To do nature photography one must conform to nature. The sun and the mountain cannot be moved; one rises with the sun when it lights the colors for you, and you climb to the best view of the mountain nature itself provides. Otherwise you are an alien aiming at nature without seeing it. You may take a picture from nature, but you are unlikely to make one with it.

David Lange, a Christ College and Engineering student at Valparaiso University, is a film-maker and photographer and contributed the nature studies featured throughout this issue.
Where's Mama?

"God, motherhood, the flag, and apple pie" once were the popular symbols of the American creed. At the moment apple pie remains the only unquestioned symbol of that creed. Indeed, in some quarters motherhood has nearly swung from a symbol of all that is good to a symbol of all that is evil.

Extreme views, of course, justify or excuse the extremist's behavior. The Victorian extremist view of motherhood as the symbol of all that is good justified men in keeping some women unspotted from the world while they could happily get spotted with the world. Mother mythically on the pedestal could uphold the virtues which father could drop whenever necessary. The real world, after all, was a man's world, and mother was always slightly out of it because she was too good for it.

To nobody's surprise extremists similarly excuse and justify their behavior today with the new view of motherhood as the symbol of all that is evil. Having recently read Brooke Hayward's Haywire, scanned Christina Crawford's Mommie Dearest, and seen Ingmar Bergman's Autumn Sonata, the editor was vividly reminded of the efforts presently afoot to scapegoat mothers—especially working mothers—with the psychological ills of their children. Mother moves from the pedestal to the stocks, rack, and whipping post. If the all good mother symbolically upheld our morals for us while we dallied, the all bad mother now is the very excuse for our neuroses. The new extremists conveniently account for their ills with "Mommie made me do it."

Motherhood is too important to leave it to mothers, and we all can help free it from the pedestal and whipping post. Presently that role needs to be demythed of extreme symbolic views and furnished with the social and psychological support systems which do not force real mothers into acting out the symbolic extremes.

Helping us think about contemporary motherhood is our March alumni columnist, Martha Bringewatt Nord. Having graduated from the University with a social work major in 1970, Mrs. Nord received her elementary teaching certification from the University of Minnesota in 1972 and taught for two years in a one-room school in North Dakota.

Residing now in Madison, Wisconsin, she serves as president of the Madison Association for the Education of Young Children, as an advisor to a state legislature committee for the revision of the state children's code, and as a co-ordinator of a network of family day care homes. Mrs. Nord herself provides day care in her home for her daughter Amelia and four other children whose mothers work.

The Cresset welcomes alumna Nord to In Luce Tua.

The Editor

March, 1979

IN LUCE TUA

Making Options For Mothers

Martha Bringewatt Nord

Full-time day care for infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers is becoming a common institution in the United States. One of the first questions friends ask when someone announces, "I'm going to have a baby," is, "Will you be going back to work?" Increasingly, women are answering, "Yes." Sometimes the father will stay home to do the parenting while the mother is working. But much more often, if a mother works full time, the parents must find someone else to care for their child—usually in a day care center or in a family day care home ("the babysitter's"). Occasionally, parents will find a caregiver to come to their home.

This routine family situation reflects, in microcosm, an enormous social change. We are restructuring our whole system of child rearing without adequate thought being given to the change by parents and society in general. I find it ironic and unfortunate that under this new "liberated" system of child care parents often have as little freedom of choice as they had in the past. Increasingly, women are "expected" to return to work in much the same way as they once were "expected" to stay home. And if they do go back to work they have, or at least think they have, little choice other than a full-time job away from home and full-time day care for their child.

Statistics abound which are usually interpreted to indicate the need for more day care facilities. Senator Alan Cranston of California is currently drafting new legislation designed to increase the availability and affordability of day care for low-income working parents. Discussing his reasons for drafting such a bill, he told Congress last August (Congressional Record, Aug. 24, 1978) that the need for more child care services is much greater now than it was eight years ago. According to Department of Labor statistics, 41 percent of mothers of children under the age of six are now in the labor force. This adds up to 6.4 million preschool children in need of care, Cranston said, yet there are only 1.6 million licensed child-care openings in centers and homes across the country.

Parents facing the job of finding adequate day care for their young children, especially for infants and toddlers, run up against this shortage nearly everywhere, and they plead for more facilities. Communities are struggling to try to meet the need with the help of limited day care money available from government. To be opposed to the
establishment of more day care facilities in response to such obvious need would be absurd. There is no doubt that many children are being poorly cared for in make-shift and overcrowded arrangements—or cared for not at all. High quality day care must be a priority for our nation.

But more day care is not the only answer and should not be the only priority. I would like our legislators and parents also to consider seriously and give more support to something like the “traditional” system of child rearing. I would like staying home with one’s own children to be a real option for mothers, now that it is no longer a “given” in our society. I am interested in a kind of support for that option that it never had in its traditional past.

For many mothers, especially single mothers, staying home to raise children is not an option today. Many are working to meet subsistence needs. This was true for many of the mothers I talked with when I was coordinator of a network of family day care homes in Madison, Wisconsin. They wanted desperately to avoid the stigma of being “welfare mothers.” It is generally accepted in our society that being on welfare is bad; struggling to stay off the “dole” is good. Citing the case of a mother who stayed home and went on welfare because she couldn’t find adequate day care, Senator Cranston, in his remarks to Congress last August, said, “Another willing worker is added to the millions on the welfare rolls.” Obviously we are supposed to think, “What a shame! Now she is only being a mother instead of doing something useful.” That kind of attitude produces a welfare system that encourages mothers of young children to work at low-paying jobs and that ignores or only superficially considers the needs of their children.

Some specialists in early childhood development think this is a disastrous perversion of social values. Selma Frailberg, a professor of child psychoanalysis at the University of Michigan Medical School, denounces the welfare system in the United States as a system which makes a mockery of our professed belief that “our children are our most precious resource.” In her recent book, Every Child’s Birthright: In Defense of Mothering, Frailberg argues, as others have, that what the poor need is money, not an array of programs that seldom work to eliminate poverty or to alleviate its effects. A “success” story under current welfare ideology is a poor mother working full time at minimum wage, paying half her meager salary away to have her children stored for the day at a warehouse operated by strangers. Frailberg believes that the best thing for child care in this country would be an income system that would bring the poor out of extreme poverty—a program that would cost billions but that is absolutely necessary if people, and especially children, are what matter.

In another important recent study, All Our Children: The American Family Under Pressure, Kenneth Keniston and the Carnegie Council on Children argue for a society that believes being a parent is as important a job as any other, and worthy of public support. Similarly, the Center for the Study of Public Policy in its Feasibility Report and Design of an Impact Study of Day Care concludes that from the standpoint of child development it would be good policy to make enough public money and public guidance available to poor mothers to allow them to take care of their own children if they wish.

So—there are the poor, whose options usually depend on the moods and whims of the rest of us. And then there is the much talked and written about “squeezed middle class,” whose options are decreasing with increasing inflation. Many young families have two parents working full time just to live at a reasonable, nonextravagant American standard of living. These parents feel they must work and find day care for their children. Inflation is limiting middle-class families’ options, too.

**On Buying Your Child a Full-time Parent**

But I think much of the talk about the “squeezed middle class” is overdone. Many of us simply don’t need as much money as we think we need. We have more options than we think we have. Many families who think they need two full-time incomes to “make it” could do just fine on one or one and a half.

I’m always surprised, upset, and disillusioned when I see in myself and other young parents, who supposedly came of age in the Sixties, the same materialism we vowed we’d never accept. Our Sixties awareness has turned from anti-materialism to the “correct” materialism of the Seventies—the natural, the nifty, the self-fulfillment life style. We buy and restore older homes in the city, we jog in the right shoes and sweatsuits, we eat spinach quiche and drink white wine, we buy nice clothes and expensive toys for ourselves and our children that belie any talk about being “squeezed.” Some of the things we middle-class young families do and buy in the Seventies are silly and in themselves, and they are absolutely absurd if they are the reasons that families need two incomes to “make it.”

I’d like those of us who are young, middle-class, two-parent families attracted by the new and very expensive materialism to consider the options that we are lucky enough to have. We can live very well without some of the frills we could afford with the income from two full-time jobs. Most middle-class parents use much of their second income to buy things they think will be good for their children. All I’m suggesting is that they consider buying their children a full-time parent—that they use the second income by giving it up.

Up to this point, I have been talking about mothers working for the income a job produces. But what about mothers who choose to work because it is fulfilling for them to continue their careers? What about the modern, liberated woman? I think women with careers they enjoy and want to continue in should have the option of not working full time, at least while their children are very
young. Part-time work is the obvious way for a woman to earn money and to maintain her career while still spending most of her time with her child or children. Many women I've worked with in finding child care would love to have this option. Unfortunately, they don't. The labor market is as much stacked against the mother seeking professional part-time work as the welfare system is stacked against the poor mother. Both systems are anti-motherhood. Over the range of the higher-paid occupations, there is a larger demand for than supply of good part-time jobs. Many employers do not consider part-time work as legitimate. In many professions, part-time jobs are virtually non-existent. Very often benefits are not available to part-time employees, and pressure is put on them to go to full-time status.

Anti-Motherhood in the Labor Market

School teaching may be the best example of the absurdities of this system. Here is a profession dominated by women workers and perfectly suited to part-time work. Many of the young mothers I knew when I was an elementary teacher would have loved to work part time, but couldn't. Nor could they take more than a year's leave of absence without losing their position. Yet the country is filled with new, unemployed teachers crying for jobs. What an odd thing! The employed and the unemployed wanting to share the work, but an archaic administrative structure prohibiting it.

There is some hope on the horizon, however. With the growing demand for part-time work, some employers are beginning to wake up and to see benefits both for themselves and for their employees. Parent groups have also begun to put pressure on the various levels of government to see their responsibilities as employers. The State of Wisconsin has made a formal, if somewhat watered-down, commitment to expand opportunities for part-time employment in state agencies. And a current mayoral candidate in Madison has written the following into his policy statement on child care:

The City of Madison is not only a government, but is also an employer. As an employer, the City should adopt personnel policies which recognize the family obligations of its employees. The City should attempt to increase the flexibility of its workers' hours and should actively support job sharing and alternative work patterns. Finally, the City should use its influence to increase the responsiveness of private sector employers in these areas.

But why should families seriously consider not having two parents working full time while their young children are in day care? There is not much good research, certainly nothing definitive, on the effects of day care on young children in the United States. What there is suggests that high quality day care, especially if the mothers feel good about working, probably is not harmful. But I share the worries of Selma Frailberg, who has studied extensively infant affectional bonding and development. She believes that taking a young child away, for eight to ten hours a

Continued on next page
day, five days a week, from the people who care most for
him and for whom he cares most is asking to much of the
developing child. A young child's sense of himself is
largely a reflection of what those around him feel about
him. I think it is essential that little children spend most
of their time—more than just evenings and weekends—
with people who love them incredibly much, who are
truly "bonded" to them. The child needs to be with
people who not only care about him as no one else does,
but who also know him as no one else can, who know his
whole short history and can respond to his needs
accordingly. Many day care providers are excellent care-
givers, loving and knowledgeable. But seldom does day
care actually provide the "substitute mother care" that
Frailberg sees as the only adequate day care. Even day
care homes and centers considered good, she says, often
fail to provide the "stability, continuity, and predictability
in human partnerships for the fullest realization of a
child's potentials for love, for trust, for learning and self-
worth." If day care is to work well for the happiness of
children and parents, it must become a kind of stable
extended family. This, unfortunately, seldom occurs.

**Mothering Is Not Housewifery!**

I sympathize with the view of many young women that
working full time at one's career while having a young
child or children is more attractive than being the stereo-
typed housewife: a woman forced to do boring, repetitive,
unstimulating, silly, or needless tasks from morn 'til
night, with no respect from herself or others, while longing
for freedom and a life of her own. And that stereotype, of
course, has grown out of the reality of many women's
lives. But this stereotype has nothing to do with what I'm
talking about. Mothering is not housewifery! In fact,
housewifery is frequently as much a retreat from mother-
hood as outside work is.

The kind of mothering that I am interested in women
doing and society supporting is important, stimulating
work—and generally great fun. It means really knowing
and understanding and enjoying our own children as no
one else can. It means helping our children become
complete human beings. It means planning days around
the physical, emotional, social, and learning needs of our
children, knowing that such work is at least as important
as any other job we could do, and knowing that this does
not mean losing our own identities.

Most of all, I want people to have real options. I realize
that for many families choosing to use full-time day care
may be best. And we need to work hard to create excellent
day care facilities. But, as day care becomes more and
more common and accepted, I want the option of not
using it also to be a real one for all parents. I want full-
time parenting to be a serious and happy choice that
everyone has a chance to make.
Rather than ignore or denigrate popular culture, some have now begun to study it seriously. What forms does popular culture take? Why and how does it change? What effects does it have? What does it tell us about ourselves and our world?

Politics and Popular Culture

Some Directions for Inquiry

James Combs

Popular culture is one of the facts of American life in the late twentieth century. The whole miasma of popular culture is a creature of democratic society combined with the technological innovations of this epoch. It is so much a part of our lives that we take it for granted—radio, newspapers, magazines, books, movies, television, recordings, language fads, sports, and so on. Popular culture phenomena are of such recent vintage that we still do not know how to treat them: as a new form of art or as kitsch, as harmless or as corrupting. The various criticisms—aristocratic, democratic, and Marxist—which have been made of popular culture tend to see it as lowbrow, demeaning, and vulgar. Yet if one looks carefully at some popular creations (say, John Ford’s movie *Stagecoach* or Raymond Chandler’s novel *Farewell, My Lovely*), one has to admit that popular art is not necessarily bad because it is popular. On the other hand, the popularity of sex ‘n’ violence formulas in contemporary movies and Mickey Spillaine novels is no great recommendation of popular taste.

It is probable that the aesthetic status and even the social desirability of popular culture will never be settled. But both the humanities and the social sciences are faced with the actuality of popular culture phenomena. Rather than ignore or denigrate popular culture, some have now begun to study it seriously. What forms does popular culture take? Why and how does it change? What effects does it have? What does it tell us about ourselves and our world? There now exists a massive literature about popular culture, and an association of scholars (the Popular Culture Association) dedicated to its study. The best work in the field indicates that popular culture, rather than being irrelevant and trivial, is both a mirror and a lamp—a mirror, in that it reflects much of our beliefs, anxieties, and fantasies; and a lamp, in that it illuminates popular choices, conflicts, and trends. Archaeologists of the future will learn much about twentieth century America by unearthing theme parks, viewing videotapes of *Gunsmoke*, and studying advertising. This is not to say that “high culture” would be ignored or even equated with popular culture, only that both tell us something about a people and what they value. The Pompeii exhibit included both Roman heroic statuary and wall pornography, and both tell us something about the Romans!

It is my central contention here that political science, as well as other social sciences, can utilize the concepts, methods, and findings of the study of popular culture to illuminate aspects of the political process. The political scientist should study popular culture because it is one important index to the hopes and fears, images and ideas, moods and responses, of mass publics. Further, one can see in popular artifacts—rituals, games, icons, mythical forms, etc.—manifestations of American culture which give the inquirer “entry” into cultural processes denied other approaches. Popular phenomena like the Super Bowl, the “electronic church,” and the science-fiction movie are products of a cultural and historical milieu, and constitute social imagery which reflects meaningful messages about our time and place. Much of the social imagery of popular artifacts—the movies, for instance—contains implicit or explicit themes which are amenable to political interpretation.

Thus popular culture is important not merely for what it overtly depicts but also for what it covertly reveals. A popular artifact may become, for instance, an expression of popular myths. The myth of the West in the United States has been subjected to considerable scrutiny, not the least of which has been to study the themes and changes over time in popular literature, movies, and TV shows about the West. Westerns tell us implicitly much more about our present than they do about our past. The Western motif has been a uniquely American setting to dramatize, in a “displaced” manner, current conflicts,
It is worth considering whether we are in a sustained Era of Ill Feelings, with the extension of vengeance to institutions other than the Presidency, and of the triumph of a politics of punishment.

concerns, and moods. The classical Western hero is transformed over time from the self-reliant servant of community values into such “modern” figures as Maverick, a “devout coward” of easy virtue and self-serving motives; Clint Eastwood’s “men with no name,” who is amoral and violent; professional groups such as the “Wild Bunch,” who find society valueless and are loyal only to professional values and groups. All of these transformations in themes—as well as many others—speak to aspects of a present that people can identify: the rise of other-directed, non-heroic modern men; the awareness of amoral and violent tendencies among those formerly thought heroic; adherence to professional to the exclusion of social values.

On face, one might think that Westerns would not include political themes of interest, yet on closer examination they do. In particular, the Western “morality play” becomes a “displaced” setting in which we can enact in dramatic forms things which are on our mind, or at least which are in the interesting transformations in the “formula” which speak to changes in mass attitudes about community and authority. The traditional Western format, in the words of John Wiley Nelson, is “the classic ritual form, the ‘High Mass,’ of the predominant American belief system.” In the traditional story, the community is saved, and the authority of the social values of the “good people” preserved through the intervention of a heroic figure who acts for the community. Shane is perhaps the most sophisticated version of this, but it was standard fare in the Republic Pictures (Roy Rogers, et al.) formula of the 1930s and 1940s. But, as Nelson points out, as times changed, the Westerns reflected changes in attitude and perspective. In Red River, for example, the authority figure of John Wayne is complicated, reflecting postwar ambivalence about authority. High Noon shows a community which is afraid to stand up to evil, and abandons those who do. Bad Day at Black Rock reveals a community which resists justice because of a shared evil.

By the 1960s and 1970s, the “anti-Western” (e.g., Hombre, McCabe and Mrs. Miller, and High Plains Drifter) shows communities which are so corrupt they are not worth saving, and has heroes who are not only independent of the authority of the community, but use or even destroy the community. The political inference is not hard to draw: the progressive disillusionment with political authority and the political community of America by many in the wake of the Cold War, the whips and scorns of racism, Vietnam, and Watergate, resonated in the changing themes of Westerns. The political experience of a nation becomes a “background” for popular culture enactments, and they give us an all too uncomfortable glimpse at what we believe about ourselves.

Let me offer another example of contemporary interest. One of the recurrent popular themes in 1970s movies has been the power and indestructibility of evil. Movies about Satanic possession, devil worship, and the like were enormously popular. The Exorcist was a hit, followed by The Omen and many others. One saw this theme in other formulas: Halloween, in many ways a classic cheap-thrills horror movie, concludes with the amoral and threatening “bogeyman” escaping, with the implication that he is lurking “out there” eternally. Indeed, man’s helplessness against violent power, whether random or organized, was a major theme in 1970s crime films (The Godfather I and II) and catastrophe movies (Jaws, The Towering Inferno). The popularity of such a broad theme tells us something about that unhappy time: a post Vietnam and Watergate period in which there was great political and social disillusionment, chronic economic woes, the shift of power and wealth to strange or hostile areas of the world, and a general distrust and exploitation of each other and institutions. Thus these movie formulas were successful because they struck upon a mass feeling, mood, malaise, and displaced it into mythical settings where we could witness it and respond to it.

In a post-liberal and post-empire age, these recent movie formulas expressed what many sensed: the resiliency of evil, man’s helplessness against evil, the omnipresent threat of evil. However, these films offer something else: we can vicariously witness—and enjoy—the punishment of the wicked. Both random and directed violence, although evil, usually winds up killing those who have transgressed in some way. The Godfather movies establish the guilt or folly of people before they are (illegally) killed; in The Exorcist, the priest who is of weakest faith is possessed and dies; catastrophe movies depict a natural force (a fire, shark, or comet) selecting for destruction those who have done bad things; in Halloween, those teenagers who drink, smoke pot, and “fool around” are murdered by “The Shape”; the one who is “straight” survives. It is as if evil has a positive function in the world, punishing those who deserve it and whom society will no longer punish!

In any case, there must be an unstated mass enjoyment of evil forces, what Robert Jewett and John Lawrence in their brilliant The American Monomyth call “Tertullian ecstasy,” spectator pleasure at seeing great evil punish individual evils. One might even speculate that this mood pervades the politics of the 1970s: that we secretly enjoy seeing the fall and humiliation of the mighty, relish seeing Presidents fail, wallow in the political disasters of the age. Along with “Tertullian ecstasy” we experience “Titanic irony,” a wry sense of satisfaction at seeing political Titans sink. Watergate was perhaps something of a “Godfather” movie, with the evil but powerful leader and his “Family” finally destroyed by what many felt were equally corrupt political institutions. The fall of Saigon was something of a catastrophe movie. Evil in high places is depicted in the many conspiracy theories which attribute ulterior motives and evil forces at work.
There is a recurrent theme of craving for authority on the part of the masses, but it tends to be unsatisfied in traditional institutions and rises "naturally" from a leader who emerges from the mass.

in every political action, e.g., the recognition of China. The indestructibility of threatening violence is observed in the inexhaustible supply of political terrorist groups. Although such analogies may be strained, it is worth considering whether we are in a sustained Era of Ill Feelings, with the extension of vengeance to institutions other than the Presidency, and of the triumph of a politics of punishment.

This extended example illustrates the provocative quality of popular culture inquiry. Although foci and interpretations may vary, the field is quickly developing a conceptual vocabulary and literature. Analysis of popular culture can be adapted to a variety of scholarly and pedagogical uses. It is my view here that the discipline of political science can utilize popular culture for its own disciplinary purposes. Popular culture studies have scientific interest, in that analysis of such popular artifacts reveal aspects of political processes, especially those micro-political phenomena at the individual level—attitudes, images, stereotypes, and myths. The imaginative worlds that people occupy are collectively portrayed in popular culture objects. The study of popular culture also contributes to the humanistic purposes of political studies, expanding our awareness of mass tastes, prejudices, and political myths. We can use popular culture artifacts to point out trends, images, and ideas which give us clues as to the political state of mind of mass publics. Such awareness offers the inquirer a better understanding of the cultural milieu in which politics and government take place.

When President Nixon went to China in 1972, CBS did a program entitled "Misconceptions about China" which has become something of a classic. It simply used clips from movies, both Hollywood and government-produced, which showed how popular culture enacted our myths about China, both good and bad. In the 1990s, there was the child-like simplicity and goodness of the Chinese peasant and the evil machinations of war-lords and Fu Manchus, including sexual designs on white women; in the 1940s, there were the heroic Chinese under Chiang and the "Dragon Lady," Madame Chiang; then there were the evil Chinese, the Communists who acted like left-wing war lords, killing missionaries and raping white women; the Korean War offered a new setting for the myth of the "yellow peril," with images of the endless hordes of "Chicoms"; and there were throughout the good Americans, whose motives were of the highest and who had a soft spot in their hearts for the Chinese people. It is fruitless to discuss whether there was any accuracy in these images, but it is worth stressing that such images have a political effect. They reinforce or create images and attitudes which color our political reactions. We were hurt that the Communists didn't want us and condemned us; we searched for scapegoats who "lost" China; and we dealt with the confusion that the "real" China—the good Chinese who still loved and wanted us—was on Formosa, and that the evil China either was a monolithic threat or did not exist. The "China lobby" was in many ways a creature of Hollywood. Awareness of the effect such fictional creations might have on our political imagery strikes me as a worthwhile educational goal.

One of the larger questions that political inquiry might undertake in this area is the extent to which popular culture affects our image of politics. Does popular culture reinforce, change, undermine, or otherwise alter our view of the political world? Certainly this charge has been made of mass media news. But what about movies, sitcoms, comics, soap operas? On a current ABC daytime soap, Ryan's Hope, a character named Frank Ryan has been involved in politics, and in typical soap fashion, his tangled personal life has been central to political defeat and success. But beyond the sordid details of Frank Ryan's personal life, the image of politics conveyed by such a popular vehicle may have a mass impact that we have yet to calculate. It is not untypical for soap operas to portray politics as corrupt and demeaning, having to deal with media moguls and underworld bosses, even though one is (at heart) good and a liberal reformer, not to mention handsome. Too, the central issue in campaigns for office tends to be personal morality, while political issues are minor. So we ask: does such portrayal tend to increase mass identification of politics as evil, of political good guys as handsome and liberal, of personal morality as the primary political issue?

Another phenomenon worthy of further study is contemporary political use of popular culture. Political actors and organizations make great use of "stars" for fundraising or other purposes. The Bob Hope Christmas shows from Vietnam, for example, served governmental purposes both with the reassuring imagery that the "G.I.s" are happy in a trying setting and the explicit supportive messages about war. Candidates for office like to be seen with actors and other entertainers, and politicians such as Jerry Brown have made much use of celebrity friends such as Linda Ronstadt. But the question for inquiry is why this is so. Similarly, why do we "celebritize" political figures? Do we now believe that celebrities, political or otherwise, occupy the same mythical, remote world, and that what they share are attributes of stardom? Have we imported show biz standards of evaluation into politics?

Popular culture artifacts come to have symbolic meaning for people and become the object of political action. It is worth investigating why this is so, especially in terms of the political meanings which are attached to them. In many cases it is obvious: a popular object conveys a political message which people respond to. When the film All Quiet on the Western Front was released in Germany, it was picketed and condemned by the Nazis for its antiwar theme and finally was banned by the Weimar government.
Certain themes do tend to persist, such as the redeemer theme, the myth that an innocent individual, who retains the ideals of the community, can through heroic action save the political order.

But in more indirect and subtle ways, popular culture artifacts became an expression of anxieties and wishes which have great political import, even if they are not overtly about politics. The Billy Jack movies, for instance, expressed a dark view of straight society and a desire to quickly—and violently—resolve social oppression that had enormous appeal among those affected by the revolution of the 1960s. These films were symbolic dramas for such audiences, fleshing out in a mythical setting political views that had developed among them. The unredeemable ignorance and evil of authority, of most adults, and the wealthy, all of whom have been corrupted by lust and greed are contrasted with the “kids” of the Freedom School, whose communal, egalitarian, and altruistic values are supplemented by a political militancy against stupid and brutal authority.

Indeed, attitudes toward authority and authoritative roles are reinforced or even changed by popular culture. Popular culture depicts authority in different eras in ways that give much insight as to that particular time's feeling about authority, including political authority. Siegfried Kracauer's justly famous From Caligari to Hitler notes the deprecation of authority in many German films of the Weimar period, including The Blue Angel. One can trace the trends in American films of different decades. In the 1930s, authority figures—bankers, magnates, politicians—were often portrayed as insensitive pluto­crats with no sympathy for the plight of the many. Politicians, judges, and official bureaucrats were portrayed as elderly, inept, or corrupt. As Andrew Bergman points out in his We're in the Money, there is a recurrent theme of craving for authority on the part of masses, but it tends to be unsatisfied in traditional institutions and arises “naturally” from a leader who emerges from the mass. The depiction of political authority is much more supportive during World War II, but the post-war period has much more ambivalence and by the late 1960s, downright hostility. The film All the President's Men depicts a dark and sinister Washington (much like Chinatown, another film of the period, “nobody knows what's going on”), where Presidential authority is God-father-like: powerful but illegitimate, reigning over an intimidated and fearful community, maintaining control by suppression rather than persuasion. The popular culture depiction of authority may, then, take on aspects of the authorities in the social milieu of a particular present.

Certain themes do tend to persist, such as the redeemer theme, the myth that an innocent individual, who retains the ideals of the community, can through heroic action save the political order, or at least rectify some political wrong. Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939) is the classic example, but the theme persists in a variety of more recent popular culture artifacts. The aforementioned All the President's Men portrays Woodward and Bernstein as innocent outsiders, energetic and idealistic young reporters who must deal with the hostility and threat of the corrupted political community to reveal the truth. They are not tempted by women, drink, or money, and through heroic action bring down the mighty. Indeed, even though there may be major stylistic changes in the depiction of political heroism, the myth of the virtuous individual fighting against and triumphing over the evils of the system persists. In the late 1960s, the TV series The Bold Ones included a segment called “The Senator.” Hal Holbrook portrayed a political hero as a kind of amalgam of the Kennedys: charismatic, liberal, sophisticated, adept at problem-solving and crisis-management (in one episode he cools a Kent State-like shooting by public hearings). By contrast, an NBC series in the late 1970s entitled Grandpa Goes to Washington was on face very different. Jack Albertson played a Senator-hero as a sort of Grandpa Walton, a political innocent who is homespun, ordinary, and unsophisticated. His skill is not dealing with Big Events, but in small symbolic issues (he stops the President from having a birthday party for his daughter at taxpayer's expense) and running benevolent errands for his constituents (fighting the bureaucracy to get the pension for an aging and broke actress). The differences, of course, do reflect two eras: we expect dynamic action in the former (a la Robert Kennedy), and simple virtue in the latter (a la Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan). But the underlying continuity is clear also: like Mr. Smith and other earlier political heroes of popular culture, these two Senators are essentially individual heroes who are arrayed against the eternal evils of politics: inertia, corruption, bureaucracy, selfish interests, fear.

Thus the inquirer who wishes to use popular culture in the study of politics is faced with the difficult task of identifying continuity and change, what is enduring in popular depictions of politics and what is new. On one hand, one can deal with the cosmic and reciprocal relationship between the social milieu which popular culture helps create and sustain and politics and government. On the other hand, one can treat the specifics of themes in one genre or artifact which relates to politics. The rise of sports, for example, can be treated in terms of the broad historical and social processes of which it is a part and how that relates to politics; or a specific-event—the NFL playoffs—can be linked to the political system (the Presidential primary system is very reminiscent of sports playoff systems, and is even reported in similar terms). The student of popular culture has to develop an eye for the larger meaning of what is often taken for granted or thought trivial; he must realize that the most mundane and seemingly irrelevant popular creations may have a significance that transcends the objects themselves. Popular culture is one major way of understanding what we are, politically and otherwise.
William Olmsted

Meditation on Boredom

Nous ne savons plus féconder l'ennui.
—Paul Valéry

The gods were bored, and so they created man. Adam was bored because he was alone, and so Eve was created. Thus boredom entered the world, and increased in proportion to the increase in population. Adam was bored alone; then Adam and Eve were bored en famille; then the population of the world increased, and peoples were bored en masse. To divert themselves they conceived the idea of constructing a tower high enough to reach the heavens. The idea is itself as boring as the tower was high, and constitutes a terrible proof of how boredom gained the upper hand. The nations were scattered over the earth, just as people now travel abroad, but they continued to be bored.

—Søren Kierkegaard

That nature hates a vacuum is exemplified by the mind when nothing much is going on. Goya's well-known etching shows how the sleep of reason breeds monsters, and this enlightenment adage has been experimentally confirmed by researchers into the effects of stimulus deprivation. Healthy individuals will begin to hallucinate promptly when shut in a dark room or left to float blindfolded in a tub of water heated to body temperature. As far as the mind is concerned, it would seem that the production of mirages is preferable to the beholding of nothingness. We are struck with admiration for those rare souls—mystics, artists, prisoners, missionaries—who embrace the void and turn it to good account. Leonardo would stare at a blank wall until marvelous figures appeared and Ruysbroek encountered the fullness of God's nature from long gazing at a polished disk; but for most of us, I suspect, such situations are to be avoided.

It is difficult to have confidence in the mind's power to overcome single handedly, as it were, the gigantic force of the boring. Safety from boredom, as from other enemies of man, often seems to lie in numbers; yet complete immunity cannot be guaranteed even by family, friends, and crowds. Paradoxically enough, these social remedies for boredom may hasten its onset and emphasize its acuity. The experience of boredom is probably universal and, in the absence of proven antidotes, impossible to exterminate. The circumstances favorable to boredom are well-known but its forms are so variable that, like the common cold, predictions concerning its duration and severity are usually inaccurate.

Boredom's mutability and capacity for adaptation are indicated by a rich vocabulary of synonyms and near-synonyms: tedium, monotony, ennui, doldrums, fidgets, dog days, sloth, lethargy, torpor, apathy (in the modern rather than Stoic sense), narcolepsy, spleen, and existential anxiety. The subtle distinctions within the lexicon of boredom indicate how formidable an undertaking it would require to analyze the phenomenon properly; and I offer the following remarks simply as a kind of meditation inscribed around Valéry's observation on the modern world: we no longer know how to make boredom fruitful.

The serious study of boredom commences with the rise of monastic communities. In the fourth and fifth centuries of our era such early fathers as Evagrius, Cassian, and Saint John Chrysostomos described the monkish malady of acedia. A sin later described as sloth, acedia was initially regarded as something akin to what we would call melancholy, boredom, or depression. The Moralia of Gregory the Great, written near the close of the sixth century, makes acedia the source of various "daughter-sins": malice, rancor, pusillanimity, despair, torpor concerning the Commandments, a wandering of the mind around forbidden things. Despite the athletic and self-mortifying cures devised for acedia, the malady continued to appear. Indeed, acedia's inevitability would seem to stem from the very circumstances which make the contemplative life possible: silence, seclusion, ascetic practices, ritual continuity.

William Olmsted studied at the University of Paris and with the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago where he was awarded his M.A. and Ph.D. Mr. Olmsted is presently Assistant Professor of Humanities in Christ College of Valparaiso University.

March, 1979
From the late Middle Ages through the Renaissance, the concept of acedia remains fairly stable, although there is growing emphasis on its kinship with melancholy. From the historical point of view it is difficult to say whether or not boredom itself undergoes a change; but in its close association with melancholy, boredom successfully invades the courts of princes and the workshops of artists. If boredom is traditionally the hazard of peaceable kingdoms, in modern life it arises from a combination of circumstances which cannot be identified with a leisurely or otiose existence. Valéry, writing in 1935, notes that, “Interruption, incoherence, surprise are the ordinary conditions of our life. They have even become real needs for many individuals whose minds now feed, as it were, only on sudden changes and constantly renewed excitations.” This modern craving for stimulation, Valéry argues, must lead to an enfeeblement and attenuation of our sensibilities; we may have forsaken the boredom of quiet lives only to plunge ourselves into a brutish stupefaction.

The Industrialization of Culture

Such a prognosis is frightening, but hardly new; similar trepidations were voiced, beginning with William Blake and mounting in frequency throughout the nineteenth century, as soon as it became apparent that certain fruits of the Industrial Revolution were noxious. The evils spawned by “the dark, satanic mills” (as Blake put it) were no doubt legion; but the excessive optimism (as it must seem to us) which the industrial age generated in its partisans was not a matter of blind folly. We tend to assume that repetitious labor has always been dull. We acknowledge the democratic character of boredom; we do not restrict it to the cloister and the palace but locate it as well in the cornfield and the sweatshop. The relative modernity of this belief in the boring effects of hard labor becomes apparent when it is contrasted with post-Renaissance attitudes. The early sixteenth century marks the decline of Renaissance humanism— with its emphasis on leisure, humanistic studies, the dignity of the individual—and the emergence of what we now call the work-ethic. The beneficial effects of hard work were acclaimed by Protestants and Catholics alike; a flood of tracts and sermons attests to the ecumenical nature of the belief that idle hands are the devil’s workshop.

During the latter half of the eighteenth century it was widely debated whether happiness were best sought in acitivity or repose; but it was the watchword provided by Voltaire which carried the day: “One must cultivate one’s garden.” Despite many moral and esthetic objections, e.g., Wordsworth’s effort to halt the railway through the Lake District, the Romantics were unable to shake the prevailing faith in the virtues of industrialization. Indeed, the Romantic reaction was undermined from the start by the disappearance of aristocratic patronage and the new dependence of artists, writers, musicians on middleclass tastes. By the 1830s, as Balzac remarked, it was necessary for literature to present “a commercial surface.” For successful artists, the industrialization of culture brought unprecedented wealth; but it also imposed the necessity of regularized production. Novels, canvases, scores and libretti were written, painted, and composed on schedule.

The industrial approach entered the educational field as well. In Hard Times Dickens attacked the new pedagogy, exemplified by Mr. Gradgrind’s school, as a method of “murdering the innocent” with facts and calculations: “So Mr. McChoakumchild began in his best manner. He and some one hundred and forty other schoolmasters had been lately turned at the same time, in the same factory, on the same principles, like so many pianoforte legs.” By mid-century, then, the intrinsic value of work is being occasionally questioned.

In that part of the French Revolution known as the Terror, the poor had become a political force. During the sixty years that separate Saint-Just’s remark that the poor are the power of the earth (“Les malheureux sont la puissance de la terre”) from Victor Hugo’s Les Misérables, full and equitable employment appeared as a universal remedy for social ills. Both France and England at this time abound with social thinkers, utopian reformers, and political economists arguing about the proper organization and most efficient utilization of the labor force; but the intrinsic value of work and the necessity for increased production are never questioned. Then as now it was commonly assumed that there was a direct correlation between unemployment and criminal or antisocial behavior. This assumption was challenged by two contemporaneous developments—the Chartist Movement in England and the 1848 Revolution in France—which indicated that work was no guarantee against mass discontent and political instability.

Kierkegaard was among the first to suggest that sheer bustle and a chicken in every pot might not avert the evil consequences of boredom. Under the pseudonym Victor Eremita, Kierkegaard published in 1843 a short work entitled “The Rotation Method.” Written in a serio-comic style, the essay argues that boredom is the root of all evil. Kierkegaard distinguishes boredom from idleness, which he claims to be a “truly divine life” and the only true good. He then proposes his method for avoiding boredom. The method consists in practicing a thorough arbitrariness which involves a willingness to adopt different viewpoints and a taste for what is accidental. Because Kierkegaard has packed the essay with subtle ironies and deliberate contradictions in preparation for a subsequent rebuttal of this “aesthetic” view by the ethical arguments, it is difficult to separate his facetious and serious meanings. For example, the excerpt quoted on page 11.

Within the ironic context of “The Rotation Method” Kierkegaard has suggested two ideas which bear on the present subject. The first, implicit in the quotation on page 11, is that boredom is intimately related to creativity, technological prowess, sociability, and—perhaps—transcendental aspirations. The second idea is implied in the

distinction between boredom and idleness; and Kierkegaard goes on to state that whereas idleness can be "annulled" by work, boredom cannot. In short, there is no contradiction between boredom and work.

In 1848 there occurred what might be called the first politically significant expression of boredom. A revolution in France toppled the constitutional monarchy of Louis Philippe and set up a short-lived republic. The upheaval was swift and spontaneous; it was heralded by very little in the way of political or economic troubles. Lamartine, the poet who became the first president of the new republic, explained the revolution in concise terms: "France is bored." Can an entire nation be bored? It would seem, in any case, that the revolution took place in circumstances which justify Lamartine's quip and which make Kierkegaard look like a prophet. As a recent historian observes, "A campaign of banquets involving bourgeois intellectuals and pretty bourgeoisie demanded limited reform but excited opinion, and provided accidentally the occasion for a demonstration which was to lead equally accidentally, through shots fired, to revolution." Or, as Kierkegaard explains his remedy for boredom, "You transform something accidental into the absolute.”

The Democratization of Boredom

With the Revolution of 1848, the history of boredom enters its modern phase; and in this period boredom attains a scope and complexity which cannot be discussed adequately here. As the first revolution against boredom, 1848 signals both the democratization of boredom and the commencement of yearning on the part of "an expanded citizenry for a more dramatic political process in which fulfillment could be achieved through the act of participation itself." The desire to get into the act, for no purpose beyond the joy of appearing and participating, becomes a hallmark not only of modern politics, e.g., the "student revolution" of May 1968 in Paris, but of modern culture as well, e.g., Woodstock. Despite Valéry's admonition, it is difficult to assess the significance of all the contemporary phenomena which stem from boredom.

No doubt there are many able to tolerate a high degree of tedium and, foregoing those delirious or idyllic moments when ennui is annulled, are able to achieve a measure of contentment within a life otherwise marked by what Thoreau called "quiet desperation." Yet in some ways such resignation seems no more likely to conquer boredom than does a life spent in hot pursuit of sheer excitement. If we enquire as to the positive aspects of boredom, it is hard to say more than that the presence of the boring, by its very emptiness and nullity, may drive us to explore the sources of inspiration available in our "much-neglected metaphysical unconscious."4

---

2"The phrase is Saul Bellow's; see his interview in Quest, February/March 1979, 30-36.

Photograph by David Lange

Except For The Tree

too late then to penalize Adam or spit back the apple or circumvent Satan. . . .

Except for one tree still untampered the fruits of our gardens are mute now, all imperfect malls under sky gasping gray in a few precious spaces unscraped; submerged in contemptuous chorales universally computered . . . and Eden's been cemented over.

Except for that tree we would starve from our harvest.

Except for its roots grounded in grace and unaltered our feasting would know no forgiveness, no sweet taste of promise in Easter.

Lois Reiner

March, 1979

13
The Politics of the Seventies

Some Preliminary Observations

James A. Nuechterlein

Now that we are well into 1979, a number of political observers are offering preliminary summations of the politics of the Seventies. (See, for example, the caustic [and sometimes incoherent] two-part appraisal by Henry Fairlie in successive January issues of the *New Republic*.) What follow are some personal notes in search of a thesis on this almost-concluded decade.

Political moods do not, of course, conveniently arrange themselves in ten year packages. In terms of atmosphere, one could locate the onset of our current era at the climax of the Watergate crisis in 1974. Watergate fits much better as the last act of the Sixties — which themselves began in 1964. Chronological quibbles aside, most analysts have characterized the Seventies as an age of conservatism. There is some truth in this, but it seems more precise to label the period as an age of confusion. Conservative overtones are present in various ways, but they do not seem to me dominant or clear cut. The contemporary mood is bewildered, eccentric, and irritable, but that, one assumes, does not constitute an adequate summary of conservatism. It would be possible unambiguously to label the current age conservative only if one confined conservatism to a mania for budget-cutting and a generalized suspicion of the efficacy of government programs. But there is more to conservatism than that, and much in the current American scene with which conservatives are not at ease.

The heart of our confusion lies in the collapse of liberalism. America may frequently have been conservative in its politics, but it has always been liberal in its culture. The significance of the New Left of the Sixties was that for the first time in American history a consequential critique from the left directed itself not at conservatism but at liberalism. Liberals did not handle that attack well and have not yet fully recovered from it. Rather than mustering a principled response to radical utopianism, they half succumbed to it in the McGovern campaign of 1972.

The Watergate affair allowed liberals temporarily to evade the implications of the McGovernite debacle, but they still have not rallied themselves from that failure of independent will. Because they could not for a time explain either to others or themselves what separated them from radicals, America's liberals lost the confidence of the public and their own self-assurance. Conservatives were embarrassed by Watergate, but their humiliation issued from the moral failures of an administration, not from ideological uncertainty or surrender.

Liberals remain divided over definitions of both constituency and program and, in America, a liberalism unsure of itself means a nation unsure of itself. The collapse of liberal morale may well be only temporary, but it does leave a political vacuum that neither radicals nor conservatives seem able to fill. Radicalism as a political movement is moribund, although social radicalism continues to display occasional signs of vitality and potential influence. (Achievement of the goals of radical feminism with respect to family structure and human relations, for example, would transform society in the most fundamental ways imaginable, and feminism is still very much alive.)

The condition of conservatism is more complex. The rise of the New Left, and the perceived failure of liberals to react adequately to it, resulted in the emergence of the movement broadly known as neo-conservatism. The most prominent neo-conservatives were former liberals who, dismayed and disillusioned with the political-cultural developments of the Sixties, reexamined their first principles and edged into a political position located ambiguously somewhere between traditional New Deal liberalism and traditional laissez-faire conservatism. (That capsule description greatly oversimplifies a complex phenomenon. I have written in some detail about that development elsewhere: "Neo-Conservatism and Its Critics," *Virginia Quarterly Review*, Autumn 1977.)

One can believe, as I do, that neo-conservatism has important and valuable things to say about American politics and culture, but so far its impact, while not non-existent, has not been great either. Respected journals such as *Commentary* and *The Public Interest* continue to publish provocative and thoughtful articles, but neo-conservatism's intellectual
influence has been limited and its political effects minimal.

The American right is enjoying a political revival, but most of what is known as the New Right has little in common with neo-conservatism and is, in fact, simply a revivification of the Hoover-Taft-Goldwater tradition of laissez-faire conservatism. To put the matter in particular terms: there remains a considerable distance between Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Philip Crane, Ronald Reagan, or Jack Kemp. Similarly, the persuaded reader of Commentary will find himself very much of a double mind as he pages through National Review.

The sense of community, always fragile in a society as disparate and as based in individualistic values as America, cannot for very long withstand the divisive effects of inflationary pressures.

The revival of old-fashioned conservatism flows most directly from the continuing specter of inflation. There is no issue so destructive of middle-class society as uncontrolled inflation. The sense of community, always fragile in a society as disparate and as based in individualistic values as America, cannot for very long withstand the divisive effects of inflationary pressures. The increase in group crankiness so evident in the country could well get out of control unless inflation can be reined in. It may satisfy the needs of our public moralists to issue warnings of a presumed new "social meanness," but it will require more than earnest sermons to keep us humane and united if the government cannot soon learn to manage the economy more effectively than it recently has.

To what degree the right will take advantage of its opportunities remains uncertain. Perhaps the most persistent criticism of American conservatism has been its essential negativism. Conservatives, so accustomed to opposition, have expended most of their energies attacking liberal leaders and programs, and have often seemed unaware of the need to persuade voters that they could, if given the opportunity, effectively and wisely wield power. Even their criticism has frequently offered more in volume and shrillness than in incisive analysis. Some right-wing politicians, at least, are working hard to raise their plausibility level by offering specific alternative policies—thus the recent appeals to the economic logic of the Laffer curve and the embodiment of that logic in the Kemp-Roth tax reduction program—but American voters remain a tough audience for conservatives. It seems clear that large parts of the electorate remain skeptical of the ability of conservatives—specifically the leaders of the Republican party—to offer America decent leadership.

There are, in any case, limits to the extent to which conservatism can be said to have gained the ascendancy in American politics. The trend may be to the right, but it is not people normally classifiable as conservatives who hold the dominant positions in Washington. Conservative Republicans did make some gains in the 1978 congressional elections, but the Democrats remain firmly in control of the Congress and the White House, and the Democratic party has been and remains the vehicle of liberalism in America. Many Democrats, of course, are moving anxiously to make their peace with the new conservative impulse, but the combination in most of them of awkward conservative gestures and lingering liberal instincts results typically in ambivalent performance unlikely for long to satisfy critics at either end of the political spectrum.

The summary condition of American politics in the Seventies, then, is one of a demoralized and crippled radicalism, a resurgent but questionably effective conservatism, and a thoroughly unsettled liberalism. We have existed for several years now in a state of general ideological drift: ours is the politics of confusion.

The signs of confusion are every-where. House Speaker Thomas ("Tip") O'Neill, for example, welcomed his colleagues to the current congressional session with the admonition that they must fight inflation (but not allow unemployment to increase) and hold down the federal deficit (but find a way to finance a comprehensive national health insurance program). He might as appropriately have urged them on in efforts to square the circle or perfect the perpetual motion machine. Politicians are seldom noted for coherence, but our present age renders them more inconsistent and random than ever.

It is entirely fitting that our current president is the most difficult to categorize ideologically of any of the presidents in this century. Jimmy Carter is, by common consent, a decent and honorable man who intermittently also shows signs of leadership ability. But Baptist-piety-cum-managerial competence does not add up to an ideological position. One could, by quoting Carter selectively, make a plausible case for him as a liberal or a conservative or neither. The striking fact about Carter is that more than mid-way in his term observers are as uncertain about labeling him as they were when he first came to national attention early in 1976.

Of the men within the Democratic party who would like to challenge Carter in 1980, the most eager appears to be Governor Jerry Brown of California. Brown is the quintessential politician of the Seventies. Coming to office with a vague reputation as a spokesman for countercultural change, Brown has since proven himself a master of studied ambiguity. Depending on the day of the week or phase of the moon, Brown can sound like a man of the left, as when he denounces the death penalty, supports the unionization of farm laborers, or muses on the egalitarian imperatives of the new austerity; or as a committed convert to the right, as when he supports Proposition 13, denounces the growth of government, and preaches the virtues of traditional American voluntarism. He dismisses issues as "the last refuge of scoundrels" and presents himself as a kind of cosmic unifier in
whom contradictions are resolved and opposites unite. There is no man in public life more difficult to anticipate: he is thus the representative politican of the age. Which says not a great deal either for Brown or the age.

As with politicians, so with the public. Recent opinion polls portray an electorate equally adamant about budget cuts and non-curtailment of major programs. There appears to be a widespread fantasy that amounts to economic faith-healing: major budget surgery, but no pain. The public actually seems persuaded that budgets could be balanced and taxes cut with no reduction of public services. All that needs to be performed, it is imagined, is elimination of “waste” (always unspecified). It is yet another reminder that the case for democracy must never be based on the assumption of voter rationality.

The continuing manifold inequities of our society will more likely be rectified by the return of economic growth than by any imaginable set of “fundamental changes in the system.”

Still, if the Seventies are hardly the best of times, neither are they the worst. There are greater political evils than irresolution. An unheroic age does not stir the blood or rally the spirit, but neither does it present a standing invitation to disaster, as did the late, unlamented Sixties. The continuing manifold inequities of our society will more likely be rectified by the return of economic growth than by any imaginable set of “fundamental changes in the system” or even “bold new approaches.” (Though I personally think the premier energies of reform should be focused on some form of guaranteed annual income.) The decade of the Sixties was without doubt an infinitely more interesting and eventful political age than our own, but I would not for a moment desire to return to it. In politics as in aesthetics, there are times when less is more.

**Winter Light**

It is winter light.
The shadows have no breath,
and iron darkness now is kelsoning
this heavy keel between the hills.

I am hunting—that is,
chapped soul,
I am walking the river ice,
am listening for the heart of it
on the green vein beneath my feet.

It is easier to walk here—
nothing to trip you,
except the springs:
you can fall in them
if you believe the innocence
of snow across their reach.

Thorn and bush,
by last sun radiances

needled vermilion
flare now;
and the bear bends,
interstellar,
and arcs his silver claw
into my zero ecstasy.
My cry (exordium)
breaks the horned owl
from his tree.
Black washed and ghost bright
in his flukes and plumes,
he is rowing down shadow,
dividing darkness with his sight.

His fear loves me.
The heart beats nakedly
against the cold;
and the red star, Betelgeuse,
winks, winks.

John Solensten
I can remember seeing his picture in the paper in the forties: a gaunt figure leaning on a cane, with heavy beard and white thatched hair, who in his nineties was still vigorously upholding all kinds of dotty ideas. George Bernard Shaw, or GBS as he was usually called, assumed the public figure of a jester. He had opinions on phonetic spelling and vegetarianism, and he expressed political sentiments on Fabianism, Nazism, and a host of other ideologies. If he lived another twenty years, his presence on television talk shows in our day would have made GBS even more notorious.

But much of the public mask was merely a disguise for his inner seriousness. Shaw could and did mock his own foolery. His comments to his good friend Archibald Henderson: “I cannot deny that I have got the tragedian and I have got the clown in me; and the clown trips me up in the most dreadful way” must be tempered with a remark of a character in John Bull’s Other Island: “My way of joking is to tell the truth. It’s the funniest joke in the world.”

Such truth-telling by means of joking proved to be productive for Shaw. Over fifty plays plus volumes of theater criticism and general essays kept on flowing from the Irish wit. Yet today, almost thirty years after his death in 1950, Shaw’s reputation remains a highly debated subject. Is he a major dramatist or simply a clever computer of staged theses? Is he more than a talented polemicist?

The list of Shaw’s detractors is impressive. Eliot spotted a poet in Shaw, but one that was “stillborn”; to Pound, he was “fundamentally trivial—a joke.” D. H. Lawrence considered his characters “fleshless, bloodless, and cold” while Joyce patronized him as “a born preacher.” And Shaw once appeared to Yeats in a dream as “a sewingmachine that clicked and shone . . . [and] smiled, smiled perpetually.”

But Shaw could evoke as dazzling an array of champions. Pirandello insisted that “there is a truly great poet in him.” Brecht, who may have gotten his “epic theater” from him, lauded his casual-contemptuous approach as permitting “complete concentration and real alertness,” and said that he gave the theater, “as much fun as it can stand.” Borges concluded a perceptive tribute with the remark that Shaw’s works leave “an aftertaste of liberation.”

Preaching and poetry, smiling fun and liberation—key terms in both the negative and affirmative comments about Shaw—all these one finds in experiencing a Shaw play. And the very fact that Shaw is performed so frequently reflects what his plays can do, not merely as texts but as theater.

In fact, in New York, at the end of 1978, the only dramatist represented in productions on Broadway other than musical comedy and contemporary playwrights was Shaw. The Circle in the Square, a large new theater on Broadway, has sell-out audiences for a sound performance of Man and Superman, and the smaller but reputable Roundabout Theatre Company down on 26th Street staged a rewarding production of Candida. To see two Shaw plays on successive evenings is to be instructed and delighted. GBS at 123 is still alive.

I

Man and Superman, first performed in London in 1905 with Harley Granville-Parker as John Tanner, later that year came to New York. The play ran to full houses for six months and then went on a tour all over the country. Audiences saw the play as full of new ideas fermenting in Europe: Bergsonian evolution, Nietzschean iconoclasm, revolutionary socialism, and, most of all, a completely new feminism. The printed edition of the play was placed in the restricted section of the New York Public Library.

Some seventy-five years later, the political and philosophical quarrels and conversations seem muted. But Shaw’s handling of sexual roles is central to the drama; one reviewer recently called the play “a thinking man’s girl-catches-boy play.” In 1900, Shaw wrote: “Can any dilemma be more complete? Love is assumed to be the only theme that touches all your audience infallibly, young and old, rich and poor. And yet love is the one subject that the drawing room drama dare not present.” Shaw’s plays present not only love, but still more, a vision of women as a universal embodiment of love, as a mystical force in creation. This force, rather than a sociopolitical interest in women’s rights, is what led Shaw to make almost all of his heroines determined young women with a glint in their eye.

Ann Sacks as Ann Whitefield in the Circle in the Square production moves dashingly over the large stage as she engages, according to Shaw’s preface to the play, in a “tragic-comic love chase of the man by the woman.” George Grizzard, as John Tanner alias...
Don Juan, saunters and swaggers, but as Shaw continued in his preface, "my Don Juan is the quarry instead of the huntsman." With wry bravura, Griz­
zard in his beautifully even voice, attempts, as Henry Higgins in Pygmalion/Fair Lady does, to stay detached and above it all. Moving from acquaintance to friend and then to father-guardian of Ann, Tanner thinks he is playing cat and mouse with himself as cat. But Shaw's heroines know their strategies well. Early in the first act, we already know the outcome: girl will get boy. In Act II, he is told this fact, and in the third act, she has him. Act IV fills out the promise: he now knows that he loves her. Beginning and ending each act with strains of Mozart to set the atmos­phere for Don Juan, the Circle in the Square production also has melody in the rhythmic pace of the action and, most of all, in the language of the play which the people on stage seem to savor on the end of their tongues. No barren or grey Beckett tones here. Black humor and tense laughter a la Stoppard is not present. Rather, a waterfall of words pours exhilaratingly from all the actors. We are enlivened, delighted, and refreshed. Whatever the Life Force is that Shaw insists is the essence of the human, we know that we feel something like that when we leave the theater.

A sticky question for all Man and Superman productions is: What is to be done with the long dream sequence usually called "Don Juan in Hell"? With it, the play runs more than five hours. (When the total play is presented, a break for dinner is scheduled, as I understand the Ontario Shaw Festival at Niagara on the Lake did in 1977. Of course, "Don Juan in Hell" makes theatrical sense on its own; I recall with fondness an evening in Ann Arbor in the early fifties when the First Drama Quartet—Charles Laughton, Agnes Moorehead, Vincent Price, and Charles Boyer—sat on stools reading Shaw and made the scene absolutely present.) Without the dream sequence, the play is shorter but thinner, all fluff and light banter. (The Royal Shakespeare Company production I saw last season in London took this route, and even with the presence of Susan Hampshire and Richard Pasco, the play lacked substance.) The Circle in the Square compromised by keeping in the sequence, but shortening it. The result was thoughtful weight, but not heaviness. All in all, Shaw was well­
served by this production.

II

Candida, written a decade earlier than Man and Superman, revolves in the same areas, the battle of the sexes. Shaw himself wrote that "the play is a counterblast to Ibsen's Doll's House, showing that in the real typical doll's house, it is the man who is the doll." The Reverend James Morell is certainly a doll-puppet, lacking in hu­
manity, and as moralistic as his name. Ever the reformer who is out speaking somewhere for causes, the pastor ignores the needs of his secretary, but also his wife, Candida. March­
banks, a poet, says urgently: "We all go about longing for love: it is the first need of our natures, the first prayer of our hearts...." The secretary loves the pastor, the poet bares his love for Candida, and amid all the unmasking, Candida pleads: "You may say anything you really and truly feel. Anything at all, no matter what it is. I am not afraid, so long as it is your real self that speaks. ...." Candida's real self decides that she will stay with Morell, onions and mops and all, but most of all, because she knows and he acknowledges that he is the weaker of the two. Love rooted in common bonds of weakness is stronger than the kind of love flowing from the romantic Shelley­like stance of Marchbanks. As husband and wife embrace, Marchbanks leaves theatrically into the night.

The intimacy of the Roundabout Theatre (in my first row seat I was within a few feet of the actors now and then) made it rather difficult to keep the detached attitude Shaw demands that the audience take toward his characters. Yet the perfection of the well-made plot—every entrance is exactly right—and still more, the Shavian opulence of language kept me and the actors and actresses in a kind of rapturous world of our own.

III

A dramatist who maintains, as Shaw once did, that he would never have written plays had he not been "a chaos of contradictions" is apt to use paradox as a primary vehicle to convey his perspective of reality. In both Man and Superman and Candida as well as in the entire body of Shaw's plays, the drama is dialectical, that is, in the root sense of that word, to choose between, to discourse. A Shaw play is indeed a drama of ideas, not merely in the sense that ideas are in the plays, but that thinking itself is dramatic.

The inversion makes for paradox, the usual structure of his plays is the counter-action between two conflicting standards: the conventional and the Shavian. Shaw begins with the usual postulates of convention, changes the probabilities and expecta­tions, and with exaggeration, assumes the diametric opposite in order to make his audience think. For Shaw, the most truly brave officer was to be the least heroic, even as his Saint Joan is most of all a common sense peasant girl. If Don Juan is the prototype of the man of love, Shaw presents a Jack Tanner who is pursued by a woman. The inversion makes for paradox, and the paradox makes for lively theater.

Such a duel of ideas can make for didactic art. Shaw's almost school-
mastery tone has put off some of his readers; after all, two of his mentors were Dickens and Ibsen, both of whom were intent on reforming society. Shaw called himself "a world-betterer," and he inveighed against folly and ignorance at every turn.

But Shaw has mastered well the lesson that before one can instruct, one must delight. The range of delight in his plays extends from pure farce to some of the most witty dialogue in the English language. He exploits comic situations, incongruous characters, and ludicrous word play. In order to expose ignorance and folly, ridicule is the strongest weapon.

The comic tradition of Aristophanes, Jonson, Congreve, and Molière had portrayed society as the norm, and therefore the individual who is out of step must either adjust to the ways of the world or abandon society altogether. Shaw, as usual, turned this notion upside down. The individual triumphed over the unthinking mass. Candida and Ann Whitefield and all the rest are comic counterparts of the true individualists in Ibsen's tragic vision: the Heddas and the master builders who lose all by defying their society.

The comic tradition portrayed society as the norm, and therefore the individual who is out of step must either adjust to the ways of the world or abandon society. Shaw, as usual, turned this notion upside down.

What Shaw ridicules most are those who are mechanical, those who have become puppets. Such characters with their rehearsed responses are comic puppets, for they have lost their vitality. In Man and Superman, Shaw presents Henry Straker, Tanner's chauffeur, as faceless and mechanical. He is first observed under the motor car that is onstage, but only part of his body is seen; his head is under the car. He can drive and he can repair the machine, but he has no goal. Travel for the sake of speed is all he is interested in. Tanner in a moment of self-doubt confesses to Straker: "I am the slave of the car and of you too." Tanner must therefore be restored to vitality, to regain the Life Force. He is educated by Ann who in her spontaneity personifies the Life Force. In the dream, Don Juan says: "I had come to believe that I was a purely rational creature: a thinker! I said, with the foolish philosopher, 'I think; therefore I am.'" It was Woman who taught me to say, 'I am; therefore I think.' At the end of the play, he is in fact thrown into Ann's arms by the Life Force even after he has framed his rational denials and reasoned rebuttals. Contrary to all his expectations, Tanner irrationally surrendered to Ann.

Some detractors have seen Shaw as one of the links between Nietzsche's "superman" and the rise of Nazism. But this is to give Shaw more weight than he deserves. He is first of all an ironist, a wit who sees life not in ideological either/or dichotomies, but in the paradox of both/and. Shaw loves to tell us in his prefaces, as well as have his characters tell us in the plays, that something's "nothing-but" something else. As he shatters one of our conventional thoughts about politics or economics or ethics by insisting that something must be either/or, this or that, before we can think of a possible third choice, Shaw has hastened us off to another paradox, another irony.

One of the ways of seeing both/and is to have the double vision of seeing reality as it is, and at the same time to see it reversed. Dame Sybil Thorndike, the actress who played the leading role in many of Shaw's dramas, once said: "A landscape is much more vivid if one looks at it head downwards—one sees colour in greater contrast, everything is heightened in tone, and one remembers that vividness when one is walking normally again. So GBS stood on his head, and made us stand on our heads also to shock our awareness." To enter the world of Shaw's drama is to make us more aware that to be human is to live in never-ending paradox.

---

Richard Maxwell

Many years before he became a sage of the 1960s, Marshall McLuhan had a bright idea about movies: "The Romantics," he noted, "had nothing to learn from cinema; it is rather cinema that can learn from them." In elaborating on this comment, McLuhan pointed not just to Romantic literature—which presumably ended in 1830 or thereabouts—but to an extraordinary range of literary techniques which evolved from Coleridge's generation to Poe's to Baudelaire's to Eliot's. Such techniques made it possible for some of these writers to "accept the city as [a] central myth." McLuhan is able to suggest, in a few sentences, a complex web of relationships between cities, cinema, and literature—"Tennyson and Picturesque Poetry," in Critical Essays on the Poetry of Tennyson, ed. John Kilham (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1960), p. 83.

Having taken his undergraduate degree at the University of California-Riverside and his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago, Richard Maxwell is now Assistant Professor of English at Valparaiso University, where his teaching specialization is nineteenth century British literature and his co-curricular passion is the chairmanship of the University's foreign film committee.
specifically modern forms of verbal expressiveness: he does not stop either to convince his readers or to apply his insights coherently, but why should this hinder us? The possibilities—as I hope to show—are too promising to pass over hastily.

McLuhan is writing about a failure. The cinema (as of 1952, when he published these remarks) has neglected to learn from the Romantic-symbolist heritage. One could certainly argue with this judgment, but anyone comparing, for instance, Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* with T.S. Eliot's "The Waste­land" can see its force. The difference is between Eliot's *apparent* rejection of Romanticism—his substitution of irony for visionary quest—and Lang's all-too-eager embrace of Romantic clichés. *Metropolis* has considerable impact but its stylized nightmare images are finally a mixed blessing. In effect, the viewer is asked to accept the city as an allegory before he has had time to consider it as a literal condition of modern experience. Lang gives us the stock-in-trade of Romantic fable: the doppelgänger, the mad scientist, the shadowy and suicidal ascent, the apocalyptic flood, the torture-chamber. These images fail to add up because they are never grounded in realistic detail or any convincing equivalent of it. Lang's city is all metaphor; it is inside the head. Call this expressionism—call it what one will—it is not an advance on the nightmarish cities of Wordsworth or Poe or DeQuincey, where there is always at least an initial respect for the given data of city life. Before the city is a myth, it is a sociological reality. Only by relating artistic technique to this reality could Lang have compelled us to accept his metropolis.

Lang neglects to communicate the difficult, hermetic immediacy of the city; it is here that Eliot excels. "The Wasteland" shares with *Metropolis* horrific visions of a pressured, fragmented existence. Both works show us the other side of 1920s optimism. Eliot's necropolis is far more striking than Lang's, however, because instead of rushing to an achieved nightmare vision he concentrates on the struggle for meaning under the peculiar circumstances of urban life. This struggle is necessary because of what McLuhan and the great sociologist Georg Simmel call the "discontinuity" of the city; as Simmel puts it, cities are characterized by the "rapid crowding of changing images, the sharp discontinuity in the grasp of a single glance."*\(^2\)

Eliot dramatizes brilliantly those points at which such incoherence shades momentarily into some kind of ordered meaning:

> This music crept by me upon the waters' And along the Strand, up Queen Victoria Street. O City city, I can sometimes hear Beside a public bar in Lower Thames Street, The pleasant whining of a mandoline And a clatter and a chatter from within Where fishermen lounge at noon: where the walls of Magnus Martyn hold Inexplicable splendor of Ionian white and gold.

This passage is far more faithful to the Romantic heritage than any scene in *Metropolis*, for the ironies and dislocations reject certain aspects of Wordsworth or Tennyson in order to recreate others. The manipulations of perspective which typify much nineteenth-century poetry achieve a new life because Eliot has grasped a technique in relation to a content. The technique is the verbal exploitation of multiple perspective or discontinuity. The content is a basic fact about London, that it is an environment of wrenching fragments and juxtapositions. London's special kind of disorder—emphasized by the violence of Eliot's leaps—yields to "inexplicable splendor," the labyrinth of sounds in the phrase miming the mystery of this transformation. Eliot has done for London what he once said metaphysical poetry did for human experience generally. He has brought disparate kinds of life into a convincing artistic whole. He is able to accomplish this feat through a faithfulness to the surface discontinuities of city life, from which he seizes a provisional and momentary order.

Implicitly, I have been agreeing with McLuhan that cinema could learn—perhaps is learning—from the Romantic tradition. This is not to deny that the adaptation would be complicated and roundabout. It is notoriously difficult to transfer a means of expression from one art to another. Moreover, when is enough enough? Eliot found a borderline between incoherence and Parnassian finish. People had to live with "The Wasteland" for many decades in order to get used to this accomplishment. Someone directing a commercial film—a very different sort of project than writing an avant-grade poem—must do without the sense of precedent and the sense of freedom that the poet had on his side. To put this another way, a director who wants to experiment must manage so that his audience doesn't quite notice. Under these demanding circumstances, even the mildest innovation could seem radical.

**McLuhan was right. Discontinuity—on a technical, a narrative, or a thematic level—can create an intense audience involvement.**

Somehow or other, despite these problems, the city movie has prospered. No one (thank goodness) has made a movie of "The Wasteland" but a quick look at three city films will show the spectrum of expressive possibilities which directors have adopted or reinvented for their medium, particularly in recent years. McLuhan was right. Discontinuity—on a technical, a narrative, or a thematic level—can create an intense audience involvement with a city landscape, an understanding of the balance between anarchy and coherence in this most demanding of human environments.

Nicholas Roeg's *Don't Look Now* is a film about omens of death. The essential image occurs at the very beginning when an art historian (Donald Sutherland) cuts his finger on a glass slide and confronts magnifications of a blood drop projected upon a screen: the blood spreads and cakes,
formulating indecipherable scrabbles. Soon the action moves to Venice, city of reflections (double-images) and absences (images which should be there but aren’t). In this city of disturbing illusions—the title of the film tells all—Sutherland pursues what he takes to be the ghost of his youngest child. Roeg comes to film by way of cinematography: this film is a sequence of beautifully-visualized dislocations. Don’t Look Now has a way of focussing on a dead-end or an abandoned doll and of making such an image bear more of a burden than we would have supposed possible. The film integrates the psychology of prescience and the experience of Venetian life: the city and Sutherland’s mind become a single, enveloping maze. The predictable denouement, in this case, matters less than the moment-to-moment shocks created by photography and editing.

Roeg’s accomplishment is largely technical; it depends on his mastery of craft. The American Friend, by the German director Wim Wenders, is less finished but perhaps more interesting film. The American Friend has not been widely distributed in the United States—a shame, since it offers a fascinating European perspective on the American genre of film noir. The plot brings together a Hamburg picture-framer dying of some mysterious disease and an international con-man (Dennis Hopper, of Easy Rider fame) who inveigles him into assassinating a Mafia official. Wenders guides us carefully through a series of confrontations and climaxes: we anticipate an ultimate coherence behind the workings of this mystery. Gradually this coherence disintegrates. In Don’t Look Now, the rhythm of editing gives point to a conventionally-told suspense story. In The American Friend it is the narrative which is out of joint.

When I first saw the film, I remember being irritated at what I took to be an absurd self-indulgence. The director seemed to have fallen into a common misunderstanding, that formlessness in a work of art is the appropriate way to reflect on chaos in the outer world. The film’s point, however, is subtler than a first viewing might suggest, for Wenders is engaged in a form of rhetorical manipulation. The story is bait: we swallow it and only then realize that we’ve swallowed the hook as well. The hook is the city—not so much a particular city as a kind of international urban nexus composed of subways and hospitals and hotels. Normally such landscapes resist our efforts at understanding or emotional engagement. Here, by an irrational and powerful transfer, we are led to feel and think much more about the inhuman scale of these scenes than we usually do. Wenders, in effect, has found a way to push city images from background to foreground until they overwhelm the story and absorb our interest in it. This is a meaningful turnabout because the landscape, finally, tells us everything that the story can’t about the moral quality of Wender’s world and the kind of despair that his two protagonists feel.

City films tend toward the bizarre, the grotesque, the disorienting—these varieties of experience spring spontaneously from the everyday life of the streets.

City films have a tendency towards the bizarre, the grotesque, the disorienting: we are meant to see that these varieties of experience spring spontaneously from the everyday life of the streets when it acts on the human mind. If this logic is followed far enough, as it is in the recent Invasion of the Body Snatchers, the result is an alternation between paranoia and anarchy. Moviegoers will recall that the original Body Snatchers was a low-budget thriller from the mid-fifties. The film was an especially nasty evocation of small town life: who can tell if the pod people have taken over folksy old Uncle Ira? No one can tell by just looking at him, of course; if you know that he’s pod, it’s through intuition. The first Body Snatchers exploits the supposed intimacy and community of a small American town, which makes Phil Kaufman’s decision to film the second version in San Francisco seem downright brazen. A story about an intimate, secure environment which is suddenly not so secure would presumably lose its point in the context of big city life. Body Snatchers certainly becomes a different film with the change in setting but it is far from a pointless exercise. After all, fear of losing one’s identity has often been an excellent big city theme. Kaufman holds his viewers—and his protagonists—in suspension, between the whirligig of street life and the pressing demands of invisible systems. He arranges that the threat of the pods should come from both sides, so that we exist at once in the shock world of instant anecdote and the abstract world of bureaucracy or a debased pop psychology.

The most telling contrast between the two Body Snatchers is in the role played by the superficially reassuring psychologist (Leonard Nimoy!). Version one puts the message of the film in the hero’s mouth: he suggests that we all become pods when we give up humane values like love or the enjoyment of life for its own sake. Kaufman’s film gives a similar speech to the psychologist, who is obviously trying to distract us with metaphors where we should be looking out for slimy, disgusting creatures that are actually trying to get us. The new Body Snatchers is reluctant to allow us the aesthetic distance of perceiving metaphors; it wants us to be caught up in a horrifyingly literal situation. One of the film’s great strengths is superb special effects, which dramatize the sheer biological urge of the pods to take over human beings. Yes, the pods must be a metaphor: they have been adapted by Kaufman to reveal and comment on the life of an American city. At the same time we are pressured to believe in them. So far as we do believe, the film leaves us with the impossible but interesting task of rethinking what a metaphor or an actuality might be in this fevered San Francisco. Among the accomplishments of city films, this provocation is not the least.


Letter from Tecate

Gomez the proprietor
full of days of the great
Baja, nights of stars waving
from Tecate, will wave

grandly rising to pump
from a tule reed chair.
Up from the dust
past the corrugated shack,
yard full of Cereus
taking ten years to night bloom

for one hour.
In this heat everything leads
to a death, he says
is worth ignoring.

Mountains of shoes catch it,
tires catch it in his yard
at noon and throb.

Even his daughters
down a lane of dead saguaro,
a collection of dark eyes

stare up at things that rise,
faint like a whistle
of coyote laughter,
beyond papa, gasolina, turista.

Peter Brett

Music

The Music Department
In the Contemporary University

James Klein

In a time when declining student enrollments and the effects of inflation are causing universities to re-evaluate their programs and course offerings, music departments are also looking at their programs of study which may not lead to employment upon graduation and course offerings which have received diminishing interest in the past decade. College music educators today often find themselves asking each other, "Where should we stand to face the future?" and "What exactly is the role of the college music department?" My column this month may help to acquaint the non-music educator with the function of a music department within a university, and it may help alert music educators to what we can do—not only to prepare profession-oriented students better but also to prepare non-music majors to be better audiences and patrons of music in the future.

A brief survey of recent nationwide trends in music higher education will be helpful in evaluating music programs for the future. The number of students enrolled in professional

James Klein, a native Texan, is director of University Bands at Valparaiso University and teaches low brass and chamber music. He holds the M.M. degree from the University of Texas and is a candidate for the D.M.A. degree at the College-Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati.

The Cresset
music programs recently increased at a surprising rate. Compared with an enrollment of 23,972 in 1968, universities nationwide saw an increase of 26 percent to 30,354 in the four years to 1972. The reasons for this growth are attributable to several factors. First, the substantial growth in public school music education has contributed a great number of skilled performers, some of whom consider preparing for careers in music in college. They may have been channeled in different directions in college had not such a rewarding musical experience been offered in secondary school. Another reason for the increased interest in music is the increased leisure time now afforded many Americans. Shorter workweeks, increased employee benefits, and more vacation time have fostered the growth of music as a secondary endeavor. The Bureau of Labor Statistics in its March, 1979

Our immediate future is with the musical amateur, and now is the time to prepare our curricula for this music lover.

A booming interest in music as a hobby or avocation is apparent. While employment in traditional music fields is indeed limited, music departments should not reduce enrollments for that fact. Instead, we should encourage the prospective biologist or engineer with musical ability to develop his talents to the highest degree possible without, of course, neglecting his primary field of study. The outlook for the musical amateur is indeed bright as new vehicles for performance and expression arise daily.

Many music departments have been reluctant to change their programs. During the period from 1968 to 1972 when music enrollments increased, so also did music faculties, budgets, and facilities. Many schools each year still open impressive facilities for the performance and study of music. But while our campuses need adequate facilities to showcase the growth of musical skills, music departments must re-evaluate the way their programs prepare these performers and their audiences.

Our first problem is that courses offered for non-music majors usually receive the least of the teacher's attention; precedence is given the music major. Much music training is grounded in the idea of the master teacher passing along the interpretations and techniques that were learned from his master teacher. A disciple makes disciples. Intelligent general students, however, well educated in the history of musical style, analysis, and composition, are probably better equipped to make sound musical interpretive judgments than are those specialist students who have only had the guiding hand of the master teacher. (Besides, recent musicological research has shown that many of the ideas expressed by those master teachers are in error.) Programs designed so the amateur can learn the basic musical skills which can serve as the basis for post-graduate study are at least as desirable as the traditional programs for the master and apprentice.

Secondly, the design of many graduate programs in music cripples the music teacher in his approach to the amateur musician. The extreme specialization in graduate programs in music gives the graduate student such an in-depth study of one particular facet of music that oftentimes he is nearly incompetent with teaching assignments outside of his specific sphere of knowledge. A third problem to face is simply the amount of time it takes to develop proficiency on a given instrument. For the student just beginning the study of an instrument at the college level, the entire four years may be spent developing enough skill even to function within a performing group.

No one ever said that change was easy. Perhaps musicians as a group are one of the most conservative minorities in our colleges and universities when it comes to curricular change. However, we can take a lesson from a new music program at Yale University; there a graduate professional program exists, but the entire
undergraduate music program is geared to the Bachelor of Arts degree. The undergraduate music major spends only about one-third of his course work in music; he may go on to graduate study in music, but the program also allows for a number of other professional options, similar to other liberal arts degrees.

Music departments may also need to co-ordinate programs with other departments. There is a great need for persons who have a working knowledge of music in the areas of publishing, copyright law, music marketing, music programming, instrument repair, and other areas involving the business of music. Cooperation with business programs may open outlets to professions in these areas.

Finally, music departments need to serve all the students on their own campuses. We often expend large sums of money to recruit high school students to major in our various music programs, but we give little attention to the students who are already on campus. These students are the future patrons of the arts. In fact, music study should be required in the liberal arts curriculum just as is English, history, and physical education.

Music departments today find themselves in a dilemma at this time of nearing declining enrollments. We should not do away with our professional programs; there will always be a need for the highly talented and trained to set the example for others to follow. At the same time, we must prepare for the future by developing programs for the amateur and by raising an intelligent and appreciative audience for the professional performers. The balance between these two goals is difficult to strike. Certainly the music department must not serve merely a service function, relegating itself only to performances for campus events. Our immediate future is with the musical amateur, and now is the time to prepare our curricula for this music lover. This is better than scratching our heads and shrugging our shoulders as we go about doing things as they have been done for the past fifty years.

Business

Over a business deal
the drunk saying a drink feels better,
offers one, from Shanghai to Cheyenne,
and each day the earth is reborn and
the Indian agrees knowing a friend who
was shot in the head saying nothing.
Eternally the earth is reborn.
Eternally like cattle auctions
the businessman starts out a saint,
a youth in a wooden crib.
And ten fingers are reaching for something, envisioning something . . .
The heart stretches,
the mind is at work
the length of a network
of powerlines.
An elastic conscience plays
at what history has left.

Peter Brett
Jerusalem: The Tragedy and the Triumph


To read this book is to take a $12.95 guided tour around present-day Jeru­sa­lem led by a biblical literalist with dispensationalist leanings. Written sometimes in traveloguese ("There is a road that winds upward for some thirty miles . . . ."), sometimes with a romantic flare ("When the sun begins to set over the Judean hills . . . ."), the book uses history rather than geography to explore the city.

Starting with pre-biblical Jebusite times, the author slowly, and yet of necessity sketchily, moves through the history of Jerusalem from a biblical-literalist perspective. Thus the tabernacle was built and furnished exactly according to the pattern Moses had been given, and Ezra preceded Nehemiah. Don't expect to find any awareness of the date or theology of the priestly legislation or of the general scholarly consensus that Ezra must have followed Nehemiah. Don't expect to find any awareness of the date or theology of the priestly legislation or of the general scholarly consensus that Ezra must have followed Nehemiah. Thus also the Jonah of 2 Kings 14:25 is equated with the storied figure in the book of Jonah. (To place the historical Jonah at 850 B.C., however, betrays the author's distance from his subject: the date is a century too early.)

If Gulston's retelling of Jerusalem's past is questionable in places, his projections of Jerusalem's future are in toto debatable. We've heard it before from Hal Lindsey: Jerusalem will suffer the tragedy of a final decimation by Russia only to be miraculously restored for the triumph of the Golden Age. While avoiding both a crass millennialism as well as Lindsey's smartaleckries, our tour guide nevertheless wants us to believe that Old Testament prophecy is a guide for reading the political future of Jeru­sa­lem.

Something is definitely happening in the Middle East and Elie Wiesel may be right when he says the next Jewish holocaust will be everybody's holocaust. But I prefer to watch the future unfold without having to believe that someday Jerusalem will cleave in two, a great valley dividing its north part from its south in literal fulfillment of Zechariah 14.

While early post-biblical history of Jerusalem is universally dependent upon Josephus, with Josephus being superior to any of his summarizers, the medieval and modern accounts of the city's history were for me the most informative and readable.

A selection of fine color photos helps make the book worth the price. That is, if you can't go there yourself and don't mind the biases of your guide.

Mark Hillmer

The Declining Significance of Race: Blacks and Changing American Institutions


William Julius Wilson asserts that for the first time in the American experience class affiliation is more important than race in determining the opportunities of blacks for success and prosperity. According to Wilson, America's black community is beset by a widening cleavage between an impoverished, unskilled underclass and an upwardly mobile segment of the talented and the educated. Fundamental economic change and the enforcement of affirmative action legislation in recent decades have made the prospects for occupational advancement among skilled blacks comparable to or better then those of whites with equivalent qualifications.

This general decline in discrimination in the job market, however, has not touched the black lower class, which has experienced a sharply declining movement out of poverty since the economic slowdown of the 1970s. Current impediments to the advancement of lower class blacks are not the purposeful creation of racist conviction: they are racial only in consequence, not in origin. Non-whites dominate menial, low-paying jobs because of the jobs' undesirability — not because of discriminatory hiring practices. The continued subordination of ghetto blacks is most directly a consequence of structural change in the modern industrial economy, particularly of the gradual creation of a segmented labor market that provides significantly different mobility opportunities for different segments of the black population.

The Declining Significance of Race is a piece of historical sociology. It is informed by the concepts of Marxist scholarship, but not bound by the rigidities of determinism. Wilson uses arguments derived from economic class theories to illuminate aspects of race relations in the American past, yet demonstrates the inadequacies of Marxist analyses of the modern industrial present. He is sensitive to the complexity and mutual dependence of relationships at specific historical moments, implicitly recognizing throughout David Potter's dictum that the historical process is far too intricate to be handled in terms of simple dualisms.

Wilson postulates that race relations in America have been characterized historically by three major stages and that within each stage inter-racial contacts were structured by the particular arrangement and interaction of the economy and the polity. He argues that different systems of production and/or political policies have produced differing contexts for the expression of racial antagonisms and for black access to power and prestige. In both the pre-industrial antebellum period and the industrial period, a pattern of racial oppression was shaped by the state. Since the New Deal, by contrast, state intervention
has been designed to promote racial equality, and the economic expansion that followed World War II contributed to occupational differentiation and upgrading among blacks. The issue of race remains nonetheless of critical salience in America. Professor Wilson finds that racial struggles have not so much declined as shifted in object from jobs to the control of neighborhoods, schools, and urban political systems. His careful, compelling analysis suggests that our traditional prescription for racial injustice—legally enforced affirmative action—has been rendered archaic by fundamental economic change. His conclusions point to the development of a powder-keg situation among ghetto minorities in the next several decades.

Deborah Skopek-Combs

Courting Triumph


Possessor of a genius-level I.Q., a wicked serve, a degree in physics, and a Wimbledon singles title, Englishwoman Virginia Wade is one of tennis' most exciting and enigmatic athletes. Pegged by the press early in her career as a fiery tigress, Wade was often accused of falling short of her playing potential because of her temperamental and explosive on-court antics. Miss Wade in her autobiography, Courting Triumph, explains how she overcame this stigma en route to her 1977 Wimbledon Championship, a victory which represents both an athlete's understanding and compassion for human struggle and victory, rather than intricate tennis knowledge, is necessary for the enjoyment of this book. Wade focuses on this perspective when she states: "Matches are an encapsulated version of any expression in life: they are confrontations with people and circumstance. There are goals to meet; obstacles to override; choices and decisions to be made under pressure... You have to know who you are."

Courting Triumph is packed with Wade's personal ideas about the sport of tennis. Threaded with the moment by moment thoughts she experienced during the 1977 Wimbledon final, she allows the reader the illusion of playing the match with her. Such a technique succeeds in showing the reader how a champion's mind and psyche works, and it makes Courting Triumph unique among athletic autobiographies.

Since Virginia Wade won Wimbledon during the year of the Queen's Jubilee and the hundredth birthday of Wimbledon, her victory, described in detail throughout the book, raised a tumult unequalled in the often-pompous and stuff-shirt world of tournament tennis. One cannot help but be moved when Wade describes how the center court crowd, known for their staunch adherence to tennis etiquette, unexpectedly broke out into a chorus of "For She's a Jolly Good Fellow." Yes, Virginia Wade is a jolly good fellow and as expected by this critic, Courting Triumph is a jolly good book. After reading it, you will agree on both points.

Patricia Ann Giannis

Growing Up in Iowa


This book is a delightful sampler of the pleasures and pains of growing up in Iowa. There are essays and excerpts from the autobiographical books of fourteen Iowa writers, poets, novelists, and scholars. All of them grew up in various parts of Iowa and took the time to reflect upon their formative years spent in the "beautiful land."

The editor has carefully arranged the selections so that the reader gets a roughly chronological picture of the changes that have taken place over the last one hundred years in Iowa. He begins with Hamlin Garland's description of a night-time ride for the doctor over prairie land (1875) and ends with Winfred Van Etten's unusual treatment of all of her life as "a growing up in Iowa" period and her comparison of it to the development of virginal prairie land (innocence of childhood) to gopher prairie (sophistication of adulthood) to making a prairie of one's own (peace within and outside of oneself). In between are descriptions of a small-town printing plant in the 1890s; changing farmlife in various parts of the state; a small-town feud between a Methodist minister and Indian medicine man; first school days in a small southeast Iowa town; a newspaper boy's Christmas in Cedar Rapids; a wolf hunt in southwest Iowa; a boy's adventures at the early cinema and the fun of acting it out; and much more. On several occasions I found myself shaking my head in recognition of descriptions and experiences parallel to my own childhood memories of growing up in Iowa.

The writing styles represented are as varied as the experiences. They range from almost straight narrative and description to humorous tongue-in-cheek commentary on and philosophical reflection upon growing up in a rural state. One unrhymed narrative poem is also included.

The editor's introductory remarks preceding each excerpt are most helpful, particularly for those who, like myself, may be unfamiliar with most of these writers. Not only does he explain the setting of the selection in terms of regional Iowa history, but also in terms of the author's background. The suggestions of other books by the individual author are inducive to further exploration by the reader.

The richness of the land is evident to anyone who has passed through the state of Iowa. These selections illustrate not only this physical richness of the land, but also a rich literary heritage that any Iowan can be proud of.

Ann Trost

The Cresset
Confession and Congregation

Essays and Study Papers Investigating the Formula of Concord
Historically and Theologically for its Resources for Pastoral
and Congregational Life Today

For Parish Study Groups, Parochial School Teacher Retreats,
Pastoral Conferences, College and Seminary Classrooms

The Authors and Their Essays or Study Papers

David G. Truemper
"Confession and Congregation: An Approach to
the Study of the Formula of Concord"

Kenneth F. Korby
"Naming and Healing the Disorders of Man:
Therapy and Absolution"

Theodore R. Jungkunz
"Ethics in a Relativizing Society: Between the
Relativism of Moralism and Antinomianism"

David G. Truemper
"Piety in a Secularized Society: A Faith-Full Life-
Style, or the Piety of the Presence of Christ"

Walter E. Keller
"When Confession is Called For: Indifferent Things
and the Case of Confession"

Roger D. Pittelko
"Confession and Congregation: Resources for Parish
Life and Work"

David G. Truemper, General Editor

Robert C. Schultz
"Therapy and Absolution: Issues of Healing and
Redemption"

William H. Lazareth
"The Foundation for Ethics and the Question of
the Third Use of the Law"

Walter R. Bouman
"Piety in a Secularized Society"

Robert W. Bertram
"Confessional Movements and the Formula of Con-
cord"

Michael Rogness
"The Confessions in the Congregation: Practical
Suggestions for Parish Use"

Arthur C. Cochrane
"The Act of Confession—Confessing"

In addition, the hundred page document contains
responses to the essays by the authors of the study
papers.

Price: Two Dollars
Postage Paid If Payment Accompanies Order

Order From:
The Cresset
Valparaiso University
Valparaiso, Indiana 46383

Twenty Percent Discount
To College and Seminary Bookstores

March, 1979
The snow began falling, slowly at first, late on Friday afternoon. As I circled O’Hare in the DC-10, Chicago shimmers below, blessed already by a foot-deep blanket of clean, bright fluff. For thirty-six more hours the storm continued, dropping twenty new inches onto the streets, alleys, lawns, sidewalks and roofs. Temperatures then plummeted, sticking near zero for the next ten days.

The dirty, old city took on a new and glistening aura. The dirty, old city also stopped. Completely.

When a city stops like mine did, people no longer feel that they are in control. They can’t build anymore, or produce things or go to meetings or plan ways to make money and take advantage of each other. When a city stops, people go a little berserk. Not everybody, not all at once. But a little bit at a time.

For the first few days of our winter moratorium, in fact, people seemed to adjust rather well. Fate was in charge and touched everyone alike. Neighborly behavior blossomed. Big buildings and entire blocks shared food, drink, heat, shovels and companionship.

That is one way, perhaps the best way, to react to difficult times. When things get tough, or scarce, you pass them around. You share what you have, and you cooperate in what needs to be done.

But that is not the only way to react. Before too long idyllic communalism was giving ground to a flat-out Me First ethic. The shift started, appropriately enough, with the cars. For what earthly use is that great cultural totem to individuality when it lives invisible under a mountain of snow on an impassable street? Solution: you take your own personal shovel, clear out your own personal parking space, and defend your own personal piece of the no-longer public thoroughfare with your own personal (not currently needed) lawn chair. No matter that this little stratagem is patently illegal. Since when has our law not looked favorably on yet another extension of private property rights?

As the Me First ethic gained momentum in the stalled city, pushing aside stories about neighborliness in the daily press, it began to produce a fascinating corollary: Where-is-Big-Brother-Now-That-We-Need-Him? This new dependency syndrome took many forms. Why aren’t the streets being cleared more quickly? Why is public transportation so unreliable? What has gone wrong here, it now appears, is clearly somebody’s fault. And whoever that somebody is, “they’d” better get on the stick, or else. Or else, what? Or else we’ll start voting to raise our own taxes to buy the necessary plows and trains and gizmos which will ensure our city against future stoppages? Hardly.

So We’re-All-In-This-Together shifts rapidly into Me First which then escalates into full scale scapegoating. (Not that the city didn’t deserve some pointed criticism. More than the usual quota of stories about bureaucratic blundering and high level rip-offs began to surface almost as soon as the storm stopped.)

But what strikes one most strongly about these reactions is that they point once again to our deeply felt frustration in the face of forces we cannot control. As a people, we seem now to be able to tolerate the notion of Fate, or an Act of God, for about three days. That is the absolute time limit set on humility, or awe.

Quite clearly we will succeed, at least in the short run. The city will return to “normal,” and the hustlers and bustlers will feel once again that they are in control.

Only for a few, perhaps, has the snow been a sign. Your fate, it whispered, is not always and forever in your own hands.

Thank God for the snow.

As a people, we seem now to be able to tolerate the notion of Fate, or An Act of God, for about three days. That is the absolute time limit set on humility, or awe.