." Mailer converts a darkly interesting cowboy convict into an eloquent philosopher who wonders, "What will I meet when I die? . . . Will my spirit be flung about the universe faster than thought?"

Neither writer shows where fact ends and fantasy begins, contends Hersey. He claims that their great financial and critical success has spawned imitators and even infected prominent newsmen. In *The Brethren* (1979), Bob Woodward and Scott Armstrong of the *Washington Post* recreate Supreme Court Justices' moods and thoughts based on interviews with clerks. Worse, Hersey argues, the public has come to accept as routine and "minor" the obfuscations of politicians and the "real-life" simulations of the advertising industry. Such "habitual acceptance of little fibs," he warns, "leads to the swallowing whole of world-shaking lies."

OTHER NATIONS

*Hungary's
Market Socialism*

"Hungary: The Quiet Revolution" By
Chris Cviic, in *The Economist* (Sept. 20,
1980), Subscription Dept., The Economist
Newspaper Ltd., P.O. Box 190, 23a James
St., London SW1A, England.

Last summer, when Poland's Communist rulers hiked meat prices by 70 percent, striking workers paralyzed the economy and shook the government. Yet in Hungary when the prices of staple foods and fuels rose by 30 to 50 percent in July 1979, that country's 10.6 million people reacted with only mild grumbling. There, reports Cviic, correspondent for *The Economist*, price increases are part of a bold new government plan to roll back stifling Soviet-style controls.

Like its East European neighbors, Hungary has been squeezed by the Soviet Union's need for cash. Moscow now demands OPEC prices for its oil, and until 1985, Hungary will have to make do with 1979-level shipments—unless it pays with hard currency. With foreign debt at \$8 billion, Communist party boss János Kádár has been forced to slash state investments by 10 percent (\$8 billion). He has also cut government subsidies for meat and bread.

Yet Budapest's markets overflow with veal, pork, and a variety of produce rarely found elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Health care, household maintenance and repairs, and automobile services are widely available. Unlike Poland and other Iron Curtain countries—which only grudgingly permit private agriculture—Hungary extends considerable credit and reduced tax rates to workers on its collective farms who use their spare time to till their own plots. Today, private half-acre "farms" produce one-third of the nation's agricultural yield and supply most delicacies (e.g., strawberries). Similarly, moonlighting professionals, artisans, and handymen provide services that cumbersome state bureaucracies would be hard pressed to deliver efficiently. In most cases, officials look the other way. Roughly 45 percent of Hungary's residential housing is built by weekend hardhats.

Like Yugoslavia's Marshal Tito, Kádár has transferred increasing responsibility for investment, production, and pricing to individual factory and business managers. He has boosted loans to smaller enterprises, which can quickly adapt to the desires of Western cash customers. He has also made it clear that Hungarian socialism no longer guarantees jobs; workers may now be fired for laziness or laid off to streamline operations. In exchange, state-controlled labor unions enjoy the unusual right to veto many types of management decisions.

Cviic predicts that the Soviets, with headaches in Poland and Afghanistan, will tolerate Kádár's reforms as long as the Communist government remains unchallenged. The main threat to the "New Eco-

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conomic Mechanism" may come from within, as living costs go up. The regime must boost productivity swiftly in order to stabilize prices before disgruntled workers on fixed incomes demand the return of food subsidies and job guarantees.

India's Ex-Untouchables

"'Ex-Untouchable': Problems, Progress, and Policies in Indian Social Change" by Barbara R. Joshi, in *Pacific Affairs* (Summer 1980), William Byrd Press, 2901 Byrdhill Rd., Richmond, Va. 13261.

Modern India's founders tried to end their country's 2,000-year-old caste system. In the constitution of 1950, they guaranteed remedial schooling, government jobs, and representation by quota in India's parliament and state legislatures to the nation's "Untouchables." Today, Untouchables — traditionally considered so unclean by Hindus that even their shadows were abhorrent — still toil at the bottom of India's poverty-ridden economy.

Untouchables make up roughly 15 percent of India's population, reports Joshi, a political scientist at the State University of New York, Geneseo. "Affirmative action" programs have attracted a growing number of them into India's civil service, where 64 percent of all Indian non-farm workers are employed. But most Untouchable government jobholders are clerks and junior technicians; in 1974, only 1.2 percent of top-level bureaucrats were Untouchables. In India's private industries, where government quotas do not apply, the situation is worse. Untouchable employment there rose a bare 1 percent from 1961 to 1971, half the rate for the population as a whole. Today, with India's economic growth rate slowing, even these modest gains are endangered. The country's powerful labor unions increasingly assail the government for "pampering" the lower castes. And unusual waves of murder and arson have claimed Untouchable lives in the cities of Agra and Aurangbad.

But the true measure of the Untouchable's lowly status must be taken in rural India, where 90 percent of all Untouchables live. According to the latest (1971) census, only 28 percent of them cultivate their own or rented land, compared with 43 percent of higher caste peasants. And more than half the Untouchable farmers till plots smaller than 2.4 acres — a pattern likely to persist under "land reform" laws that are riddled with loopholes. Fully 52 percent of all Untouchables are landless agricultural laborers — compared with 34 percent in 1961. Literacy among Untouchables grew more slowly than among all other Indians during the 1960s.

Despite their guaranteed legislative seats, Untouchable politicians are not sufficiently numerous or financially independent to press for further progress. They will be lucky, suggests Joshi, in the current economy, to win an extension of the constitution's "special protection," which expires in 1990.

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Russian Views on Poland, 1830

"The Russian Idea and the 'Polish Question': Some Russian Views on the Polish Insurrection of 1830" by Julia Brun-Zejmis, in *East European Quarterly* (Fall 1980), 1200 University Ave., Boulder, Colo. 80309.

In 1830, Tsar Nicholas's plan to launch Polish troops against France and Belgium triggered revolt in Poland and harsh Russian reprisal. Ironically, some of the bitterest enemies of Polish independence were progressive Russian intellectuals.

Russian patriotism surged in the early 19th century, spurred first by fear of revolutionary France and later by pride over Russia's victories against Napoleon. Russian intellectuals in particular, recounts Brun-Zejmis, a University of Delaware historian, began to imagine a grand historic mission for the motherland. Some were simply Slavophiles who believed that Russia was destined to dominate Europe and the entire civilized world. Others were admirers of liberal Western society, who glimpsed in authoritarian Russia (and particularly in the regime of liberal Tsar Alexander I) the potential to lead a democratic Slavic and even Pan-European federation. Russia's "youth" and unique position between Asia and the West made it an obvious agent of change, many agreed.

Some of Russia's most progressive thinkers argued that Poland had been crushed for its own good. In an unpublished essay, subversive philosopher P. J. Čaadev contended that tsarist laws could protect Catholic Poles from the Russian Orthodox Church's hostility; moreover, (then) landlocked Poland could share Russia's ports and rivers.



Poet (and self-portraitist) Aleksandr Pushkin chafed under tsarist censorship. But like many "enlightened" 19th-century Russian thinkers, he opposed Polish independence.

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Unabashed imperialists, such as Russia's first national poet, Aleksandr Pushkin (1799–1837) believed that Russian strength and stability required dominion over all Slavic "tribes." Shaken by the Polish revolt, he asked in an 1831 poem "*Will the Slavic streams flow/To the Russian Sea/Or will the Russian sea drain off completely. . . ?*"

The asylum that the West extended to the Polish rebels of 1830 fed Russian xenophobia. Russia had "absorbed the power of the Mongols" and saved Europe from Napoleon, Pushkin exclaimed; in many Russian intellectuals' eyes, Western Europe had proven itself to be the true historical enemy of Russia.

Cuba's Costly African Venture

"Economic Aspects of Cuban Involvement in Africa" by Sergio Roca, in *Cuban Studies* (July 1980), Center for Latin American Studies, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15260.

Fidel Castro portrays Cuba's military intervention in African conflicts as a policy of "principle," to be continued whatever the cost. The beating that Cuba's economy has taken in supplying nearly 36,000 soldiers and 11,000 civilian technicians to Angola and Mozambique (since 1975), Ethiopia (since 1978), and other leftist African nations bears out Castro's claim, writes Roca, a specialist on Cuba at Adelphi University.

The African campaigns have siphoned valuable personnel, money, and machinery from Cuba just when declining sugar prices and rising import costs have struck hard at the Cuban economy. Havana's military budget doubled from 1975 to 1978, to 8.5 percent of the island's gross national product. By 1979, Cuban economic growth was down to 4.5 percent—half the 1975 rate.

Agricultural growth has been hobbled by the assignment to Africa of mechanics and truck drivers. In October 1979, only 20 percent of the country's combines and 60 percent of its tractors were fit for the sugar harvest.

The 7,900 construction workers now abroad, Roca estimates, could have put up 40,000 new units in housing-short Cuba in 1979. Instead, only 22,000 were built. With 1,167 dentists and physicians (about 6 percent of Cuba's 1978 total) serving overseas, the quality of health care has dropped sharply. And though Cuba has virtually wiped out illiteracy, the departure of 2,300 trained teachers has reportedly undermined classroom discipline and pushed up the drop-out rate.

Yet the island's foreign wars have yielded some benefits. Post-Angola pacts increased Cuban-Soviet trade (to \$5.7 billion in 1978), raised Soviet price subsidies for Cuban sugar and nickel exports, and linked Soviet oil charges to Cuban sugar prices. Cuba now gets Soviet oil at cheaper rates than other communist countries pay. Its support of African leftists, Roca speculates, may secure Cuba a steady share of Soviet oil, even if, as expected, the USSR's production levels off in the 1980s.

OTHER NATIONS

Frau Lib

"German Social Democracy and Women's Suffrage 1891-1918" by Richard J. Evans, in *Journal of Contemporary History* (July 1980), Sage Publications, Inc., 275 South Beverly Dr., Beverly Hills, Calif. 90212.

Turn-of-the-century suffragettes in Britain and the United States were generally ladies of some affluence. But in Imperial Germany in the early 1900s, working-class women and men led the fight for women's enfranchisement, recounts Evans, an historian at Britain's University of East Anglia.

In the campaign's vanguard stood the all-male Social Democratic Party (SPD), socialist voice of the German worker since the 1860s, and its sister affiliates. (German law forbade women to join political parties until 1908.) The party's first platform, approved in 1891, firmly endorsed women's right to vote. But for several decades, independent socialist women's groups lobbied mainly for higher pay and better working conditions for factory women. In 1908, as women's groups formally joined up with the SPD, the female component of the party began to change. Most of the new women recruits were housewives. Increasingly, socialist women centered their attentions on the suffrage issue.

Beginning on March 19, 1911, they staged a series of annual "International Proletarian Women's Days" featuring crowded rallies and speeches. Socialist women also took to the streets—tactics then considered revolutionary by Germans. Occasionally, club-wielding police dispersed them—which unnerved and embarrassed the SPD men.

As the SPD swelled to become the largest bloc in Germany's Parliament in 1914, party leaders who backed the feminists in theory continually questioned whether supporting women's suffrage was good politics. They feared that Germany's traditionally conservative women would support rightist and centrist parties. And most male socialists were ready to sacrifice women's suffrage for gains on other fronts, notably, universal male suffrage in provincial elections.

In 1918, just before World War I ended, the SPD won Catholic Center and Liberal support for abolishing property restrictions on male voting by agreeing to drop the women's cause. But the party's long philosophical adherence to women's rights prevailed in the end, writes Evans. The working class socialists who sparked the November 1918 revolution immediately enfranchised women under the new regime that governed Germany until the Weimar Constitution (complete with universal suffrage) was ratified 9 months later.

RESEARCH REPORTS

Reviews of new research by public agencies and private institutions

“Nonproliferation and U.S. Foreign Policy.”

The Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. 438 pp. \$22.95

Authors: Joseph A. Yager et al.

After 35 years, the nuclear weapons club now has six members — the United States, Soviet Union, Britain, France, China, and India. (Israel and South Africa may make it eight.) During the 1980s, this number could double.

Too many different factors seem to be driving nations into the nuclear club for the United States to carry out a single, consistent anti-nuclear proliferation policy. So concludes a team of Brookings researchers in this survey of America's “antiproliferation” options.

South Asia provides a case in point.

The 1970 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) froze the world into nuclear weapons “haves” (then, the United States, Soviet Union, China, France, and Britain) and “have-nots.” Most advanced Third World nations, including India, view the NPT purely as a device to preserve the superpowers' military dominance.

India, South Asia's dominant power, scorned the treaty and exploded its own “peaceful” nuclear device in 1974. Short-lived American and Canadian cutoffs of nuclear fuel simply induced New Delhi to stockpile and enrich its own uranium.

In fact, the Carter administration insisted in 1980 that only continued shipments of U.S. nuclear fuel — despite India's refusal to forswear reprocessing—could preserve Washington's influence with New Delhi. (The Soviet invasion of nearby Afghanistan was also instrumental in turning U.S. pol-

icy around.) The case of India shows that a tough antiproliferation stance can be not only futile but possibly undesirable.

Yet U.S. resumption of nuclear exports to India has infuriated Pakistan. Despite Pakistan's signing of the NPT, American officials are convinced of General Mohammad Zia ul-Haq's hunger for nuclear arms. Pakistan has now acquired enough expertise that a test detonation is expected by 1985. Meanwhile, U.S. offers of economic and military aid to Pakistan have been skimpy. That fact and Washington's need for allies near the Persian Gulf have limited U.S. opposition to Zia's nuclear plans.

What kind of antiproliferation policy is practical? Urging nations to forgo nuclear technology already within their grasp will not work, the authors argue. But U.S.-assisted settlements of Indo-Pakistani and Sino-Indian border disputes, for example, could make a nuclear build-up seem unnecessary to both India and Pakistan.

Globally, U.S. policy must combine diplomacy, military aid, and defense guarantees, which reduce the need for nuclear arms, with limited nonproliferation measures. Two suggestions: encouraging the establishment of regional fuel reprocessing centers; and publicizing the economic inefficiency, not the military potential, of the small uranium reprocessing and enrichment plants currently popular with Third World countries.

**“Public Opinion on Environmental Quality:
Results of a National Opinion Survey.”**

U.S. Council on Environmental Quality, 722 Jackson Pl. N.W.,
Washington, D.C. 20006. 49 pp.

Americans' concern over pollution has abated somewhat since the nationwide celebration of “Earth Day” in 1970. But the environment has become an “enduring” interest like health care or education, according to this study of public opinion trends.

Eleven years ago, only crime outranked air and water pollution in a Gallup poll measuring public concern over 10 domestic issues (inflation was not included). By 1980, respondents faced with the same choices on a survey conducted by Resources for the Future (RFF), a Washington-based research organization, ranked pollution sixth, behind crime, unemployment, “killer” diseases, education, and poverty, in that order.

But, despite massive federal programs to control pollution and widespread support for curbing Big Government, 48 percent of Americans in 1980 still felt that Washington was spending “too little” on the environment. Even survey questions asking respondents to make “tradeoffs” between environmental quality and

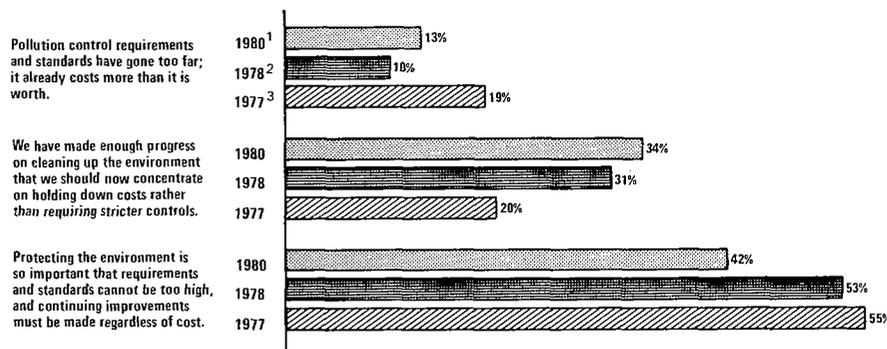
other goals revealed a significant — though declining — preference for pollution control. According to RFF polls, people who support continuing environmental improvement “regardless of cost” dropped from 55 percent in 1977 to 42 percent in 1980.

Americans oppose pollution controls that jeopardize energy supplies. In early 1980, University of Michigan pollsters asked whether “you think the government should . . . keep environmental protection regulations unchanged even though this may delay the production of more energy.” Twenty-nine percent favored unchanged regulations, 34 percent supported easing standards, and 15 percent opted for lower standards with qualifications.

However, most Americans are confident that the federal government can both protect the environment and satisfy future energy needs, according to the 1980 RFF survey.

Some critics have seen the environmental movement as an “elitist” cause championed by affluent Americans.

VIEWS ABOUT POLLUTION CONTROL



Source: Opinion Research Corporation, 1977; Resources for the Future, 1978, 1980.

But the 1980 RFF poll found that 62 percent of the public considered themselves active environmentalists or sympathetic to the cause — the same percentage recorded in 1978 when the question was first posed. The proportion characterizing themselves as un-

sympathetic dipped from 6 to 4 percent.

Only among blacks, persons lacking a high school diploma, and residents of the East South Central states (Mississippi to Kentucky) did "sympathy" drop below 50 percent.

"Palestinian Nationalism: The West Bank Dimension."

Prepared for the International Security Studies Program, The Wilson Center, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560. 41 pp.
Author: Moshe Ma'oz

The hilly, densely populated West Bank of the Jordan River has been the cradle of Palestinian Arab nationalism since the turn of the century. But only since Israeli occupation of the region, in 1967, has historically spotty support for a West Bank homeland turned into a Palestinian Arab cause célèbre. So writes Ma'oz, a political scientist at Jerusalem's Hebrew University.

When the newborn state of Israel won control of all Palestine in the 1948 war of independence, most Palestinian Arabs and their leaders fled to the Egyptian-ruled Gaza Strip and the Jordanian-governed West Bank. Palestinian Arab nationalism became lost in the broader pan-Arab struggle against Israel.

Distinctively Palestinian opposition to the Jewish state reappeared during the 1960s, with the emergence of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). But the Lebanon-based PLO made few inroads among Palestinians on the West Bank. From 1948 to 1967, Ma'oz writes, many had grown resigned to Jordanian control.

Post-1967 Israeli occupation policies oddly abetted the rebirth of Palestinian nationalism. In order to prevent the development of a unified West Bank Arab leadership, Israel increased the powers of the area's local town councils and mayors. In 1976, the strategy backfired. West Bank voters

elected a group of nationalist mayors loyal in varying degrees to the PLO. These politicians cooperated with the military government on local issues but became spokesmen for the Palestinian cause, leading strikes and demonstrations, and protesting alleged Israeli repression.

The economic progress fostered by Israeli authorities has increased the mayors' independence. The Israeli government has spent generously on the West Bank, modernizing agricultural production and creating jobs. As a result, radical mayors are able to collect higher taxes and more voluntary contributions from the populace. Aid from wealthy Arab countries has further reduced Israeli budgetary support, from 40 percent of total municipal outlays in 1969 to 7 percent today.

The election of conservative Prime Minister Menachem Begin in 1977 and his controversial support for permanent Jewish settlement of the West Bank have intensified Palestinian Arab radicalism. Support for establishing a fully sovereign Palestinian nation is now nearly universal among Arabs in the region. Yet, Ma'oz contends, few of the mayors insist on eliminating Israel and making an Arab state of all Palestine. They fear the destructive effects of a new war and appreciate the economic gains generated

by Israel.

Despite PLO intimidation, many West Bank mayors are willing to consider interim steps toward full sovereignty—such as a temporary federation between an autonomous West

Bank Palestinian “entity” and Israel or Jordan. Ma’oz suggests that these leaders’ ability to negotiate with Israel without PLO approval will determine how soon lasting peace comes to the Middle East.

“Have Black Men Gained in Employment?”

Urban Institute research paper, unpublished, presented on October 2, 1980, at the Brookings Panel on Economic Activity, The Brookings Institution. 25 pp.

Author: Frank Levy

Although individual black male earnings as a percentage of white male earnings have been steadily growing (to 71 percent in 1978), the U.S. Census earnings data do not include people who earn nothing at all. Hence, the impact of the growing black male “underclass” on overall black economic progress is masked.

Levy, a senior economist at the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., used a revised census sample of black and white males, aged 20 to 55, to include those with “zero earnings.” Such men accounted for 10.7 percent of the blacks and 3.8 percent of the whites in 1978; full-time, full-year black male workers accounted for 55 percent of all black men in 1978 (versus 65 percent in 1967). All this pushed down the “real” overall black-white earning ratio in 1978—from 71 percent to 59 percent.

Then Levy examined the same statistics to see what the odds were that a male of given race, age, and characteristics would be employed. How many blacks had a *less* than 50 percent likelihood of being employed? In 1964, only about 2 percent of all black men fitted this description. In 1978, about 17 percent were in this category. At the same time, the job prospects for the “top” 15 percent of blacks got better; they matched those of the top 51 percent of whites in 1978 versus 61 percent of whites in 1964.

Do black men with low prospects for employment starve? No. In 1978, they lived in households where other income averaged \$7,300, and 18 percent of the households were on welfare. Whether welfare (and food stamps) induced these men not to seek work remains unclear.

What is clear is a growing split in the black community: Some men are doing better; others worse. After the civil rights revolution, the male underclass grew to over 375,000 individuals (the “bottom” 12 percent) in 1978, most of whom did not work at all in 1977.

The differences between the top 36 percent of the sample of black males and the “bottom” 12 percent were smaller than one might expect. On the average, persons in the lowest segment were younger (27 years old versus 31), slightly less educated (11.5 years versus 13), less likely to live in the South (47 percent versus 61 percent), and more apt to be single (67 percent versus 30 percent).

Thus, contrasts between the underclass group and other black men with better prospects were fairly modest—although these variations “may of course obscure large differences in unobserved characteristics such as literacy and criminal records.” Or the modest differences may reflect a limited job market in which luck plays a disproportionate role.

“Litigation on Behalf of Women.”

The Ford Foundation, P.O. Box 559, Naugatuck, Conn. 06770. 72 pp. \$4.50
Author: Margaret A. Berger

Judicial decisions that struck down racial bias during the 1960s prompted feminists to press the courts—especially the Supreme Court—to ban all forms of sex discrimination. But already by 1979, many prominent women’s rights attorneys believed that their effort had hit a dead end, after a string of modest legal victories.

Berger, a professor at Brooklyn Law School, attributes the Supreme Court’s apparent insensitivity to sexism to judicial uneasiness over the possible effects of granting women full equality under the law—radical changes in U.S. family life, employment trends, and welfare programs.

Feminist lawyers have generally won only those cases where victory conferred benefits on both men and women. They have fared poorly in cases where the problems are peculiar to women or where discriminatory patterns would be costly to eliminate.

In *Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld* (1975) and *Califano v. Goldberg* (1977), the Burger Court made Social Security benefits automatically available to widowers and widows alike. (Previously, the former had to prove dependence on their spouses.) And in the 1979 case *Orr v. Orr*, the Court invali-

dated an Alabama law prohibiting wives from paying alimony.

In contrast, *Gilbert v. General Electric* (1976) was regarded as a major defeat by women’s rights activists. The Court ruled that an employee income protection plan covering temporary disabilities except pregnancies did not discriminate against women—even though men who voluntarily underwent vasectomies and hair transplants qualified.

Another case jarred feminists. In 1979, a Massachusetts court upheld the state’s practice of giving veterans preference in handing out civil service jobs. The judges ruled that the policy was not sexist in *intent*.

The outlook for further legal progress is bleak, according to Berger. The Supreme Court seems to believe that sex discrimination exists only when government officials or employers fail to prove that their current discriminatory policies meet vital objectives. Employers are resisting further concessions to women, realizing that the subtler forms of bias now under feminist attack are difficult to prove statistically, as the Supreme Court now explicitly requires in more and more cases.

“Technology Transfer Between East and West.”

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD Publications and Information Center, 1750 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. 435 pp. \$50
Authors: Eugene Zaleski and Helgard Wienert

The flow of advanced industrial equipment and technology from the Western democracies to Soviet bloc countries rose sharply as U.S.–Soviet

relations warmed during the 1960s and early ’70s. Now it is slowing, report Zaleski, of the French National Center for Scientific Research, and

Weinert, a researcher for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

This is not the first such change. Russian trade with the West ground to a halt following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. Soon, however, the Kremlin began to perceive foreign assistance as the key to its numerous industrialization plans. By 1929, German, British and American-designed metallurgical facilities, electric power stations, chemical plants, and steel mills had been built throughout the country.

During World War II, the Lend-Lease program injected some \$1.25 billion of the latest American industrial equipment into the Soviet economy. Yet subsequent Cold War tensions prompted U.S. legislation banning the sale of militarily useful American equipment to the East by domestic industries or foreign trade partners.

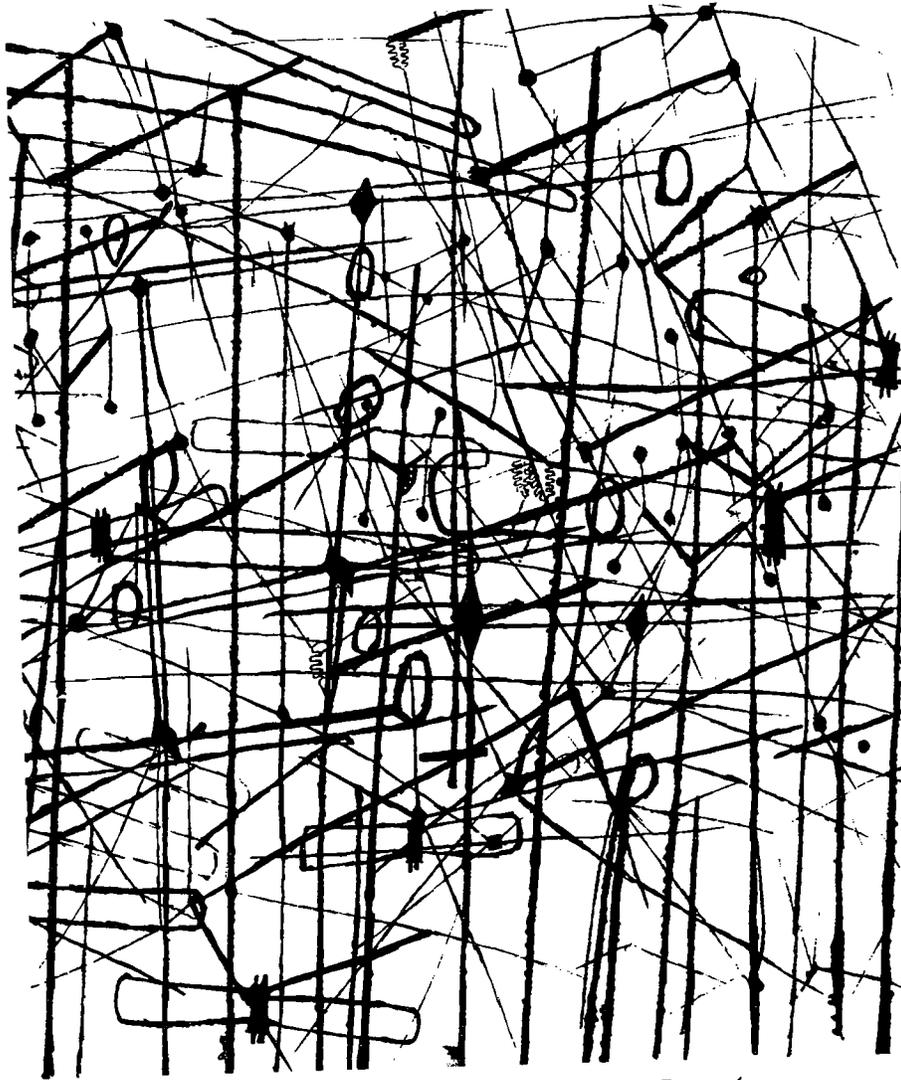
Trade between the two blocs blossomed again during the mid-1960s, when two trends converged. As U.S.-Soviet relations gradually improved, America joined the competition for Communist markets cautiously begun by West Germany, Britain, and Italy in the 1950s. And their slumping economies spurred the Communists to make massive purchases of Western technology, to be financed by borrow-

ing billions of dollars from Western banks.

Between 1965 and 1977, total Western and Japanese high technology sales to the Soviet bloc—mainly of heavy machinery and transportation equipment—grew from \$1 billion to \$10 billion. (Of this, more than half went to the USSR.) Then came a downturn. After a nearly \$3.4 billion jump in 1975 alone, the increases shrank to \$100 million in 1976 and rose to only \$832 million in 1977.

The trade slowdown stems primarily from the Communist countries' staggering \$100 billion collective debt and Western reluctance to extend further credit. But, the authors maintain, politics will continue to dog East-West high technology trade—even if the Communist countries raise more hard cash by boosting their exports. Some specialists in the U.S. Congress charge that sales of "civilian goods" such as computers and automotive technology have strengthened Soviet military capabilities.

Indeed, since 1977, there has been growing support in Congress for severe curbs on the export of semiconductor devices, precision machines, integrated circuits, and computers that could help the Soviets close the remaining gaps in military technology. The boom in East-West technology transfer may be over.



Ben Shahn

© Estate of Ben Shahn, 1953.

By 1953, when America's spreading roof-cover of TV aerials caught the imagination of artist Ben Shahn (detail above), 20 million U.S. households had television sets, and Walter Annenberg had launched his new TV Guide, now America's best-selling magazine. Today, 98 percent of all American families own at least one TV set, more than own refrigerators.

Television in America

“There has never been anything like the intimate relationship . . . between the American people and its television broadcasters,” observed critic Michael Arlen. Watching television is the one thing almost all Americans do, and if the experts are right, they will be doing more of it every year for some time to come. Inevitably, TV has become a focus of much scholarly inquiry. Does television shape U.S. voting patterns or sway public opinion? Has it fostered a decline in literacy among the young? Is it a spur to violence, to sexism, to promiscuity? Here, Lawrence Lichty explains how TV acquired its present character; Stuart Shorestein looks at public television’s uncertain future; Stuart Brotman weighs the probable impact of cable TV, videodiscs, and other new technologies; and Joel Swerdlow surveys the research on television’s effects on the way we view the world and live our lives.



SUCCESS STORY

by Lawrence W. Lichty

In many households in the United States during the early 1950s, Father came home one night, often just before Christmas, and placed a television set in the living room where the radio had stood. It came sooner to families in big cities and suburbs, sooner to people with higher incomes, and sooner to those living in the Northeast, where most of the new TV stations were. Because postwar America was the most affluent place on Earth, television, like the automobile, eventually came to everybody.

In one sense, television seems to be the world’s first dispensable major technology. Theoretically, the complex industrial societies of the United States, Western Europe, and Japan

could function quite well without it. This is not true of the printing press, the telephone, the radio, the digital computer. Were any of these to disappear, our economy, our public administration, and our defense system would be thrown into chaos.

Radio Days

Yet I would argue that television has also become essential, by the very fact that it has been around for 30 years, and we have adjusted to it, allowed it to alter our perceptions and choreograph the rhythms of daily life. Television, if only by default, is one of the tools modern societies now must use to sustain themselves. In many countries, as in our own, television and the central government are the only *national* institutions. Television is a baby sitter, an initiator of conversations, a transmitter of culture, a custodian of traditions. It is the creator—and showcase—of heroes. Psychologically, TV performs other, inef-fable functions. If it were suddenly to disappear, what would happen to the 20 percent of Americans who watch 12 hours of television a day? One need not concede that TV is “good” to recognize that getting rid of it, like keeping it, entails a certain cost.

Television’s roots go deep. It is the inheritor of functions once performed by serialized novels, by newspapers and photographs, by movies and the phonograph. But its content, like a froth, exists on the surface of things. The “substance” of TV is a derivative amalgam flavored by Madison Avenue and Hollywood, endlessly percolating the grounds of popular culture: the fiction of women’s magazines, the clichés of newspaper headlines, the plotlines of best sellers, the fleeting tyrannies of political fads, the shifting banalities of the conventional wisdom. All of this television ingests, then throws back, reshaped and reinforced and trivialized. It happens over and over again, day after day. In relation to American society, television is always in the same place. It possesses a peculiar, implacable kind of stability.

For 30 years, television has been a flickering constant in American life. The TV industry and its structure; the nature and quality of television programs; the ratings system; the raised

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From A Pictorial History of Television by Irving Settel and William Laas. Copyright © 1969 by Irving Settel and William Laas. Used by permission of Grosset & Dunlap, Inc.

In 1882, illustrator Albert Robida tantalized the French public with visions of a sight-and-sound device much like television. Above: his version of what, during the Vietnam era, came to be called the “living room war.”

eyebrow of federal regulation—remarkably, none of these has changed, in its essential lineaments, since commercial TV emerged after World War II. Television thrives within a constellation of forces on which it depends but over which it has only limited influence. Its character, in effect, has been locked into place. Television might be a different medium if broadcasters did not have to rely for their revenues on advertising, but they do. Television would certainly be different if the audience were different (imagine the result if only people with mortgages or Ph.D.s in physics owned TV sets) or if it had been the offspring of the federal government, or even the Ford Foundation, instead of network radio.

Nothing was so important to the development of television as radio. Radio-as-progenitor gave television a voice, a code of conduct, and a way to make a living, just as radio itself had drawn its form and content from vaudeville, the concert hall, and the newspaper.

In 1923, when émigré engineer Vladimir Zworykin, late of the Russian Army Signal Corps, sought his patent for the first

electronic TV tube (the iconoscope), the radio broadcasting business was growing rapidly. In 1922, the number of U.S. radio stations rose from fewer than 30 to 570.* The Radio Corporation of America (RCA), founded in 1919 as a U.S. government-promoted holding company for radio patents, grossed \$50 million in 1924 from sales of radios.

Uncle Sam Steps In

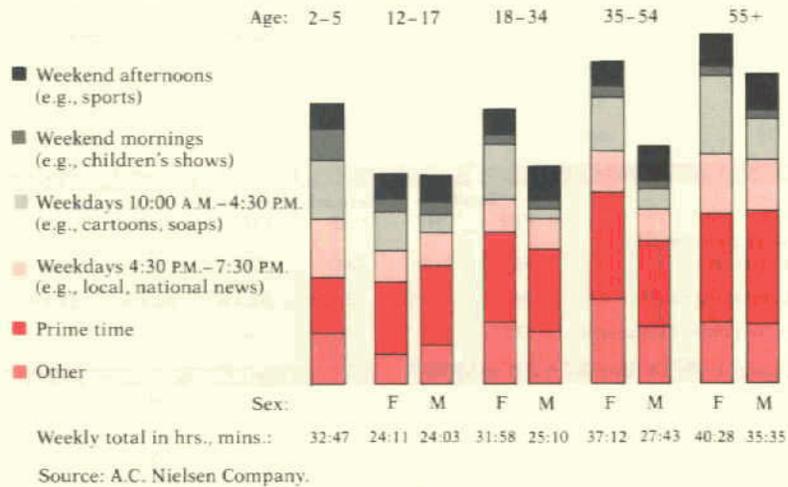
By the time of the Great Crash, a network structure was in place. Building on several years of experiments, RCA, through its subsidiary, the National Broadcasting Company, inaugurated a "Red" Network in 1926 by providing music and various talk shows to 21 affiliate stations. A second NBC "Blue" network was started a few months later. (NBC was ordered to divest itself of one network in 1943, and the Blue network became what is now ABC.) In 1929, cigar-fortune heir William S. Paley, then 28, took control of a floundering network, the Columbia Phonograph Broadcasting System—now CBS and still controlled by Paley. Together, the networks provided about 130 hours of programming a week in 1931. For a quarter century, the networks would dominate radio programming.

As the radio audience grew, advertisers turned increasingly to the airwaves, although many found the notion of "ether advertising" distasteful. "The very thought of such a thing," wrote the author of a 1922 *Radio Broadcasting* article, "is sufficient to give any true radio enthusiast the cold shakes." Yet, barring government subsidies, or a rush of Andrew Carnegies to endow stations, advertising was the only long-term way to pay for radio. In time, advertisers became the chief source not only of radio revenues but also of radio programming (e.g., the *Eveready Hour*, the *Cliquot Club Eskimos*, the *General Motors Party*), cementing forever the link between broadcasting and commerce.

Throughout radio's golden age, Washington stepped in occasionally from the sidelines, mainly to prune a tree that was otherwise doing nicely. With the blessing of most broadcasters, Congress in 1927 created the Federal Radio Commission (FRC) to straighten out a chaotic technical situation and assume responsibility for station licensing. The FRC eliminated some channels and consolidated others, then allowed radio's development to proceed—with the proviso that use of a channel was

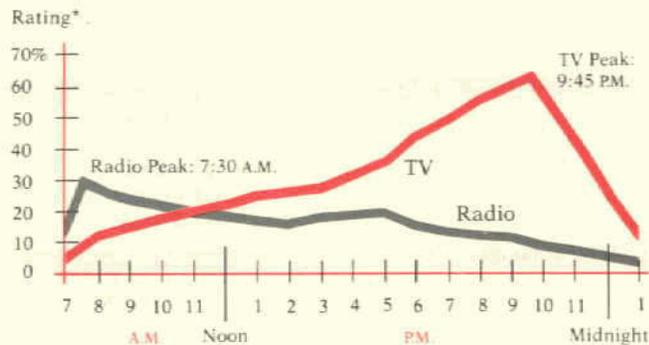
* Much of radio remained "amateur" throughout the 1920s, with programming sometimes patched together minutes before broadcast time. Most stations with any real "staff" were owned by department stores and other retail outfits that sold radios, or by radio manufacturers themselves (e.g., Westinghouse, General Electric).

HOW TV VIEWING BREAKS DOWN, BY AGE, SEX, AND TIME



TV viewing activity is distributed disproportionately (above). Women, for example, watch more than men, older people more than younger (except children). Television has pushed radio's prime time from the evening to the early morning hours (below).

RADIO LISTENERS VS. TELEVISION WATCHERS



*The radio rating in this chart reflects the percent of all persons with radios who are listening at any given time; the television rating is based on the number of households watching television as a percentage of all TV households.

Sources: Arbitron; A.C. Nielsen Company.

THE TELEVISION INDUSTRY
TV Sets and TV Households

	TV sets sold to retailers (millions)	TV households (millions)	As % of all households	% with color TV
1950	7.4	3.9	9.0%	0.0%
1960	5.8	45.8	87.1	.7
1979	16.6	76.3	98.0	81.0

Television Stations in 1978

	Total		Network-affiliated		Independent	
	VHF	UHF	VHF	UHF	VHF	UHF
No. of commercial TV stations	515	210	484	128	31	82
% reporting profits	94.4%	73.1%	93.1%	82.1%	82.1%	57.1%
No. of public TV stations	112	168	—	—	—	—

Commercial TV Employment in 1978

	No. of employees	Total payroll (billions)
Total	70,805	\$1.4
ABC, CBS, NBC	14,542	.4
Local station total	56,263	1.0

Television and Advertising

	Total U.S. adv. expenditures (billions)	Total TV adv. (billions)	TV adv. as % of all adv.	Magazine adv. as % of all adv.	Newspaper adv. as % of all adv.
1950	\$ 5.7	\$.2	3.0%	8.4%	36.3%
1960	12.0	1.6	13.6	7.6	30.8
1979	49.7	10.2	20.5	5.9	29.4

Top Five TV Advertisers in 1979

1	Procter and Gamble	\$289,600,000
2	General Foods	203,200,000
3	American Home Products	122,600,000
4	General Motors	117,300,000
5	Bristol-Myers	117,000,000

Cable TV Penetration

	No. of households with cable (millions)	As % of all TV households
1969	3.6	6.3%
1974	8.7	13.1
1979	16.8	22.0

Sources: FCC TV Broadcast Financial Data; Television Factbook; Advertising Age, April 30, 1980; Cable Television Developments, Oct. 1980; A. C. Nielsen Company; Cobett Steinberg, TV Facts, Facts on File, Inc., 1980; Public Broadcasting Service.

being conferred “but not the ownership thereof.” The regulators were not reformers. In any event, the FRC found, as its successor, the Federal Communications Commission (1934) would find, that life and death power over individual stations did not bring much leverage over the system as a whole.

By the time of the Depression, as radio became a vehicle of popular entertainment, the broadcasting industry had acquired the shape it now generally maintains. Stations were organized into networks, AT&T “longlines” linked them up, and advertisers paid for programming. Broadcasters were experimenting with program formats that have since become familiar: news, drama, comedy, music, and variety shows. Politicians began using radio to publicize their conventions, FDR to broadcast his “fireside chats.” Radio, with its capacity for virtually instantaneous nationwide communication, had become America’s first *universal* mass medium.

The TV Age Begins

Slowly, working from the inside out, television displaced radio. It took radio’s programming, its networks, its audience, its advertisers, its talent, its executives, its benign relationship with the FCC, and its way of doing business. Over time, the TV moguls made some changes, but the basic formula remained.

Television was radio’s child. While the idea was not new—*Scientific American* had used the word *television* in 1907—it was not until the early 1920s that such pioneers as Charles F. Jenkins and Philo T. Farnsworth in the United States and John L. Baird in Britain reported the first successful video transmissions. The radio networks built on this foundation. NBC televised images as early as 1927 and in 1931 began broadcasting from an experimental station, W2XB5, on the 53rd floor of the Empire State Building. Atop the Chrysler Building, CBS soon had its own experimental TV station.

After World War II, the electronics industry finally got television out of the infant stage. Television sets reappeared on the market in 1946, costing an average of \$280. Within two years, four networks—ABC, CBS, NBC, and the short-lived Dumont network—were in operation. By 1952, 108 stations were on the air.* Of these, more than half were owned by a company that

*From 1948 to 1952, the FCC imposed a “freeze” on new TV station applications while it studied certain technical problems—allocation of stations to various market areas, use of the ultra-high frequency (UHF) band, color television, and other matters. Following the precedent set by the Federal Radio Commission 25 years earlier, the FCC then allowed the development of television to proceed. Within one year after the end of the freeze, the FCC authorized creation of more than 400 new TV stations.

operated an AM radio station before 1925, half were owned by a company that owned another TV station, and four out of five were owned by a company that owned a radio station in the same market as its TV station. Ninety percent of the stations were showing a profit. TV's advance was abetted by skillful promotion. "How can a little girl describe a bruise deep inside?" asked one television manufacturer's advertisement. "No, your daughter won't ever tell you the humiliation she's felt in begging those precious hours of television from a neighbor."

A Tyranny of Fads

Radio was the obvious source of much television programming. Most of the radio stars of 1950—Martin and Lewis, Lucille Ball, Roy Rogers, Groucho Marx, and scores of others—became TV stars a few years later. To this ready-made menu, the networks added movies and a bigger dollop of sports than radio, lacking pictures, had ever been able to sustain. Puppet shows and, later, cartoons drew young children into the broadcast audience, just as action/adventure serials had done for radio. While television news combined the traditions, good and bad, of radio and newsreel reporting, TV made journalism a more prominent feature of broadcasting than it had ever been.

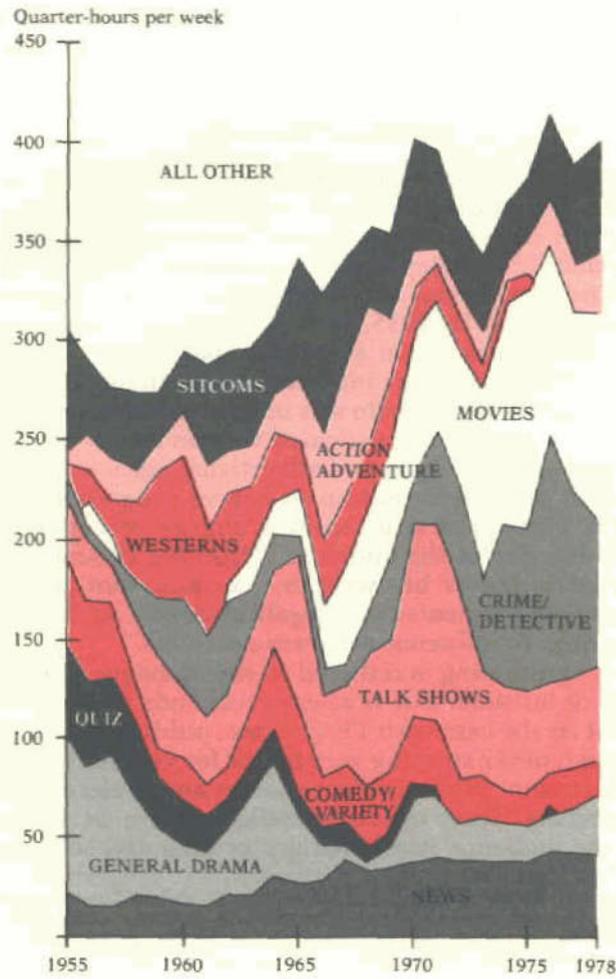
Television programming, like that of radio, consists of a finite number of trends mutating within a closed system. Most of them have radio precedents: the courtroom dramas (beginning with *They Stand Accused*, 1949), the "adult" westerns (*Gunsmoke* and *Wyatt Earp*, 1956), the medical dramas (*Ben Casey* and *Dr. Kildare*, 1962), and so on.* "Spinoffs" were not unknown on network radio—the Green Hornet, for instance, was the Lone Ranger's nephew—but television raised parthenogenesis to a science.

If something works, imitate it; if one show soars in popularity, put on others like it; if the ratings fall, take them off. One can study an electrocardiogram of this phenomenon, reflecting the variable vitality of "action" shows, in the incidence of TV violence, which rises and falls but oscillates from a nearly constant level. Few trends, or programs, last very long. In the delayed 1981 season, only 18 out of 80 prime-time network programs had been on for five years or more.

Contrary to the claims of the high-minded, television is not free to break this cycle. Broadcasters are in business not to produce bold, innovative programs but to attract audiences to

*Throughout this essay, the date given for programs is that of the TV "season." Thus, *Dr. Kildare* appeared during the 1962 season, which began in the autumn of 1961.

NETWORK PRIME-TIME PROGRAM TRENDS



Source: Computed by Lawrence W. Lichty, Christopher Sterling, and Susan Leakey. For more details see Christopher Sterling and Timothy Haight, *The Mass Media*, New York: Praeger, 1978.

Not shown on the graph are daytime soap operas (40 hours per week) and weekend sports (17 hours). Both have grown steadily since 1955.

view commercials. Audience taste—what the largest possible audience will stand for—sets television's immutable boundaries. Fred Smith, then director of radio station WLW, identified the fundamental principle in 1923. "The nature of radio programs," he wrote, "eventually will follow demands of economic conditions, which in other words, is but the demand of the public."

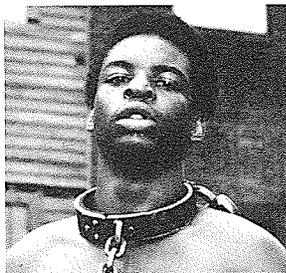
Nielsen's "Black Box"

Most early radio stations kept track of audience response, usually by monitoring the mail and phone. But as advertising increased, so did the accuracy—and importance—of polling. In 1930, Archibald Crossley and his Cooperative Analysis of Broadcasting Company began publishing once-a-year ratings based on telephone surveys. By 1935, the C. E. Hooper Company was providing "Hooperatings" on a monthly basis. Seven years later, the A. C. Nielsen Company introduced a mechanical "black box" that could be affixed to radio sets in selected homes to record listening habits. A more sophisticated version is now used to measure TV ratings.* Sponsors and advertising agencies rely heavily on this and other information to cancel programs or develop new ones. Networks and stations charge prices-per-minute based on the size of the audience. "Nothing in American life," author Martin Mayer has written, "certainly not politics, is so democratic, so permeated with egalitarianism, as the use of television ratings to influence program decisions."

TV programming is tethered to the audience. Like a kite, it has a bit of latitude. But it always responds to a tug from the viewers. As is the case with TV violence, public opinion rises and falls, though never straying very far, or for very long, from a glacial mainstream. When audience tastes and preferences change in a superficial way, television reflects them in a superficial way. If the audience itself changes profoundly, so does televi-

*The two largest ratings companies today are the A. C. Nielsen Company and Arbitron, though the latter is concerned exclusively with local ratings. Nielsen produces a weekly National Television Index based on 3,600 homes nationwide. For instant ratings, known as "overnights," Nielsen relies on a sample of 1,800 households in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and San Francisco. In addition, Nielsen analyzes the data from TV diaries logged by 100,000 viewers across the country to compile its quarterly Nielsen Station Index, which provides local station ratings. Not all members of the TV audience are equal. During prime time, advertisers have their eyes particularly on the middle-income women who still do most of America's shopping. Makers of products for the elderly—denture cream, Geritol, headache remedies—aim for the network news programs, 41 percent of whose audience consists of people aged 55 or older. Toy makers and candy companies dominate the weekend morning children's shows. Commercials tucked into soap operas are for housewives aged 25 to 49. While popular shows attract older men, teens, and children, prime-time programming must hold the 25-to-54 female audience or it will not survive.

THE TOP-RATED SHOWS IN HISTORY



UPI.

*All eight *Roots* episodes scored in the top 50 programs. In order to list other highly rated shows, only the top-ranking segment is included here.

Scheduled Programs	% of all homes reached
1 Nov. 1980 <i>Dallas</i> (Who Shot J.R.?)	53.3
2 Jan. 1977 <i>Roots</i> (episode 8)*	51.1
3 Nov. 1976 <i>Gone With the Wind</i> —1	47.7
4 Nov. 1976 <i>Gone With the Wind</i> —2	47.4
5 Jan. 1978 <i>Super Bowl XII</i>	47.2
6 Jan. 1979 <i>Super Bowl XIII</i>	47.1
7 Jan. 1970 <i>Bob Hope Christmas Show</i>	46.6
8 Jan. 1980 <i>Super Bowl XIV</i>	46.3
9 Aug. 1967 <i>The Fugitive</i> (last show)	45.9
10 Jan. 1971 <i>Bob Hope Christmas Show</i>	45.0

Special Events

Special Events	% of all homes reached
1 Nov. 1963 JFK Funeral	96
2 July 1969 Apollo II Moon Landing	94
3 Nov. 1960 Election Night	92
4 July 1965 Gemini IV Space Walk	92
5 Nov. 1964 Election Night	91
6 Aug. 1968 Democratic Convention	90
7 July 1976 Democratic Convention	89
8 Nov. 1956 Election Night	89
9 Aug. 1976 Republican Convention	88
10 Feb. 1962 John Glenn Space Flight	81



ABC.

Source: A. C. Nielsen Company.

All but one of the top 10 scheduled TV programs were broadcast during winter months, when TV-watching is at its peak. Six of the 10 were shown on Sunday, when evening viewing is heaviest.

sion. There are many reasons for the end, in the mid-1950s, of the "Golden Age" of live, often inspired, TV drama. Not the least of these is that television's early core of affluent, urban viewers by then constituted a minority of TV households.

Television did induce, though it did not initiate, one major change in the relationship of advertiser to broadcaster. Throughout most of the radio era, advertisers paid for *and pro-*

duced their own programs. Then, in 1946, CBS radio regularly began producing shows of its own—notably *My Friend Irma* and *Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts*—and selling the time to advertisers. The notion was transplanted to television. By 1959, only one-quarter of all prime-time TV shows were produced by advertisers. (Today, the practice survives mainly in soap operas.)

The chief catalyst here was the rising cost of production. A typical hour-long variety show cost only about \$6,000 in 1949, but more than \$100,000 a decade later. The cost of a 30-minute drama grew from \$15,000 in 1952 to more than \$100,000 in 1970. Bearing production costs plus network fees represented a big commitment—and an act of faith—by even the wealthiest sponsors. At first advertisers reacted by sharing the costs of a program with one or more other companies. Eventually, they moved out of the business altogether, content to spread their bets and buy time on programs created by the big Hollywood production companies: Paramount, Universal, 20th Century-Fox, Warner Brothers, and Columbia.*

Fish Can't Fly

The decline of advertiser-produced TV coincided with the quiz show scandals—an episode that constitutes a parable of government attempts to regulate the TV industry.

Introduced in 1955, within six months Revlon's \$64,000 *Question* was being seen in almost half of all TV households. True to the cycle of imitation described above, prime time was suddenly blinking with sponsor-produced quiz shows, all of them hungrily competing for viewers. By 1957, reports of "rigging" were being investigated. The climax came during congressional hearings in November 1959 when Charles Van Doren, a teacher at Columbia University and an NBC *Today* show celebrity, confessed that he had been briefed on questions and answers while competing on the quiz show, *Twenty One*. "I would give almost anything I have," Van Doren testified, "to reverse the course of my life during the past three years."

Amid a brief public uproar, the FCC in 1960 raised an eyebrow and enjoined the networks to clean house. Then—as atonement, it was implied—FCC Chairman John C. Doerfer proposed that each of the three networks begin providing an hour of public affairs programming each week. The networks agreed. Dur-

*The cost squeeze hit the networks, too. Because an hour-long show was considerably less expensive to produce than two half-hour shows, the networks prudently began to expand their action or dramatic programs into an hour. Four out of five prime-time television shows in 1956 were 30 minutes in length; fewer than half are today.

ing the 1962 season, there were more hours of documentary programming on television than any season before or since—253 hours. Yet, as the memory of the quiz show scandals receded, so, quickly, did the number of documentaries.

The FCC's "prime-time access rule," which went into effect in 1971, has suffered a similar fate. In essence, the rule requires TV stations in the 50 largest markets to carry no more than three hours of network-supplied programming during the prime-time hours of 7:00 to 11:00 P.M. The goal was to promote *local* programming, especially news and public affairs. To a certain extent, the rule was effective: Many stations now broadcast informational programs such as *PM Magazine*. Yet its primary—and unanticipated—effect has been to stimulate the growth of first-run, nationally syndicated quiz shows, created by independent producers. In 1975, two-thirds of the programs on all TV stations in the 7:30–8:00 P.M. time slot consisted of game or quiz shows; all five of the TV stations owned by the NBC network, for example, are currently airing the highly profitable *Family Feud*. Broadcasters have neatly finessed the intent of the access rule while following it to the letter.

One still reads, from time to time, laments in the press or in academic journals about what television "could have been," as if it could have been any different than what it actually became. Its future, as a mass marketing tool, was determined well before its birth, in a very Darwinian sense. A fish cannot fly; it swims.

Some dreamers now hail cable TV and videodiscs as technologies that may finally pull television into an era of "quality" and "innovation." They won't. They may supplant commercial TV just as TV in some ways brushed radio aside. But radio adjusted by becoming more "specialized," and so will network television. The new video media, for their part, will be subject to the very same market forces that shaped radio and television broadcasting. While the audience may have more choices, the proportion of "quality" programming appearing on the home screen will not be much different than it is now. The prospect is not a noble one, but it has, at least, the virtue of familiarity.



DOES PUBLIC TELEVISION HAVE A FUTURE?

by Stuart Alan Shorestein

Throughout its history, public broadcasting in America has been a medium in search of a mission.

It was born during the early 1950s as an attempt to harness the educational potential of the "electronic blackboard." It was revamped during the '60s as an institution designed to preserve and foster America's (and, cynics would add, Britain's) "cultural heritage." Over the course of three decades, public broadcasting has received lavish praise, pointed criticism, and more than \$3 billion in public and private money.

Public TV now faces serious trouble. In a 1979 report, a blue-ribbon commission impaneled by the Carnegie Corporation handed down this verdict:

We find public broadcasting's financial, organizational, and creative structure fundamentally flawed. In retrospect, what public broadcasting tried to invent was a truly radical idea: an instrument of mass communications that simultaneously respects the artistry of individuals who create programs, the needs of the public that form the audience, and the forces of political power that supply the resources. . . . Sadly we conclude that the invention did not work, or at least not very well.

The Carnegie Commission did not recommend that the whole effort be scrapped. Predictably, it put forward instead a meticulously crafted reorganization plan; it called for increased funding. But the commission's ruminations have roused little interest in Congress or the White House, both of which have lately sought to trim spending, not subsidize expensive "frills."

Public television's chronic funding difficulties and organizational headaches persist. Despite attempts to reach out to a more diverse clientele, public TV still attracts only a small prime-time audience that remains disproportionately white, college-educated, and affluent. About one-fifth of public TV's prime-time hours are taken up with shows produced abroad—in England primarily, but also in Canada, Australia, West Ger-

Advertisement for Lillie, a popular PBS series produced in Great Britain and broadcast in the United States in 1979, thanks to a grant from the Mobil Oil Corporation.



many, and even Japan. And now, to compound its problems, public broadcasting is facing increased competition from cable TV, satellite-to-home transmission, videocassettes, and video-discs—competition that may ultimately rob it of its more popular offerings and of its role as the alternative to the commercial networks.

Just as serious is public broadcasting's perceived lack of purpose. ABC, CBS, and NBC are in business to make money. What is public television in business for? Instruction? Culture? Ratings? Survival? In fact, there are 280 local public TV stations across the United States, all of them autonomous. They are united by no common mission (i.e., to be "a civilized voice in a civilized society" as the Carnegie Commission put it). Rather, as former *New York Times* critic Les Brown once noted, the only joint purpose seems to be the pursuit of congressionally authorized funds.

At the same time, since none but the biggest public TV stations have the capacity to produce much original programming, local stations have come to depend on the daily PBS network "feed" out of Virginia for more than 70 percent of their shows. These programs are hatched by station executives in the flagship public stations, including WETA in Washington, WGBH in Boston, and WNET in New York. Many of these executives are veterans of foundations, or universities, or cultural institutions; a few are network refugees. Well-educated, if not intellectuals,

committed to "uplift," they are responsible for the genteel, upper-middlebrow quality of public TV's typical offerings, a quality that is public television's signature and, arguably, its chief weakness. "From the very first," writes critic Benjamin DeMott, "the makers of what we've come to know as public TV have behaved as though their prime duty was to coat the land with a film of what can best be described as distinguished philistinism, lifelessly well-meaning, tolerant, earnest, well-scrubbed—and utterly remote from what is most precious and vital in the soul of this nation."

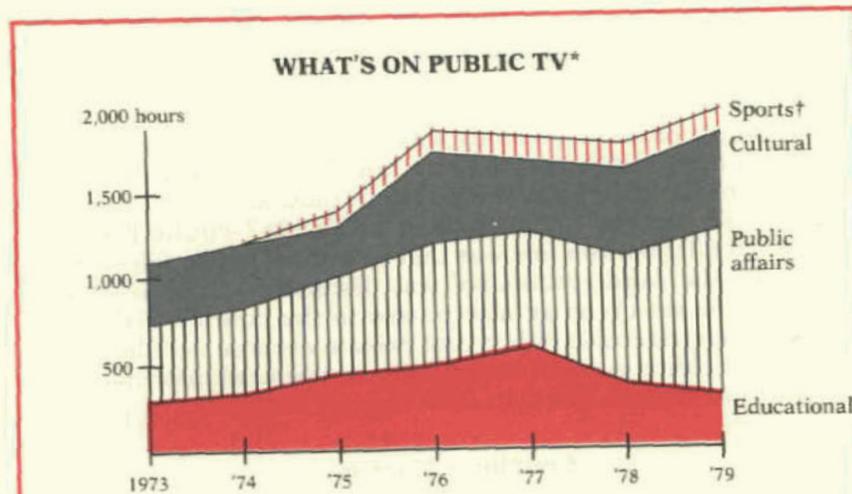
Public television started out at a disadvantage in the United States. In Britain, West Germany, Japan, and Canada, television, like radio broadcasting before it, was initially state-run. People grew accustomed to paying for TV out of their own pockets. By the time advertiser-supported television came along, public TV was already well established—not as an adjunct but as the leader in the medium.

In the United States, the story was exactly the reverse. Here, commercial broadcasting was already in full bloom by the time the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in 1952 set aside 242 stations, mostly in the UHF frequency, for noncommercial, educational use. There was little popular demand for educational TV; the idea hadn't occurred to most Americans.

The FCC, it should be noted, was doing public television no great favor, since most TV sets were only equipped to receive VHF. The new stations, moreover, were run primarily by educators with little or no broadcasting experience. (A few were veterans of educational radio.) In contrast to the situation in Britain after 1954, when many BBC employees moved laterally to ITV, the new commercial network, few American commercial broadcasters were tempted by the low pay and relative invisibility of educational TV. By 1957, only 21 educational broadcasting stations, run by cities and towns, local school systems, or universities, were actually on the air.

With a few exceptions—e.g., *Sunrise Semester* (which made its debut in 1957), and eventually *Sesame Street* (1969) and *The Electric Company* (1971)—the promise of the electronic blackboard went unfulfilled. There was never enough money to produce good programming. Many educators, then as now, were highly skeptical of TV's pedagogic value. By the early 1960s,

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*Hours of programming distributed annually to local stations by PBS.

†Until 1974, sports programs were included in the "cultural" category.

Source: Public Broadcasting Service.

The number of hours of original programming distributed by PBS has been growing, though internal fluctuations by category are significant. Public affairs programming now accounts for almost half of PBS's schedule; this includes 130 hours for the ABC World News Tonight (captioned for the deaf). Educational programming—the most costly to produce—has dropped substantially. In 1979, PBS paid \$9.2 million to acquire foreign programs, and earned \$2.5 million from sales abroad of its own shows.

noncommercial TV was in disarray. Fewer than 75 educational stations were in operation around the country, and the few programs they shared had to be "bicycled" from one station to the next. Their audiences were small.

Public TV got its first transfusion under the Kennedy administration when Congress enacted the 1962 Educational Facilities Act, which authorized up to \$32 million in matching funds over five years to support noncommercial broadcasting. That same year, Congress required all TV sets sold after 1964 to be able to pick up UHF as well as VHF channels. The number of noncommercial stations now began to multiply, reaching 107 by 1966, when the Carnegie Corporation, intrigued by the possibility of "networking," impatient with the American system's shortcomings, and inspired by the manifest achievements of the

BBC, charged a select commission to look at the future of non-commercial broadcasting.

It was the era of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, when publishing a blue-ribbon study was often tantamount to seeing its recommendations enacted into law. Within a month of its release, the Carnegie Commission report (now known as "Carnegie I") had become the nucleus of LBJ's 1967 Public Broadcasting Act. Its bottom line was that a national *public* television network—the word *educational* was discarded as unattractive—should be set up as an alternative to the commercial networks, at considerable public and private expense, for the purpose of providing cultural enrichment and general information, not just instruction. The act sailed through Congress.

Creating a Monster

To oversee operation of the new system, Congress created the nonprofit Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) under a private, nonprofit board to be appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. CPB's main duties were to pay for programs and distribute funds, including an annual congressional appropriation, to member stations. CPB, in turn, spun off the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) to link up local stations, creating, in effect, America's "fourth network." The purpose of this complex organizational layout was to insulate public television from White House and congressional interference.

This is the foundation on which public broadcasting, as Americans have come to know it, has grown. It has expanded rapidly. In 1967, only 119 noncommercial TV stations were on the air; by 1979, the number had climbed to 280. Over roughly the same period, public broadcasting's annual income (for TV and radio) rose from \$58 million to almost \$600 million, with more than one-quarter of it coming from Washington.*

Public television, however, has had its growing pains. Since its inception, it has been wracked by bitter, if tedious, jurisdictional conflicts among CPB, PBS, and the hundreds of member stations. Was PBS only responsible for the technical job of "networking," or could it select programs too? Was CPB just a funding body, or did it in fact have ultimate control over what went on the air? No one knew. In trying to insulate public broadcasting, Congress inadvertently created something of a monster.

*In 1979, public broadcasting's income was \$599 million, of which 27 percent came from the federal government, 40 percent from state and local governments (including state colleges). About 84 percent of total revenues are earmarked for public television, the remainder for National Public Radio.

The “double-hull” buffer between politics and public television proved rather porous in any event. While Congress declared CPB to be a *private* entity (it is not an agency of the U.S. government), it failed to provide for guaranteed, long-term funding. Congress also left selection of the corporation’s board to the vagaries of partisan politics.

Once Burned, Twice Shy

President Richard Nixon took advantage of both oversights in 1972 when he abruptly vetoed Congress’s \$155 million, two-year appropriation bill for CPB because he disapproved of what he saw as a certain bias against his administration in such programs as *The Elizabeth Drew Show*, *Black Journal*, and *Washington Week in Review*. Almost immediately thereafter, Nixon was able to make six new appointments to CPB’s 15-member board, putting his supporters firmly in control. The board promptly ordered cancellation of all but one of public television’s public affairs programs. (*Black Journal* was the lone survivor.) While public broadcasting’s funding procedure was modified after President Nixon’s post-Watergate resignation, the scar tissue remains visible—and sensitive.*

Public television’s other big problem has been programming. During the late 1960s and early ’70s, as public TV was beginning to take shape, critics were rather tolerant of the system’s shortcomings. Give it time, they urged. A decade later, it is clear that despite some notable successes—*Great Performances*, *The MacNeil-Lehrer Report*, *Sesame Street*—public television’s overall record remains uneven.

Lack of money is the biggest single factor. Public broadcasting’s total revenues in 1979—some \$599 million—equal about 5 percent of total *commercial* broadcast revenues. In per capita terms, U.S. public TV receives less than public broadcasting in any of the other industrialized democracies.† As a result, American public TV stations simply don’t have the money to produce much original programming.

This is one reason why PBS airs so many imported shows,

*Congress in 1975 enacted a Public Broadcasting Financing Act, which provided for up to \$570 million over a five-year period under a matching formula guaranteeing \$1 in federal funds for every \$2.50 (since reduced to \$2) public TV stations could raise in funds from viewers and foundations. By providing for money over a period of years, and tying federal outlays to a matching-fund “trigger” mechanism, Congress effectively protected public television from direct financial and political pressure. CPB and PBS, meanwhile, have agreed to divide responsibilities between them. For the moment, there exists a fragile truce.

†The per capita cost of public broadcasting in the United States in 1978 was \$2.53, compared with \$9.14 for Japan’s NHK and \$20.35 for Canada’s CBC.

THE BBC: FEELING THE PAINS OF COMPETITION

American critics and audiences, impressed by British Broadcasting Corporation programs aired on U.S. public television (such as *Great Performances* and *I, Claudius*), commonly regard the BBC with a certain reverence. Yet British audiences have lately grown more critical of the publicly financed broadcasting empire once known fondly as "Auntie." While the BBC's TV offerings arguably remain the "least worst" in the world, like Britain's economy, they have come down in the world.

The BBC was established under royal charter in 1926 as a combination national radio network and British "Voice of America." The corporation was shaped from the outset by Director General John (later Lord) Reith, who saw broadcasting as "a drawn sword parting the darkness of ignorance." Reith gave the public what he thought was good for them—classical music, lectures, drama, public affairs programs, and the like. By the time he retired in 1938, Reith had ensured that the BBC's fledgling television arm would be formed in the image of BBC radio.

BBC television remained a "drawn sword" for as long as it remained a monopoly. But in 1954, in a move Reith likened to "smallpox, bubonic plague, and the Black Death," Parliament created the commercial Independent Television Authority and its 13-station (now 15-station) ITV network. Unburdened by an elitist legacy, unabashedly pandering to mass tastes, ITV had a firm hold on 70 percent of Britain's TV viewers by the late 1950s. As its audience dwindled, the BBC found it increasingly hard to justify an annual subsidy (currently \$690 million) based on license fees paid by all TV households.

despite complaints from talented American writers, producers, and actors. Purchasing a series already produced in, say, Great Britain, may cost 10 percent of what it would cost to produce it in the United States. The low price tag attracts corporations such as Mobil and Exxon, which underwrite almost all of the imported programs shown on public television. Public broadcasters would *like* to produce more blockbusters like *The Adams Chronicles*. They can't afford to.

Public television suffers, too, from a certain inevitable timidity. It is quite all right to be an "alternative," but *too much* of an alternative might not sit well among benefactors on Capitol Hill or in the White House or in the local community. Public affairs programs are especially vulnerable. Initially, public TV

Under Sir Hugh Greene, a veteran broadcaster who was appointed Director General in 1960, the BBC began to fight back. Greene was willing to take risks in current affairs, dramatic, and comedy programming; it was he who introduced *The Forsyte Saga* and the satiric *That Was the Week that Was*. "With [Greene] in command," a colleague recalled, "Auntie changed its sex and for the first time in its life was young." Sir Hugh got a vote of confidence in 1964 when Parliament awarded the BBC a second channel and slapped a stiff tax surcharge on ITV's "immorally" high profits. By the mid-1960s, BBC-1 and 2 had won back half of Britain's viewers.

But competition has had its sour consequences. To maintain its share of the audience, the BBC ultimately was forced to evolve from educator into mass entertainer—in short, to emulate its commercial rival. Today, 14 percent of the BBC's schedule consists of movies and American imports like *Starsky and Hutch* and *Dallas*. While a substantial 18 percent is still devoted to public affairs and documentaries, and 14 percent to the pedagogic Open University, music and ballet offerings have declined to about 1 percent of total programming, drama to about 5 percent.

The BBC labors under other burdens. Production costs have risen with inflation, and the BBC does not have as much control over license fees (currently about \$80 per year for color TV, \$28 for black and white) as ITV does over its advertising rates. The affluent commercial network, meanwhile, has been able to lure away top BBC stars and executives, and, with such programs as *Upstairs, Downstairs* and *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, even to erode Auntie's near-monopoly on respectability. In 1980, Britain's Conservative government, committed to free-market principles, awarded a second channel to the commercial network over the protests of the BBC.

was a pacesetter, airing more documentaries in the 1968–69 season than ABC, CBS, and NBC combined. Some, such as those in the *Behind the Lines* series, were highly controversial. Then President Nixon cracked down. Once burned, twice shy: While PBS eventually got back at Nixon by broadcasting gavel-to-gavel coverage of the 1973 Senate Watergate Committee hearings, public TV's news record since then has been undistinguished.

To be blunt, PBS has neither the freedom nor the resources to compete with the commercial networks in news or public affairs programming. It has no overseas bureaus, no central news desk, no equivalent of the networks' evening news programs. PBS barely covered the 1980 Republican and Democratic con-

ventions. Even the best of public TV's news shows, like *The MacNeil-Lehrer Report*, do not approach the popularity or the visual range of CBS's *Sixty Minutes*.

Ratings are not PBS's strong point, either. PBS's primetime ratings share is about 3.5 percent; even the most popular shows on public TV, such as the periodic *National Geographic* specials, have never reached more than 16 percent of television households. A commercial show with that rating would be canceled at once.

No Place To Go

Public broadcasting's failure to achieve "parity" with commercial television is understandable. It was, first, a late starter. By the time PBS came into existence, Americans had already become conditioned—by radio even before television—to free, mass-appeal programming. Second, public television was created as an alternative. Unlike commercial TV, it deliberately does *not* aim at the lowest common denominator. Thus, say PBS defenders, there is no point in analyzing public TV's record in terms of commercial TV's Nielsen ratings. (PBS press releases, of course, take a different view of the ratings when a public television program scores high.)

Public television's dilemma is that if it can't attract large enough audiences, many of its funding sources—e.g., corporations, foundations, and the federal government, not to mention the audience itself—may dry up; if it gears its programming to the ratings game, it will betray the principles on which it was founded (and may not increase its ratings anyway). There may be no middle ground, to judge from reaction to the announcement last year that a consortium of public TV stations was planning to air, for about \$1 million, 13 reruns of the acclaimed but canceled CBS series about Harvard law students, *The Paper Chase*. "If we're going to keep blurring the line between commercial and public TV," wrote Tom Shales, television critic for the *Washington Post*, "why have public TV at all?"

What complicates matters for public television is that the programs that do make it distinctive—the concerts, operas, dramas, and imported specials—are among the kinds of programs most threatened by cable television, videocassettes, and videodiscs. To be sure, PBS has been in the forefront of some of the new technologies. It began broadcasting to local stations via the Westar satellite in 1978 and will soon divide itself into three distinct networks (PTV-I, II, and III) offering three simultaneous program services for local public broadcasters to pick from.

This will give PBS a certain flexibility—assuming it can find the money to pay for all the new programming—but that may not be enough. Viewers, after all, will still have only one public TV channel in their area, not three.

Cable operators, by contrast, can offer their subscribers as many as 80 channels. According to one recent study, the availability of cable TV tends to cut proportionately far more into the time spent watching public television than into time spent viewing network fare. By decade's end, it should be commercially profitable to market, over cable, everything from *Live from Lincoln Center* to shows like *Upstairs, Downstairs*. Indeed, commercial pay networks will probably be able to outbid PBS for the best programs. Public television could become a "second-string" market, airing programs only after their commercial potential has been exhausted. How will Congress justify using tax dollars to support a system that the market has replaced?

If the new technologies do indeed siphon off PBS's more popular offerings, public television's strategic choices will be limited. It could move into programming that is not yet commercially acceptable, thereby becoming the risk taker of the TV industry, the developer of new talent, the bold experimenter. Unfortunately, it isn't likely that this kind of TV is going to attract a broad audience, or a broad coalition of backers in Congress.

Another possibility is a return to "localism." By shedding the mantle of CPB and PBS, public television stations might focus on serving the communities to which they broadcast—airing low-cost documentaries on local issues, presenting programs sponsored by the local school board, and so on. This notion, too, is probably doomed. First, public TV's centralized "national" bureaucracy is unlikely to phase itself out of existence. Second, how would Washington equitably funnel money to 300 local public TV stations, all of different sizes and with different audiences? Third, as cable owners have discovered, a steady diet of local programming does not hold viewers.

In the end, none of public television's options seem very promising. Billion-dollar injections of federal funds are unlikely. Yet, without them, public TV cannot stay where it is and has no place to go.



THE NEW ERA

by *Stuart N. Brotman*

One of the more memorable images from the movies of the 1970s was that of anchorman Howard Beale in "Network" urging his TV audience to open up their windows and shout: "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it anymore."

Unlike Beale's frustrated viewers, Americans during the 1980s will acquire a powerful tool with which to register their dissatisfaction with traditional TV programming—one that will allow them, in effect, to vote with their pocketbooks. The tool is new video technology. If one believes the enthusiasts, it holds out the promise of irrigating a wasteland, bringing a vast array of quality television programming into the living room at a moderate price. For their part, skeptics point to the history of conventional TV broadcasting, itself once hailed as the hope of the future: The claims made for any budding technology, they contend, are always too good to be true.

Many of the new TV technologies (e.g., cable television, subscription TV, and videocassettes and discs) have in fact been "promising" for years. Until the late 1970s, however, the performance of innovative TV technology companies was generally unremarkable, their growth stymied by federal regulation, scarce venture capital, and, to some extent, a public willing to settle for the menu that ABC, CBS, and NBC provided.

All that has changed. Studies in 1979 by the *Washington Post* and Peter D. Hart Research Associates, for example, document a certain impatience with network TV programming—and point to an expanding pool of viewers willing to *pay* for some alternative. Investment in the new TV technologies, both by businessmen and consumers, is up sharply; entrepreneurs are now backed by the financial resources of such firms as IBM, the New York Times Company, Time Inc., Warner Communications, and Getty Oil. And the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), following the lead of federal courts, has substantially freed the cable TV industry from 20 years of sometimes capricious federal regulation.

The television landscape, in sum, is rapidly changing. While the familiar broadcast channels divided among independent

Newspaper advertisement for Home Box Office, 1980. Owing largely to the advent of cable television systems, half of all U.S. households now can receive nine or more TV channels.

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HBO PEOPLE DON'T MISS OUT... ON HOLLYWOOD'S BIGGEST HITS.

Superman
Look! On your TV screen!... It's a comedy... It's an adventure... It's a love story... Christopher Reeve and Margot Kidder in the larger-than-life film version of America's favorite comicbook hero.

HBO—A Month of Movies for Less Than the Cost of a Night Out.

HBO
Home Box Office

stations and the local affiliates of ABC, CBS, and NBC are not about to fall into disuse, they now have competition. ABC, for example, won the rights to the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics with a \$225 million bid, but the runner-up, offering \$190 million, was neither CBS nor NBC but T.A.T. Communications, a diversified company with cable interests, owned in part by Norman Lear. A subscription TV company called ON-TV, also owned in part by Lear, successfully outbid ABC for rights to the June 1980 Roberto Duran–Sugar Ray Leonard boxing match. The prospects are so promising financially that cable companies are scrambling to win franchises from local governments in communities that lack cable service—including Cincinnati, Chicago, and four boroughs of New York. It has been called “the last great gold rush.”

For the most part, the new video technologies are now on the market, or soon will be. Whether their “product” will simply amount to more of the same situation comedies, sports, soap operas, and movies, however, is a subject of much speculation.

Let us begin with a brief primer on a few of the new electronic media.

Cable television transmits video signals through a coaxial cable, usually placed under streets or on telephone poles; no broadcast spectrum is used. As of last autumn, there were about 4,300 cable systems in the United States and most *urban* systems now operating have at least 20 channels, although not all of them are in use. (Two-thirds of all cable systems currently carry 12 channels or less, but channel capacity will increase dra-

matically during the 1980s.) About one-fifth of all U.S. households—15 million of them—are “wired” for cable, and the number of wired households has been growing by 20 percent annually. For a \$5 to \$10 monthly fee, each cable subscriber receives a basic service (“basic cable”) consisting of all broadcast signals from local TV stations plus a variety of satellite-fed special services, such as a children’s channel, an all-news channel, an all-sports channel, and an all-religion channel.

Movies and Sports, Sports and Movies

Most cable systems also offer piggyback packages for a separate monthly fee (“pay cable”), such as Home Box Office (HBO), a subsidiary of Time Inc., and Showtime, a joint venture between Teleprompter (the largest cable company) and Viacom International. These packages typically offer 12 to 16 recent Hollywood films per month. They also provide sporting events that are not televised by commercial stations and, on occasion, original entertainment specials. The cost of one of these packages to the consumer is between \$7 and \$10 per month above the basic rate. Pay cable is growing fast. It was in 4.4 million homes in October 1979, 5.7 million in April 1980. Total cable industry revenues (pay and basic) in 1979 approached \$2 billion.

Subscription television (STV) involves a conventional broadcast station, usually in the UHF frequency band (i.e., channels 14 through 83), that transmits scrambled signals to subscribing viewers with leased decoders. The scrambled signals are beamed for a portion of the day, typically 8 to 12 P.M. weeknights, with some expanded daytime programming during the weekend. (Under FCC rules, these STV stations are required to broadcast at least 28 hours of unscrambled, nonpay programming per week). Pay offerings on STV resemble those of pay cable—primarily feature films and sports. The average monthly fee for this service is \$20. There are now about 20 STV systems with some 450,000 subscribers. Several dozen STV applications are awaiting FCC approval.

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Communications satellites have revolutionized the transmission of distant broadcast signals to cable systems by dramatically lowering the cost of terrestrial transmission (usually accomplished by sending video signals through long-distance telephone lines leased from AT&T). The leader in the domestic satellite field has been RCA, with its Satcom I and Satcom II. Western Union also has a video transmission satellite, known as Westar. Each satellite has a number of channels, called transponders, that can be leased for transmission. Transponder leasing gave an important boost to the pay cable industry because it allowed cable programming to be efficiently networked across the country.* HBO led the way in 1975, and today virtually all pay cable services transmit to "receive-only" antennas owned by subscribing basic cable companies.

Aiming for the Bottom

The importance of all of these new video systems lies less in the technology *per se* than in the chance—albeit a slim one—to break the grip of the networks on TV programming.

Network programming is largely a function of economics, not of taste, producing limited but fierce competition in a TV marketplace dominated by only three corporations. ABC, CBS, and NBC compete for TV advertising dollars (network ad revenues alone totaled \$4.3 billion in 1979) by selling millions of viewers to sponsors. Like their forerunners in network radio, TV network executives care primarily about the gross numbers. With few exceptions (e.g., soap operas), they are not trying to "target" a particular audience the way local radio stations and specialized magazines do. They want everybody. As a result, prime-time network programming aims for the lowest common denominator, and there is no incentive to tamper with threadbare formulas that happen to work. Paul Klein, a former NBC executive, once described the operative strategy as "Least Objectionable Programming." Every network tries to put something on the air that, at minimum, will not disturb or bore the viewer enough to prompt him to switch to another channel.

This is the bottom line of commercial television, both nationally and among the 612 local network affiliates and 113 independent stations. As long as Americans can choose only a handful of advertiser-supported channels, the TV industry, so it

*It also made possible the creation of "superstations," like R. E. ("Ted") Turner's WTCG-TV (now WTBS) in Atlanta, whose signal, via satellite and cable, now reaches some 5 million U.S. homes. Turner's Cable News Network, which began operation in June 1980, likewise relies on satellite transmission.

WHAT CABLE SUBSCRIBERS GET IN ARLINGTON, VA.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>2  WMAR-2, Baltimore</p> | <p>12  Turner Broadcasting's
24-hour Cable
News Network</p> |
| <p>3 Public access channel:
public interest
programming provided
by subscribers or by
nonprofit organizations
(e.g., Red Cross, local
hospital)</p> | <p>13  WJZ-13, Baltimore</p> |
| <p>4  WRC-4, Washington, D.C.</p> | <p>14  Entertainment
and Sports
Programming Network:
24-hour sports channel</p> |
| <p>5 WTTG-5, Washington
independent station</p> | <p>15 Teletext: Metrocable
program guide</p> |
| <p>6 Teletext: UPI news,
stocks, business news,
top 40 countdown</p> | <p>16  Home Box Office:
current movies,
nightclub acts,
concerts, sports specials</p> |
| <p>7  WJLA-7, Washington</p> | <p>17  WTBS, Atlanta
superstation: old
movies, reruns, Atlanta
Braves baseball</p> |
| <p>8 Teletext: weather, news,
sports, <i>Radio Arlington</i>
audio background</p> | <p>18 CINEMAX: foreign
films, classic movies,
other feature films</p> |
| <p>9  WDVM-9, Washington</p> | <p>19  WOR, New York
superstation: old
movies, reruns, New
York Mets baseball,
other regional sports</p> |
| <p>10 Weather: 24-hour
radarscope picture.</p> | |
| <p>11  WBAL-11, Baltimore</p> | |

is said, cannot help but churn out bland programming.

Why are there so few TV channels—and networks? When the FCC was allocating broadcast frequencies during the late 1940s and early '50s, the commissioners decided to intermix VHF (very high frequency) and UHF (ultra high frequency) channels in the same market, even though they knew that UHF broadcasters, of whom there were, at the time, only a handful, would never be able to compete effectively against the 108 already established VHF stations. Not the least of UHF's disad-

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| 20 | WDCA-20, Washington independent station | 25 | Teletext: grocery shopping guide |
| 21 | Teletext: community bulletin board, classified ads | 26  | WETA-26, Washington |
| 22  | WAPB-22, Annapolis | 27  | CBN and WTKK, religious channel: Christian Broadcasting Network and Manassas, Va., station. Features Rex Humbard, Oral Roberts, Dr. Jerry Falwell, <i>PTL Club</i> , <i>The 700 Club</i> |
| 23 | Cable Satellite Public Affairs (live coverage of U.S. House of Representatives); Black Entertainment Network; Calliope (children's films); USA Network (professional and college sports); "The English Channel" (British programming) | 28 | WBFF-45, Baltimore independent station |
| 24  | WNVT-53, Goldvein, Va. | 29-36 | School and county government stations |

Source: Metrocable, Arlington, Va.

The menu of a typical urban cable television system—Arlington (Va.) Metrocable—suggests that cable has not so much changed TV fare as tripled the size of the portions. Of the 35 available channels depicted above, 6 pick up signals from network stations, 4 from nearby public TV stations, 2 from local independent stations. Two more—WOR and WTBS—are "superstations" featuring a mix of movies, sports, and reruns. The 3 pay cable channels offer movies and sports. The 8 channels set aside by the cable operator for the use of county government and local schools are rarely in use. Arlington Metrocable has 18,000 subscribers, representing one-third of all homes in the area that can be wired for cable.

vantages was that few TV sets could receive UHF signals. (Not until 1964 were manufacturers required to equip all TV sets for UHF.) Yet, the VHF band could accommodate only 12 channels (2 through 13) without encountering signal interference, while UHF could accommodate 70.

The FCC also decided to allocate television frequencies so that stations would serve as local outlets. Typically, no more than three VHF stations were allotted to any one market, a decision based partly on city size but also on the need to avoid

interference with neighboring cities' channels. The predictable result of this system, however, was that the three local stations became affiliated with ABC, CBS, or NBC. Independent or educational programming was generally relegated to the few UHF stations that managed to survive.

The emerging alternative to this conventional, advertiser-supported television system is one where the viewer votes his or her programming preference directly, much as consumers of books, magazines, movies, and newspapers make economic decisions on what, if anything, they are willing to spend for specific items. This is the prospect opened up by the new electronic media.

A Choice, or an Echo?

In theory, at least, a pay system of TV distribution creates enormous incentives to produce new types of programming, quite apart from its enormous number of available channels. Where a network needs an audience of at least 30 million for a "successful" program in terms of ratings, pay TV can turn a profit with an audience of 1 or 2 million. This is because the networks are essentially feeding sparrows by feeding horses; programs are paid for by advertising, with ad revenues depending on the size of the audience. By contrast, cable viewers pay for programming directly. A cable company can also charge interested customers a premium for certain "specials." Ballet, plays, symphonies, exotic sports, quality children's programming, soap operas for old people, in-depth news coverage—each of these theoretically makes economic sense when aimed at a specific audience willing to pay for it.* "We are going to isolate pockets of fanatics," one cable executive told the *Washington Journalism Review*, "and build a business on them."

Cable operators concede that, so far, pay cable programming has consisted almost entirely of movies and sports. That is what viewers have been most willing to pay for. Cable owners have been experimenting with other types of programming, including original productions shown exclusively to subscribers. Ted Turner's 24-hour Cable News Network, which feeds to 309 cable systems nationwide, is one example. Home Box Office produced the widely acclaimed series *Time Was*, a look at past decades hosted by Dick Cavett. Showtime has aired numerous vari-

* Whether there is a large enough audience to support "quality" cable programming will soon be known with the debut of two new pay cable networks—Bravo (a joint venture of several cable companies), in December 1980, and CBS Cable (a subsidiary of CBS Inc.), due later this year. Both promise cultural programming exclusively (e.g., dance, theater, music).

ety specials and a sitcom called *Bizarre*. Being able to bring 80 channels into, say, Pittsburgh, will be a Pyrrhic victory for viewers if only a handful of channels actually carry marginally different programs, or if what the active channels show amounts to a pale imitation of network output. Cable TV's record to date is discouraging.

Network executives work that point into every discussion of alternative TV technology. "I truly wish that there was an infinite quantity of good programming available but there isn't," observes Gene Jankowski, president of CBS/Broadcast Group. "Adding signals to the marketplace will not be adding choice."

The initial response of the broadcast industry to the new video technologies, throughout the 1960s and most of the '70s, was to lobby (successfully) for federal protection in the form of restrictive FCC rules, such as a limit on how many distant signals a cable system could carry. (Pay cable owners were also prohibited from airing feature films more than 3 but less than 10 years old, and from televising certain sporting events, such as the Super Bowl.) Traditional broadcasters argued that the networks were running, in effect, a kind of charity enterprise, bringing the great wide world—documentaries, space shots, inaugurations, the World Series—free of charge into the homes of all Americans, regardless of income; cable operators, they contended, would siphon off all of the good programming into the homes of the affluent.

Hedging Bets

The broadcast industry's preferential treatment began to crumble in 1977, when the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., in the case of *Home Box Office, Inc. v. FCC* overturned most of the FCC's restrictions on what *pay* cable entrepreneurs could offer their customers. The court cited a breach of the First Amendment rights of producers, cablecasters, and viewers. Then, last July, prodded by chairman Charles D. Ferris, an aggressive proponent of deregulation, the FCC voted 4 to 3 to scrap all but two of the restrictions on *basic* cable programming.*

*Cable owners, like broadcasters, do not dislike *all* forms of regulation. Cable has its own government-granted benefits. For example, under the Copyright Act of 1976, cable systems are allowed to pick up non-network distant broadcast signals—of *The Dick Van Dyke Show*, say, or classic films like *The African Queen*—and retransmit them to their own viewers at a low, government-established rate. These royalties are collected by the federal Copyright Royalty Tribunal, which then distributes the sum among the companies originally responsible for the programs—movie studios, TV syndicators, sports clubs, local broadcasters, and public television. "The vast majority of cable operators," complains Jack Valenti, president of the Motion Picture Association of America, "pay more for postage stamps than for their programs."

Now that their oligopoly has been weakened, the three TV networks are beginning to adopt a less alarmist tone, making adjustments and exuding optimism. The Corporate Planning Department of NBC, for example, now projects that the new technologies will simply increase the total number of hours each American household spends watching television, and that commercial broadcasting's share of that audience will not decline. Herbert Schlosser, formerly president of NBC and now in charge of developing and marketing videodiscs for RCA, NBC's parent company, generally agrees with these projections: "The reservoir of hours of TV watching is so huge—over 2,300 hours per home per year—that even with some audience loss commercial broadcasting will remain a strong and vital business and will continue to be a necessity to advertisers."

Yet the broadcasters are hedging their bets. In recent years, particularly at the local level, they have been heavily involved in purchasing cable systems. (More than 30 percent of all cable systems are now owned by companies with broadcast interests.) During the past year, all three networks set up "video enterprise" divisions to produce and distribute programming for pay cable, subscription television, and videodiscs.*

A Long Way from Camelot

For their part, advertisers are taking a wait-and-see attitude toward the new technologies, with an eye on the short-term data (which reveal that, on occasion, pay programming can get Nielsen ratings comparable to those of top network shows) and the long-term projections (which show cable in 40 to 50 percent of U.S. homes by the end of the decade). If such trends continue, advertisers may begin diverting some of their broadcast television expenditures to cable.

Some conventional broadcasters are worried, although few will express their concern publicly. Others profess nonchalance. The competition, after all, owes much to its ability to offer a service that, as currently set up, is uncensored and largely free of commercials. More important, they say, only the networks can offer advertisers tens of millions of viewers at a time. Even if Americans in large numbers began switching to the alterna-

*Videodiscs and videocassettes are wild cards: No one knows how successful they will be, or how they will change the TV industry. Discs are the video equivalents of phonograph records; when placed on a video disc player, they produce sound and pictures on the home TV screen. Cassettes perform the same function using videotape; they may be purchased blank (for home recording of TV shows) or prerecorded. Currently, the largest segment of the prerecorded cassette market is for pornography.

tives, they would be dispersed among scores of different channels. And, broadcasters maintain, the networks would still deliver the biggest single audience blocs.

The advertisers' reluctance to move quickly into the new TV systems is understandable. The television industry is currently in a state of flux. No one can predict what its nature and dimensions will be 20 years from now. The possibilities seem endless.

Perhaps the status quo will *remain* the status quo, with the airwaves still dominated by ABC, CBS, and NBC, and cable and pay television cast in the role of lucrative ventures on the fringe. It may turn out that the new technologies are not competing against the networks so much as against the film and record industries. Broadcasters may successfully pre-empt competition by continuing to buy into cable companies and to invest heavily in programming for cable and home video, in effect playing both ends against the middle. Or the new cable networks may become so successful that they begin to attract national advertising—and gradually turn into replicas of the kinds of TV they once sought to replace.

It is difficult not to invent dispiriting scenarios, given commercial television's own history—and the overall performance to date of the alternatives. The new electronic media will probably make money. They may, in the end, add a bit to the general quality of American TV; they may give us, here and there, a few more real choices than we had before. And videodiscs and videocassettes will almost certainly allow most Americans to schedule their TV viewing around their leisure time, rather than vice versa.

But it is hard to believe that the new video technologies will bring us much closer to the lofty ideal expressed by E. B. White. "I think television should be the visual counterpart of the literary essay," he wrote in 1966. It "should arouse our dreams, satisfy our hunger for beauty, take us on journeys, enable us to participate in events, present great drama and music, explore the sea and the sky and the woods and the hills. It should be our Lyceum, our Chautauqua, our Minsky's, and our Camelot."



A QUESTION OF IMPACT

by Joel Swerdlow

Historian Daniel Boorstin, the Librarian of Congress, has called television "the next great crisis in human consciousness." Such crises attend the birth of every new form of mass communication. Even the written word did not emerge unchallenged. Plato warned that disciples of writing would "generally know nothing; they will be tiresome company, having the shadow of wisdom without the reality." The printing press, too, had its critics. It bred heresy and dissent, some said, and gave common folk dangerous ideas.

Now television is under attack. Will its accusers someday seem quaint? Or is the "visual" culture of television a revolution to be feared and fought?

That some kind of revolution has occurred cannot be denied. Ninety-eight percent of all U.S. homes have at least one TV set; it is turned on for an average of more than six hours a day, although it may not always command the viewers' undivided attention. No other leisure activity has ever consumed such a big chunk of Americans' time. Watching television is what Americans do more than anything but work (if employed) and sleep. Appropriately enough, brain wave studies indicate that children and adults alike lapse into a "predominantly alpha wave state" (which usually precedes sleep) after only 30 seconds of television viewing.¹

TV has also eclipsed rival media. In 1979, total revenues in the United States from all book sales were \$6.3 billion; for commercial television, advertising revenues alone totaled \$10.2 billion. Television reshaped radio content and listening patterns and cut per capita movie attendance from 29 in 1946 to 5 in 1979. It was an accessory to the deaths of big-city afternoon newspapers.

But what is television's impact on *people*? How does it affect the way we view the world, our neighbors, ourselves? How does it change our behavior?

Firm answers are hard to come by. Because television is so pervasive, researchers find it virtually impossible to form control groups for purposes of comparison. Anyone growing up without television is, by definition, "abnormal." Today, schol-

ars seeking to examine the effect of TV on learning, spending habits, voting patterns, perceptions, and a wide variety of behavior must generally be content to contrast "heavy viewers" with "light viewers" rather than viewers with nonviewers. This approach carries certain risks, because the heaviest TV viewers tend to be people at the lower end of the income/education ladder, a characteristic that may in itself account for certain of the behavioral traits commonly associated with heavy television watching.

Even so, research into the behavioral implications of television—using statistical modeling, content analysis, galvanic skin tests, brain wave studies, and other techniques—has become a glamor industry in academe. While the hundreds of published studies tend to shy from making explicit the relationship of cause to effect, most of the findings are strongly suggestive. The literature is virtually devoid of arguments that television is either powerless or harmless.

Learning: The difficulties in America's classrooms obviously stem from many causes. *Why Johnny Can't Read* appeared in 1955, well before many U.S. homes had TV sets. Family instability, lack of discipline at home and in the schools, and educational fads have all taken their toll. But not even the most sympathetic analyst absolves TV of a major share of the blame.



Drawing by Weber. © 1978 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

"This is my husband, Taylor," went the caption of this 1978 Weber cartoon. "His brain has turned to mush from too much television."

Ever since the first members of the TV generation began applying to colleges during the early 1960s, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores have shown a steady decline. ("Television," the authors of a 1977 SAT study concluded, "has become a surrogate parent, a substitute teacher.") Teachers complain about their pupils' passivity, short attention spans, and lack of imagination, characteristics attributable, at least in part, to TV viewing. Many young teachers, themselves raised on television, now arrive in the classroom without basic skills. TV has apparently fostered a new growth industry: the teaching of "remedial" reading and writing in the nation's colleges.

By about age 15, the average American child has spent more time (about 20,000 hours) in front of a television than in the classroom—or doing homework. During the school year, approximately 1.5 million children aged 2 to 11 are still watching TV at midnight on weekdays. Researchers generally agree that heavy viewers comprehend less of what they read than do light viewers. They also confirm that, other things being equal, the more television a child watches, the worse he does in school.² (The sole exception may be students with low IQs.) "Mentally gifted" grammar-school students show a marked drop in creative abilities after just three weeks of intense television viewing. In a real sense, then, TV watching acts as a major "drag" on learning in America.

In the classroom itself, some types of learning can be helped by TV. Educators seem to agree that certain televised lessons can eliminate the need for repetitious reading drills, can help improve reading skills, and can be useful in teaching vocabulary.³ The use of scripts from popular TV shows as a teaching tool—a controversial practice known as "scripting"—has reportedly raised average reading levels in some Philadelphia schools by some 20 percent, although it may also, in the process, have legitimized the misinformation inherent in most TV programs.

The most publicized efforts to tap the educational potential of TV remain public television's *Sesame Street* and similar programs that provide instruction in reading and, it is claimed,

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help preschoolers learn “how to learn.” Critics counter that parents are being tricked, that teaching children to read or count at so early an age has no lasting effect—except, perhaps, to get the child “hooked” on television. Educator John Holt worries that *Sesame Street* teaches children that a “right answer” always exists. Other researchers contend that *Sesame Street* has no demonstrable impact upon later school performance.⁴ And, while second-graders in the lower half of their classes *do* benefit from another program, *The Electric Company*, two years of viewing do not seem to help more than one.*

Setting the Agenda

Much of the problem obviously lies with parents who regard TV as a convenient baby sitter or as a child’s afterschool sedative; most parents, surveys show, have no idea how much television their children actually watch. Yet the high number of hours the average child (or teen-ager) devotes to watching TV means that an equivalent amount of time at home is *not* being given over to reading, hobbies, or socializing. The diversion of time from reading is critical. In a complex, technological society, reading becomes more rather than less important.

Politics: Television has transformed American politics, but its influence is like a *pointilist* painting: easy to trace from a distance, but less so the closer one gets. Television intrudes upon the political process chiefly through news broadcasts and paid political advertisements. Yet, to a certain degree, television is also an important force in U.S. electoral politics simply because it is *believed* to be important.

Researchers agree that TV’s chief political role is as an “agenda-setter”: It does not so much tell people what to think as it tells them what to think *about*. Studies of Watergate and the Vietnam War, for example, indicate that television identified each as a major problem long before the public did. This in no way makes television unique. Newspapers play the same role, and did so long before television existed. What makes television distinctive is its glamor and its reach. As the chief source of

*Whatever the impact of specific programs, some scholars speculate that by relying on the information coded in images, TV watchers may be developing hitherto unused portions of their brains. Harvard University researchers in 1979 showed similar groups of children the same story—one version on film with narration, and the other in a picture book. In response to questions afterward, both groups gave generally the same answers. Yet the film-viewers based their answers on visual content, while the readers relied more upon verbatim repetitions of the text. One thought process was neither more correct nor more desirable; they were merely different. Other research suggests that the average IQ may be rising because of children’s increased capacity to handle spatial, visual problems.

news for most Americans, it has enhanced—and exaggerated—the power of the Fourth Estate.*

Television is far from all-powerful, and its exact effect on voter behavior and opinion has yet to be identified. While political commercials *do* inform voters of the issues, they seem to have “no effect on voters’ images of candidates,” according to the one in-depth study of such advertisements.⁵ There is no demonstrable correlation between TV expenditures and election results, except when the race is close and one candidate heavily outspends the other.

Realism vs. Reality

Modest though its influence may be on voters, TV affects American political campaigns through its influence on candidates’ behavior. Candidates now rely on media consultants as they fly from market to market, in search of free air time on the local or national evening news. During the 1980 general election, Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan each spent about 60 percent of their \$29.4 million campaign treasuries on advertising, and most of that went into television.

Why do they do it? Part of the reason is probably historical. Since 1952, when television made its political debut, there have been a handful of instances where TV apparently proved decisive. Richard Nixon’s self-saving “Checkers” speech in 1952 and the Kennedy-Nixon debates in 1960 are usually cited as examples.† Television commercials have also proved to be an effective surrogate if one does not wish to get out on the campaign trail, as Jimmy Carter discovered during the 1980 primaries. Furthermore, television commercials, as California Governor Jerry Brown has observed, help “to convince people of the reality” of a campaign. In 1977, Madison, Wisconsin, Mayor Paul

*This can have international consequences. The vision of global TV publicity is a temptation to some terrorists and a tool in the hands of others. The 1979–80 story of the Americans taken hostage in Iran is a case in point. In Tehran, the colorful Islamic “student” militants adroitly exploited the American news teams’ hunger for “good film.” In the United States, the hostages’ families and man-in-the-street reactions added a home-town angle. The TV news organizations saw the hostage story as a continuing melodrama and gave it almost unprecedented amounts of air time. On one occasion, the *CBS Evening News* devoted all but 3 minutes of its regular 22-minute broadcast to the crisis. President Carter, some analysts contend, felt impelled by the “saturation” TV coverage to react in dramatic ways—e.g., leaving the campaign trail, ordering a Navy task force to the Indian Ocean. He, too, discovered that the crisis could be exploited, as his poll ratings went up. The distinction between what was important and what was just theater was blurred from the day the American diplomats were taken hostage.

†It is interesting to note that people who heard the debates only on radio generally believed that Nixon had “won,” while those who saw Nixon’s poor make-up and Kennedy’s relaxed manner on television inclined to JFK.

Soglin and his advisers insisted on airing TV commercials during his re-election campaign even though the candidate didn't need to. The reasoning: Not running commercials would erode morale among campaign workers and lead voters to think Soglin was unable to raise money.

“The President Said Today . . .”

The rise of televised politics has also coincided with—and contributed to—weakening party organization. Up to a point, politicians no longer need party backing to reach voters; with money for media time, they can blanket the territory. Only television allows a candidate to become a household face in, say, 35 states in a matter of three months. Presidential primaries themselves are the handmaidens of television, if not its creations. The national party conventions are likewise dependent on—and adapted to—network television; the delegates, outnumbered by network employees, complain that they don't know what's going on unless they have a television set to watch.

As often as not, there is nothing very important happening on the convention floor or out on the hustings, but it is worth any correspondent's job to say so. TV news shows compete for viewers just like other television programs. Hence, the correspondents' emphasis on campaign strategies and personalities over substance, on tactical errors and slips of the tongue. A study of CBS News's 1980 campaign coverage, for example, found it to be “extensive, nonpartisan, objective, and superficial.”⁶ Writing in 1893, Britain's Lord Bryce blamed political party leaders for the absence of “great” Presidents in America. Today, it is popular to blame the poor quality of broadcast journalism.

Campaigns aside, television has indisputably helped to center power in Washington and in the Presidency. Only the President may command free network air time almost at will—for press conferences, for major addresses, for brief announcements during a time of crisis, or for such special events as the signing of the Egypt-Israel peace treaty in 1979. He is the focus of attention on the evening news: There is *always* a story filmed on the White House lawn. Political scientist Michael Cronin points out that television “serves to amplify the President's claim to be the only representative of all the people.” Yet the advent of TV has not eliminated the long-term attrition in the opinion polls that all modern Presidents have experienced.

In sum, then, television's greatest impact on politics seems to be indirect. It has helped to reshape the process of American

politics—and the way politicians speak and act—because Presidents and politicians (and TV correspondents) *think* TV is important. Lyndon Johnson was extremely sensitive to TV news; he and his aides were shaken when CBS anchorman Walter Cronkite publicly turned against the administration's Vietnam policy in early 1968. Yet there is no evidence that the impact of TV news, as both its critics and champions contend, turned the American people against the Vietnam War. And, despite Richard Nixon's appreciation of television's supposed power—returning from Peking in 1972, he sat in Air Force One for nine hours in Anchorage, Alaska, so that he could triumphantly arrive home in prime time—there is no evidence that television pushed him out of office in 1974.

Parables and the Pill

Behavior: Television affects all kinds of human behavior, but no aspect has been studied more than violence. (On TV, violent incidents occur, on average, 5 times per hour during prime time and 18 times per hour during weekend daytime children's shows.) The evidence here is compelling: Children who see a great deal of violence on television are more likely than children who see less to engage in aggressive play, to accept force as a problem-solver, to fear becoming a victim of violence, and to believe that an exaggerated proportion of the society is employed in law enforcement.⁷ These conclusions remain true when held constant for IQ, social status, economic level, and other variables. The broadcast industry has itself invested millions of dollars in such research but, perhaps predictably, comes up with, at best, a "not proven." An exception was a six-year CBS study conducted in Great Britain during the 1970s that concluded that young men who are heavy TV viewers are 50 percent more likely to commit violent crimes.⁸

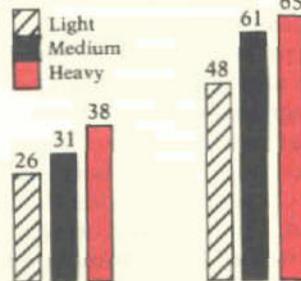
Television, of course, may also teach "pro-social" lessons. Significantly, a TV protagonist displaying positive behavior has more of an impact upon children's subsequent play than does a character encouraging violence. Michael Landon, star and executive director of *Little House on the Prairie*, admits to writing parables into his show in order to "teach America's families and children." Teaching and learning, of course, are not the same thing; it is a matter of scholarly conjecture whether children "generalize" the specific beneficial lessons they have learned—that is, whether it occurs to children to apply such lessons in real-life situations that may vary, in their details, from the episode portrayed on television.⁹

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO TELEVISION

Television presents a peculiar picture of social reality, one that is as credible to many viewers as it is inaccurate. Owing to a high incidence of violent episodes on TV, heavy viewers tend to overestimate the prevalence of violent crime in U.S. society and are less trusting (right) of other people than are light viewers. Occupational breakdowns are markedly skewed on prime-time TV (below right), where 1 out of every 8 persons is a policeman (versus 1 out of 222 in real life), but only 1 out of 10 is a blue-collar worker (versus 1 out of 2 in the U.S. work force). Similarly, TV characters (below, left) tend to be in the prime of life, neither too young nor too old. Perhaps not surprisingly, studies show that heavy viewers under the age of 30 tend to believe, contrary to fact, that people do not live as long as they used to.

ATTITUDES

Adult TV Watching



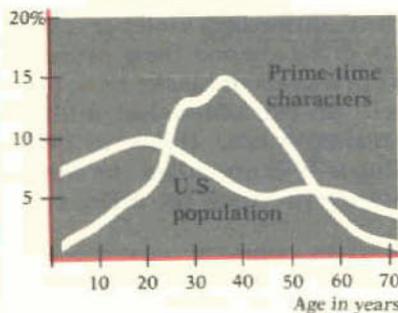
% answering yes to question: Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance?

% answering yes to question: Would you say you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

EMPLOYMENT

	Prime-time (% of all characters)	U.S. (% of all workers)
Policemen	12.8	.45
Private eyes	1.2	.02
Blue-collar workers	9.9	49.67
Doctors	3.0	.35
Lawyers	1.6	.33
Judges	0.5	.02

AGE DISTRIBUTION



Source: George Gerbner and Nancy Signorielli, *Women and Minorities in Television Drama*, 1979; George Gerbner, "Television's Influence on Values and Behavior," 1978.

Television provides the American child's most easily accessible—if not necessarily most accurate—data on sex. Indeed, sex has become television's chief dramatic device. Recent tabulations document a rapid increase in TV's sexual innuendoes and in TV portrayals of prostitution, incest, rape, infidelity, and other deviations from the so-called old morality. In 1978, references to premarital or extramarital sex occurred in 43 percent of all prime-time shows (versus 21 percent in 1977); a mixture of sex and violence could be found in 10 percent of all prime-time programs (versus zero in 1977).¹⁰ On prime-time shows, sexual intercourse is seven times more likely to occur between unmarried couples than between husband and wife.

It seems reasonable to suppose that all of this has an impact, but how, and on whom? One study indicates a relationship between TV and unwanted teen-age pregnancies: Heavy viewers are more likely to believe that their favorite television heroine would not use birth control.¹¹ Another survey concludes that television raises adolescents' expectations of "what sex should be like." Heavy viewers seem to marry earlier and have more children. Such data, however, remain tentative and fragmentary.

We are on somewhat firmer ground with regard to "sexism." The more television most people watch, media scholar George Gerbner concludes, the more sexist their views are.¹² Other studies find that "children's perspectives of males and females generally correspond to the stereotypes found on TV."¹³ Heavy viewers are more likely to prefer sexually stereotyped toys and activities. On the positive side, girls who are shown women in "men's roles" on TV are more likely than other girls to endorse those roles as feasible and desirable.

Kicking the Habit

What about race? From sit-ins to antibusing violence, civil-rights activists and their foes have often shaped their protests with television in mind. Fictional portrayals of blacks have presumably had some impact as well. An estimated 130 million Americans watched ABC's up-from-slavery epic, *Roots*, in 1977. *New York Times* editorial writer Roger Wilkins called the series "the most significant civil rights event since the Selma-to-Montgomery march in 1965."

*Women on television are generally attractive, under age 40, use sexual guile, and hold primarily "traditional" female occupations. Women are warm, submissive, timid, and emotional—men are ambitious, intellectual, violent, and logical. In authoritative speaking roles, particularly in commercials, men outnumber women by more than three to one.

Yet precisely what effect the portrayal of blacks in *Roots* and other network offerings has had on white TV audiences is difficult to pin down. Young children, especially suburban whites who may have little contact with blacks, believe television *comedies* faithfully depict other races even when this contradicts what their parents have taught them.* Researchers also conclude that many children form stereotypical opinions about other groups during preschool years when they are most susceptible to TV's influence. Yet these children do not seem to believe that a television character's race is important.

One other behavioral note: Families that are asked by researchers to forego television for prolonged periods report that their lives are much improved, but nearly all resume watching as soon as the experiment ends. Some psychiatrists now regard heavy TV viewing as an addiction.

As Advertised on TV

Selling: Television affects behavior on a crucial front—consumption. This is the economic basis of TV's existence. Advertising's share of the Gross National Product has held more or less steady for the past three decades at around 2 percent, but television's share of total ad expenditures—20.5 percent, or \$10.2 billion in 1979—has grown year by year.

Businesses do not spend those billions for nothing. Long-distance telephone billings across the nation, for example, rose by 14 percent in 1979 (to \$1.3 billion) following introduction of AT&T's "reach out and touch someone" campaign. Television commercials may create a demand for hitherto nonexistent products (e.g., feminine deodorant sprays) and permit manufacturers to by-pass retailers and appeal directly to consumers. Even print ads now make increasing use of the logo "as advertised on TV" as if to lend a certain legitimacy, even reality, to the product.†

Television advertisements do not *guarantee* sales success, however, and TV is not necessary for some commodities. Seventy percent of all cigarette advertising was on broadcast media in 1970 when the congressional ban went into effect, yet ciga-

* Findings about television and blacks also generally hold true for Hispanics, Native Americans, and other groups.

† The power of television is felt most acutely during childhood. The average child sees about 25,000 commercials a year. Studies show that the younger children are, the more likely they are to prefer playing with toys advertised on TV than with friends, and the more likely they are to ask parents to make a specific purchase. When asked "the kinds of goods you call snacks," 78 percent of the children in one survey named TV-advertised junk food.

TV NEWS: THAT'S THE WAY IT IS

When Vice President Spiro Agnew assailed the "liberal" TV networks in 1969 for their distortions of news, he had some truth on his side. But he missed the point. The strongest bias was, and is, commercial, not political. To survive, the news executives must get high audience ratings. Hence, they serve up news-as-entertainment: melodrama, pathos, violence, conflict, celebrity.

As a transmitter of "facts," television news is inherently inefficient, compared to print. A transcript of the typical 22-minute bits-and-pieces evening news program equals in wordage about two columns of the *New York Times*; any intelligent reader can take in—and ponder—more information in 22 minutes than the networks could provide in twice that time. Yet 75 percent of Americans report that they get most of their news from TV, a trend that even CBS's Walter Cronkite thinks is "ominous."

TV news's appeal, studies indicate, lies partly in its convenience; seeing is easier than reading. To grip audiences, one NBC man noted, the producers, film editors, and correspondents "make little movies": of Mt. St. Helens erupting, Iranian demonstrators shouting, John Anderson gesturing, Iraqi soldiers shooting. The film

rette consumption in America is now at an all-time high. The tobacco industry merely increased its advertising budget and pumped the money into other media.*

Perceptions: For innumerable TV viewers, "real life" is not as exciting or dramatic as it is "supposed" to be, and as it is on television. This aspect of television's impact is perhaps the most pervasive and least documented. It penetrates psychological rhythms in a way that the viewers involved may have difficulty recognizing—largely because they are not on guard against it. Novelists, such as Jerzy Kosinski, have lately begun exploring the phenomenon. (A *Journal of the American Medical Association* editorial on insanity recommended Kosinski's *Being There* as a "supplement to scientific study.") Truman Capote's *Music for Chameleons* is written in part as a screenplay, while practitioners of the "new journalism" record their impressions in the manner of roving cameras.

Television projects an aura of authenticity. A significant number of people, for example, believe that what they see on TV is real. In 1967, the National Commission on the Causes and Pre-

*Tobacco executives resisted the broadcast ban only half-heartedly because earlier federal rulings guaranteed air time for antismoking TV commercials. Surveys indicated that these "counter-commercials" were hazardous to healthy cigarette sales.

snippet itself is often vivid but ambiguous; the TV reporter's brief comments, sometimes highly speculative, supply a simple theme and story line. Critic Michael Arlen once wrote, "The main thing is not the [filmed] event, and the need to describe it, but to describe it in such a way that [the viewers] will feel the way you want them to feel about it."

Thus, news is, as ABC producer Av Westin observed, a special branch of television "show biz." The three major network news shows in 1979-80 together averaged an audience of 30 million every night. That audience is disproportionately old (41 percent are 55 years of age or older) and female (47 percent of news viewers are *adult* women). Children aged 2 to 11 are far more likely to watch the evening news than are teen-agers. And the TV news audience is fickle. More than half of all U.S. households did not watch these shows even once a month. Of those who did watch, 68 percent saw fewer than six shows a month; only 6 percent watched the news at least four nights a week.

Do major events increase the TV news audience? A little. But the season matters much more. During the summer months, the U.S. network evening news audience is about 35 percent smaller than in winter, no matter what's going on in the world, or what Mr. Cronkite has to say about it.

vention of Violence discovered that 15 percent of middle-class white teen-agers and 40 percent of poor black teen-agers believed that TV programs "tell about life the way it really is." One recent study using a scale of 1 to 9 found that children in the third through sixth grades gave TV families an overall reality score of 5.97, and TV policemen a 6.89. Furthermore, the study concluded, "real life experience with parallel television content did not diminish the perceived reality of television."¹⁴ In other words, TV images tended to be seen as "truer" than first-hand information.

Such distorted views of reality may affect reality itself. Physicians cite the "*Marcus Welby* syndrome"—patients expecting doctors to cure and comfort them quickly and at little cost or inconvenience. Owing to the predominance of police and crime programs on TV, surveys now show that many police officers try to act and look like they're "supposed" to. A recent Rand survey found that much of what real detectives do during a routine investigation—e.g., fingerprinting, lineups, showing mug shots—is usually not employed to capture criminals. Rather, in many cases, such techniques are intended to satisfy public expectations of how police *should* behave.¹⁵

Television also teaches that the police coerce witnesses,

bribe, plant illegal drugs, lock up suspects without filing charges, and otherwise subvert the Constitution. When a tape of such illegal practices was shown to a class of prelaw students at the University of Massachusetts, most failed to understand why it was worthy of note. The author of this study, Ethan Katsh, a professor of legal studies, further points out that law is based upon abstract principles that on TV "are replaced by a personification of law. The focus of television is invariably on the visual elements of law such as courts, judges, police, lawyers, and criminals. These elements, which are a part of the law, become identified as being all of law."¹⁶

Believing that their TV images affect both social status and political power, organizations variously representing Vietnam veterans, women, homosexuals, senior citizens, manual workers, racial minorities, the handicapped, and the mentally ill have started to gather proof. Surveys show, for example, that the more people, especially young people, watch television, the more they tend to perceive old people in generally negative and unfavorable terms. A Machinists Union study laments that on prime-time television shows, "prostitutes outnumber machinists . . . and unions are almost invisible." Such imbalances, the Machinists argue, "devalue and harm occupations of crucial need to the economy."¹⁷

To sum up, there is no longer much doubt that television may engender or reinforce certain perceptions. The big unanswered question is: How strongly do various TV audiences "offset" what they see on the TV screen with perceptions and values drawn from other sources—personal experience, parents, friends, reading, church, and school?

Time for Self-Control

Television, as a technology, is neither good or bad. It is a fact of life, and no Luddites will ever bring back pre-TV days. Indeed, with the advent of cable, satellite transmission, and home video equipment, Americans will probably be watching more television in the years ahead than ever before.

Yet, as Daniel Boorstin correctly warns, our uncritical embrace of television has created a crisis. Even the imprecise studies now available suggest TV's far-reaching impact, be it harmful or (occasionally) benign. In theory, public opinion could tilt television programs toward more constructive ends; the TV industry, after all, is a captive of audience taste. But even that would hardly lessen the sheer amount of time many people spend passively in front of the TV set. And there is no evidence,

in any event, that Americans are disposed to rise up, en masse, against those responsible for what appears on the air.

This is perhaps the most alarming aspect of television—not the medium itself, but the fact that most Americans refuse to acknowledge its influence, or to take steps to leash its content, or at the very least to take control over their own viewing habits and those of their children.

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BACKGROUND BOOKS

TELEVISION IN AMERICA

Television has replaced the popular novel—and the movies—as America's chief medium of entertainment, and scores of scholars and journalists have attempted to explain this phenomenon. The Library of Congress card catalog contains entries for more than 6,000 works on television. Yet, among them, truly illuminating studies are few.

The best one-volume history is **Tube of Plenty: The Evolution of American Television** (Oxford, 1975, cloth; 1977, paper) by Erik Barnouw, a former Columbia professor of dramatic arts, television, and film. His well-written account is a condensation of his three-volume *A History of Broadcasting in the United States* (1966–70). In addition to providing crisp analyses of TV's evolution and of individual programs, Barnouw presents brief sketches of television's tycoons, including NBC's David Sarnoff and CBS's William S. Paley.

In **David Sarnoff: A Biography** (Harper, 1966), Eugene Lyons describes the dramatic incident that thrust the young Sarnoff into national prominence. On the night of April 14, 1912, while on duty as a wireless operator in New York City, Sarnoff received a startling message from the S.S. *Olympic*: "S.S. *Titanic* ran into iceberg. Sinking fast." To ease communications with ships near the scene, President William Howard Taft shut down all other radio stations. For three days, Sarnoff stayed glued to his earphones and relayed news of the tragedy to the press. An overnight celebrity, he later formed the NBC network to

provide a market for radios—and later, of course, got into TV.

In 1948, William S. Paley, principal owner of CBS, brightened his network's prospects by raiding rival NBC of some of its biggest TV stars—Jack Benny, Red Skelton, and Frank Sinatra. Paley, who also pioneered in radio news with Edward R. Murrow, William Shirer, H. V. Kaltenborn, and Eric Sevareid, gives an often veiled account of his rise in **As It Happened: A Memoir** (Doubleday, 1979).

Paley touted CBS-TV as "the largest advertising medium in the world." And, indeed, TV's relationship with business is the medium's Big Story. For a complete account of that symbiosis, readers can again turn to Erik Barnouw.

In **The Sponsor: Notes on a Modern Potentate** (Oxford, 1978, cloth; 1979, paper), Barnouw writes that the real message of TV is a commercial one; the result is "a dramaturgy reflecting the demographics of a supermarket."

Most of the TV-viewing public claims to dislike commercials, but there is little doubt among advertisers that they succeed in selling products. As the head of the "Creative Group" that produced AT&T's campaign to promote long-distance telephoning has remarked, "In thirty seconds, everybody notices *everything*." A funny, behind-the-scenes look at the making of those brief "spots" for the telephone company is **Thirty Seconds** (Farrar, 1980) by *New Yorker* television critic Michael J. Arlen.

For six months in 1979, Arlen, the author of two excellent collections of essays on TV—**Living-Room War** (Viking, 1969) and **The View from Highway 1** (Farrar, 1976, cloth; Ballantine, 1977, paper)—followed the commercial-makers around. The result is a deadpan, camera-eye view of the people involved in an exotic process. “Basically,” says an ad man, “we are targeting people who have already experienced making a long-distance phone call.” The commercial’s music composer admits that “Reach out and touch someone” was a “good line” but, he adds, “it was genius . . . that thought to extend the basic concept to ‘Reach out, reach out, and touch someone.’”

How television has “touched” the public, or affected the way people behave, is a growing target of scholarly effort. An extensive round-up of 25 years of such research is found in **Television and Human Behavior** (Columbia, 1978, cloth & paper) by George Comstock et al. Not surprisingly, there are few firm answers.

Although no hard evidence links TV news treatment and shifts in public opinion, network news “bias” has long excited critics’ suspicions. Edward J. Epstein’s **News from Nowhere: Television and the News** (Random, 1973, cloth; Viking, 1974, paper), is a pioneering inside look at ABC, CBS, and NBC. Epstein clearly shows the preponderant (and

nonideological) influence on TV journalism of budgets, competition for ratings, and keep-it-simple themes. The frustrations of TV newspeople bulk larger than their flaws in Marvin Barrett and Zachary Sklar’s **The Eye of the Storm** (Lippincott & Crowell, 1980, cloth & paper), the latest Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University survey of broadcast journalism. More pointed is editor Paul Weaver’s critique in **Television as a Social Force: New Approaches to TV Criticism** (Praeger, 1975, cloth & paper). The producers of TV news programs, he writes, seek to convey an impression of “authority and omniscience”; the final product is peculiarly unreliable because it tells the viewer more than its creators know or can know.

Reference books dealing with television abound. Most intriguing is critic Cobbett S. Steinberg’s **TV Facts** (Facts on File, 1980). Its lists of top-rated TV shows, however, can be as dispiriting as the best-seller book lists in Sunday newspapers. The three highest-rated TV series for 1978-79 were *Three’s Company*, *Laverne and Shirley*, and *Mork and Mindy*. *60 Minutes* tied for sixth place. The longest running prime-time TV series is *Disney’s Wonderful World*. Since September 1954—under five different titles and on two networks—the show, perhaps appropriately for television, has offered the public a tour of Fantasyland.

EDITOR’S NOTE: Lawrence W. Lichty and Stuart N. Brotman suggested many of the titles mentioned in this essay.

Philippe Ariès:

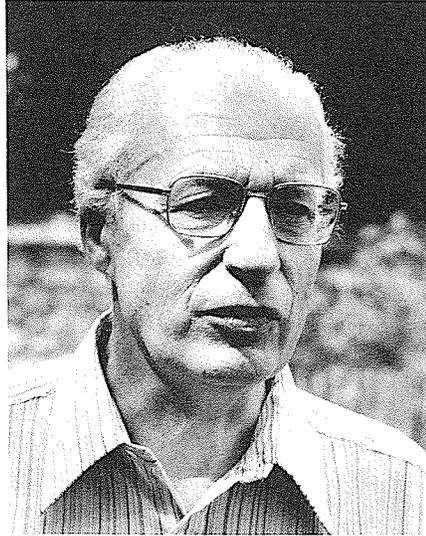
MENTALITY AS HISTORY



"Every November," Philippe Ariès recently recalled, "I was impressed by the migratory instinct that brought flocks of pilgrims to the cemeteries, in the cities as well as in the country. I wondered about the source of this piety. Had it existed since the beginning of time?"

With that question, historian Ariès embarked on a 15-year scholarly ramble through the eccentricities of medieval wills, the evolving grandeur of church ritual, the topography of ancient graveyards, and the symbolism of tombstones—the debris, in short, of man's "collective unconscious." Ariès had long been drawn to phenomena "located at the border between nature and culture." In earlier works, notably *Centuries of Childhood* (1965), he had examined attitudes toward *life*, as revealed by changing Western notions of family and childhood. Then, during the mid-1960s, Ariès began to explore man's evolving attitudes toward death and dying. The result of this illuminating quest will be published in English, later this winter, as *The Hour of Our Death*, from which his essay below is drawn.

Philippe Ariès is something of an anomaly among that handful of pioneering French historians who have revolutionized their craft, on both sides of the Atlantic, in the years since World War II. He is not entirely an intellectual historian, nor a practitioner of "pots-and-pans" social history; rather, he is interested in how the common people perceived the nature of things, in ideas, perhaps never consciously articulated, that "were simply lived, naively, as if self-evident." Ariès does not claim affiliation with any one school of history, such as the *Annales*. Indeed, until he accepted a directorship at the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* in 1978, he had never held a university post; professionally, he pursued a career in the French civil service as a specialist in tropical agriculture in Africa and Latin America. Aloof from academe, Ariès has been free to play the maverick: original, imaginative, impressionistic.



*Historian
Philippe Ariès.*

Photo Anne de Brunhoff.

He has, as a result, been faulted by some for a lack of scholarly "rigor." Yet, his critics concede that even his errors have been brilliant ones.

Ariès is involved in a guessing game whose rewards (and risks) are great. His chief tool is the prying, offbeat question, which he employs like a wedge to exploit a promising crack in the evidence, to widen it and expose it to the light. Is it significant, he wonders, that on French tomb effigies carved before the 13th century, the folds of the sculpted garments fall as if the recumbent figures were actually standing up? Was it coincidence, he asks, that the medieval fascination with the macabre coincided with a lapse in the custom of viewing the corpse? And why, in the 17th century, were the French Protestants demanding to be buried in old Catholic cemeteries?

Drawing his examples from prehistory and antiquity as well as modern times, Ariès identifies a cluster of durable beliefs at the core of Western attitudes toward death—protean beliefs that periodically molted over the course of two millenia but always left evidence behind. One of these beliefs recognized the dying individual's place in the social order, for death was not merely a personal drama but an ordeal involving the entire community. There was the deep-seated vision of an afterlife, originally perceived not as Paradise but as numb repose in Na-

ture. And there was the brooding presence of evil, a grim constant lurking on both sides of death.

All of these concerns were linked, one to the other; they were rooted, too, in the variable circumstances of the here and now. He discerns, for example, a shift in the constellation of popular belief during the 13th and 14th centuries, as literacy and prosperity fostered a new spirit of individualism in Europe's cities. With individualism came a weakening in the communal character of death—and a sense of one's own biography as unique. Epitaphs, once rare, became "a kind of *Who's Who* laid open for the perusal of passersby." Funerary monuments reappeared. Inevitably, the idea of an afterlife mutated. Strong-willed burghers, lovers of life, balked at the notion of death as passive biological anonymity; better to think that one's individuality—one's *soul*—would survive in perpetual bliss.

What is noteworthy is not that attitudes toward death have greatly changed over the centuries but that for so long they remained loosely faithful to a certain ageless concept of individual and society, of individual and nature. Even the bathetic romanticism of the 19th century drew in part on traditions (albeit greatly disfigured) that were no stranger to Charlemagne.

Yet, in the 20th century, Ariès argues, all of this has changed. Western man has banished the idea of evil, tamed nature, discarded the afterlife, doused the last embers of communal spirit—and in the process "restored death to its savage state." The break with the past, he concludes, has been sudden, decisive, and complete. Like all Ariès' arguments, it is worth pondering.

—*The Editors*

INVISIBLE DEATH

by *Philippe Ariès*

Death is not a purely individual act, any more than life is. Like every great milestone in life, death is celebrated by a ceremony that is always more or less solemn and whose purpose is to express the individual's solidarity with his family and community.

The three most important moments of this ceremony have long been *the dying man's acceptance of his active role, the scene of the farewells, and the scene of mourning*. The rites in the bedroom or those of the oldest liturgy expressed the conviction that the life of a man was not an individual destiny but a link in the unbroken chain, the biological continuation of a family or a line that began with Adam and included the whole human race.

One kind of solidarity subordinated the individual to the past and future of the species. Another kind made him an integral part of his community. This community was gathered around the bed where he lay; later, in its rites of mourning, it expressed the anxiety caused by the passage of death. The community was weakened by the loss of one of its members. It proclaimed the danger it felt; it had to recover its strength and unity by means of ceremonies, the last of which always had the quality of a holiday, even a joyous one.

In the early 20th century, before World War I, throughout the Western world of Latin culture, the death of a man still solemnly altered the space and time of a social group that could be extended to include the entire community. The shutters were closed in the bedroom of the dying man, candles were lit, the house filled with grave and whispering neighbors, relatives, and friends. At the church, the bell tolled.

After death, a notice of bereavement was posted on the door (in lieu of the abandoned custom of exhibiting the body or the coffin by the door of the house). All the doors and windows of the house were closed except the front door, which was left ajar to admit everyone who was obliged by friendship or good manners to make a final visit. The service at the church brought the whole community together, and after the long line of people had expressed their sympathy to the family, a slow procession, saluted by passersby, accompanied the coffin to the cemetery. The

period of mourning was filled with visits: visits of the family to the cemetery and visits of relatives and friends to the family.

Then, little by little, life returned to normal. The social group had been stricken by death, and it had reacted collectively, starting with the immediate family and extending to a wider circle of relatives and acquaintances. Not only did everyone die in public like Louis XIV, but the death of each person was a public event that moved, literally and figuratively, society as a whole. It was not only an individual who was disappearing but society itself that had been wounded and that had to be healed.

Concealing the Truth

All the changes that have modified attitudes toward death in the past thousand years have not altered this fundamental image, this permanent relationship between death and society. Death has always been a social and public fact. It remains so today in vast areas of the Latin West, and it is by no means clear that this traditional model is destined to disappear. But it no longer has the quality of absolute generality that it once had, no matter what the religion and the culture. In the course of the 20th century, an absolutely new type of dying has made an appearance in some of the most industrialized, urbanized, and technologically advanced areas of the Western world—and this is probably only the first stage.

Two characteristics are obvious to the most casual observer. Its novelty, of course, its contrariness to everything that preceded it, of which it is the reverse image, the negative. Except for the death of statesmen, society has banished death. In the towns, there is no way of knowing that something has happened. The old black and silver hearse has become an ordinary gray limousine, indistinguishable from the flow of traffic. Society no longer observes a pause; the disappearance of an individual no longer affects its continuity. Everything in town goes on

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In this illumination from a 15th-century Book of Hours, St. Michael and Satan battle for a dead man's soul, depicted as a child. The idea of an immortal soul gained universal acceptance during the Middle Ages, giving rise to such circumlocutions as "he gave up his ghost."

Private collection.



as if nobody died anymore.

The second characteristic is no less surprising. Of course, death has changed in a thousand years, but how slowly! The changes were so gradual and so infinitesimal, spread out over generations, that they were imperceptible to contemporaries. Today a complete reversal of customs seems to have occurred in one generation.

After the second half of the 19th century, an essential change occurred in the relationship between the dying man and his entourage.

Obviously, the discovery that one's end was near has always been an unpleasant moment. But people learned to overcome it. The Church saw to it that the doctor carried out the role of herald of death. The role was not a coveted one, and it required the zeal of the "spiritual friend" to succeed where the "earthly friend" hesitated. When the warning did not happen spontaneously, it was part of the customary ritual. But during the later 19th century, it became more and more problematical, as we see from a story in Tolstoi's "Three Deaths," which appeared in 1859.

The wife of a rich businessman has contracted tuberculosis, as happened so often at that time. The doctors have pronounced her condition hopeless. The moment has come when she has to be told. There is no question of avoiding it, if only to allow her to make her "final arrangements." But here is a new element: The distaste of the entourage for this duty has increased. The husband refuses "to tell her about her condition," because, he says, "It would kill her. . . . No matter what happens, it is not I who will tell her." The mother of the dying woman is also reluctant. As for the dying woman, she talks about nothing but new treatments.

Behind this reluctance, even when it grates under the satirical pen of Tolstoi, there is the love of the other, the fear of hurting him and depriving him of hope, the temptation to protect him by leaving him in ignorance of his imminent end. The modern attitude toward death is an extension of the "affectivity" of the 19th century. The last inspiration of this inventive affectivity was to protect the dying or very ill person from his own emotions by concealing the seriousness of his condition until the end. When the dying man discovered the pious game, he lent himself to it so as not to disappoint the other's solicitude. The dying man's relations with those around him were now determined by a respect for this loving lie.

Yet, in order for the dying man, his entourage, and the society that observed them to consent to this situation, the protection of the patient had to outweigh the joys of a last communion with him. The last communion with God and/or with others was the great privilege of the dying. For centuries there was no question of depriving him of this privilege. But when the lie was maintained to the end, it eliminated this. Even when it was reciprocal and conspiratorial, the lie destroyed the spontaneity, pathos, and public nature of the last moments.

The beginning of the 20th century saw the completion of this psychological mechanism that removed death from society and eliminated its character of public ceremony. This is the first milestone in the modern history of death.

"Not Receiving"

The second great milestone in the contemporary history of death is the rejection and elimination of mourning. Mourning in the true sense of the word comes after the funeral and burial. The pain of loss may continue to exist in the secret heart of the survivor, but the rule today, almost throughout the West, is that *he must never show it in public*. This is exactly the opposite of

what used to be required. In France since about 1970, the long line of people offering their condolences to the family after the religious service has been eliminated. And in the country, the death notice, though still sent out, is accompanied by the dry, almost uncivil formula, "The family is not receiving," a way of avoiding the customary visits of neighbors and acquaintances before the funeral.

But generally speaking, the initiative for the refusal is not taken by the survivors. By withdrawing and avoiding outside contact, the family is affirming the authenticity of its grief, which bears no comparison to the solicitude of well-meaning relatives; it is also adopting the discreet behavior that society requires.

The Denial of Death

Indeed, the transition from the calm and monotonous world of everyday reality to the inner world of the feelings is never made spontaneously or without help. The distance between the languages is too great. In order to establish communication, it is necessary to have an accepted code of behavior, a ritual that is learned by experience from childhood. Once, there were codes for all occasions, codes for revealing to others feelings that were generally unexpressed, codes for courting, for giving birth, for dying, for consoling the bereaved. These codes no longer exist. They disappeared in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. So feelings too intense for the ordinary forms either do not find expression and are held in, or break forth with intolerable violence because there is no way to channel them. In the latter case, they threaten the order and security necessary to daily activity. Therefore, they must be repressed.

It is for this reason that everything having to do first with love and then with death became forbidden. This taboo became necessary after the gates and dams that had contained these wild forces for thousands of years were abandoned. Thus, a model was born, especially in the English public schools, of virile courage, discretion, and propriety, which forbade public allusion to romantic feelings and tolerated them only in the privacy of the home.

A new situation appears around the middle of the 20th century in the most individualistic and middle-class parts of the West. There is a conviction that the public demonstration of mourning (like love), as well as its too-insistent or too-long private expression, is inherently morbid. As British sociologist Geoffrey Gorer has written, "At present, death and mourning

are treated with much the same prudery as the sexual impulses were a century ago." Weeping is synonymous with hysteria. Mourning is a malady. This disparaging attitude begins to appear in subtle form in the postromantic sarcasm, still mingled with romantic beliefs, of Mark Twain. Twain is both annoyed and moved by theatrical demonstrations, and defends himself from antiquated sentiments with humor. Today, this attitude has become common. The period of mourning is no longer marked by the silence of the bereaved amid a solicitous and indiscreet entourage, but by the silence of the entourage itself. The telephone does not ring. The bereaved is in quarantine.

The suppression of mourning is not due to the frivolity of survivors but to a merciless coercion applied by society. Society refuses to participate in the emotion of the bereaved. This is a way of denying the presence of death in practice, even if one accepts its reality in principle. As far as I can see, this is the first time that the denial has expressed itself so openly. For some time, this denial had been rising from the depths where it had been thrust, moving toward the surface without yet reaching it: from the Victorian fear of being buried alive, to the time when



The death of Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, at Buckingham Palace, 1861. In the 19th century, Ariès writes, death came to be seen as "moving and beautiful, like the immensity of nature, the sea, the moors."

From the collection of Mrs. Betty O'Looney. Used by permission of Studio Vista, London.

one concealed the death of the other out of love and concealed the sick person from others out of disgust. From now on, the denial of death is openly acknowledged as a significant trait of our culture. The tears of the bereaved have become comparable to the excretions of the diseased. Both are distasteful. Death has been banished.

Resting in Peace?

As we have seen, the romantic model as it existed in the middle of the 19th century underwent a gradual dismantling. First, in the late 19th century, there were the changes that occurred in the early stages of dying, the period of very serious illness during which the patient was kept in ignorance and isolation. Then, in the 20th century, came the taboo against mourning and everything in public life that reminded one of death. There remained only the actual moment of death, which long retained its traditional characteristics: the reviewing of the life, the public quality, the scene of the farewells. But after World War II, even this last survival disappeared, owing to the complete medicalization of death. This is the third milestone.

The essential fact is the well-known advance in surgical and medical techniques. As soon as an illness seems serious, the doctor usually sends his patient to the hospital. Advances in surgery have brought parallel advances in resuscitation and in the reduction or elimination of pain and sensation. These procedures are no longer used only before, during, or after an operation; they have been extended to all the dying, in order to relieve their pain. For example, the dying man is given food and water intravenously, thus sparing him the discomfort of thirst. A tube runs from his mouth to a pump that drains his mucus and prevents him from choking. Doctors and nurses administer sedatives.

By a swift and imperceptible transition, someone who was dying came to be treated like someone recovering from major surgery. This is why, especially in the cities, people stopped dying at home—just as they stopped being born at home. In New York City in 1967, 75 percent of all deaths occurred in hospitals or similar institutions, as compared with 69 percent in 1955 (60 percent for the United States as a whole). The proportion of deaths in hospitals has risen steadily since then.

This transfer of death to the hospital has had profound consequences. It has accelerated an evolution that began in the late 19th century and pushed it to its logical conclusion. Death has been redefined. In the traditional mentality, the sense of the moment of death was softened by the certainty of a continuation:

Death in the Hospital (1926) by José Gutiérrez Solana: "Hospital personnel have defined an 'acceptable style of facing death.' This is the death of the man who pretends he is not going to die."



From José Gutiérrez Solana by José L. Barrio-Garay. Bucknell University Press, 1976.

not necessarily the immortality of the Christians but a subdued prolongation of some kind. After the 17th century, the more widespread belief in the duality of the soul and the body and in their separation at death eliminated the margin of time. Death became an instant.

The medicalized death of today has restored this margin, but by borrowing time from this life, not from the beyond. The time of death has been both lengthened and subdivided. The doctor cannot eliminate death, but he can control its duration, from the few hours it once was, to several days, weeks, months, or even years. It has become possible to delay the fatal moment; the measures taken to soothe pain have the secondary effect of prolonging life.

Sometimes, this prolonging of life becomes an end in itself, and hospital personnel refuse to discontinue the treatments that maintain an artificial life. The world will remember the Shakespearean agony of Franco, surrounded by his 20 doctors. The most sensational case is no doubt that of Karen Ann Quinlan, an American girl of 22 whose mechanical respirator was turned off in March 1976 to allow her to die but who was still alive nearly

five years later being fed and given antibiotics intravenously. No one expects that she will ever regain consciousness. It is not our purpose here to discuss the ethical problems raised by this rare case of "therapeutic tenacity." What interests us is that medicine can cause someone who is almost dead to remain alive almost indefinitely; and not only medicine but the hospital itself, that is, the whole system that turns medical activity into a business bureaucracy and that obeys strict regulations regarding method and discipline.

Death has ceased to be accepted as a natural, necessary phenomenon. Death is a "failure." This is the attitude of the doctor, who claims the control of death as his mission in life. But the doctor is merely a spokesman for society, although more sensitive and radical than the average person. When death arrives, it is regarded as an accident, a sign of helplessness or clumsiness that must be put out of mind. It must not interrupt the hospital routine, which is more delicate than that of another professional milieu. It must therefore be discreet. The patient's passivity is maintained by sedatives, especially at the end, when the pain becomes unbearable and would otherwise produce the "horrible screams" of Ivan Ilyich or Madame Bovary. Morphine controls the great crises, but it also diminishes a consciousness that the patient then recovers only intermittently.

Such is today's "acceptable style of facing death." Death no longer belongs to the dying man, who is first irresponsible, later unconscious, nor to the family, who are convinced of their inadequacy. Death is regulated and organized by bureaucrats whose competence and humanity cannot prevent them from treating death as their "thing," a thing that must bother them as little as possible in the general interest.

Nature Imprisoned

From the earliest times, man has regarded neither sex nor death as crude facts of nature per se. The necessity of organizing work and maintaining order and morality in order to have a peaceful life in common led society to protect itself from the violent and unpredictable forces of nature. These included both external nature, with its intemperate seasons and sudden accidents; and the internal world of the human psyche, which resembles nature in its suddenness and irregularity, the world of the ecstasy of love and the agony of death. A state of equilibrium was achieved and maintained by means of a conscious strategy to contain and channel the unknown and formidable forces of nature. Death and sex were the weak points in the defense sys-

tem, because here there was no clear break in continuity between culture and nature. So these activities had to be carefully controlled. The ritualization of death was a special aspect of the total strategy of man against nature, a strategy of prohibitions and concessions. This is why death was not permitted its natural extravagance but was imprisoned in ceremony, transformed into spectacle. This is also why it could not be a solitary adventure but had to involve the whole community.

The Retreat of Evil

How are we to explain the current abdication of the community? How has the community come to reverse its role and to forbid the mourning that it was responsible for imposing until the 20th century? The answer is that the community felt less and less involved in the death of one of its members. First, because it no longer thought it necessary to defend itself against a nature that had been domesticated once and for all by the advance of technology, especially medical technology. Next, because it no longer had a sufficient sense of solidarity. The "community" in the traditional sense of the word no longer existed. It had been replaced, first by the family, next by an enormous mass of atomized individuals.

But this disappearance does not explain the powerful resurgence of other prohibitions. This vast and formless mass that we call society is, as we know, maintained and motivated by a new system of constraints and controls. It is also subject to irresistible movements that put it in a state of crisis and impose a transitory unity of aggression or denial. One of these movements has unified mass society against death. More precisely, it has led society to be ashamed of death.

This shame is a direct consequence of the definitive retreat of "evil." As early as the 18th century, man had begun to reduce the power of the devil, to question his reality. Hell was abandoned, at least in the case of relatives and dear friends. Along with hell went sin and all the varieties of spiritual and moral evil. They were no longer regarded as part of human nature but as social problems that could be eliminated by a good system of supervision and punishment. The general advance of science, morality, and organization would lead quite easily to happiness. But in the middle of the 19th century, there was still the obstacle of illness and death. There was no question of eliminating that. The romantics circumvented or assimilated it. They beautified death, gateway to an anthropomorphic beyond. They preserved its immemorial association with illness, pain, and agony;

these things aroused pity rather than distaste. The trouble began with distaste: Before people thought of abolishing physical illness, they ceased to tolerate its sight, sounds, and smells.

Medicine reduced pain; it even succeeded in eliminating it altogether. The goal glimpsed in the 18th century had almost been reached. Evil no longer clung to man, it was no longer part of human nature, as the religions, especially Christianity, believed. It still existed, of course, but outside of man, in certain deviant behaviors such as war, crime, and nonconformity, which had not yet been corrected but which would one day be eliminated by society.

But if there is no more evil, what do we do about death? To this question modern society offers two answers.

The first is a massive admission of defeat. We ignore the existence of a scandal that we have been unable to prevent; we act as if it did not exist, and thus mercilessly force the bereaved to say nothing. A heavy silence has fallen over the subject of death. When this silence is broken, as it sometimes is in America today, it is to reduce death to the insignificance of an ordinary event that is mentioned with feigned indifference. Either way, the result is the same: Neither the individual nor the community is strong enough to recognize the existence of death.

And yet this attitude has not annihilated death or the fear of death. On the contrary, it has allowed the old savagery to creep back under the mask of medical technology. The death of the patient in the hospital, covered with tubes, is becoming a popular image, more terrifying than the *transi* or skeleton of macabre rhetoric.

A small elite of anthropologists, psychologists, and sociologists has been struck by this contradiction. They propose not so much to "evacuate" death as to humanize it. They acknowledge the necessity of death, but they want it to be accepted and no longer shameful. Death must simply become the discreet but dignified exit of a peaceful person from a helpful society that is neither torn nor overly upset by the idea of a biological transition without significance, without pain or suffering, and ultimately without fear.





Used by permission of Ästhetik und Kommunikation, Berlin.

"We are building socialism," proclaims this worker, drawn by Y. Pimenov in the early 1930s to promote the First Five-Year Plan. Such art is characteristic of a peculiarly persistent Soviet genre, the "production poster."

The Soviet Future

Most public American discussion of the Soviet Union focuses on its foreign policy and military capabilities. Among the specialists, another, quieter debate is underway. The subject: looming economic and social crises inside the USSR. Here, two Soviet affairs specialists—demographer Murray Feshbach and political scientist Blair Ruble—argue less about the nature of those problems than about their significance. Feshbach contends that during the next two decades the Kremlin must undertake drastic actions to cope with unprecedented change. Ruble contends that the Soviet system will “muddle through” without much basic alteration. Finally, critic John Glad supplies a portrait of everyday life in the USSR with selections from recent Russian fiction.



A DIFFERENT CRISIS

by Murray Feshbach

During the next two decades, the Soviet Union will face special problems that have never before afflicted a major industrialized nation during peacetime. Simply stated, the European part of the population is not replacing itself, while the non-Russian, non-Slavic, non-European people of the Soviet Union—most of whom are of Muslim origin—are experiencing a strong growth in numbers. By the year 2000, ethnic Russians will be a clear minority in the country that most Americans still call “Russia.”

From this simple fact flow consequences that may, over the next two decades, lead the Soviet Union into peculiar economic, military, and political difficulties.

The USSR's annual rate of economic growth now stands at a low 2 percent; shortages of skilled labor caused by the slowdown in the ethnic Russian rate of increase could trim that to zero or even induce a decline. Barring some unforeseen change in the Kremlin's world view, the Soviet military will continue to require hundreds of thousands of conscripts each year through the 1980s and '90s—but in 15 years, the Red Army may well find itself with large numbers of soldiers who turn toward Mecca at sunset. In short, between now and the end of the century, the ethnic Russian primacy long taken for granted by both tsars and Bolsheviks will be challenged—not by individuals but by inescapable demographic trends.

Single Sex Cities

The Soviet Union, of course, will have other headaches in the years ahead. The question of who will succeed Leonid Brezhnev, for instance, looms larger with each passing day. The Soviet economy is beset by low worker morale, a leveling-off of oil production, sluggish technological progress, and the drain of massive military spending. To Soviet leaders, such ailments are painful, chronic, and familiar, like arthritis. The coming demographic shift is an altogether different type of crisis, one unprecedented in Soviet history.

The demographic shift will magnify the effects of a general demographic slump. Overall, death rates are up, and birth rates are down. Since 1964, the Soviet death rate has jumped by 40 percent; by the end of the century, it is expected to hit 10.6 annually per 1,000 population, nearly the same rate as China's is now. Meanwhile, the national birth rate has fallen by 30 percent since 1950; two decades from now, the rate likely will be down to 16.1 per 1,000. Labor is already short, and the available supply will tighten further over the next few years as the annual net increase in the size of the working-age population sags from its 1976 high of 2.7 million to a projected 1986 low of 285,000. For a variety of reasons, the 1980s should also bring a long-term

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THE USSR: POLITICAL AND ETHNIC DIVISIONS



Names of Soviet republics are in capital letters.

In 1980, out of a total Soviet population of 265 million, the eight southern republics accounted for 57 million, and the RSFSR, 138 million. Like most Central Asians, Turkic peoples are traditionally Muslim.

decline in Soviet capital formation—just when more investment in machinery will be needed to help offset labor shortages by boosting productivity.

How did the Soviet Union get caught in this bind?

The past is partly to blame. Stalin's purges of the 1930s took many millions of lives. Battlefield losses during World War II claimed another 15 million Soviet *males* alone. The Soviet Union is still feeling the "demographic echo" of both events. To policymakers in the Kremlin, the phrase "generation gap" has a special gruesome reality.

But the continuing climb in the Soviet death rate indicates that whatever the other problems of the past were, many of them are still around. Indeed, during the last few years the mortality rate for 20- to 44-year-olds has shot up so fast that male life expectancy has dropped from 66 to 63 years, a full decade

less than the life span for females. (The only nation with a larger gap is Gabon.) The chief villain here is, in two words, rampant alcoholism. Among its well-known effects are ill health, malnutrition, and accidental death.

Short-sighted government planning has played a part, creating scores of "single sex cities" across the Soviet Union. Many an undiversified metropolis such as Bratsk and Abakan was built around a "hot, heavy, and hazardous" industry (e.g., steel, coal, oil-drilling) with almost no jobs for females. Men are correspondingly scarce in textile towns, including Orekhovo-Zuevo and Ivanova, known in the USSR as the "cities of brides."

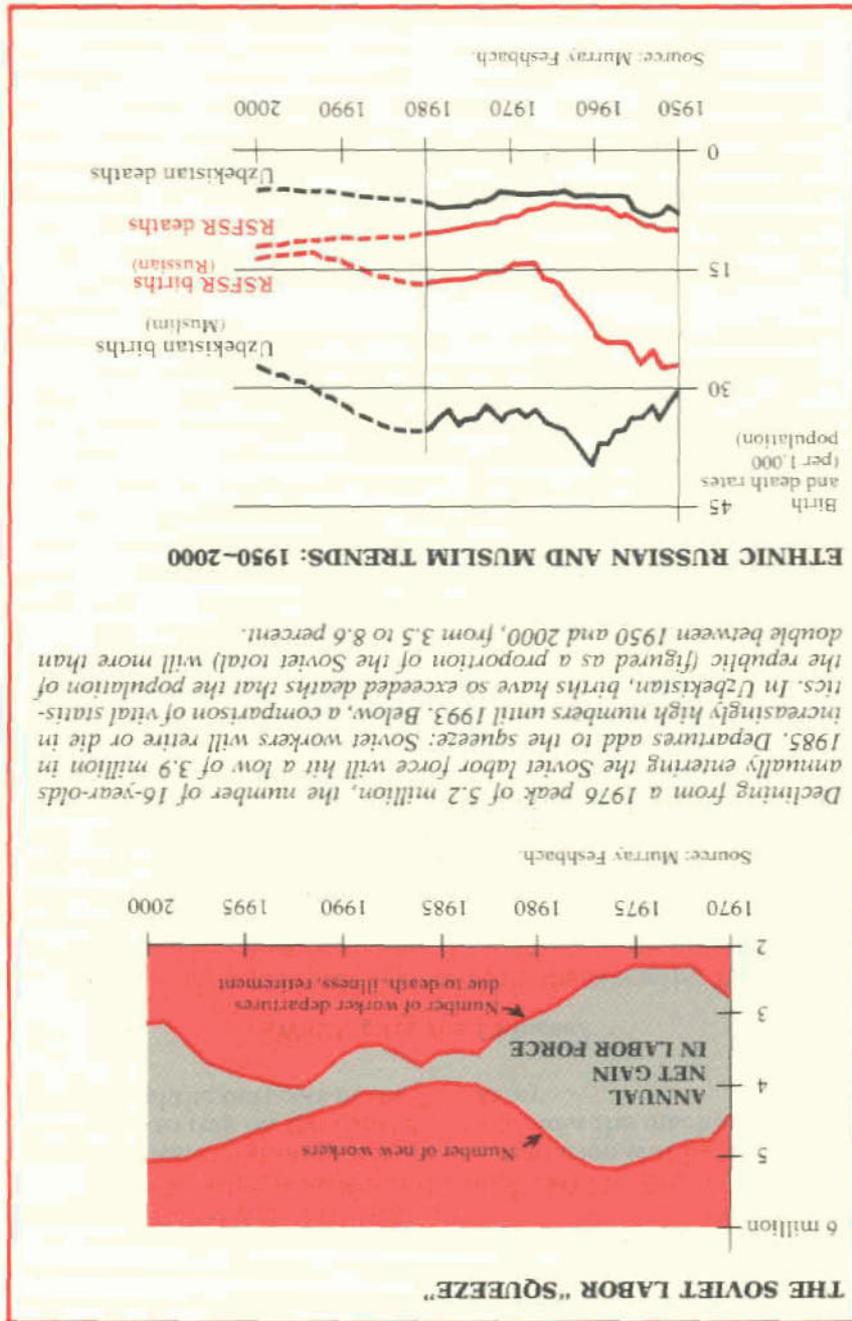
Soviet babies are also dying in shockingly large numbers. During the past decade, the USSR became the first industrialized nation to experience a long-term rise in infant mortality, which grew, according to the Soviet definition, from 22.9 per 1,000 live births in 1971 to 31.1 per 1,000 in 1976. (The Soviets consider infant losses within a week of delivery as miscarriages, not deaths. If calculated by American methods, the 1976 figure would be 35.6 per 1,000, more than twice the U.S. rate.)

One reason for the rise in infant mortality is that abortion has apparently become the USSR's principal means of "contraception," with a present average of six abortions per woman per lifetime, 12 times the U.S. rate. When used repeatedly, abortion may induce premature delivery in subsequent pregnancies, and premature infants are 25 times more likely to die during their first year than full-term infants. Another baby-killer is female alcoholism, which weakens the fetus.

40 Million Muslims . . .

But the prime culprit may well be the USSR's prenatal and postnatal health-care system, in which the flaws of Soviet medicine and social planning seem to converge. Fed inferior artificial milk, placed in overcrowded day-care centers when only three months old (owing in part to the labor shortage, most Soviet women must work full-time), and left there for 8 to 12 hours a day, hundreds of thousands of Soviet babies have become easy prey to epidemic diseases, particularly influenza.

The labor shortage and its economic implications would, by themselves, be enough to worry the Kremlin. Yet the problem is worsened by regional differences: It is the USSR's Russians and other Slavs who are not producing as many children as they once did. Soviet Central Asians, by contrast, are flourishing. Relatively unaffected both by Stalin's purges and World War II, traditionally shunning both alcohol and abortion, and keeping



their birth rate high even as their death rate declines, the Soviet Union's 40 million ethnic Muslims have enjoyed a rate of population increase about five times that of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR).

Every Russian is aware of the implications: During the next two decades, the waning European population will increasingly be forced to rely on the rural Asians to man the machines of industry and the outposts of the Red Army.

Waiting for the Chinese?

This is not a prospect that delights the Kremlin. Relations between ethnic Russians and their Muslim neighbors have never been smooth. It was the Russian Bolsheviks who, in 1920 and 1921, used the Red Army to put the old tsarist empire back together. In 1924, partly in reaction to Muslim guerrilla groups (the *Basmachi*), the Bolshevik regime divided the vast Central Asian region of Turkestan into five "nations." Kazakhstan, the largest, stretches more than 1,500 miles from the Caspian Sea to the Chinese border. The others—Kirghizistan, Tadzhikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan—lie in the arid southeastern corner of the Soviet Union, where they nestle up against China, Afghanistan, and Iran.

After a half-century of Communist rule, Central Asian resentment of the European "elder brothers" still flares up: In 1969, Uzbeks rioted in their capital of Tashkent, beating up all those who looked Russian. On the other side, Europeans living in the southeastern republics seem almost colonial in their habit of deriding the natives as *chernye*—that is, "blacks" (which they are not). While Brezhnev has proclaimed the Red Army "the living embodiment of Socialist internationalism," its senior command remains exclusively Slav, and mainly Russian.

Small wonder, then, that the Muslims of the borderlands reportedly taunt the Russians with the warning: "Wait until the Chinese come."

The Chinese may never come, but the year 2000 will, and it might bring a Muslim "victory in the bedroom." At century's end, the population of the Central Asian republics will have grown by one-half, from 40 to 60 million. These five republics, populated mainly by ethnic Turks sharing a common religion and culture, will then account for more than 20 percent of the entire Soviet population. If one adds the three Transcaucasian republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, then the turn-of-the-century total for the "Soviet sunbelt" climbs to almost 30 percent. In 1970, only 1 out of 7 persons in the Soviet Union was



The USSR's ethnic groups range from Eskimo to German. In 1977, more than 40 languages of instruction were used in Soviet schools; in 1979, the Soviet census counted 22 "nationalities" with populations of more than a million. Here, in a 1957 poster, representatives of five such groups are shown beneath the hammer-and-sickle symbol of the Soviet state.

of Muslim origin. By the turn of the century, the ratio will be at least 1 out of 5, and perhaps 1 out of 4. Of the Soviet population as a whole, ethnic Russians will be a minority—48 percent.

While high Muslim fertility seems, at first glance, a partial solution to the USSR's overall manpower shortage, in fact it merely adds a cruel twist. As a practical matter, the Soviet leadership cannot simply replace each Russian worker with a Muslim. There is the problem of location: 60 percent of the Soviet gross industrial product originates in the RSFSR, and to this day Soviet Muslims are reluctant to emigrate from the "House of Islam" (*Dar ul-Islam*), their native lands far to the southeast.

There are, of course, Soviet precedents for the coerced movement of large populations. In 1944, for example, six days after the liberation of the Crimea from the Nazis, all 200,000 of the local Tatars were condemned by Stalin as a "collaborator nation" and sent to Siberia, the Urals, and Uzbekistan. But slave labor is anachronistic in a technological world; it is better suited to the building of earthen dams than to the manufacture of silicon semiconductors.

The alternative is even more unwieldy: shifting the Soviet Union's industrial plant to the labor-rich southern tier. Again, there are precedents, as when, in 1942-43, up to 50 percent of

European Russia's factories were moved east from the combat zone to the safer Urals. But heavy postwar industrialization in European Russia has now made such an exodus prohibitively expensive. It would probably be vetoed on political grounds anyway, for fear of a Russian "backlash." Housing and food are already scarcer in the RSFSR than in Central Asia, and ethnic Russians would be less than happy to see their industries and resources siphoned off by people they consider inferior ingrates.*

Hence the government's present compromise: Whenever possible, it locates *new* plants for labor-intensive industries in the south, a move that recognizes the improbability of Muslim migration. This may help in the long term, but it will do little to dampen the labor squeeze coming in the 1980s.

Coping with Demography

The manpower problem will be exacerbated by the demands of the armed forces. If the Communist Party is the father of Soviet society, the military is its privileged eldest son. Come labor shortage or labor surplus, the Kremlin annually calls up about 1.7 million 18-year-olds to replenish the 4.8-million-man armed forces. But if it takes its usual quota, the Army will conscript enough manpower in 1986 to equal six times that year's net increase in the labor force.

This smaller pool will also include a higher percentage of the country's least educated, least "urban" menfolk. In 1970, only one-fifth of all Soviet conscripts came from the eight southern republics; in the year 2000, the proportion will be one-third. The Red Army's truck driver training course now takes a year. (The U.S. Army's takes five weeks.) One wonders what place the sophisticated technological army of the 21st century will have for unskilled and (perhaps) untrustworthy draftees from the "backward" border regions, many of them probably still unable to speak Russian fluently.†

The USSR has, in its short history, been hit by epidemics, invasions, and famines, all of them staggering blows that might have toppled the regime—but didn't. The Soviet people seem able to endure and survive almost any misfortune. But the USSR has never experienced simultaneous blows to both eco-

*A rather blunt 1971 dissident *samizdat* document complained that "Russia gets all the knocks" and warned that the regime's ideal of a "new Soviet people" would lead, through "random hybridization," to the "biological degeneration" of the Russian people. In Soviet demographic circles, the current euphemism for Russian "ethnic purity" is "*kachestvo* [quality] of the population."

†In 1970, only 16 percent of Central Asians of all ages claimed fluency in Russian.

conomic health and ethnic Russian supremacy.

Some Western analysts predict that life will simply grind on, that present birth and death trends will continue but that the Soviet Union will plod on without much change. Others see the Kremlin turning away from its domestic difficulties and embarking upon risky foreign adventures to divert the citizenry's attention and stir patriotic fervor.

Such forecasts, in my view, are plausible but improbable.

The Soviet Union will not be able to simply do "more of the same" during the crises of the 1980s and '90s as it did in the past. The Communist Party's goal is to retain power. To do so, it will probably be forced to increase production by implementing fundamental economic reforms, to loosen the state bureaucracy's strangle hold on the everyday workings of the economy, even to the point of permitting some autonomy for shopkeepers, farmers, and cottage industries, as in Poland or Yugoslavia.

Should such reforms succeed (and there is no guarantee of that), the USSR's ethnic Russian leaders will be able to deal with the growing numbers of Central Asians from a position of renewed strength, which will make economic and political concessions to the Muslims seem less dangerous.

Continued economic decline, conversely, might lead to an anti-Muslim crackdown by an insecure and embattled party. And the Muslims themselves might get ideas about autonomy. Nothing breeds solidarity so much as repression; as historian Alexandre Bennigsen has noted, the USSR is the only place in the world where Shiite and Sunni Muslims, often bitter foes elsewhere, regularly take part in the same religious rites.

But these are only scenarios, dim visions of what might possibly happen in the years to come. This peculiar problem of *people* introduces a new element of uncertainty. The demographic trends now underway will in the next few decades challenge the regime in ways that simply cannot be foreseen. In discussions by American analysts of the Soviet Union's future—discussions that address, say, the USSR's bigger missiles, growing Navy, and poor economic performance—the coming population shift seems amorphous, distant, almost inconceivable. But it could easily become the Kremlin's most pressing problem of all. For better or worse, it will reshape the Soviet Union, producing a country that in the year 2000 will be far different from the one we know today.



MUDDLING THROUGH

by Blair A. Ruble

About the time that the first McDonald's fast-food stand started selling hamburgers outside Chicago in 1955, a potential competitor named Hubie's opened in Dobbs Ferry, New York. Hubie's was a fully automated "hamburger machine." At one end, attendants fed in ground beef, rolls, cheese, pickles, and ketchup; at the other end, hot hamburgers emerged to slide onto the plates of waiting stand-up diners.

But even the best-laid plans go awry, and Hubie's plans were flawed: The meat patties were not uniform in size, and so some fell into the fire; slow-ups on the conveyor belt resulted in buns toasted black; bits of melting cheese dripped onto vital cogs and bearings; and ready-to-go burgers slid not onto the customers' plates but onto their shoes. Rather than admitting failure and abandoning their "futuristic" system, Hubie's executives hired extra workers to supervise matters, and even put a few cooks in the back room to supplement the defective machine's output. Yet such expedients finally proved futile. The customers stayed away in droves. Hubie's soon went the way not of McDonald's but of another contemporary, the Edsel.

The Soviet economy—rigidly organized, overly complex, and less than a boon to consumers—is not unlike Hubie's hamburger stand. But the USSR is not the USA. If Hubie's had opened in Moscow, it would probably still be in business, since it would be a state-run monopoly. Muscovites craving fast food would have no alternative.

In short, there is more than one way to sell hamburgers or organize an economy. The Russians have no word for "efficient," but when their leaders decide to give one goal top priority, they can be *effective*, as when, during the early 1960s, the Soviet government decided to achieve strategic parity with the United States.

This distinction is often overlooked. Led astray by the Soviets' decidedly different methods, Western observers of the USSR have repeatedly concluded that a Soviet economic breakdown was at hand. When the First Five-Year Plan was promulgated in 1928, for example, Western specialists warned that the heavy



From *Antologia del Krokodil*. © 1979 by Casa Editrice Roberto Napoleone, Italy.

"Here's proof," a devious foreman tells a visiting bureaucrat, "the tractors are ready, and are heading for the fields." Improvisation on the farm and in factories is a frequent subject of Soviet cartoons.

loads of freight and frequent usage stipulated by the plan would bend the tracks and ruin the roadbeds of the Soviet railway network. Yet the system endured. Indeed, the Soviets got along with only one main east-west railway line—the Trans-Siberian Railroad—until 1974, when construction of the Baikal-Amur Mainline, or BAM, resumed after a two-decade hiatus.

Today, Western specialists variously see looming crises in Soviet energy, manpower and productivity, and agriculture. One must treat their forecasts with a certain prudence.

It is easy to poke fun at the Soviets. With a per capita gross national product (GNP) lower than Italy's, the Soviet economic performance is still far from Nikita Khrushchev's old goal of overtaking the United States by 1980. Indeed, Soviet trade patterns—that is, exporting oil and importing technology and food—resemble those of a resource-rich developing nation such as Saudi Arabia more than those of the United States.

The Kremlin's hopes for the Soviet economy are embodied in a five-year plan, which (officially, at least) is treated with veneration. Billboards, newspapers, and television programs endlessly repeat official incantations such as "Fullfill on time the tasks of the Five-Year Plan." This is the way it works: Before the outset of each planning period, *Gosplan*, the national state planning agency, draws up a schedule of long-term goals and distributes it to every industrial enterprise throughout the USSR. Each

manager, from the smallest provincial factory on up, reviews the proposals and passes a response up the administrative ladder to the next highest industry level. There it is coordinated with similar proposals and consolidated into a new united plan. By this process, plans, as they grow in scope, wend their way through the bureaucracy until they finally reach the national planning headquarters in Moscow, where *Gosplan* prepares the ultimate five-year plan for the nation.

Bitter Cold and Crumbling Coal

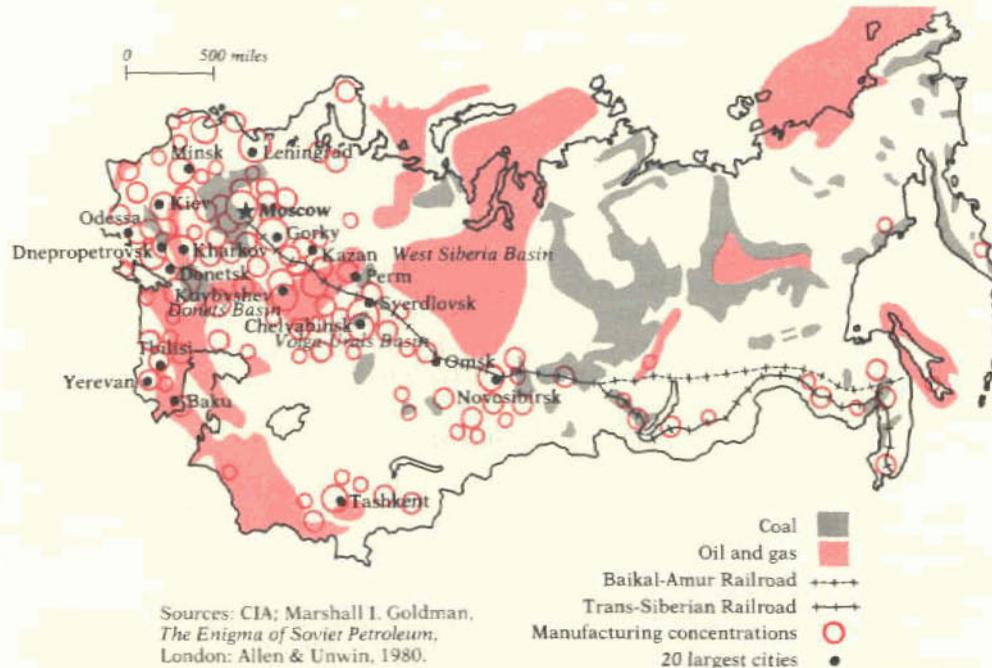
A Communist Party Congress and the USSR Supreme Soviet then approve the plan. Thus ratified, the plan puts managers who fail to follow it in violation of national statutes; as journalist Hedrick Smith observed, the plan comes close to being "the fundamental law of the land." The fundamental flaw in the plan is that it is "finalized" in Moscow but largely implemented at the local level, so the officials who set each factory's targets are not the people who have to meet them.

The new plan that comes before the 26th Communist Party Congress, scheduled to convene in February 1981, will have to deal with the usual strains resulting from poor agricultural performance and heavy military spending (which Western analysts estimate to account for at least 8 and perhaps as much as 18 percent of the GNP, versus U.S. figures of about 13 percent in 1954 and 5 percent in 1979). In effect, the Kremlin has been imposing what strikes many Westerners as a perpetual gray wartime austerity, with top priority given to military needs. But Soviet leaders will also confront difficulties unimagined a decade ago: If Western specialists are correct, the 1980s, for the Soviets, will be a time of a shifting labor supply, declining productivity, and energy shortages. *Gosplan* will, in one way or another, have to "solve" those problems.

That the Soviet Union could come up short in energy is perhaps the biggest surprise. During the 1970s, the USSR became the world's largest oil producer, pumping 11.7 million barrels a day in 1979. (In second place was Saudi Arabia with a 1979 daily

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THE USSR: ENERGY IN THE EAST, USERS IN THE WEST



average of about 9 million barrels.) Through sheer volume of production, the USSR manages to be both the world's second largest oil consumer (after the United States) and exporter (after the Saudis). Since 1977, oil exports—to such Western countries as Italy, West Germany, and France—have accounted for more than half of all Soviet hard currency earnings.

Yet throughout the 1970s, Western analysts—most notably those employed by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency—maintained that the Soviets were facing an energy crunch. Production in the giant Samotlor oil fields in Siberia, which account for a quarter of the Soviet total, was said to be leveling off. Other energy sources were thought to hold out little hope. The famous coal fields of the Donets Basin, in the Ukraine, were reportedly petering out after more than a century of mining. The ambitious nuclear power program has fallen well behind schedule, and today less than 4 percent of Soviet energy comes from atomic power—among other things, putting it behind firewood as a home heating source.

Moreover, these analysts noted, most of the Soviet Union's

fossil fuel reserves lie in Siberia, while some 80 percent of Soviet energy is consumed in the European part of the USSR. With its brief, blazing summers, and prolonged, bitterly cold winters, Siberia is a difficult area to exploit. The expense of laying an oil pipeline across the USSR could far exceed that of constructing the Alaska pipeline, which cost \$8 billion and was built with sophisticated technology still unavailable in the USSR. Siberian coal, with its tendency to crumble and self-ignite when exposed to air, is of a far lower quality than that now mined in the European USSR, and coal transportation costs are generally 10 times those of oil. Those who predict a Soviet energy crunch argue that even an advanced Western nation such as France or West Germany would be hard put to conquer such problems, and that the Soviets will be further encumbered by their clumsy planning, lackluster management, and low-grade technology.

A Contrary Argument

Yet other Western specialists, most notably Harvard economist Marshall Goldman, have pointed out that at one time CIA experts told us that Soviet petroleum exports would begin tapering off in 1975. When that didn't happen, they changed their prediction to 1976, and then 1978, and more recently 1979 and 1980. In 1977, the CIA predicted that Soviet oil production would peak in 1981, with the output for Siberia stabilizing at around 5 million barrels per day. Siberian oil fields are now producing 6 million a day.

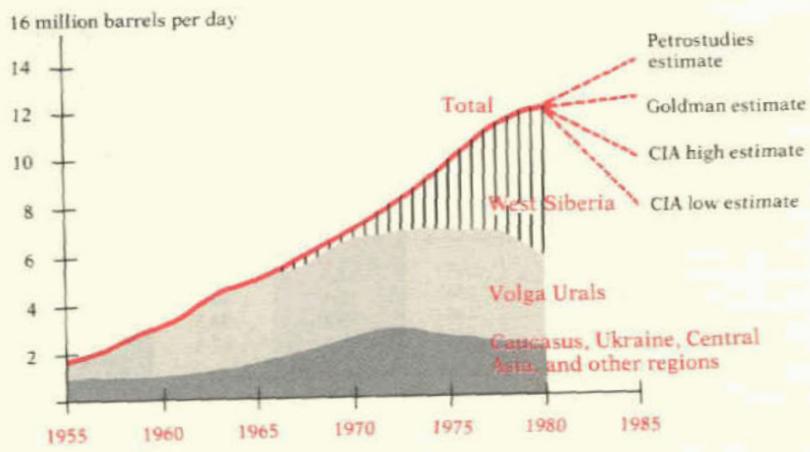
Goldman finds little reason to start agreeing with the CIA now. First, he says, the very fact that Soviet prospecting technology is so outmoded means that much of the USSR (unlike the United States) remains unexplored. Second, the CIA has overlooked possible Soviet offshore deposits in the Pacific and Arctic Oceans as well as in the Caspian Sea. Third, the Soviets could benefit from conservation measures: Soviet factories currently use as much energy as their American counterparts but produce only three-quarters the volume of goods. Fourth, the CIA has given short shrift to Soviet natural gas reserves, estimated to be 40 percent of the world total. Gas could soon replace oil at home; the bulk of Soviet energy consumption takes place in stationary boilers and furnaces, thus easing a switchover from oil to gas. Gas could also replace oil as an export, if yet another Soviet-West European pipeline is constructed, as now appears likely. Furthermore, the Soviet commitment to nuclear energy is firm, and untroubled by environmentalists' lawsuits and "anti-nuke" demonstrations. The "Atomash" factory at Volgo-

SOVIET ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE
as percentage of U.S. performance (100%)



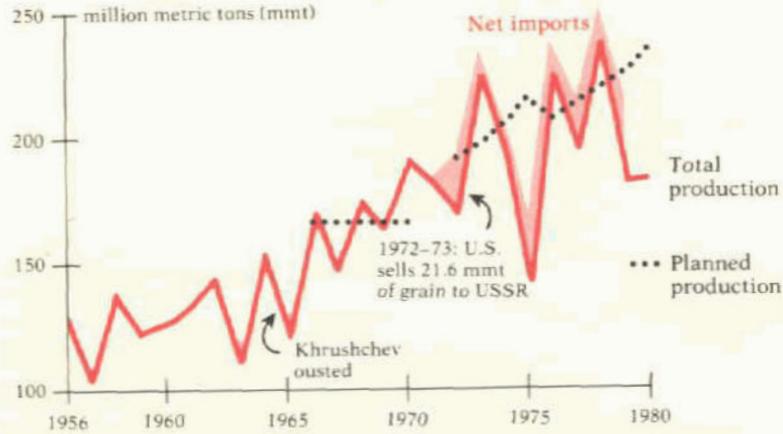
Source: CIA; Gertrude Schroeder; Stanley Cohn; Imogene Edwards, Margaret Hughes, and James Noren, "U.S. and U.S.S.R.: Comparisons of GNP," in *Soviet Economy in a Time of Change*, Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress, 1979.

SOVIET OIL: PRODUCTION AND PREDICTIONS



Source: CIA; Marshall I. Goldman; Petrostudies, "Soviet Preparations for Major Boost of Oil Exports," Malmo, Sweden: Petrostudies Co., 1978.

SOVIET GRAIN: GOALS, PRODUCTION, IMPORTS



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture; Alec Nove, "Soviet Agriculture under Brezhnev," *Slavic Review*, September 1970, p. 406.

SOCIAL INDICATORS

		USSR	ITALY	USA
Per capita GNP ¹ (in 1979 dollars)	1951	\$1,820	\$1,883	\$ 6,157
	1961	2,870	3,127	6,802
	1971	4,260	4,654	8,847
	1977	5,070	5,325	10,224
Per capita meat consumption ² (kg)	1951	26.0 ³	16.5	74.4
	1961	39.0	30.7	89.7
	1971	50.0	56.7	109.1
	1977	56.0	64.7	112.0
Infant mortality (per 1,000 live births) ⁴	1951	84.0	67.0	28.4
	1961	32.2	40.7	25.3
	1971	22.9	28.3	19.1
	1977	31.5 ⁵	17.6	14.1

¹Italian figures are gross domestic product. Italian GDP approximately equals GNP. ²In carcass weight. ³1950 figure. ⁴Soviet data exclude infant losses within one week of delivery. ⁵1976 estimate.

Sources: International Monetary Fund; CIA; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Government of Italy; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; United Nations; B. R. Mitchell, *European Historical Statistics 1750-1970*, New York, 1975; U.S. Bureau of the Census.

donsk will soon start turning out 8 to 10 reactors a year. Thus, Soviet energy difficulties are not insurmountable.

In its lagging industrial productivity, the Soviet Union remains in some ways still a "developing nation"—63 years after the Revolution. Here, the system *is* the problem, along with some persistent cultural and psychological hangovers from the past.

Leading the World

To begin with, the Soviets have been notably unsuccessful in transforming peasants into efficient eight-hour-a-day factory workers. With five or six months of winter and a short growing season, the Russian peasant was long accustomed to vast stretches of idleness followed by frantic bursts of energy. This habit lives on today in the industrial system of "storming" at the end of each month to fulfill the plan. Some factories are said to produce half their total output in the last 10 days of each month; Soviet economist Leonid Kantorovich, winner of the Nobel Prize in 1975, has estimated that the inefficiency of "storming" reduces national income by 30 to 50 percent. Researchers in the USSR discovered that factory hands are idle for as much as half their total worktime. For this and other reasons (poor planning, overmanning, shoddy materials, and outdated technology), the Soviet industrial worker is less than half as productive as his American counterpart.

The problem is not a new one. During the 1930s, Joseph Stalin sought to resolve it by enacting severe criminal penalties; by 1939, 20 minutes tardiness could win a worker a quick ticket to the Gulag (Stalin's "corrective labor" penal system). After Stalin's death, however, criminal sanctions were dropped in favor of economic rewards, first in wage hikes—between 1956 and 1978, the Soviet minimum wage rose by nearly 150 percent—and then in a system of bonuses for outstanding efforts. The incentives failed, for the simple reason that Soviet workers are not enticed by more money, which is of little use when goods are unavailable. As one Soviet wisecrack goes, "We pretend to work, and they pretend to pay us."

Worker dissatisfaction is expressed in high turnover rates, absenteeism, and on-the-job vodka parties. Protected by a labor shortage and by trade union officials, who since the 1950s have been able to discourage and even prevent management from dismissing unproductive workers, the Soviet worker finds that it is almost impossible to lose his job (except for political reasons). In the late '70s, nearly one-fifth of the USSR's labor force moved

on to new jobs each year. And it is difficult to overstate the devastating effect alcohol has had on the Soviet economy—not to mention the health of the population. Per capita sales of alcoholic beverages nearly tripled between 1957 and 1972; during the last decade, the USSR led the world in per capita consumption of distilled spirits.* One Soviet economist has calculated that “drying out” the working population would boost industrial productivity by 10 percent.

Thus, during the 1970s, the Soviets went shopping abroad for new technology with which to sidestep altogether the labor productivity problem. Between 1965 and 1977, annual Soviet machinery imports more than quadrupled, with entire “turn-key” plants, such as the Fiat factory at Togliatti, being purchased from abroad.

One Bad Crop in Three

Yet managers as well as workers have stubbornly resisted “the scientific-technical revolution,” as the Kremlin calls it. One might paraphrase Lincoln Steffens: They have seen the past, and *they* think it works better. Under constant pressure from their superiors to meet output quotas every month, Soviet factory managers shy away from the production losses inevitably incurred during any switchover to a new production system. Even when lower-level innovation is welcomed, it leads only to a pat on the back and the same old orders—fulfill the plan. Moreover, turnarounds in American trade policy, most recently with President Carter’s post-Afghanistan embargo, have made some top Moscow officials uneasy about industrial policies dependent upon purchases of Western technology. Without such purchases, the task of increasing productivity will be close to impossible; even with them, the system is likely to keep any production gains rather small.

Even so, one might ask, why should the 1980s be so critical? In the past, the Soviets have muddled through; in my view, if the labor shortage squeezes industry too hard, they will (to borrow Sovietologist Seweryn Bialer’s phrase) simply start “muddling down.” The military will continue to get what the Kremlin decides it needs; the squeeze will be felt by the civilian consum-

*Duke University economist Valdimir Tremil notes that the alcohol problem places the government in a fiscal dilemma: Although alcoholism damages health and productivity, taxes on alcohol generate about 12 percent of all government revenues, enough to cover the Soviet Union’s officially announced defense budget. (True military expenditures are believed by most Western experts to far exceed the published figure.)

ers, who will not challenge the system. Here and there, over the next 20 years, factory workers may protest or strike, but Soviet history suggests that such disturbances will be both rare and brutally suppressed.

The Soviet Union's most intractable failure has been in agriculture. But nature bears part of the blame. Indeed, as Harvard historian Richard Pipes has observed, the Soviet Union's poor soil, erratic rainfall, and short growing season (about half that of Western Europe's) explain why, throughout its history, the country has suffered "one bad harvest out of every three."

Early on, farm productivity was further hamstrung by Stalin's policies, which amounted to class warfare. During the late 1920s and early '30s, Stalin wiped out the well-to-do peasants—the *kulaks*—and collectivized agriculture. The results: famine and the deaths of millions. For the regime, the price was right. For the first time, the party gained total political control of the countryside.

Once implemented, Stalin's brutal policies became a kind of theology; its abandonment would signify an abandonment of socialism itself. Nevertheless, soon after Stalin died in 1953, his successors attempted to eliminate his worst excesses. In agriculture, these efforts became closely connected with the fate of Nikita Khrushchev.

Promoting himself as a farm expert, Khrushchev, an old Ukraine hand, reached for power in the mid-1950s by advocating a liberalization of agriculture policy. From 1956 to 1959, these changes—increased investment, higher rural living standards, and tolerance of private cultivation—coincided with beneficial weather to produce abundant harvests. Khrushchev's policies appeared to be vindicated.

Tomatoes at \$5 a Pound

But as Khrushchev consolidated his position, his early pragmatism ebbed. During the early 1960s, he pushed for stricter state control and introduced the "forced crop program." The centerpiece of the program was the conversion of the Ukrainian wheat belt to corn cultivation, an ill-fated policy derived largely from official belief in Soviet agronomist T. D. Lysenko's "Marxist" theory of genetics, which (absurdly) held that plants could be made to adapt to their environment and could then transmit those adaptations to their offspring. According to Lysenko, corn would soon flourish in the Ukraine. It did not, and the spectacular failure of the Soviet European "forced crops" came just as drought hit the Soviet Asian farmlands. The 1963 harvest was a



"Potato Diggers," by R. Kaljo. In 1979, the labors of one Soviet farmworker fed 8 people, while his (or her) American counterpart fed 56.

disaster: The USSR decided to import significant amounts of food for the first time since World War II, and in October 1964, Khrushchev was ousted by the Central Committee. The Soviet Union, explained his successors, had had enough of Khrushchev's "hare-brained schemes."

Leonid Brezhnev's farm plans, introduced in March 1965, involved an enormous increase in outlays—for machinery, construction, fertilizers, and land reclamation. By 1977, the annual Soviet investment in agriculture ran to nearly \$80 billion, more than six times the U.S. expenditure. Even so, the Soviets have developed a farming system capable of meeting only the most elementary needs of an industrial society. Grain imports have supplemented the domestic harvest in every year since 1971. Those imports—to feed beef cattle, chickens, and hogs—are perhaps a major cause of the relative stability of Soviet consumption in the Brezhnev era: The impact of agricultural difficulties on the Soviet economy and people has been softened through grain imports paid for by oil exports.

Meanwhile, Soviet farmers supplement official production and imports with their own "private" crops. During the mid-

1970s, the private sector occupied 3 percent of cultivated land; but it is estimated to have produced 59 percent of the USSR's potatoes, 44 percent of its fruit, 34 percent of its vegetables, and 31 percent of its meat and milk.

It is not only in agriculture that such "hidden" production enables the official state-run system to survive. Throughout the Soviet system, life is made tolerable by what Western academics call the "Soviet second economy." After six decades of socialism, notes University of Virginia economist Gertrude Schroeder, "nearly everyone seems to have devised ingenious ways to turn its shortcomings to his individual advantage." Indeed, to keep one's job, to meet the plan, to simply operate within Soviet society, it is virtually impossible *not* to participate in the unofficial "gray market" or illegal "black market." Thus, a bureaucrat seeking top quality medical attention will arrange for an appointment in a doctor's home—for a fee—rather than in a government clinic; a Moscow housewife hungry for tomatoes in mid-winter will find them being sold at \$5 a pound by a Georgian farmer who has flown via Aeroflot to the capital with two basketloads; a factory manager, striving to meet his monthly production quota, will use barter or bribes to ensure the timely delivery of needed parts or supplies.

It is, of course, impossible to gauge the true extent of unofficial economic transactions. Workers with access to prized goods tend to be thoroughly corrupt: During 1971, no fewer than one in five Moscow gas station attendants was arrested by the "Department for the Struggle Against Plundering of Socialist Property" for profiteering in petrol. One might call the second economy the Soviet "10 percent solution"; overall, Western economists figure its contribution to be between 5 and 15 percent of the total official GNP. And, to repeat, it provides the kind of lubrication that allows the official system to function as well as it does.

Remembering Papa

Since the early 1970s, U.S. specialists have held up three alternative visions of the Soviet reaction to an uncertain economic future. The first sees the introduction of a hawkish, repressive neo-Stalinism; the second portrays an enlightened leadership brought to understand that economic production will not increase without liberal reform; and the third simply predicts "more of the same." Neither of the first two possibilities seems plausible.

True, some close observers of the USSR do detect an emerg-

ing grassroots neo-Stalinism, and many Soviet citizens both great and small seemingly yearn for a romanticized past when Papa Stalin made all decisions, when the Soviet people enjoyed the strange luxury of not having to think. But Stalin's answers do not address today's questions. A neo-Stalinist revival could not bring Siberian oil closer to the factories of Central Russia; it would not make workers of the technological age more productive. Stalin's agricultural policies only barely managed to feed the smaller, less urban population of a half century ago. The possibility of a Stalinist revival persists for no better reason than that it has antecedents in the past. The liberal reformist option, for its part, has no real precedent in Soviet history. It exists more as an exercise in Western logic than as a practical Soviet political choice.

The question to be answered by Brezhnev's successors is not whether to go left or right but whether there is any real alternative to more of the same. "Muddling through" (or "down") is not what will *save* the system—it *is* the system, and, in my opinion, it will absorb the impact of any attempts at neo-Stalinism or liberal reforms just as it has absorbed everything else. And though it is not painless, "muddling through" does possess the great virtue (in Soviet eyes) of predictability. Difficult adjustments by the citizenry may have to be made, but in economic matters, the Soviet threshold of pain is, like the sloth's, far higher than we might expect.

Should stagnation persist, as is likely, the Soviet leadership need not perceive disaster. Decline, after all, is relative. Zero economic growth might in the coming decade seem an outstanding accomplishment when one views the unpromising outlook in the West. Transporting oil from Siberia, no matter how costly, could well turn out to be considerably easier for Moscow than getting it from the Persian Gulf will be for the West.

We should not consider remarkable the fact that Soviet leaders face difficult problems. Rather, what is striking about the economic decisions Moscow will make—or avoid making—is not their difficulty but the fact that they are no more vexing than those that face political and business leaders in Bonn, Paris, London, Tokyo, and Washington. Indeed, the increasing uncertainty of the Soviet economic future may signify nothing more or less than the USSR's slow, stumbling entrance into the ranks of the developed world.



BREZHNEV'S PEOPLE

Scenarios, statistics, and theories abound in U.S. discussions of the Soviet Union. But such abstract (and often abstracted) information cannot fully convey what it is like to live in Soviet society. The *Wilson Quarterly* invited John Glad, a specialist in Slavic literature, to fill out the picture with illustrative excerpts from recent Russian fiction. Three of Professor Glad's choices—those by Natalya Baranskaya, Arkady Arkanov, and Fyodor Abramov—first appeared in Soviet publications. The current regime allows *some* criticism. The contemporary Soviet writer can portray some of the difficulties of Soviet life without being shipped off to a labor camp. Yet more than a few attitudes, ideas, and subjects—the secret police, or KGB, is a notable example—are still taboo. Thus our first piece, by émigré Ilya Suslov, which not only mentions but actually belittles the KGB, would never get past a Soviet censor.

Visiting the West

Born in 1933, Ilya Suslov achieved fame in the USSR as editor of "The Club of the Twelve Chairs," the popular humor section of The Literary Gazette. Suslov emigrated to the United States in 1974. Here, he takes a wry look at that most precious of Soviet privileges, travel to the West:

I had a girlfriend who worked in the Beryozka Dance Troupe. The troupe was frequently sent abroad to bring back hard currency, so the discipline had to be ironclad.

"What place did you like most of all?" I once asked my friend.

"We never saw anything," she said. "We were always on the road, rehearsing, or giving performances. We only got \$10 a day for expenses, and we had to eat three times a day on that and save up enough to buy junk we could sell on the black market."

"How'd you manage that?"

"We always brought the biggest suitcases available. On the way over, we'd pack them with sugar, salt, cookies, sausage, canned goods, concentrates, tea, soap, coffee — everything we needed to survive and be able to save money. And on the way back, we stuffed them with blouses (our building was even called the 'blouse house'), watches, dresses, suits, sheepskin coats, pantyhose. A person could live real well on the earnings. You know how foreign things sell."

"Okay, suppose you're on tour for a month and you don't eat anything. Ten dollars a day is only \$300. What can you buy for \$300?"

"Sales!" my friend said. "You can't imagine the kind of sales they have in the West! They would take us to special stores where everything was virtually free. The items might have been out of style for them for two or three years, but for us it was still the wave of the future. Just look at this woman's watch. I bought it for \$1.50, but I'll sell it for 80 rubles. They'll tear my hand off to get it."

"But at that rate you could kick the bucket from hunger. Just look at yourself after that trip — nothing but skin and bones."

"So what!" my friend answered. "As long as there's bones, you can always put on the meat. Look, I'm not a beggar, and I'm not a prostitute. The girls in our troupe get 79 rubles a month—the price of a pair of shoes. Who can live on that? And the money I've saved up from these tours has been enough to buy an apartment and a car. And I dress like a human being. . . ."

She said that they had stopped in a small hotel in Switzerland. That night, the lights in the hotel went out just before the performance. Then they went out again. The manager got all upset and sent for Nadezhdin, the head of the troupe. He said that if the fuses blew one more time, he'd kick the whole Ber-yozka troupe onto the street. It turned out that the lights were off because the girls were all plugging in their heating elements at the same time. They wanted some tea before the performance.

John Glad, 39, is associate professor of Germanic and Slavic languages and literature at the University of Maryland, College Park. Born in Gary, Ind., he received his B.A. (1962) and M.A. (1964) degrees from Indiana University and a Ph.D. in Slavic languages and literature from New York University (1970). He is the author of Russian Pronunciation (1978) and Extrapolations from Dystopia (1980). He has also edited and translated several books of Russian literature, among them Russian Poetry: The Modern Period (1977), The Poems of Nikolai Klyuev (1977), and Kolyma Tales by Varlam Shalamov (1980).

As for ironclad discipline, that turned out to be a simple thing. They just announced that on the next trip abroad, only 80 people would be sent instead of 100. And the girls really put out an effort. Party headquarters were deluged with denunciations; all the girls were trying to curry favor and be included in that cherished list. They wrote that Pavlova had left the hotel in the evening on the last tour, even though that was not permitted. They wrote that Sidorova and Petrova went to a department store, even though Vasil Vasilich said that was off limits. "Vasil Vasilich" was the name used for all the KGB men accompanying the troupe during the trip. Officially, they had all kinds of jobs—balalaika player, stage worker, administrative assistant. They were all called "Vasil Vasilich," and they didn't even mind responding to the name; why not?

The Beryozka Dance Troupe was an outstanding success. Foreigners loved it and constantly invited it to go on tour.

A Day Like Any Other

Natalya Baranskaya, a historian and ethnologist, graduated from Moscow University in 1930 but did not publish until 1968, when she earned sudden celebrity with "One Week Like Any Other." This matter-of-fact account of a two-paycheck middle-class family struck a chord with Soviet women, whose burdens (cramped apartments, long shopping queues, unhelpful husbands) far exceed those of their American sisters:

I just can't wake up. I feed Dmitry's palm on my back as he shakes me.

"Olga, Olga, sweetie, wake up. You'll be running around again like a chicken without a head."

I finally really do wake up. I make it to the bathroom, where I wash up and bury my face in a warm Turkish towel, nearly fall asleep for a half-second, and wake up with the words: "To hell with all of it!"

But all that is nonsense. There is no one and nothing to send to hell, and everything is fine and beautiful. We got an apartment in a new building. The children are wonderful, Dmitry and I love each other, and I have an interesting job. Who or what would I want to see in hell? Nonsense!

At work, I run into Yakov Petrovich on the third-floor stairway.

"You won't be late with your experiment, Olga Petrovna?"

I blush and say nothing in my confusion. Of course, I could say: "No, of course not." It would be best to do that. But I

remain silent. How can I be sure?

"In view of your interest in your work and . . . um-m-m . . . your ability, we agreed to transfer you to the vacant slot for a junior researcher and include you in a group working on an interesting problem. But I have to tell you that we are a little disturbed . . . um-m-m . . . surprised that you aren't conscientious enough in fulfilling your obligations."

I am silent. I love my work. I treasure the fact that I can work independently. It doesn't seem to me that I'm not conscientious. But I am frequently late—especially on Mondays. What can I say? I just hope this is only a normal chewing out and nothing more. I mutter something about icy sidewalks and snowdrifts, the bus that always arrives at our stop already packed, the crowds. . . . And with a sickening nausea I realize I have said the same things the other times.

Back at the lab, a heated discussion is raging with regard to point five of a questionnaire: "If you have no children, underline the reason: medical grounds, financial reasons, family situation, personal considerations, etc."

I don't see any point in arguing when all you have to do is underline "personal considerations" and move on to the other questions. I would even underline "etc." But point five has caught everybody's interest, even pricked the vanity of those women who have no children.

The comments come thick and heavy: "Some people let animal instinct run their minds." "People with no children are simply selfish." "They ruin their own lives." "Well, it remains to be seen—just whose life is ruined." "And who's going to pay you your pension if there's no young generation to replace us?" "The only real women are those who can bear children." There was even a remark: "Anyone who put her head in a noose should shut up."

I remember we didn't want a second child. Our boy, Kotka, wasn't even a year-and-a-half old when I realized I was pregnant again. Horrified, I cried and registered for an abortion. But it was a different feeling this time than with Kotka. It was better and different in general. I mentioned it to an older woman at the clinic who was sitting next to me in the waiting room and was taken completely aback when she replied: "That's not because it's your second, but because it's a girl." I got up and went straight home, where I told Dmitry that I was going to have a girl and that I didn't want any abortion. He was outraged: "How can you listen to that absurd chatter?" He kept trying to persuade me to forget this nonsense and go back to the clinic.

But I believed it would be a girl and even began to dream of

*Image versus reality,
Soviet-style. He smokes,
drinks pivo (beer) and
watches television,
while she works, shops,
walks baby, and cleans.*



From Krokodil, 1980.

her. She had fair hair and blue eyes like Dmitry's. (Kotka took after me with his brown hair and dark eyes.) The little girl would run around in a short dress, shake her curly head, and rock her doll. Dmitry got very angry when I told him of my dreams, and we had a quarrel.

Finally, the last day arrived for us to make the decision, and we thrashed things out. I said: "I don't want to kill my daughter just to make our lives easier." And I burst into tears. "Alright, alright, but stop that bellowing, you idiot. If you want another baby, go ahead. But you'll see — it'll be another boy." Then, abruptly, Dmitry stopped talking, stared at me silently for a long time, slammed his palm against the table top, and resolved: "It's decided: Just stop bellowing and arguing." And he hugged me. "But you know, Olga, a second boy isn't so bad either. Kotka will have someone to play with." But it was a girl, Gulka, fair-haired, and absurdly similar to Dmitry. . . .

Getting home is no easy thing. I'm carrying two heavy bags with everything but vegetables. I have to stand in the subway, holding one bag in my arms and keeping the other between my feet. It's crowded and everybody is pushing, so there's no chance to even try to read. Mentally, I count up how much I've spent. It always seems to me that I've lost some of my money. I had two 10-ruble notes, but now only some loose change is left. There should be 3 rubles left over. I recount everything and go through the purchases in the two bags. The second time, I come to the conclusion that I have lost 4 rubles. I give up and begin to look at the passengers who are seated. Many are reading. The young women are reading books and magazines, and the better-dressed men have newspapers. A fat man is reading a humorous magazine, but his face is morose. The young men look away,

squinting lazily, so they won't have to give up their seats.

Finally, at Sokol Station, everyone leaps to his feet and rushes toward the narrow stairway. With my packages of milk and eggs, however, I have to bring up the rear. When I reach the bus station, the line is big enough to fill up six buses. Maybe I should try to squeeze into one of the full buses? But how about my bags? Nevertheless, I try to get on the third bus, but the bags in my arms don't permit me to grab onto anything; my foot slips off the high step, and I fall painfully on my knee. Precisely at this moment, the bus begins moving. Everyone is shouting, and I squeal. The bus stops, a man standing near the door pulls me in, and I lean into my bags. My knee aches, and I undoubtedly have an omelet in the one bag. But someone gives me his seat, and I can survey the damage to my knee and torn stocking smeared with blood and dirt.

When the bus reaches my stop, I rush home, the grocery bags bouncing against my aching knee. I just hope that Dmitry didn't let the children stuff themselves on bread and that he remembered to start the potatoes.

I knew it—the children are eating bread. Dmitry has forgotten everything and is engrossed in a technical journal. I light all the burners and put on the frying pan and the tea pot. In 20 minutes, we sit down to a meal of meat patties and potatoes.

We eat a lot. It's the first time I've really eaten that day. Dmitry is also hungry after a skimpy meal in the cafeteria. God only knows how the children ate.

The children grow sleepy from the hot heavy meal and support their chins with their little fists. Sleep is written all over their faces. I have to drag them under the stream of warm water in the bathroom, put them to bed, and they are already asleep at nine.

Dmitry returns to the table. He likes to drink his tea leisurely, look through the paper, read a book. But I have to wash the dishes and then the children's clothing. Kotka's leggings have to be darned; he's constantly wearing them out at the knees. I prepare their clothing and put Gulka's clothes in a bag. By that time, Dmitry brings me his overcoat; he lost a button in the crowded subway. Then, the kitchen has to be swept and the garbage has to be taken out. That's Dmitry's job.

I wake up in the middle of the night with a feeling of anxiety. I don't know why. I lie on my back with my eyes open. I can hear the heating pipes sighing in the silent night and the loud ticking of the upstairs neighbors' wall clock. The same time being evenly measured by their pendulum is being frantically ticked away by our alarm clock.

The Savior's Graffiti

The elaborate Church of the Savior on the Blood was erected on the spot in Leningrad where a revolutionary's bomb felled Tsar Alexander II in 1881. Closed during the 1917 revolution, it is now undergoing restoration and will eventually be reopened as a museum. Both believers and nonbelievers express their hopes and thoughts by penciling graffiti on the sides of the church. Some examples collected by John Glad:

"Lord, grant me luck, and help me to be accepted into the Art Academy in four years."

"Happiness and health to me and Volodya."

"Lord strangle Taritsyn!"

"Lord, help me get rid of Valery!"

"Lord, help me in love!"

"Lord, make Charlotte fall in love with me!"

"Lord, I'm hungry!"

"Lord, help me pass the exam in political economics!"

"Lord, help me pass the exams in: 1) electrical technology, 2) E.V.I. (Electrical Vacuum Instruments), 3) Marxism-Leninism. Pi. . . ." (Signature illegible.)

"Help me pass my driver's license test, Lord."

"Lord, help me pass the entrance examinations to LVXPU" (the Leningrad Higher Institute of Art and Industry). Added by another person: "Me too."

"Lord, take the arrogance out of my wife."

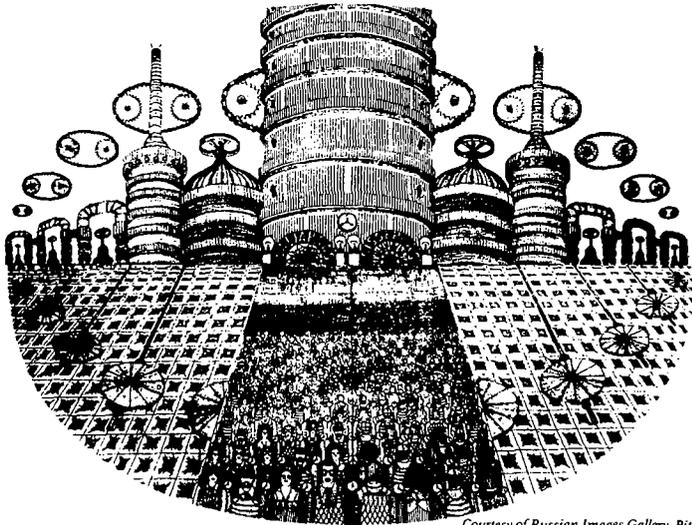
"Lord, help me win a transistor radio, model AP-2-14, in the lottery." Added on by another person: "All we have is P-201. Archangel Gabriel."

3×3 = 1,812

The distortions inflicted on Soviet life by the production quotas of the Plan are here taken to the absurd extreme by satirist Arkady Arkanov, 47, who has remained in favor in the Soviet Union, where he is on the staff of The Literary Gazette:

In the new director's office, everything was the same, but it had nevertheless changed.

The old director's desk had been on the right; the new director's desk was on the left. The safe had been on the left earlier, but now it was on the right. The new director was in a



Courtesy of Russian Images Gallery, Pittsburgh.

Estonian artist Vinn Vello's etching, The Shift (1977), portrays one crew of workers emerging from a factory as the next crew enters.

no-nonsense mood: "Why is your factory producing so few jar lids?"

"You see. . ."

"I believe you are the chief engineer and have a Ph.D. in mathematics?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered.

"That means: algebra, a^2 , b^2 . . . We know a thing or two around here too. . . So. . . We're going to work differently from now on! No more of that old-fashioned fiddling around. . . Am I right?"

"Well, yes," I agreed, still not understanding what was up.

He smiled, pleased to have found an ally.

In his new office, the new director had the free manner of a man who had been born and raised there.

"So . . ." he proceeded, smacking his lips over every word.

"We're going to eliminate the main cause of our difficulties. We're going to dispose of the old-fashioned multiplication table."

I laughed, delighted to see that our new director had a sense of humor. He waited till I had finished laughing and continued: "I have carefully acquainted myself with the multiplication table and have come to the conclusion that the former figures have become antiquated and are restraining us from moving forward in a truly aggressive fashion. . ."

I was beginning to take a real liking to this new director.

"I would like to make a suggestion in this regard," I said with a laugh. "Let's have 2 times 2 be 9, 3 times 3 be 34, and 5 times 5 be 81."

"I doubt that that would be sufficient," he said, blowing his nose. "I've made some preliminary calculations."

The director drew a sheet of paper from his desk and handed it to me. It was covered with all sorts of figures.

The sheet contained a new multiplication table: $2 \times 2 = 67$; $3 \times 3 = 1,812$; $6 \times 7 = 2,949$. The last column contained only 12-digit numbers.

I glanced at the director in a distracted fashion. He was staring at me with triumphant eyes.

"How do you like 3 times 3 equals 1,812? What do you say?"

"Isn't that sort of going overboard?" I asked with a weak smile.

"Maybe. But it is bold! But you're a scientist, and you can work out the details. Have it back in my office in a week for me to sign."

Death on the Collective Farm

Associated with neither the Kremlin "establishment" nor the dissidents, 60-year-old novelist Fyodor Abramov is an independent voice, best known for his blunt, gloomy depictions of rural life. In this excerpt, Pelageya is the widow of the farmworker Pavel:

All of Pavel's near and distant relatives had arrived at the collective farm to see him off on this, his last journey. As might have been expected, they were almost all country folk. But there was also a cousin from the city, an uncle-pensioner from a forest town, and a nephew who was an officer in the Army and who had flown in for the funeral.

Everyone was there except his beloved daughter, Alka, who had fled, pregnant, to the city.

Pavel had died on the third day following his daughter's flight from home, and no one knew where to search for her. Fragments of whispered gossip reached Pelageya's ears as she stood at the feet of the dead man: "That's the way children are nowadays. . . . They're ready to bury their own parents alive. . . . You raise them—and that's your reward. . . ."

Pavel was buried old-style and new-style.

At home, everything was done as such things had always been done. And the chairman of the collective farm didn't interfere. While the old women were burning incense around the coffin and droning "Holy God," the chairman of the collective farm and his assistant smoked out on the street. At one point, the veterinarian, Afonka, came rushing into the hut, shouting drunkenly for them to stop making a mockery of a man who had been a real bolshevik even if he wasn't a party member. But they got rid of him in a hurry. The chairman himself. Just pushed him out of the hut.

The new rites began at the cemetery when they started making speeches over the open coffin:

"A dedicated worker. . . . From the very beginning. . . . Honest. . . . A model for all of us. . . . We'll never forget. . . ."

It was then that Pelageya lost control of herself. She had endured everything: the wailing, the condemnation in her neighbors' eyes for not having taken better care of Pavel, their whispered gossip. Immobile as stone beside the coffin, she had endured it without so much as gesture or even a sigh. But when the speeches began, the earth lurched beneath her feet.

"A dedicated worker. . . . From the very beginning. . . . Honest. . . . A model for all of us. . . ."

Pelageya listened to those words and suddenly thought: It was true—every last word. Pavel had worked in the farm without ever refusing—like a horse or a machine. He had even fallen ill at work. They brought him from threshing on a cart. And who appreciated his work while he was alive? Had anyone even thanked him? The chairman? She, Pelageya?

No. The truth had to be spoken: She had always regarded her husband's work [on the collective farm] as worthless. How could anyone value work for which there was no payment?



EDITOR'S NOTE: *Ilya Suslov's piece is taken from the author's manuscript; Natalya Baranskaya's is from Novy mir, no. 11, 1969; Arkady Arkanov's is from The Club of the Twelve Chairs (Moscow, 1974); and Fyodor Abramov's is from The Selected Works of Fyodor Abramov (Moscow, 1975).*

BACKGROUND BOOKS

THE SOVIET FUTURE

"Homeland of patience" was the 19th-century Russian poet Fedor Tiutchev's sorrowful epithet for his country. As Berkeley historian Nicholas V. Riasanovsky explains in **A History of Russia** (Oxford, 1963; 3rd ed., 1977), the Russians have patiently endured invasion, isolation, and a backward economy. Looking West, Russia's rulers have repeatedly sought to catch up with Europe, "whether by means of Peter the Great's reforms or the [Soviet] Five-Year Plans."

Peter the Great (1672-1725), the father of modern Russia, set up technical schools; sent Russians abroad to study science, mathematics, and engineering; and himself toured Western Europe, sometimes in disguise.

Under Peter, Russia's foreign trade quadrupled, enabling him to build a European-style Army and Navy and to wage interminable wars. Thanks to his military outlays, asserts Riasanovsky, Russia remained at the end of the 18th century a poor, backward land, weighed down by "a large and glorious army" and a huge, complex bureaucracy.

It was not until Russia's shattering defeat by Turkey, Britain, and France in the Crimean War (1853-56) that large-scale borrowing of Western technology by Russian entrepreneurs began. The state encouraged industrial development. During the 1890s, the Ministry of Finance, directed by Count Sergei Witte, subsidized heavy industry by curtailing imports, balancing the budget, and introducing the gold standard. Yet Witte's approaches were inherently

contradictory, argues Clark University historian Theodore Von Laue in **Sergei Witte and the Industrialization of Russia** (Columbia, 1963, cloth; Atheneum, 1969, paper). The independence and spontaneity essential to entrepreneurial capitalism were incompatible with the long tsarist tradition of government initiative and control.

The Bolsheviks who led the revolution of October 1917 did not stray far from that tradition. But during the first years of the communist state, their hopes for economic revitalization were set back by civil war, drought, famine, and epidemic disease. In **An Economic History of the USSR** (Penguin, 1972, paper only), University of Glasgow economist Alex Nove quotes Lenin's confession of the time: "Such is the sad state of our decrees; they are signed and then we ourselves forget about them and fail to carry them out."

Faced with social and economic breakdown, Lenin in 1921 introduced the New Economic Policy (NEP), under which the Bolsheviks abandoned extreme centralization in favor of a mixed economy. The state then controlled only the "commanding heights" of the economy (iron, steel, electricity, transportation, and foreign trade). Much retail trade and almost all farming reverted to the private sector. Taxes replaced requisitions; technical experts and foreign capital were brought in from abroad. In **Western Technology and Soviet Economic Development, 1917-30** (Hoover, 1968), Antony Sutton lists more than 200 firms that entered the USSR as "cessionaires" in the

1920s, among them Alcoa, Gillette, International Harvester, and Singer Sewing Machine.

NEP warded off disaster. But it came to an end in 1927, when Joseph Stalin outmaneuvered his competitors, gained total control of the Communist Party, and introduced the First Five-Year Plan. In **Planning for Economic Growth in the Soviet Union, 1918–1932** and **Stalinist Planning for Economic Growth, 1933–1952** (Univ. of N.C., 1971 and 1980, respectively), Eugène Zaleski, director of research at the National Center of Scientific Research in Paris, examines the Stalinist drive toward industrialization. His conclusion: The central national plan was—and is—a “myth,” a “vision of the future.” In reality, he contends, Soviet economic policy consists of “an endless number of plans, constantly evolving, that are coordinated . . . after they have been put into operation.”

Stalin went on to rule the USSR for a quarter of a century. In the West, at least, he is best remembered for his murderous repression. In **The Great Terror: Stalin's Purges of the Thirties** (Macmillan, 1968; rev. ed., 1973, cloth & paper), Kremlinologist and poet Robert Conquest estimates that 20 to 30 million people perished during the Stalinist period.

Millions more were sentenced to long terms in the labor camps—“the Gulag archipelago,” in Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's memorable phrase. The Nobel Prize-winning novelist's first work, **One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich** (translated by Max Hayward and Ronald Hingley; Praeger, 1963, cloth & paper), portrays one Gulag prisoner's battle against hunger, cold, and despair.

Russia suffered terribly when the Nazis invaded in the summer of 1941, not least because half of the

Red Army's senior officers had been purged and shot or imprisoned on Stalin's orders. Stalin's vast Army seemed to melt away as German forces pushed to the suburbs of Moscow and began the 900-day siege of Leningrad. Alexander Werth, Moscow correspondent for the *London Sunday Times* during World War II, presents a highly sympathetic account of the Red Army's retreat and resurgence in **Russia at War, 1941–1945** (Dutton, 1964, cloth; Avon, 1964, paper).

Germany's defeat left the USSR dominant in Eastern Europe, where local Communists soon set up Soviet-style regimes—and Soviet-style economies. Moscow orchestrated Comecon, the East's version of the Common Market, and the Warsaw Pact, the Soviet answer to NATO. Yet socialist economic cooperation could be rather lopsided: At one point, the foreign trade ministers of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia were executed for haggling too hard with the Soviet Union. Former White House aide Zbigniew Brezinski comprehensively examines USSR–Eastern European relations in **The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict** (Harvard, 1960; rev. ed., 1967, cloth & paper).

Stalin finally died in 1953. In **Stalin: The Man and His Era** (Viking, 1973), Adam Ulam, professor of government at Harvard, likens the dictator's last years to “a tale by Kafka, with an occasional scene that seems to come from the chronicle of gangland warfare in Al Capone's era.” Yet, under Stalin's leadership, the Soviet Union became one of the world's Big Two military powers.

Looking at today's USSR in **The Soviet System of Government** (Univ. of Chicago, 1957; 5th ed., 1980, cloth & paper), Columbia University law professor John Hazard argues that

"Stalinism is not dead, but muted." The Soviet Union's present rulers, he adds, are governed by a "determination to avoid change."

If that is indeed their aim, they have in the last few years been successful. Since Nikita Khrushchev's ouster in 1964, the Soviet people have enjoyed what has been, by Russian standards, a period of remarkable calm.

In recent years, two noted American newsmen have set out to describe Soviet life in the Brezhnev era. In **The Russians** (Quadrangle, 1976, cloth; Ballantine, 1977, paper), the *New York Times's* Hedrick Smith mentions a particularly jarring example of official conservatism: *Goskontsert*, the state booking agency, regularly imposes quotas on Soviet popular bands—15 percent Western music, 20 percent Eastern European, and 65 percent Soviet. *Washington Post* correspondent Robert Kaiser suggests, in **Russia: The People and the Power** (Atheneum, 1976, cloth; Pocket Books, 1980, paper), that the Soviet system is "efficient" in the broadest sense: Through the centralized allocation of resources, Soviet leaders are able to "use what they have to get what they want."

A good deal more thorough is **Soviet Economy in a Time of Change** (Government Printing Office, 1979),

a two-volume anthology prepared by 79 scholars and government analysts for the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress. In 58 densely documented articles, the specialists examine Soviet successes (in oil production, for instance) and setbacks (most notably in agriculture) during the 1970s.

Time alone will soon bring changes to the Kremlin. Seweryn Bialer calculates in **Stalin's Successors: Leadership, Stability, and Change in the Soviet Union** (Cambridge, 1980) that, in 1952, the average age of Politburo members was 55.4 years, while in 1980 it was 70.1.

Bialer, a Columbia University political scientist, warns that Brezhnev's successors *might* be "seriously shaken" in the 1980s, despite the apparent stability of the communist regime. Derived less from tradition than from political controls, that stability rests on a very narrow base of popular support. As Bialer sees it, the present-day Soviet political system resembles the 19th-century potato diet of Ireland. And he quotes Cambridge historian George M. Trevelyan, who wrote: "The potato is the easiest method of supporting life at a very low standard—until a year comes when the crop completely fails."

—Barbara Ann Chotiner

EDITOR'S NOTE: Ms. Chotiner is assistant professor of political science at the University of Alabama, where she is currently writing a book on the 1962 reorganization of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

CURRENT BOOKS

FELLOWS' CHOICE

Recent titles selected and reviewed by Fellows of the Wilson Center

**SOCIAL ORIGINS OF THE
NEW SOUTH:**

Alabama, 1860-1885

by Jonathan M. Wiener
La. State Univ., 1978
247 pp. \$14.95

**PLANTERS AND THE
MAKING OF A "NEW
SOUTH": Class, Politics,
and Development in North
Carolina, 1865-1900**

by Dwight B. Billings, Jr.
Univ. of N.C., 1979
284 pp. \$15

After the Civil War, grasping upstarts pushed aside the great planters who had controlled Southern politics—so goes the conventional chronicle of the post-bellum South. By two recent accounts, however, it is mainly a fabrication. Wiener, a historian at the University of California, Irvine, finds that, in five Alabama counties, the planter elite was as dominant in the 1860s and '70s as it had been in the decade prior to the war. The largest landholders, in fact, added to their properties. Plantations had ceased to be workable because freedmen refused to labor in gangs as they had under slavery. But sharecropping developed gradually as an alternative. It eliminated the detested overseer—and the gentry still owned the land. Since freedmen had to buy their supplies and sell their cotton on terms set by the landlord, the planter class profited nicely.

Ante-bellum North Carolina was the poorest of the Southern states; cotton production flourished only in a few eastern counties. Yet from 1880 to 1900, an average of six new textile mills sprang up in the state each year, processing cotton from all over the South. Billings, a University of Kentucky sociologist, shows how eastern Carolina planters supplied the capital for, and were the chief beneficiaries of, industrialization. Located in the western Piedmont hills, where water power was abundant, their mills offered jobs to subsistence farmers and paid for new schools and churches. As both authors stress, the way in which well-to-do landholders held onto their power shaped Southern history. In Alabama, planters with a high stake in sharecropping warded off the mechanization of agriculture and perpetuated the state's underdevelop-

ment. In North Carolina's manufacturing counties, textile workers joined the mill owners to turn back the mixed-race Populist challenge of the 1890s. Soon after, the state legislature disenfranchised both blacks and illiterate poor whites. The legacy of the planters' power—a one-party South and voting discrimination—lasted until the 1960s.

—James Lang ('78)

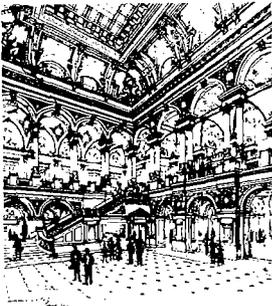
**THE POLITICS OF
SOVIET CINEMA,
1917–1929**

by Richard Taylor
Cambridge, 1979
214 pp. \$19.95

During the 1920s, a group of young Soviet directors, most notably Sergei Eisenstein, made some of the most innovative films the world had yet seen. They used their art as a tool for political indoctrination—extolling the glories of the 1917 Revolution and of the new Soviet way of life—more skillfully than any director before, or perhaps since. British historian Taylor describes this highly creative period that, ironically, stunted the Soviet cinema's future development. Although filmmakers quoted Lenin's endorsement of the medium ("Of all the arts for us the cinema is the most important") *ad nauseam*, and Communist leaders talked a great deal about the propaganda potential of films, the Party failed to supply the young industry with adequate financial and institutional support. Soviet leaders could not decide whether they wanted to raise artistic standards, to use films as a source of revenue, or to exploit the new art form simply as a propaganda tool. Overlapping film agencies competed for meager funds. Most importantly, Taylor writes, the Russian people, as long as they had a choice, preferred entertaining American films to artistically superior, ideologically "correct" Soviet ones. Taylor has performed a valuable service by deflating the image of the early Soviet film industry as a powerful propaganda machine. He is less successful in explaining how and why a group of talented artists suddenly appeared and made lasting contributions to cinema art. But perhaps that is an impossible task.

—Peter Kenez ('80)

**THE AMERICAN
RENAISSANCE, 1876-1917**
edited by the Brooklyn
Museum
Pantheon, 1979
232 pp. \$25



Turn-of-the-century American artists, together with the Vanderbilts, Rockefellers, and Morgans who patronized them, believed that their society would rival, even surpass, the great civilizations of the past. Artists and architects did not seek an original style but appropriated, without shame, "the best from all cultures, even our own." The neo-Baroque Library of Congress was decorated with neo-Renaissance murals and sculpture, the dome of San Francisco's City Hall was modeled after that of St. Peter's, and the homes of the rich on New York's Fifth Avenue and in Newport, R.I., were derivations of French chateaux and Italian villas. Art historians generally slight the period; this book's three essays demonstrate that its studied eclecticism, even when bordering on the grotesque, was not a failure of imagination but a creative response to America's new wealth and position. U.S. artists saw themselves as "new bearers of the torch of Western civilization." Their mission: to articulate the link between America and cultures of the past, while celebrating and strengthening homegrown virtues. Indeed, the authors observe, wealthy art consumers, for all their vanities and greed, were benefactors; they financed our cities' great libraries, museums, and parks as symbols of America's destiny.

—Wanda M. Corn ('80)

**THE ZERO-SUM
SOCIETY: Distribution
and the Possibilities for
Economic Change**
by Lester C. Thurow
Basic, 1980
230 pp. \$12.95

MIT economist Thurow provides a shrewd analysis of America's ailing economy—but he offers disappointing political recipes for recovery. Sluggish growth, he asserts, has reduced the American economy to a "zero-sum" condition. No more pie is being baked; if Peter is to get a larger piece, it must be taken from Paul. Politicians, unions, consumers, and businessmen have all tried to forestall the economic pains that would accompany a necessary cutting back of low-productivity enterprises. Among the results: regulations that bind railroads to unprofitable lines and subsidies to keep the inefficient shipbuilding industry afloat. The United

States, says Thurow, must devise a political process capable of allocating financial losses. His prescriptions include elimination of the corporate income tax, with stockholders paying higher taxes on dividends; a reduction in antitrust and regulatory laws, accompanied by taxes to discourage the production of specific goods; and federally funded programs to relocate workers from "sunset" to high-productivity "sunrise" industries. In my view, compelling as Thurow's economic insights are, his proposed partnership between the private sector and government to plan the economy—a U.S. version of Japan, Inc.—would only result in heavier lobbying by interest groups afraid of being left out.

—J. William Futrell ('80)

**ETHICS IN THE
PRACTICE OF LAW**

by Geoffrey C. Hazard, Jr.
Yale, 1978, cloth; 1980,
paper
159 pp. \$12.50 cloth, \$5.95
paper

Who is a client? To whom is a corporate attorney responsible—the board of directors, stockholders, the public? Who is served by a government lawyer—his departmental chiefs, his agency, the President, the people? The American Bar Association's Code of Professional Ethics does not answer these questions; lawyers' disciplinary committees handle only the most egregious cases of misconduct. The bar's code developed from the demands of trial procedure, notes Hazard, a Yale law professor. But today's lawyer, representing business or government or a family, often must be, in Justice Louis Brandeis's famous phrase, "lawyer for the situation." The attorney is, in effect, a mediator. His first duty is not loyalty to an individual; it is to muster his skill, honesty, and practical wisdom in an effort to treat all parties fairly and empathetically. Hazard also examines ethical issues in criminal cases: What is a lawyer's responsibility for the crimes, sins, failings of his client? How much moral advice is he to give? First published three years ago, this is the sanest treatment available of the ethical dilemmas encountered by the legal profession.

—John T. Noonan ('80)

NEW TITLES

History

**WALTER LIPPMAN
AND THE AMERICAN
CENTURY**
by Ronald Steel
Atlantic-Little, Brown, 1980
669 pp. \$19.95

Today, it is hard to understand how a newspaperman could work as assiduously behind the scenes with Washington's higher-ups as Walter Lippmann did for 50 years and still maintain credibility. Lippmann (1889-1974) was a founder of the progressive *New Republic* in 1914, a political and foreign affairs editor for Pulitzer's *New York World*, and a long-time columnist for the *New York Herald Tribune*, and later for *Washington Post/Newsweek*. His magisterial style and long view of the world made him an oracle of his time, despite some faulty judgments (in 1933, he lauded Hitler as "the authentic voice of a genuinely civilized people"). Having supported Woodrow Wilson in the *New Republic* in 1916, Lippmann then went to work for him and helped draft the Fourteen Points. After the war, he turned against Wilson and advocated the defeat of the Versailles Treaty. Later, Lippmann advised Al Smith, Wendell Willkie, FDR, and Adlai Stevenson, among others. He helped formulate and promote the Marshall Plan after World War II and was consulted by JFK about choosing a Secretary of State. Lippmann's success at juggling politics and journalism, historian Steel asserts, was due to his fierce patriotism, conceit, and the firm belief that persons of superior intellect, not just elected officials, should participate in setting the nation's course. Yet his activism was at some cost to his objectivity. Lyndon Johnson's adviser McGeorge Bundy once observed that Lippmann had a "useful tendency" to think of Presidents as being right. It was an astute remark, but in Johnson's case it did not prove true. Lippmann broke with LBJ over Vietnam in 1965, gave up Washington for New York, and at long last began to question just how closely journalists should work with those in power.

**PURITAN BOSTON AND
QUAKER PHILADELPHIA:
Two Protestant Ethics and
the Spirit of Class Authority
and Leadership**

by E. Digby Baltzell
Free Press, 1980
585 pp. \$19.95

Rooted in tradition, Boston and Philadelphia seem, at first glance, to be sister cities. Yet while Bostonians have influenced U.S. history all out of proportion to their numbers, Philadelphians have not. (One example: In the *Dictionary of American Biography*, only 76 people rate entries of more than 5,000 words; 31 are Massachusetts natives, two are Pennsylvanians.) The gap, theorizes Baltzell, a University of Pennsylvania historian, can be traced to the contrasting values of the Protestant sects that founded these cities. Boston's Puritans set a standard of both intolerance and high-toned responsibility, reflected in the city fathers custom of banning objectionable books. Philadelphia's Quakers—more egalitarian and individualistic—were inclined toward tolerance. Averse to political maneuvering, they exhibited, says Baltzell, a rigid diffidence that enabled the city's notoriously corrupt politicians to take hold and prosper long before the 1776 Revolution. "Passive and private," Philadelphia's upper class has generally kept to its clubs and businesses, shunning participation in public life. Baltzell sees a warning in this tale of two cities: For most of its history, America, like Boston, has been primarily Puritan and Calvinist in spirit; during recent decades, especially the 1960s, the country's intellectuals and academics have moved closer to Philadelphians' individualism. The result, believes Baltzell, may be a generation of highly educated humanists who are unwilling to lead.

**THE CHEESE AND THE
WORMS: The Cosmos of
a Sixteenth-Century Miller**

by Carlo Ginzburg
Johns Hopkins, 1980
177 pp. \$14

"I have an artful mind," admitted Domenico Scandella during his first trial for heresy in 1584. Scandella, known as Menocchio, was born in Montereale, near Venice, in 1532. He owned a mill, sired 11 children, served briefly as village mayor—and, remarkable for a country boy, learned to read and write. It proved to be his undoing. "He will argue with anyone," testified one neighbor. A second heresy trial, in 1599, resulted in the stubborn Menocchio's being burned at the stake. Italian historian Ginzburg accidentally stumbled



Courtesy of The Newberry Library, Chicago.

on Menocchio's case in Italian archives. He was struck by the forgotten miller's plucky defense and his eccentric views, including a piquant version of the Creation: "All was chaos, that is, earth, air, water, and fire were mixed together; and out of that bulk a mass formed—just as cheese is made out of milk—and worms appeared in it, and these were angels." Where did Menocchio get his ideas? He refers during his trials to a dozen books, including Boccaccio's *Decameron* and the *Koran*. Yet, as Ginzburg demonstrates, Menocchio appropriated "remnants of the thinking of others as he might stones and bricks" to construct his own unique cosmology, held together by a mortar of temporal rural folklore. Ginzburg adroitly blends Inquisition transcripts (which, like modern screenplays, record gesture and tone as well as dialogue) with his own scholarly detective work to animate the stubborn miller's confusing, colorful personality. Ironically, Menocchio epitomizes the age upon which he left no mark: Like much of 16th-century society, he was reeling from the encounter between peasant culture and the written word.

**THE FRENCH
ENCOUNTER WITH
AFRICANS: White
Response to Blacks,
1530–1880**
by William B. Cohen
Ind. Univ., 1980
360 pp. \$22.50

For 200 years, France has enjoyed a reputation for racial egalitarianism that black American visitors, such as Richard Wright and Paul Robeson, have confirmed. Cohen, an Indiana University historian, traces the less well-known but deep historical currents of French racial bigotry. The first prolonged contact between Frenchmen and Africans, he notes, occurred on West Indian plantations in the 1620s and '30s. Popular travelogues by 15th-century traders and missionaries had already sparked impressions of black inferiority in most Europeans' minds. French owners of foot-dragging African slaves were quick to fuel such notions. Still, the first modern abolitionists were probably Frenchmen—the influential 18th-century Enlightenment *philosophes* Diderot, Voltaire, Montesquieu. But they saw history as the story of human progress toward the apex of European civili-

zation. They believed all men had equal potential. Yet by determining that Africans had failed to develop theirs, the *philosophes*, Cohen suggests, sealed a "separate and inferior destiny for the black race." The relatively free interaction between the races in colonial Senegal during the early 19th century did little to change French views. And the *philosophes'* doubts were soon supported by "scientific racism"—anthropologists claiming that "the Negro has a shortened forehead and a mouth that is pushed forward as if he were made to eat instead of to think." By 1880, Cohen concludes, French troops were marching into black West Africa, confident that, for the "savage" continent, "to be burned by France [was] to begin to be enlightened."

Contemporary Affairs

PRODUCTIVITY IN THE UNITED STATES: Trends and Cycles

by John W. Kendrick and
Elliot S. Grossman
Johns Hopkins, 1980
172 pp. \$14.95

Covering 20 major U.S. industries—ranging from textile manufacturing to furniture making to printing and publishing—economists Kendrick and Grossman sift the statistical signs of America's economic deceleration. Cost-reducing technological advances, they note, accounted for about half the rise in productivity (here measured as the ratio of an industry's output to labor *and* capital input) from 1948 to 1966. Since then, plant and product improvements have abated, and the rate of spending on research and development has decreased. Also hindering business efficiency, say the authors, have been government-mandated paperwork and regulations; spreading unionization and worker demands for bigger benefits and fewer hours; and the entry, in greater numbers, of inexperienced women and young people into the job market. The authors eschew policy recommendations in this lean, technical study. But their detailed analysis has the advantage of allowing comparisons of performances by whole industries and by the companies within them. Kendrick's and Grossman's conclusions support the common wisdom: The penalty for low productivity (the rate of increase dropped

by half during the period 1966–76) has been passed on to consumers in the form of higher-priced goods; they, in turn, have sought inflated wages to pay for them.

**ARABIA, THE GULF
AND THE WEST**

by J. B. Kelly
Basic, 1980
530 pp. \$25

Most recent books about the Arab states have either been narrow, scholarly treatises lacking in immediacy or “quickies” published to capitalize on the latest flare-ups in the Middle East. This account is one of the first to offer timely and substantial histories of each of the Persian Gulf States. But it will be hotly debated. Historian Kelly sees the Arab world as the primitive domain of dynastic rivalries, antipathies among Muslim sects, and tribal vendettas. The industrial world, he writes, has been left dependent on the good will of a handful of “militarily insignificant” states with long cultural and religious traditions of animosity toward the Christian West. Kelly asserts that the Arabs’ oil revenues—more than \$200 billion in 1979—have been squandered. In Saudi Arabia and the Shah’s Iran, excessive amounts have been spent on sophisticated weaponry; costly new hospitals and schools cannot be properly staffed. While the West engages in diplomacy amid a “deadly lethargy,” he warns, Soviet behavior in the Middle East bears “all the hallmarks of . . . imperial Russia.” Useful data in a controversial package.

**THE POLITICS OF
REGULATION**

edited by James Q. Wilson
Basic, 1980
468 pp. \$18.95

Businessmen seek relief from what they see as overzealous government regulation. Surprisingly, many consumers favor deregulation too, but for a different reason. They believe that most regulatory agencies have been “captured” by the industries they are supposed to control. Neither view is quite accurate, contends Wilson. In 10 informative essays, he and nine other political scientists examine the workings of a few state power commissions and several federal regulatory agencies. The latter include, among others, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Food and Drug Adminis-

tration, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). They find that an agency's actions are most often the result of employee motives. Agencies are staffed by "careerists," whose job ambitions reside entirely within the agency; by "politicians," who aspire to higher elective or appointive office; and by "professionals," lawyers, economists, or scientists who expect to advance to positions in the industries or professions they regulate. When an agency—the Federal Maritime Commission, for example—is dominated by careerists, it aims to avoid both industry complaints and headline-catching negligence that would lead to department shakeups. When politicians are in control, as was the case with the early EPA, headlines are sought, and a flurry of controversial and divisive rules to please consumers are adopted. An agency such as the FTC, led by professionals out to make names for themselves, will be aggressive in making rules and prosecuting offenders. Yet another factor exposes all agencies to the ire of "victimized" businessmen and "neglected" consumers or workers, adds Wilson—that is, the sheer size of regulatory undertakings. OSHA, for example, employs 80 percent of its staff to inspect workplaces, but only manages to cover about 2 percent of them each year.

Arts & Letters

**NATHANIEL
HAWTHORNE IN
HIS TIMES**
by James R. Mellow
Houghton, 1980
684 pp. \$19.95

When Nathaniel Hawthorne married in 1842, he rented the Concord, Mass., house where his landlord, Ralph Waldo Emerson, had earlier written his famous essay "Nature." In an act of neighborliness, Emerson had a young protégé plant a vegetable garden for the newlyweds. The amateur gardener was, of course, Henry David Thoreau. Later in life, Hawthorne (1804–64) doubted whether he had "ever really talked with half a dozen persons in [his] life." In this engaging biography, we glimpse him dashing out the back door as visitors enter the front yard; yet his reputation as a recluse seems overblown. Mellow, an art

and literary critic, chronicles Hawthorne's connections not only with Concord's transcendentalists but also with George Ripley's Brook Farm commune (where he lived for a time) and with local Democratic politicians, through whom young Hawthorne gained and later lost a job in the Salem Custom House. In 1853, at the height of his literary career, Hawthorne was appointed U.S. consul in Liverpool, his reward for writing a campaign biography of President Franklin Pierce, an old college chum. Mellow reconciles two Hawthornes: the brooding author of dark tales and the active U.S. diplomat who, while in England, fought hard (but unsuccessfully) to end the mistreatment of American sailors by their officers at sea.

KIPLING, AUDEN & CO.:
Essays and Reviews,
1935 – 1964
 by Randall Jarrell
 Farrar, 1980
 381 pp. \$17.95

Stanley Kunitz once said that fellow poet Jarrell had "the wariness of a porcupine." If so, it is no less true that he implanted his sharp quills with perfect accuracy. Oscar Williams's poems, quipped Jarrell, were "written on a typewriter by a typewriter." No better, E. E. Cummings "sits at the Muse's door making mobiles. . . . He invents a master stroke, figures out the formula for it, and repeats it fifty times." It was as a champion of unfashionable writers, however, that Jarrell (1914–65) made his mark as a critic. He helped rekindle interest in Walt Whitman, Robert Frost, and, in three essays reprinted here, Rudyard Kipling. Jarrell urged readers to ignore Kipling's reputation as a crude imperialist and to *read* him—for his understatement, contrasts, and ability to write "short." A list composed by Kipling, he maintained, is "more interesting than an ordinary writer's murder." Jarrell's essay on World War II correspondent Ernie Pyle shows a poet's appreciation for journalism that is uncluttered and spare. Pyle's condemnation of war, he concluded, was "more nearly final than any other, because in him there is no exaggeration, no hysteria, no selection to make out a case, no merely personal emotion unrecognized as such: he has nothing to prove." Jarrell was

exacting enough to realize that "critics are discarded like calendars" and talented enough to avoid that fate himself.

**AGE OF SPIRITUALITY:
Late Antique and Early
Christian Art—Third to
Seventh Century**
edited by Kurt Weitzmann
Princeton, 1980
735 pp. \$45

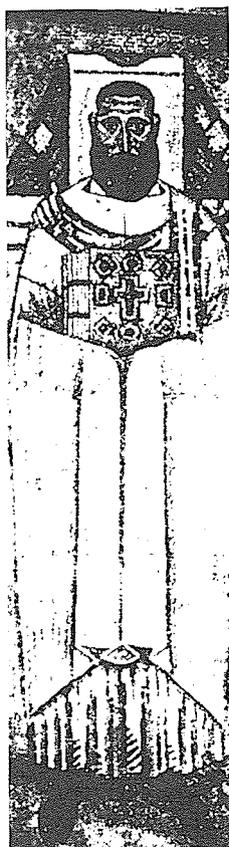


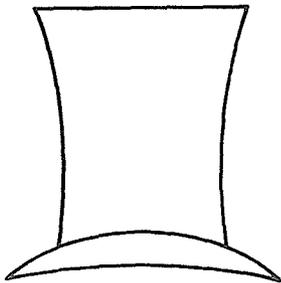
Photo Lykides, Greece.

From the time of Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity in the early 4th century until his imperial capital, Constantinople, fell to the Muslim Turks in the mid-15th, the Orthodox Byzantine empire produced a dazzling display of holy images. Pictures were emblazoned on coins, wood, and ivory, as well as in mosaic, fresco, and cloth. Recently, scholars such as Weitzmann and Ernst Kitzinger have begun to shed light on the origins of Byzantium's great culture, which soared even as the West was plunging into its "Dark Ages." Their studies have been inspired by 20th-century archeological discoveries in the eastern Mediterranean region, notably the unearthing, on Mount Sinai, of the largest collection of early Christian paintings to survive the ruthless purge of "graven images" by the original "iconoclasts" of 8th- and 9th-century Byzantium. The icons of Sinai preserved the stately naturalism of late pagan antiquity even as they foreshadowed the ethereal abstraction of medieval Christianity. The haunting mummy portraits and votive Isis statues of Hellenistic Egypt prefigured the Orthodox depictions of the Virgin. All this and more is described in this splendid book—an expanded catalogue of a 1977-78 exhibit of some 450 Byzantine objects. The illustrations and the commentaries, by 39 art historians, connect modern Western culture to its early Eastern origins. Yet, regrettably, the powerful, creative impulse behind the artistry never quite comes to life amid the careful tagging of artifacts.

Weitzmann is pre-eminent among art historians working on early Christian art. Coincidentally, two of his beautifully illustrated essays have recently been reissued, by Braziller, in paperback: *The Icon: Holy Images—Sixth to Fourteenth Century* (\$11.95) and *Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination* (\$9.95). They are bargains.

*Science & Technology***SEEING: Illusion, Brain and Mind**

by John P. Frisby
Oxford, 1980
160 pp. \$16.95



Roxby Press, Ltd.

In talking about sight, we frequently resort to the inadequate model of photography. This analogy explains the first steps in the process of seeing, in which the eye, like a camera's lens, focuses an image of the world on its retina. But vision, notes Frisby, a British psychologist, involves more than just mirroring light patterns back to the brain. A camera, television, or computer printout can replicate reality but cannot see. The eye extrapolates. Shape, texture, movement, size are all "seen." Furthermore, "brain pictures" are not made with photographic accuracy; our minds "expect" to find certain patterns and will impose them where they do not exist. (The top hat at left, for example, is actually as wide as it is tall, contrary to what our eyes, overestimating vertical lengths, tell us.) Frisby also discusses the roles played by environment and heredity in sight development. Studies suggest that Asians have less difficulty than Caucasians in distinguishing between vertical or horizontal lines and oblique ones, he notes. Kittens reared in a drum painted solely with horizontal stripes develop only horizontally tuned striate nerve cells in the cortex of the brain—the body's visual center. Frisby's clarifications of as yet unanswered questions about eyesight inspire the reader's awe of this "familiar" function.

FROM ATOMS TO QUARKS: An Introduction to the Strange World of Particle Physics

by James S. Trefil
Scribner's, 1980
225 pp. \$12.95

When Ernest Rutherford and Niels Bohr discerned the atom's structure in the early 1900s, scientists thought they had found the basic building blocks of all matter (protons, electrons, and, possibly, neutrons). They had not. By the early 1960s, hundreds of additional particles (neutrinos, positrons, mesons, baryons, to name a few) had been discovered. Trefil, a University of Virginia physicist, traces scientists' confusion about the properties of these new particles: Experimenters could not predict where they would turn up. "Once more," he writes, "our picture of the

world had become complex." Then, in 1961, Cal Tech's Murray Gell-Mann and Yuval Ne'eman, of London's Imperial College, found that the new particles tended to form octets. In 1964, Gell-Mann and George Zweig explained this phenomenon by hypothesizing that neutrinos, positrons, and the rest were made up of still more elementary constituents, which they called "quarks"—from a line in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* ("Three quarks for Muster Mark"). The theory worked—for a while. But since 1974, evidence has pointed to the existence of more than one kind of quark. So now, Trefil reports, physicists are stalking heavy leptons, magnetic monopoles, and tachyons, as well as the still-elusive quarks.

**WEATHER
MODIFICATION: Prospects
and Problems**
by Georg Breuer
Cambridge, 1980, 178 pp.
\$24.95 cloth, \$8.95 paper

Scientists have been trying, with mixed results, to influence the elements via sophisticated meteorological techniques since the late 1940s. In 1973, there were 67 weather-modification projects in the United States, of which 55 were commercial enterprises. "Seeding" clouds—either by releasing silver iodide crystals from an airplane or by generating silver iodide smoke from the ground—has, judging from crop yields, increased rainfall. But the art remains imperfect. Scientists cannot isolate moving clouds for experimentation (as they can, say, white mice), so they cannot determine whether a seeded cloud might have released rain—or more or less of it—without their efforts. In this international survey, first published in Germany in 1976, Breuer, a meteorologist, points out that in addition to boosting crop yields, seeding can produce kilowatts (by increasing rainfall over the river catchments of hydroelectric plants), wash toxic substances from the atmosphere, and even drench a battlefield (the U.S. military tried it during the Vietnam conflict). The only *predictable* success in weather modification so far, however, has been the temporary dispersion of fog over airfields, accomplished by warming the surrounding air with jet engines or smoke generators.

PAPERBOUNDS

AKENFIELD: Portrait of an English Village. By Ronald Blythe. Pantheon reprint, 1980. 318 pp. \$3.95

"Freedom," muses a 21-year-old Akenfield pig-farmer, "is getting up at 6:30 every morning, having a wash and breakfast and being outside by seven to start feeding." In this 1969 history of a rural Suffolk village just 90 miles from London, British novelist Blythe, an East Anglian himself, airs the pleasures and limitations of life in a private, much romanticized society. Blythe talked with 49 of the 298 villagers—farmers, craftsmen, shopkeepers, a vicar, and even a poet and a painter. Their frank exchanges reveal inextricable friendships and the satisfactions of working with the soil, but also a suspicion of books and new ideas, pettiness, and an unwillingness to meet the outside world. The village is hardly the bucolic England of legend. Farm earnings are low, most residents are poor, and many young people flee to the city. Once, life in Akenfield was "all obedience." Now "the village is so quiet . . . nobody walks about."

COMEDY. Edited by Wylie Sypher. Johns Hopkins reprint, 1980. 260 pp. \$4.95

Comedy is serious business to English novelist George Meredith, French philosopher Henri Bergson, and U.S. critic Sypher. Meredith (1828–1909), in this volume's first long essay, argues that comedy—especially the witty and sophisticated comedy of manners—saves us from complacency. When characters on a stage are caught "drifting into vanities, congregating in absurdities, planning short-sightedly, plotting dementedly," he writes, we laugh—and recognize our own follies. Bergson (1859–1941) believes that the comic spirit picks away at the "rigidity in society" that prevents us from thor-

oughly appreciating individuality. We chuckle when a parson sneezes during a sermon, because our attention is drawn from the soul to the body. Unlike Meredith, who states that only those who care about people can appreciate comedy, Bergson theorizes that humor demands a "momentary anesthesia of the heart." Sypher, however, claims that both Europeans oversimplify the subject. To him, life today is irrational; its essential absurdity is inherently (and bitterly) funny. Sypher's view of humor as "a sign of desperation," of "man's revolt, boredom, and aspiration," chills the reader who, guided by Bergson and Meredith, has come to see comedy as a measure of society's mental health.

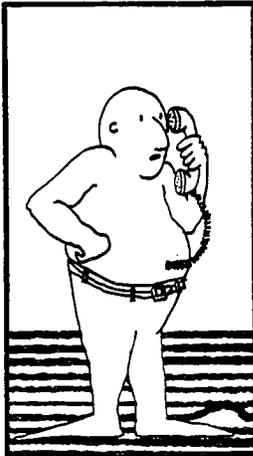
WOMEN AND MEN ON THE OVERLAND TRAIL. By John Mack Faragher. Yale reprint, 1980. 281 pp. \$6.50

"On three farms out of four," an 1862 Department of Agriculture report concluded, "the wife works harder, endures more." Woman's lot was no better on the wagon trails that led from Missouri to California in the 19th century. Faragher's study of diaries and travel narratives written by men and women on treks westward won the 1980 Frederick Jackson Turner Award for history. Men, he finds, had one principal task—"getting the wagons and the family safely through to the coast." Typically, their accounts were terse statements of fact: "Fri 10 made this day 14 and encamped at the Willow Springs good water but little grass 3 Bufaloes killed. . . ." While the men hunted or talked politics around the campfire, women concerned themselves with cooking, mending, washing clothes, and child-rearing. Lamented one: "Some women have very little help about the camp, being obliged to get the wood and water

(as far as possible), make camp fires, unpack at night and pack up in the morning." Historians, including Page Smith in *Daughters of the Promised Land* (1970), have asserted that pioneer women's responsibilities enhanced their status and independence. Not so, says Faragher. During the arduous journey, marriage remained a practical alliance for survival. This partnership "in production, processing, and consumption," he writes, required that men and women continue, not change, their traditional roles.

BIOFEEDBACK: Potential and Limits. By Robert M. Stern and William J. Ray, Univ. of Nebr. reprint, 1980. 197 pp. \$3.95

Caesar, Freud, Kant, Saint Paul—all suffered from migraine headaches. Biofeedback training, maintain Stern and Ray, Penn State psychologists, could have



Courtesy of Dow Jones-Irwin.

taught them to constrict a particular artery in their heads, producing relief similar to that induced by drugs. During biofeedback training, electrodes are placed on a part of the body—the skin, the brain, an artery—and the level of electrochemical activity is monitored on a TV

screen. The patient tries, by relaxing, for example, to alter the "picture" until a level of energy is reached that produces the desired results. The process by which a patient learns to control involuntary parts of the body is little understood; but it seems to require a different sort of concentration from that used to train voluntary muscles, and involves learning to recognize and induce certain "mental states." In their survey of the research conducted since 1965, the authors suggest that biofeedback may be particularly useful in reducing stress-related ailments (ulcers, high blood pressure). But it remains, they emphasize, one therapy alternative among many—and no substitute for conventional treatment.

THE NEOCONSERVATIVES: The Men Who Are Changing America's Politics. By Peter Steinfels. Touchstone reprint, 1980. 336 pp. \$5.95

"Neo-conservatism," writes Steinfels, the liberal editor of *Commonweal*, "is the serious and intelligent conservatism America has lacked." The new intellectual movement's leading lights include ex-liberals and even ex-socialists: Irving Kristol, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, Nathan Glazer, Aaron Wildavsky, James Q. Wilson. These critics have emerged as an influential counterforce to the academic-political Left's excesses of the 1960s. They examine the unintended effects of Big Government policies, e.g., busing, affirmative action, "prophylactic" regulation. They ask basic questions, such as: Is equality desirable? Above all, they raise issues that the Left avoids, notably about individual responsibility and the nation's moral culture. Yet, Steinfels contends, the neoconservatives have their own vices, notably a "negative" narrow focus that ignores such matters as business influence and "corporate power."

Graham Greene

This winter, Graham Greene's *Ways of Escape*, the long-awaited sequel to his first memoir, *A Sort of Life* (1971) will be published in New York. In the new book, the British novelist assembles a pastiche of recollections of his adventures around the world during the past 50 years—exploits that resulted in such vivid novels as *The Power and the Glory*, *The Heart of the Matter*, *The Quiet American*, and *Our Man in Havana*. Yet Greene has always brought a special dimension of faith to his novels. Here critic Frank McConnell reassesses Greene's penchant for "action" and "belief"—his long prolific career, his devotion to Catholicism and socialism, and his affinity with the movies. Selections from Greene's own writings follow.

by Frank D. McConnell

Imagine a not-quite young, not-quite happy man with a tedious and/or dangerous job in a seedy, urban or colonial, locale.

Now, imagine that something happens to force him to betray whatever is dearest to him—a loved one, an ideal, a creed. In the aftermath of his faithlessness, he comes to discover precisely how dear was the person or thing he betrayed. In the corrosive admission of his failure, he learns, if he is lucky, to rebuild his broken image of the world and to find his place in it.

Now add scenes of grotesque violence and grim comedy, incidental characters (tawdry, sinister, and dotty), and a limpid prose style. You have, of course, conjured up any of the 23 novels of Graham Greene. You have also glimpsed the spirit behind one of the most paradoxical and brilliant storytellers of this century.

Greene was born in 1904 and published his latest novel, *Doctor Fischer of Geneva, or The Bomb Party*, in 1980. Although he confided to an interviewer that *Dr. Fischer* was so short (156 pages) because, at age 76, one does not want to begin lengthy

*Greene, to his irritation, has often been labeled a "Catholic" novelist. When the Vatican once (unsuccessfully) tried to persuade him to suppress *The Power and the Glory*, another so-called Catholic novelist and a good friend—Evelyn Waugh—came to his support.*

Drawing by David Levine. Reprinted by permission of the New York Review of Books. © 1969 NYREV, Inc.



projects, he shows no signs of tiring. Indeed, a restless, nervous creativity has characterized all his novels, short stories, plays, travel writings, and political essays. In the first installment of his autobiography, *A Sort of Life* (1971), he says that he became a writer because it was the only profession that alleviated the great disease of existence—boredom.

There may be some self-deprecation in that statement. A man who calls his a "sort of" life is, whatever else, not vain. And Greene is, in fact, notoriously shy, even reclusive.

Boredom is not a passive state, however, but a frantically energetic one: the fluttering of the mind desperately trying to escape the cage of an impoverished existence. And the impoverished, the seedy, the cheapened are the central contours of the Greene landscape, just as the bored, the failures, and the betrayers are his permanent heroes.

But this is the first of many contradictions in Greene's work. He may concentrate exclusively, obsessively, on the dreariness and sadness of modern life. But what emerges from his tales is not blank despair (though he can come close to that) or advocacy of social revolution (though he has always been a committed leftist). What materializes, rather, is a vision of the ways that even society's disorder, urban sprawl, and tackiness can be-

come the stuff of true moral perceptions, of imagination and charity.

In other words, if for Greene the act of writing wards off tedium—is, literally, a salvation from boredom—his stories play out the theme in a major key. For they are about, finally, the Redemption of the Bored.

The son of the headmaster of Berkhamsted School in rural Hertfordshire, Greene claims to have known the curse of boredom from an early age. As a student at his father's school, where, he says, he felt like a "quisling," he made several attempts to take his own life. In 1920, after he tried running away, he was sent to London to undergo psychoanalysis. Six months later he was back home and still bored—"fixed, like a negative in a chemical bath." He discovered a forgotten revolver belonging to his brother and proceeded to play frequent games of Russian roulette. Later (1922–25) at Balliol College, Oxford, he recalls, he was almost continually drunk—another desperate attempt to escape.

Removing the Clichés

Greene's first jobs—as an unpaid apprentice reporter on the *Nottingham Journal* (he drew an allowance from his father) and then as sub-editor on the *London Times* (1926–30)—supplied valuable experience for a would-be fiction writer. He later recreated middle-class Nottingham's "Dickensian atmosphere" in *This Gun for Hire* (1936). And, in retrospect, his stint on the *Times* was instructive. "I can think of no better career for a young novelist," he writes in *A Sort of Life*, "than to be for some years a sub-editor on a rather conservative newspaper." Greene spent his time "removing the clichés of reporters . . . compressing a story to the minimum length possible without ruining its effects."

As for his early personal relationships, Greene has disappointed the prurient. In 1927, he married Vivien Dayrell-Browning, a Roman Catholic, and converted to her religion. The couple had two children, a boy and a girl, before the marriage

Frank D. McConnell, 38, a former Wilson Center Fellow, is professor of English at Northwestern University. A native of Louisville, Ky., he received a B.A. from the University of Notre Dame (1964) and a Ph.D. from Yale (1968). Among his books are Storytelling and Mythmaking: Images from Film and Literature (1979) and The Science Fiction of H. G. Wells (forthcoming). Ways of Escape, copyright © 1980 by Graham Greene, is published by Simon & Schuster.

broke up during the 1930s. In his new autobiography, *Ways of Escape*, Greene retains his reticence regarding his family, fastidiously observing what he calls "the 'copyright' of others' lives."

Greene's first novel, *The Man Within* (1929), was a modest commercial success, selling 8,000 copies. Its royalties—and advances for future books—provided him with enough money to live, he thought, for three years. He happily quit the *Times*. The move was premature.

His next two novels—*The Name of Action* (1930) and *Rumour of Nightfall* (1931)—were failures.* The latter sold only 1,200 copies, and the *Times* refused to rehire him.

Orient Express (1932) was a moderate success, but *It's a Battlefield* (1934) and *England Made Me* (1935) met with public indifference. Always restless, Greene, with a £350 advance from his publisher, and his 23-year-old cousin Barbara, in 1935, trekked through the jungle of Liberia. The result was *Journey Without Maps* (1936). Greene next received an advance for a book on the persecution of the Catholic Church in Mexico during the turmoils of the 1930s (*Another Mexico*, 1939). He could now live by his writing.

In 1941, during World War II, he joined the British Secret Service (MI-6) and ran a one-man intelligence outpost in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Two years later, he returned to London and worked in MI-6's subsection for counterespionage in the Iberian peninsula. Kim Philby, the famous Russian KGB "mole," was in charge of that subsection, and Greene has never disclaimed his wartime friendship with the British defector. Greene is philosophical about the job of a spy: "There is a bit of the schoolmaster in an Intelligence officer: he imbibes information at second hand and passes it on too often as gospel truth."

Predicting Trouble

Since World War II, as his books have become more popular, Greene has continued his globe-trotting unabated—Malaya, Vietnam, Kenya, Poland, Cuba, the Congo, Argentina, often as a well-paid free-lance magazine journalist. And he has had an uncanny nose for trouble. A friend, actor Alec Guinness, once remarked that if he heard that Greene had visited a place, he himself made plans to stay away from it for one or two years—knowing an upheaval was coming.

Greene has been a critic of the French and then the U.S. mis-

* Greene has subsequently renounced both of these books, which, he says, "are of a badness beyond the power of criticism properly to evoke."

ENCRUSTED WITH CHARACTERS

With a novel, which takes perhaps years to write, the author is not the same man at the end of the book as he was at the beginning. It is not only that his characters have developed—he has developed with them and this nearly always gives a sense of roughness to the work: a novel can seldom have the sense of perfection which you find in Chekhov's story, "Lady with the Lapdog." It is the consciousness of that failure which makes the revision of the novel seem endless—the author is trying in vain to adapt the story to his changed personality, as though it were something he had begun in childhood and was finishing now in old age. There are moments of despair when he begins perhaps the fifth revision of Part One, and he sees the multitude of the new corrections. How can he help feeling, "This will never end. I shall never get this passage right"? What he ought to be saying is, "I shall never again be the same man I was when I wrote this months and months ago." No wonder that under these conditions a novelist often makes a bad husband or an unstable lover. There is something in his character of the actor who continues to play Othello when he is off the stage, but he is an actor who has lived far too many parts during far too many long runs. He is encrusted with characters. A black taxi driver in the Caribbean once told me of a body which he had seen lifted from the sea. He said, "You couldn't tell it was a man's body because of all the lampreys which came up with it." A horrible image, but it is one which suits the novelist well.

From Ways of Escape

adventures in Vietnam. The 1954 battle at Dien Bien Phu, he writes, "marked virtually the end of any hope the Western Powers might have entertained that they could dominate the East." And he has seldom portrayed Americans in a flattering light. Think of "ignorant and silly" but well-intentioned Alden Pyle in *The Quiet American* (1955), or the tourists in *Our Man in Havana* (1958).

Greene's antipathies may have been re-enforced by U.S. laws. For one month in 1923, at Oxford, Greene was a member of the Communist Party. Hence, until the early 1960s, under the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act, he had to obtain special permission to enter America, and his stays were limited to four weeks. Indeed, he was deported from Puerto Rico in 1954 for violating the act. He last visited the United States, oddly enough, in 1977 when his close friend and admirer, Panamanian strongman General Omar Torrijos, named him an official delegate to the signing of the Panama Canal Treaty in Washington.

These days, at home in Antibes on the French Riviera,

Greene is fond of dividing his career into three phases. First, as he sees it, he was a political novelist (from *The Man Within*, presumably, to *The Confidential Agent* in 1939); next a religious novelist (from *The Power and the Glory* in 1940 to *The End of the Affair* in 1951); and then, once again, political (from *The Quiet American*).

It is a tidy breakdown, but it is subtly wrong. As his novels themselves attest—and as the epigraph to *The Honorary Consul* (1973) from Thomas Hardy* acknowledges—politics and religion, rightly understood, are not alternatives to, but complementary perceptions of, the puzzle of human existence itself.

This outlook helps explain why Greene often seems most “religious” when he is writing about spies and policemen (*The Ministry of Fear*, 1943; *The Third Man*, 1950) and most “political” when he is writing about priests and saints (*The Power and the Glory*; *A Burnt-Out Case*, 1961).

It explains why, though a Roman Catholic, he remains in continual conflict with Church orthodoxy and why, though a socialist, he has never been able to adhere to the ideology of the party. If he has a true faith, it is probably a faith in the novel—that multifaceted, ironic, and complex vision of life. And such complexity can—and should—dissolve all orthodoxies.

Such a sense of life, though, is best seen in action. Here is the first paragraph of one of Greene’s most successful books, *This Gun for Hire*:

Murder didn’t mean much to Raven. It was just a new job. You had to be careful. You had to use your brains. It was not a question of hatred. He had seen the minister only once: he had been pointed out to Raven as he walked down the new housing estate between the little lit Christmas trees—an old, rather grubby man without any friends, who was said to love humanity.

An amoral killer stalks his prey, a sad old humanitarian, among a forest of absurdly decorated Christmas trees.

It is an almost perfect Greene movement. In a single take, it captures the killer whose cold violence threatens society’s security, the benevolent victim whose well-meaning innocence (he “was said to love humanity”) is a kind of threat, and the paragraph’s hidden heroes—those artificially lit, tiny Christmas trees. Their shining signifies, at once, the sleaziness of a commercialized Christmas and the lost solemnity and radiance of

*“All things merge in one another—good into evil, generosity into justice, religion into politics. . . .”

the Birth they are supposed to honor.

No other modern English novelist is as satisfying an entertainer as Greene is. Indeed, his influence has been at least as great on later practitioners of the spy novel (John le Carré, Len Deighton) as it has been upon "serious" novelists, such as Iris Murdoch, V. S. Naipaul, and Paul Theroux. In a century when literary fiction, from James Joyce to Samuel Beckett, has been marked by a narrowing of consciousness and an ever-increasing degree of difficulty and involution, Greene is a maverick. He is an important writer who deals with weighty ideas, and he is also unabashedly popular and unashamedly a storyteller.

Murder among the Christmas trees: It is a world of passionless assassinations and sinister, mean streets, and it is all but totally without hope. It is also the world of that most perdurable form of popular narrative, the gangster film, from *Little Caesar* to *The Godfather*.

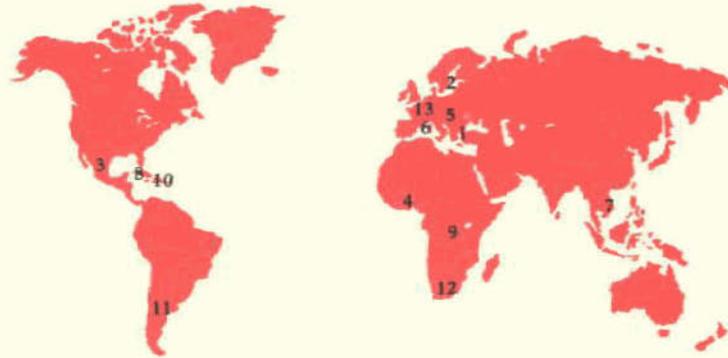
I used the cinematic term *take*, above, to describe the effect of the opening of *This Gun for Hire*. And, indeed, most of Greene's novels are so readable because, among other things, they are so easy to visualize. They often progress like camera shot-analyses for a screenplay.

Not that Greene is simply "influenced" by film. Writers as different as Vladimir Nabokov and Norman Mailer have been affected by this accessible mass art. Nabokov regarded it as yet another instance of the vulgarization of culture (in *Lolita*). Mailer treats it as an incarnation of the rowdy, countercultural energies of the American psyche (in *The Deer Park*). What Greene—uniquely—has done is to use the resources of melodramatic movies in a way that both reflects the predicaments of contemporary life *and* is vastly entertaining.

In fact, Greene has written or collaborated on the screenplays for most of his novels that have been filmed. And almost all of his novels have been; *The Third Man* (1950) was first a story, next a screenplay, and then a "novelization" by Greene. Moreover, from 1935 to 1940—the period of his earliest triumphs—he was a movie reviewer for *The Spectator*. His film criticism, collected in *The Pleasure-Dome*, remains among the best from that exciting era of international cinema.

Greene has always been aware, and quite proud, of his popularity. Fond of tracing his ancestry to his distant forebear Robert Louis Stevenson, enamored of the tradition of Victorian fiction when the novel was in touch with its audience, and optimistic about film's ability to re-create that golden age, Greene savors the idea of being not just a great writer but a great popular writer. Until recently, he insisted upon separating

GREENE'S WORLD



- | | | | |
|----|------|---|---------------------|
| 1 | 1932 | <i>Stamboul Train (Orient Express)*</i> | <i>Istanbul</i> |
| 2 | 1935 | <i>England Made Me (The Shipwrecked)*</i> | <i>Stockholm</i> |
| 3 | 1940 | <i>The Power and the Glory (The Labyrinthine Ways)*</i> | <i>Mexico</i> |
| 4 | 1948 | <i>The Heart of the Matter</i> | <i>West Africa</i> |
| 5 | 1950 | <i>The Third Man</i> | <i>Vienna</i> |
| 6 | 1955 | <i>Loser Takes All</i> | <i>Monte Carlo</i> |
| 7 | 1955 | <i>The Quiet American</i> | <i>Vietnam</i> |
| 8 | 1958 | <i>Our Man in Havana</i> | <i>Cuba</i> |
| 9 | 1961 | <i>A Burnt-Out Case</i> | <i>Congo</i> |
| 10 | 1966 | <i>The Comedians</i> | <i>Haiti</i> |
| 11 | 1973 | <i>The Honorary Consul</i> | <i>Argentina</i> |
| 12 | 1978 | <i>The Human Factor</i> | <i>South Africa</i> |
| 13 | 1980 | <i>Doctor Fischer of Geneva, or the Bomb Party</i> | <i>Switzerland</i> |

*U.S. title in parentheses.

his fiction into what he called "entertainments"—the more dramatic of his potboilers—and "novels"—the more solemn performances. He has lately dropped the distinction, perhaps because so many of his readers have noticed that the "entertainments" are often more serious than the "novels."

Another key consideration of Greene's joining of high and low culture is the literary decade in which he began his career. During the 1930s, some of the brightest young Englishmen tried to unite high, intellectual, revolutionary ideas with familiar, even "vulgar" forms. College-style Marxism—class struggle articulated by upper-class minds—resulted in much absurdity and many instances of embarrassing literary slumming. Yet this era produced chilling images of the unspeakable-within-the-banal. W. H. Auden's 1939 apocalyptic ragtime, "Refugee

THE WORKS OF GRAHAM GREENE

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1925 Babbling April (<i>verse</i>) | 1955 The Quiet American |
| 1929 The Man Within | 1957 The Potting Shed (<i>drama</i>) |
| 1930 The Name of Action | 1958 Our Man in Havana |
| 1931 Rumour of Nightfall | 1959 The Complaisant Lover
(<i>drama</i>) |
| 1932 Stamboul Train
(Orient Express)* | 1961 In Search of a Character
(<i>travel</i>) |
| 1934 It's a Battlefield | 1961 A Burnt-Out Case |
| 1935 England Made Me
(The Shipwrecked)* | 1963 A Sense of Reality (<i>stories</i>) |
| 1936 Journey Without Maps (<i>travel</i>) | 1964 Carving a Statue (<i>drama</i>) |
| 1936 A Gun for Sale
(This Gun for Hire)* | 1966 The Comedians |
| 1938 Brighton Rock | 1967 May We Borrow Your
Husband? (<i>stories</i>) |
| 1939 The Lawless Roads (<i>travel</i>)
(Another Mexico)* | 1969 Collected Essays |
| 1939 The Confidential Agent | 1969 Travels with My Aunt |
| 1940 The Power and the Glory
(The Labyrinthine Ways)* | 1971 A Sort of Life (<i>autobiography</i>) |
| 1943 The Ministry of Fear | 1973 The Pleasure-Dome
(Graham Greene on Film)* |
| 1947 Nineteen Stories | 1973 Collected Stories |
| 1948 The Heart of the Matter | 1973 The Portable Graham Greene |
| 1950 The Third Man | 1973 The Honorary Consul |
| 1951 The Lost Childhood (<i>essays</i>) | 1974 Lord Rochester's Money
(<i>biography</i>) |
| 1951 The End of the Affair | 1976 The Return of A. J. Raffles
(<i>drama</i>) |
| 1953 The Living Room (<i>drama</i>) | 1978 The Human Factor |
| 1954 Twenty-One Stories | 1980 Doctor Fischer of Geneva, or
The Bomb Party |
| 1955 Loser Takes All | 1981 Ways of Escape (<i>autobiography</i>) |

*U.S. titles.

Blues" is an example:

Saw a poodle in a jacket fastened with a pin.
Saw a door opened and a cat let in:
But they weren't German Jews, my dear, but they weren't
German Jews.

It also spawned the bleak backgrounds of Greene's spy novels, detective stories, and melodramas.

The Anglo-American detective story comes complete with built-in assumptions about the moral confusion of life in the modern city (think of the atmosphere of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's London) and about the chances for cleansing that urban chaos (recall the priestly role of detectives from Sherlock Holmes to Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe). This tradition is a near perfect vehicle for a writer obsessed, as Greene is, with

READING GREENE

The best place to begin reading Greene is still his "entertainments." *This Gun for Hire*, *The Confidential Agent*, and especially the splendid, underrated *Ministry of Fear* map the ambiguous contours of his moral and political world. They are thrillers whose excitement is generated through a tension between action and ideas.

Among the "novels," the trilogy of *Brighton Rock*, *The Power and the Glory*, and *The Heart of the Matter* is essential. Greene's most deeply and problematically "religious" novels, these three present visions, successively, of damnation, purgation, and salvation—all projected against the backdrop of urban and colonial politics. *The End of the Affair* and *A Burnt-Out Case* elaborate his religious themes. And *The Quiet American*—his "Vietnam novel"—and *The Comedians*, set in Haiti, do the same for his political concerns.

Moments of rich if bitter comedy sparkle in all Greene's books, even the grimmest. (Critics, Greene writes in his new autobiography, "were too concerned with faith and no faith to notice that in the course of the blackest book I have written I had discovered comedy.") In *Our Man in Havana* and *Travels With My Aunt*, he gives full rein to his comic talent, producing wonderfully funny books that glimmer with a deep darkness as much as his darkest novels flirt with laughter.

The Honorary Consul, *The Human Factor*, and *Doctor Fischer of Geneva, or The Bomb Party* constitute a summary of the *seedy*—"Why," laments Greene, "did I ever popularize that last adjective?"—world of espionage and moral choice. Rich and rewarding in themselves, they are even more enjoyable when read in the context of Greene's long, extraordinary career.

—F. D. McC.

the union of religious experience and public morality.*

In this respect, it is interesting to compare Greene's fiction to the work of another great entertainer and moralist, Alfred Hitchcock. French film director François Truffaut first observed that Hitchcock's thrillers were all parables of the Fall. In, say, *Rear Window*, *North by Northwest*, and *Frenzy*, an innocent man stumbles onto a situation fraught with violence and evil, only to learn that he too is somehow implicated. This perennial Hitchcock motif is analogous to the theme of betrayal and self-

*Greene, nevertheless, is not very fond of the old conventional British detective story: "Outside the criminal class sexual passion and avarice seemed the most likely motives for murder; but the English detective writer was debarred by his audience of the perpetually immature—an adjective which does not preclude a university professor here or there—from dealing realistically with sexual passion, so he was apt to involve his readers in a story of forged wills, disinheritance, avaricious heirs, and of course railway timetables."

knowledge in Greene's fiction. The crucial difference is that Greene's version is not more "serious"—but darker. Greene believes much more than did Hitchcock in our involvement with evil—and much less in the chances for the innocent to survive malevolence.

Critics have probably made too much of "Greene as Catholic novelist." He himself insists that the label is misleading, claiming that he is a novelist "who happens to be a Catholic." In a recent interview with his old friend, critic V. S. Pritchett, Greene cryptically described himself as a "Catholic atheist." In his new autobiography, he writes that, for a long time, he was not "emotionally moved, but only intellectually convinced" by the Catholic faith. But Catholicism is, undeniably, central to his imagination. He entered the Roman Catholic Church in 1926, just before his marriage and three years before his first novel, *The Man Within*, was published. And he has remained a Catholic despite the breakup of his marriage and Church censure.*

Why Greene is a Catholic—and why it matters that he is a Catholic—is most clear in *The Power and the Glory*, the book that initiates what he describes as the second, "religious" phase of his career. The hero, an anonymous, alcoholic priest in Mexico during the 1930s, is about to be executed for following his vocation:

It seemed to him at that moment that it would have been quite easy to have been a saint. It would only have needed a little self-restraint and a little courage. He felt like someone who has missed happiness by seconds at an appointed place. He knew now that at the end there was only one thing that counted—to be a saint.

This kind of sainthood is indistinguishable from the passionate social gospel announced in Auden's famous "September 1, 1939": "We must love one another or die." It is a sainthood that unites the salvation of the self and the salvation of the world. Piety and politics are indissolubly bound up with one another. It is Greene's austere and uncompromising view that justice and charity, if they cannot be the same thing, can be nothing at all.

One explanation of the Fall is contained in an ancient parable. In his alienation from God, Adam irreparably separated the roots of the world-tree, which represents the presence of the

*The Roman Curia tried unsuccessfully to force Greene to suppress *The Power and the Glory* some 10 years after its publication in 1940. In *Ways of Escape*, Greene recounts a meeting years later with Pope Paul VI: "Mr. Greene," the pontiff remarked, "some parts of your books are certain to offend some Catholics, but you should pay no attention to that."



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Depicting the elaborate dinner parties given by Doctor Fischer of Geneva for his rich friends, Greene probes the limits of power—and of greed.

Lord; i.e., Adam divided the roots of His Justice from the roots of His Loving Kindness. All human history, then, can be viewed as an attempt to heal this rift—to reunite justice and mercy in society as well as in the individual.

I do not know if Greene ever encountered this myth, but it comes uncannily close to the heart of his own perception of man's affairs. His spies are touched by yearnings for the sublime; his saints are tormented by their responsibilities to others. They all dramatize the fact that man may be either just or charitable but, tragically, not both.

And yet we want to be both. That is the aim of our most hopeful political thought and our earnest moral aspirations. The advantage of the novelist over the political theorist and the theologian is that the writer can *show* us this wished-for union of head and heart, and also demonstrate why the world's disorder makes its attainment so difficult.

Throughout Greene's books, justice and love are placed in intricate counterpoint. No writer of our time is more unrelenting in his depiction of the tawdriness of so much of modern life. No one is more adamant in his articulation of the nastiness of which we are all capable. And yet no author so compellingly brings to light the pathos underlying even the most hateful of his characters.

In an early novel, *England Made Me* (1936), Greene invents a

minor character named Minty, a gossip, wholly loathsome journalist. His petty cruelty extends even to trapping a spider under a glass so that he can watch it starve to death. But in one scene, as we watch Minty say his prayers and crawl into bed, we are also given a revelation: "And like the spider he withered, blown out no longer to meet contempt; his body stretched doggo in the attitude of death, he lay there humbly tempting God to lift the glass."

That sentence is shocking in its precision. Minty remains despicable. Yet we are forced to see that his hatefulness is a part of his humanity. His is a hatefulness founded on hopelessness ("humbly tempting God to lift the glass" may be one of the finest lines in all Greene's fiction).

It is a short step from this kind of perception to a world like that of the West African colony in *The Heart of the Matter* (1948). Greene's existential policeman, Major Scobie, reflects that in that cruel climate one could love people almost as God loves them, knowing the worst. Scobie will abandon this abstract, bitter charity. He falls in love with a woman not his wife. His mortal sin reveals to him the radiance of the truth he has betrayed.

But Scobie is one of Greene's saints. His shattering experience points toward, if it does not reach, the union of justice and charity. No wonder Greene has been attacked by orthodox religionists as well as by die-hard socialists. He has continued to remind us that the novelist—the imaginative man—cannot afford to be orthodox. He can only be totally honest about the reality and complexity of experience.

Greene's most recent books, since *Travels with My Aunt* (1969), have a valedictory, summarizing quality about them. Greene appears to be revisiting the major locales of his writing and re-examining his fiction with a view toward giving it a final shape. Again, one is reminded of Hitchcock, who, in his last films, created a virtual précis of his own strongest work.

The "final shape" of Greene's work, however, extends beyond the books themselves to the influence they have had. Like his contemporary and sometime adversary, George Orwell, Greene is an indispensable voice of moral sense and moral passion in an era when both sense and passion are too often drowned out by the stridencies of ideology and egotism. If we now speak of nightmare totalitarianism as "Orwellian," we also think of the modern city (London, New York)—that wasteland of poverty and frequent violence—as "Greeneland."

Percy Bysshe Shelley, with all the optimism of a Romantic, called poets the "unacknowledged legislators of the world." Such were his hopes for the wedding of personal vision and pub-

lic history. Shelley's Victorian disciple Robert Browning was less sanguine, perhaps more realistic, about the chances for that marriage. Adrift and often ignored in the welter of events, the poet may nevertheless be an agent, a secret observer whose accounts highlight the face of our disorder.

This is how Browning—Greene's favorite—describes the poet in "How It Strikes a Contemporary" (1852):

We had among us, not so much a spy,
As a recording chief-inquisitor,
The town's true master, if the town but knew!
We merely kept a governor for form,
While this man walked about and took account
Of all thought, said and acted, then went home,
And wrote it fully to our Lord the King
Who has an itch to know things, he knows why. . . .

Diffident as he is, Greene would no doubt disclaim such a function. Nevertheless, it is an accurate description of the role he has played for 50 years.

A sampling of his work follows:

THE ACT OF LIVING

Greene used his trip to Liberia in the winter of 1934–35 as an occasion to examine his past and the current state of his own mind. In this excerpt from Journey Without Maps (1936), he reflects on his Catholicism and finds that, after his frequent attempts at suicide, he will go on living:

The fever would not let me sleep at all, but by the early morning it was sweated out of me. My temperature was a long way below normal, but the worst boredom of the trek for the time being was over. I had made a discovery during the night which interested me. I had discovered in myself a passionate interest in living. I had always assumed before, as a matter of course, that death was desirable.

It seemed that night an important discovery. It was like a conversion, and I had never experienced a conversion before. (I had not been converted to a religious faith. I had been convinced by specific arguments in the probability of its creed.) If the experience had not been so new to me, it would have seemed less important, I should have known that conversions don't last, or if they last at all it is only as a little sediment at the bottom of the brain. Perhaps the sediment has value, the memory of a conversion may have some force in an emergency; I may be able to strengthen myself with the intellectual idea that once in Zigi's Town I had been completely convinced of the beauty and desirability of the mere act of living.

LIFE DURING THE BLITZ

The mise en scène of Greene's melodramatic The Ministry of Fear (1943) is London at the height of the World War II blitz. He sets the stage and introduces his pitiable hero with typical cinematic verve:

Arthur Rowe lived in Guilford Street. A bomb early in the blitz had fallen in the middle of the street and blasted both sides, but Rowe stayed on. Houses went overnight, but he stayed. There were boards instead of glass in every room, and the doors no longer quite fitted and had to be propped at night. He had a sitting-room and a bedroom on the first floor, and he was done for by Mrs. Purvis who also stayed—because it was her house. He had taken the rooms furnished and simply hadn't bothered to make any alterations. He was like a man camping in a desert. Any books there were came from the twopenny or the public library except for *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *David Copperfield* which he read, as people used to read the Bible, over and over again till he could have quoted chapter and verse, not so much because he liked them as because he had read them as a child and they carried no adult memories. The pictures were Mrs. Purvis's—a wild water-colour of the Bay of Naples at sunset and several steel engravings and a photograph of the former Mr. Purvis in the odd dated uniform of 1914. The ugly arm-chair, the table covered with a thick woollen cloth, the fern in the window—all were Mrs. Purvis's, and the radio was hired. Only the packet of cigarettes on the mantelpiece belonged to Rowe, and the toothbrush and shaving tackle in the bedroom (the soap was Mrs. Purvis's), and inside a cardboard box his bromides. In the sitting-room there was not even a bottle of ink or a packet of stationery; Rowe didn't write letters, and he paid his income tax at the post office.

IS HARRY LIME REALLY DEAD?

"To me," Greene has written, "it is almost impossible to write a film play without first writing a story." The Third Man (1950) was never intended for publication; Carol Reed's movie, Greene has said, is "the finished state of the story." Rollo Martins, an American writer of westerns, travels to Allied-occupied Vienna right after World War II in search of Harry Lime, a black marketeer, portrayed by Orson Welles in the film version. Col. Calloway, head of British Military Police in Vienna, narrates Rollo Martins's arrival:

One never knows when the blow may fall. When I saw Rollo Martins first I made this note on him for my security police files: "In normal circumstances a cheerful fool. Drinks too much and may cause a little trouble. Whenever a woman passes raises his eyes and makes some comment, but I get the impression that really he'd rather not be

bothered. Has never really grown up and perhaps that accounts for the way he worshipped Lime." I wrote there that phrase "in normal circumstances" because I met him first at Harry Lime's funeral. It was February, and the gravediggers had been forced to use electric drills to open the frozen ground in Vienna's Central Cemetery. It was as if even nature were doing its best to reject Lime, but we got him in at last and laid the earth back on him like bricks. He was vaulted in, and Rollo Martins walked quickly away as though his long gangly legs wanted to break into a run, and the tears of a boy ran down his thirty-five-year-old face. Rollo Martins believed in friendship, and that was why what happened later was a worse shock to him than it would have been to you or me (you because you would have put it down to an illusion and me because at once a rational explanation—however wrongly—would have come to my mind). If only he had come to tell me then, what a lot of trouble would have been saved.

A SHOAL OF BODIES

In the 1950s, Life and other news magazines ran Greene's vivid dispatches from Vietnam. This excerpt, describing the French defense of Phatdiem against the Viet Minh, is from The Quiet American (1955). The passage was first published, however, in 1953 as an article in The Listener of London:

The lieutenant sat beside the man with the walkie-talkie and stared at the ground between his feet. The instrument began to crackle instructions, and with a sigh as though he had been roused from sleep he got up. There was an odd comradeship about all their movements, as though they were equals engaged on a task they had performed together times out of mind. Nobody waited to be told what to do. Two men made for the plank and tried to cross it, but they were unbalanced by the weight of their arms and had to sit astride and work their way across a few inches at a time. Another man had found a punt hidden in some bushes down the canal, and he worked it to where the lieutenant stood. Six of us got in, and he began to pole it towards the other bank, but we ran on a shoal of bodies and stuck. He pushed away with his pole, sinking it into this human clay, and one body was released and floated up all its length beside the boat, like a bather lying in the sun. Then we were free again, and once on the other side we scrambled out, with no backward look. No shots had been fired; we were alive; death had withdrawn perhaps as far as the next canal. I heard somebody just behind me say with great seriousness, "Gott sei Dank." Except for the lieutenant they were most of them Germans.

Beyond was a group of farm buildings. The lieutenant went in first, hugging the wall, and we followed at six-foot intervals, in single file. Then the men, again without an order, scattered through the farm. Life

had deserted it—not so much as a hen had been left behind, though hanging on the wall of what had been the living room were two hideous oleographs of the Sacred Heart and the Mother and Child which gave the whole ramshackle group of buildings a European air. One knew what these people believed even if one didn't share their belief; they were human beings, not just grey drained cadavers.

So much of war is sitting around and doing nothing, waiting for somebody else. With no guarantee of the amount of time you have left, it doesn't seem worth starting even a train of thought. Doing what they had done so often before the sentries moved out. Anything that stirred ahead of us now was enemy. The lieutenant marked his map and reported our position over the radio. A noontime hush fell; even the mortars were quiet, and the air was empty of planes. One man doodled with a twig in the dirt of the farmyard. After a while it was as if we had been forgotten by war. I hoped that Phuong had sent my suits to the cleaners. A cold wind ruffled the straw of the yard, and a man went modestly behind a barn to relieve himself. I tried to remember whether I had paid the British consul in Hanoi for the bottle of whisky he had allowed me.

THE TOOLS OF A SPY

Greene is a sharp satirist, and one of his funniest novels is Our Man in Havana (1958). Reluctant hero Jim Wormold, a failed middle-aged vacuum-cleaner salesman, is here recruited as a British spy by MI-6's chief Caribbean agent, Hawthorne:

"When we have your office here properly organized, with sufficient security—a combination safe, radio, trained staff, all the gimmicks—then of course we can abandon a primitive code like this, but except for an expert cryptologist it's damned hard to break without knowing the name and edition of the book."

"Why did you choose [Charles] Lamb?"

"It was the only book I could find in duplicate except *Uncle Tom's Cabin* . . ."

"I brought you some ink as well. Have you got an electric kettle?"

"Yes. Why?"

"For opening letters. We like our men to be equipped against an emergency."

"What's the ink for? I've got plenty of ink at home."

"Secret ink of course. In case you have to send anything by the ordinary mail. Your daughter has a knitting needle, I suppose?"

"She doesn't knit."

"Then you'll have to buy one. Plastic is best. Steel sometimes leaves a mark."

"Mark where?"

"On the envelopes you open."
"Why on earth should I want to open envelopes?"
"It might be necessary for you to examine Dr. Hasselbacher's mail. Of course, you'll have to find a sub-agent in the post office."
"I absolutely refuse . . ."
"Don't be difficult. I'm having traces of him sent out from London. We'll decide about his mail after we've read them. . . ."
"I haven't even said I was willing . . ."
"London agrees to \$150 a month, with another hundred and fifty as expenses; you'll have to justify those, of course. Payment of sub-agents, et cetera. Anything above that will have to be specially authorized."
"You are going much too fast."
"Free of income tax, you know," Hawthorne said and winked slyly. . . .
"You must give me time. . . ."
"Your code number is 59200 stroke 5." He added with pride, "Of course I am 59200. You'll number your sub-agents 59200 stroke 5 stroke 1 and so on. Got the idea?"
"I don't see how I can possibly be of use to you."
"You are English, aren't you?" Hawthorne said briskly.
"Of course I'm English."
"And you refuse to serve your country?"
"I didn't say that. But the vacuum cleaners take up a great deal of time."
"They are an excellent cover," Hawthorne said. "Very well thought out. Your profession has quite a natural air."
"But it is natural."
"Now if you don't mind," Hawthorne said firmly, "we must get down to our Lamb."

ANOTHER COUNTRY

Greene displays his descriptive powers, and his gift for apt metaphor, in this passage from The Honorary Consul (1973), a tale of terror and passion set in Argentina:

Doctor Eduardo Plarr stood in the small port on the Paraná, among the rails and yellow cranes, watching where a horizontal plume of smoke stretched over the Chaco. It lay between the red bars of sunset like a stripe on a national flag. Doctor Plarr found himself alone at that hour except for the one sailor who was on guard outside the maritime building. It was an evening which, by some mysterious combination of failing light and the smell of an unrecognized plant, brings back to some men the sense of childhood and of future hope and to others the sense of something which has been lost and nearly forgotten.

The rails, the cranes, the maritime buildings—these had been what

Doctor Plarr first saw of his adopted country. The years had changed nothing except by adding the line of smoke which when he arrived here first had not yet been hung out along the horizon on the far side of the Paraná. The factory that produced it had not been built when he came down from the northern republic with his mother more than twenty years before on the weekly service from Paraguay. He remembered his father as he stood on the quay at Asunción beside the short gangway of the small river boat, tall and gray and hollow-chested, and promised with a mechanical optimism that he would join them soon. In a month—or perhaps three—hope creaked in his throat like a piece of rusty machinery.

ABANDONED

Greene has said that of all his novels the one that most satisfies him is The Power and the Glory (1940). It is set in Mexico's Tabasco province during the 1930s. The socialist government has banned religion, closed the churches, and outlawed the clergy. The remorseful "whiskey priest," father of an illegitimate daughter, is on the lam:

Far back inside the darkness the mules plodded on. The effect of the brandy had long ago worn off, and the man bore in his brain along the marshy tract—which, when the rains came, would be quite impassable—the sound of *General Obregon's* siren. He knew what it meant: the ship had kept to time-table; he was abandoned. He felt an unwilling hatred of the child ahead of him and the sick woman—he was unworthy of what he carried. A smell of damp came up all round him; it was as if this part of the world had never been dried in the flame when the world was sent spinning off into space: it had absorbed only the mist and cloud of those awful spaces. He began to pray, bouncing up and down to the lurching, slithering mule's stride, with his brandied tongue: "Let me be caught soon. . . . Let me be caught." He had tried to escape, but he was like the King of a West African tribe, the slave of his people, who may not even lie down in case the winds should fail.

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COMMENTARY

We welcome timely letters from readers, especially those who wish to amplify or correct information published in the Quarterly and/or react to the views expressed in our essays. The writer's telephone number and address should be included. For reasons of space, letters are usually edited for publication. Some of those printed below were received in response to the editor's requests for comment.

Recollections of a Space Hand

Re "The Space Effort" [WQ, Autumn 1980]:

In 1955, the [U.S.] von Braun team estimated that it could launch a minimum satellite in the fall of 1956. I know, for I was part of the Project Orbiter team. This sub rosa group was headed by Office of Naval Research Cdr. George W. Hoover and von Braun. Interservice rivalry, as well as intramural skirmishes between the Office of Naval Research and Naval Research Laboratory, and industrial lobbying were factors preventing the launching of a U.S. earth satellite before the Soviet Union.

A lovely game of "what if" can be played presuming a scenario in which the United States had launched a satellite a year ahead of the USSR. If such had been the case, we might have had man in orbit by now, but a politically motivated program to send a man to the moon might never have occurred. In other words, the stunning impact of the first Soviet Sputnik would have been blunted.

The strength of the Soviet Union's continuing broad-base program presents a challenge to the United States that has not yet been accepted. The Salyut 6 space station has provided the Soviets with increasing manned duration records while developing orbital skills and potentially important technology. The United States has not had a man in space for more than

five years—and shan't before the first space shuttle flight scheduled for the spring of 1981. Whereas five years ago the United States had a commanding lead in manned space experience, the USSR now has more than double the total U.S. cumulative man-hours in space: 45,969 to 22,503.

There must be a national commitment, a defined goal, in order to establish pre-eminence. The splendid success of the Voyager spacecraft's encounters with Jupiter and Saturn notwithstanding, the U.S. space program for the future is weak and thin.

*F. C. Durant, III
Chevy Chase, Md.*

Living Off the 1960s

The beginning of the '80s finds us in a world drastically changed. The virtual U.S. monopoly in civil space activity is gone, most of the "easy" planetary explorations have been done, and military use of space is increasing. Nationally, there appears to be no consensus, due in part to the appallingly small amount of public discourse, about where the civil space program ought to be headed, or why.

The time scale for generating elements of the space program from concept to implementation is typically measured in decades. We are now living off the hopes and plans of the '60s and '70s, and the country must soon determine the nature and scope of civil space activity for the late '80s and the '90s. Americans and their leaders have a responsibility to arrive at that decision by a close analysis of the merits of a vigorous civil space program, rather than by the default of benign neglect or as a result of policy fallout from related, but secondary, issues.

*Noel W. Hinners
Director, National Air and Space Museum
Washington, D.C.*

*Brazil is the Answer:
What is the Question?*

I am concerned that the spirit and enterprise that so splendidly animated [the Space Era] will fade from our social fabric. Lest that become the case, let us find a dedication of equal fervor.

Pave Brazil. Pave Brazil! Let us channel the energies we put out to get to the moon for this new frontier of purpose and spin-off. The excavation alone will, it is reliably estimated by a private research firm, create some 15 million jobs, relieving pressures building up on our urban frontier. New roots will be dug up, probably enriching our health food diets. The possibilities are endless: a demonstration that parking problems no longer need impede progress; a black hole in the weather pattern because heat is absorbed by pavements; faster telephone calls to Taiwan; a moral equivalent of war. Let the scoffers scoff. The time has come for Brazil to be paved, and there is no saying nay to it. Let NASA, proved and true, take it on.

Once Brazil is paved, the pyramids could be moved thereto. Thor Heyerdahl could make a movie about how it happened. And with the site all prepared, what is to stop us from bringing down the moon itself, infertile as it may seem, to rest beside the pyramids as a sort of World's Fair Memorial, remembering how we all felt about the progress of science in 1939.

*James David Barber
Duke University*

*NASA:
Congress Waits*

John Noble Wilford ["Riding High," *WQ*, Autumn 1980] raises the issue of the eventual military takeover of space programs. This would be unfortunate. National security applications, although demonstrating significant practical uses of space, represent one class of user—one having important but limited focus. With

emerging opportunities for private enterprises, maintaining strong national civil space activities will have new meaning.

International competition in space, which Walter A. McDougall ["The Scramble for Space," *WQ*, Autumn 1980] implies was stimulated in part by nations hedging and determining that they could have more to lose by just watching, provides both challenge and opportunity. While nations, as well as their industries, must be reasonably protective of technology obtained at great expense and effort, cooperation [within] the "growing club of spacefaring nations" has potential for overall cost savings. This is certainly the case in science programs where basic human knowledge is the product. Cooperation may be considered for large engineering projects such as multiservice space platforms providing global or regional services, as well as highly ambitious undertakings such as solar power satellites.

Popular support [for America's space program] is difficult to quantify. Whether any particular government program would stand up to a national referendum, however, begs the question of what the future holds for space. In the practical sense, leadership comes from the administration; and NASA has the responsibility for defining new directions and formulating new programs. Impatience for future planning has been expressed in Congress—most notably by the House and Senate committees responsible for authorizing the NASA budget. Capitol Hill has been very supportive of NASA's annual budget and has denied little of what the administration requested for space exploration.

*Daniel E. Cassidy
Counsel, Committee on Science and Technology
U.S. House of Representatives*

*What Mao
Unleashed*

The articles on "Mao's China" [*WQ*, Autumn '80] fail to address a fundamental question about the Cultural Revolution:

How was it possible for this cataclysm to occur in the first place? Dick Wilson [in "The Great Helmsman"] would have one believe that it was the doing of just one man named Mao Zedong. Present Beijing leaders ingenuously blame it all on the "Gang of Four."

China's Cultural Revolution was not a political abstraction, but a holocaust that disrupted the lives of tens of millions of people. Whether we believe it was fought for revolutionary ideals or for pride and greed depends mostly on our view of human nature. Whatever the motives at the start, something went wrong as friend turned against friend, and in 1967 China reached the brink of civil war.

The disturbing implication is that the guilt lies not only with Mao and the infamous "Gang" but also with the system and the society itself. Whatever Mao "unleashed" took on a life of its own as it was carried to its conclusion by many others.

On one level, the Cultural Revolution was simply a massive power struggle. On another level, it seemed at first to promise a short cut to Marx's promised land. This was to be achieved by breaking with the past once and for all. But by attacking the past, the Chinese found that they were attacking themselves. As utopia slipped out of reach, irrationality and cruelty rushed into the vacuum.

The Chinese have condemned the Cultural Revolution, but they have not explained it. Removing Mao from his pedestal, restoring the positions and reputations of those cast aside, and sentencing Mao's widow and her cohorts will be cathartic—but it will not be enough.

The larger issue is how to restore badly damaged faith in the system. China will have to relive the horrors of the Cultural Revolution many times before its real meaning can be understood. Only then will we know if it was a noble experiment gone haywire or a glorified reign of terror. The Cultural Revolution was a turning point for China; we do not yet know precisely in what direction.

Terry E. Lutz
China Council
The Asia Society
Washington, D.C.

The China Scholars

I don't know how many of Harry Harding's friends will still be talking to him after his salutary analysis of the gullibility of Sinologists over the Cultural Revolution ["Reappraising the Cultural Revolution," *WQ*, Autumn 1980]. But, as one of those who escaped quotation, may I defend some of those who did not?

Of course, there is little excuse for the "200 percenters" who were so enamored with the officially proclaimed goals of the Cultural Revolution that they failed to suspect other motives, brushed aside the chaos and bloodshed that it entailed, and hoped to reproduce it in their own lands.

But Harding is slightly unfair to some of his colleagues by implying that their analyses of the objectives of the Revolution either implied commitment, or were wrong. He quotes a couple of scholars who depicted Mao's aim as an assault on bureaucracy, an attempt to diminish the differences between leaders and led. But Harding concedes that bureaucracies were becoming ossified and that Mao's motives were almost certainly sincere. He adds that Mao exaggerated the problem. Certainly, but that does not mean that those who analysed Mao's motives in similar terms, and also assumed his sincerity, were wrong. To do so did not imply personal commitment to those goals on the part of the scholar. (Of course, some scholars were so committed.)

Finally, Harding explains *American* misperceptions of the Revolution partly in terms of lack of access to China. But, at least during the early period of the Cultural Revolution, access to China was of very little assistance in understanding what was happening there (though it might have permitted greater awareness of the violence). For among China's highest leaders, and certainly among provincial leaders, there was considerable confusion as to Mao's motives. The chairman perforce played his cards very close to his chest, and by the time his colleagues discovered what he was about, it was too late.

Roderick MacFarquhar
Wilson Center Fellow

Corrections

Please permit me to point out a factual error in your Summer 1980 issue. In the California chronology on page 62, you have the Central Pacific Railroad meeting the Union Pacific Railroad at Promontory Point, Utah. In fact, they met at Promontory, Utah.

I made the same error in a draft of text for a museum exhibit and was called on it by Barry Combs, Director of Public Relations, Union Pacific Railroad, Omaha, Nebr.

*Bob Strickland
Cheyenne, Wyo.*

It was flattering to have [a review] of my article "The United States and Israel: A Strategic Divide?" published in *The Wilson Quarterly* ["Periodicals," Autumn 1980]. However, I would like to correct the statement that "In late 1977, they [the Carter administration] sought peace talks at Geneva including the Palestinians, the Soviets, and moderate Arab states, in hopes of establishing a Palestinian homeland. But Israel refused to participate." The United States sought peace talks in-

cluding the PLO (not the same as the Palestinians) because the Arabs insisted that the PLO be present. In the "working paper" of October 1977, reached by Israel and the United States in the aftermath of the Soviet-American communiqué, Israel agreed to include "Palestinian," but not PLO, representatives in the proposed Geneva Conference. Hence, contrary to your abstract, Israel never refused to participate in a Geneva Conference including Palestinians and other Arab states. As for "moderate" Arab states, this is totally in error. "Moderation," whatever that means in the Middle East, was not a test for inclusion at Geneva, only agreement by the combatants of the 1973 war that UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 be the basis of their peacemaking.

*Harvey Sickerman
Director, Foreign Policy Research Institute
Philadelphia, Pa.*

We did, in fact, oversimplify to the point of error in our statement implying that Israel refused to participate in the proposed 1977 Geneva peace talks because of the Palestinians' presence. We should have specified that PLO representation was the sticky issue.

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(signed) Peter Braestrup, *Editor*

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