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The Wheat and the Tares

It was Jesus's counsel to the church to let “the wheat and the tares” grow together until the final judgment of God. Perhaps his wisdom was that men always judge one another very badly, and worst of all when they are dividing the orthodox from the heterodox, the “wheat” from the “tares.”

Unhappily, the church could not follow Jesus in this wisdom. With the increasing delay of that final judgment of God, the church was tragically forced to judge “the wheat and the tares” as best it could. Against its trivializers, the orthodox church defined itself with a precision which surely would have baffled Jesus even as it hoped to keep faith with him.

Over the centuries of that greatly delayed final judgment of God, the church has lurched between that orthodoxy of the wise which assures a living and authentic eschatological faith and that orthodoxy of the wretched which quests for earthly certainty about heavenly things. The latter orthodoxy is at best an expression of bad faith and at worst demonic.

The forms which orthodoxy took—deciding the limits of the scriptures, raising up a teaching hierarchy, settling upon certain creedal paradoxes—plunged the church into using their heads. And whenever a Christian uses his head, he must think in the thought available to his time and place. All thought is secular—of this changing world—and therefore is subject to historical development, decay, irrelevance, and finally absurdity. Christian thought does not escape this secularity in its orthodoxy.

The secularity of its thought is, therefore, problematic for the orthodox. Put simply, in what changing modes of secular thought shall Christians be orthodox? Or, put more positively, what changing modes of secular thought help Christians continually to cleanse their confession of a living and authentic eschatological faith until that final judgment of God?

Leading us into a discussion of some contemporary problematics in judging “the wheat and the tares” is our April alumni columnist, James A. Nuechterlein. Graduating from the University with a major in history in vintage 1960, he took his Woodrow Wilson Fellowship to Yale University where he completed his graduate work in American studies. Presently he is Associate Professor of History at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

A prolific writer on historical and political subjects for, among other journals, Review of Politics, American Spectator, Virginia Quarterly Review, South Atlantic Review, Worldview, and Commentary, Mr. Nuechterlein is also a frequent contributor to the Cresset on public affairs.

In Luce Tua

Of Heresies, Civil Liberties, And the Preservation Of the Faith

James A. Nuechterlein

Hans Küng and Edward Schillebeeckx may presumably now be counted among those who have discovered, to their own consternation, that the Pope is indeed a Catholic. It seems abundantly clear that John Paul II is determined to avoid, at whatever cost, the protestantizing of the Church of Rome. As of this writing (early February), Father Schillebeeckx is waiting to hear if the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith will, as it did with Father Küng, declare that he may no longer be considered a teacher of the Catholic faith. Whatever the outcome of this particular case, the Pope has already indicated his tenacious commitment to Catholic orthodoxy.

Only professional theologians with a close knowledge of Roman Catholic doctrine and of the writings of Küng and Schillebeeckx are equipped to deal competently with the specifics of the two cases. My disqualification on the subject is beyond challenge: I am neither a theologian nor a Roman Catholic, and I have read little of Küng and nothing of Schillebeeckx. Yet I am an interested Christian layman (of catholic, if not always Catholic, inclinations) and have found much of the general reaction to these cases at once fascinating, instructive, and perverse. It is to that reaction and its implications that these remarks are addressed.

The cardinal quality of the reaction has been its massive wrong-headedness. We should not be surprised that non-churchmen or liberal churchmen would immediately interpret the central issue as one of free speech, but it is quite astonishing to hear members of orthodox communions, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, address the matter for all the world as if they were spokesmen for the American Civil Liberties Union. The revelation of the degree to which secular assumptions have insinuated themselves into Christian discourse leaves one reeling; much of the commentary from presumably committed Christians reminds one more of gossips on the First Amendment than of meditations on Christian truth.

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Of fundamental concern to their church leaders is the authority behind statements of faith, a genuine problem not always acknowledged by moderate Catholic and Lutheran theologians.

No one, after all, has interfered with what the two priests think or say or write. They have not been silenced. What has been denied is their right to attack or subvert fundamental tenets of the church (if they have indeed done so) and still be considered teachers of the church. That obviously is no small thing, but it is not, at least within Christian assumptions, a violation of their rights. They are free to follow conscience, but if conscience leads them outside the boundaries of Catholic doctrine, then they must accept the consequences of where they have been led.

Much of the defense of Küng and Schillebeeckx is essentially Voltairean: liberal theologians insist that whether or not they agree with what the two have said, they will defend to the uttermost their right to say it. In the realm of political thought, where liberal democrats correctly assert that there are no orthodoxies, such a stance provides an essential defense of freedom, but if conscience leads them outside the boundaries of Catholic doctrine, then they must accept the consequences of where they have been led.

Assuming that most orthodox Christians would deny any such right, the fundamental issue in the case then shifts to whether or not the defendants are, indeed, heretics. On that question, as already noted, I am not qualified to pass judgment, but certain associated points can be considered.

From the Various Swamps of Enthusiasm

In Küng’s case, it is his attack on papal infallibility that has received the greatest attention. Non-Catholics might do well to exercise a certain reticence on that issue, but most Protestants will feel, as I do, an instinctive sympathy with Küng. Both historically and theologically, the doctrine of infallibility is not among the church’s most impregnable positions. If that question were at issue, the case would be simpler—again, especially for non-Catholics—than it actually is.

But the charges against Küng, and even more against Schillebeeckx, extend beyond matters of the church’s authority. Both men stand accused of questioning essential church doctrines, including the divinity of Christ and the reality of the resurrection. Since beliefs concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ constitute the heart of the Christian Gospel, there can be no question of the seriousness of the issues at stake. We are dealing here not with concerns at the margin, but with the core affirmations of the catholic and apostolic faith. If the church is not required to demand fealty here, it need demand it nowhere.

It may turn out on close examination that the two priests have been misread or misunderstood. Perhaps the Vatican hierarchy is interpreting their writings within too narrow a framework of understanding. Scholars of the church deserve the benefit of the doubt in such disputes, and the church would be wise to exercise its disciplinary authority with flexibility and restraint. It is proper to emphasize that too rigid a definition of doctrinal orthodoxy would exercise a chilling effect on Christian thought and reflection. Seminaries exist to help preserve the deposit of faith, but they should not become nurseries of fundamentalism or fortresses against theological literacy and sophistication.

It is one thing, however, to suggest that lines of doctrine be drawn carefully, quite another to suggest that they ought not be drawn at all. What is troubling about the response to the Küng/Schillebeeckx affair is that so much of it seems to suggest that the very concept of heresy is anachronistic and illegitimate. Yet those who would deny heresy must by extension deny orthodoxy. Christians may legitimately differ on the best means
All Christians might join the Pope in wondering how well the church is presently equipped to enter the necessary dialogue with modernity without mindless capitulation to it.

for affirming the one and combating the other, but without some agreed definition on the basic affirmations of the faith—without, in other words, orthodoxy—Christianity will inevitably descend into the various swamps of subjectivism, enthusiasm, and ethical humanism.

To Apostasy in the Mainstream Churches

Lutherans are these days perhaps particularly sensitive to matters concerning heresy. Remembering the agonies of the seminary professors in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod charged with teaching false doctrine, we instinctively sympathize with those in other faiths who come under similar suspicion. Those of us who took the side of the accused professors in the LC-MS dispute are not inclined to assume the good faith or the theological insight of church authorities anxious to preserve doctrinal solidarity. (In the Kung case, the analogies extend at least in part to the substance of the issue. Rome worries about papal infallibility, the LC-MS hierarchy about the literal truth of all Scripture: in both instances, the fundamental concern is the authority behind statements of faith. In my own view, in both these cases the church leaders have identified a genuine problem—a point not always acknowledged by Catholic and Lutheran moderates—but have attempted to resolve it by inappropriate and finally unacceptable means.)

But in any of these cases, it is important to keep the issues straight. If the seminary professors or Kung and Schillebeeckx deserve to be defended, it is on the grounds that they have been improperly accused, not on the basis of any presumed right to preach and teach what they will without regard to creedal or confessional discipline. We are rightly suspicious of inveterate heresy-hunters, and there is something badly wrong with the piety of churchmen whose manifestations of faith consist chiefly in rooting out impurities in the beliefs of others. None of that, however, should lead us to indifference about maintaining and defending the essentials of the faith against those who, whatever their intentions, would bring them into question. One becomes suspicious of liberal theologians whose automatic response to any charge of heresy is glibly to invoke the ghost of the Inquisition.

It is necessary to keep the fundamental issues distinct from questions of personality or motive. Right things may be done for the wrong reasons, and good people can make terrible errors of judgment. Those who express concern about the erosion of orthodox faith do, after all, have a considerable amount of evidence to point to both within and without the Roman Catholic church. Much of the current popularity of fundamentalist and evangelical movements derives from disturbing signs of apostasy within the mainstream churches. It is as important for catholic Christians to guard against the compromises and accommodations of liberalism as to resist the simplicities and rigidities of neo-fundamentalism.

One can well imagine that the Pope will find in the general reaction to the Kung/Schillebeeckx affair confirmation of his concerns regarding the integrity of Christian doctrine. When so much of the debate within the church over a heresy case focuses not on substance but on procedural or civil libertarian matters, we may justifiably assume either uncomfortable evasion of the central issue or a disquieting intrusion into Christian thought of secular presuppositions. In either case, traditional Christians might join the Pope in wondering how well the church is presently equipped to enter into the necessary dialogue with modernity without mindless capitulation to it. Kung and Schillebeeckx may well be innocent, but their cause is properly our own only if they are speaking from within the assumptions and affirmations of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic faith.
Christians distinguish the "righteousness that counts before God" from that righteousness that counts before other forums, thus freeing themselves for responsible political life.

Living With Big Brother

A Theologian's Perspective
On Governmental Regulation

David G. Truemper

Governmental regulation will always be both too little and too much—too little to protect adequately the weak from the predatory actions of the strong, and too much to allow free reign to the creative members of society to exercise their gifts for the common good.

It is not immediately apparent that the problem of governmental intervention and regulation is a problem relevant for theology. The extent of governmental regulation is not addressed in Scripture, nor does it come under the purview of traditional theological commonplaces. So the first task of the theologian is to determine what is problematic for theology about the problem of governmental intervention and regulation. Now, problems are problematic for theology when and because they are aspects of the human predicament. The Christian theologian seeks to expose such problems with the expectation that thereby he/she may also expose the "solution" which the Christian tradition, moored in the worshipping community, has to offer to the world.

This article is a preliminary view, indicating the point of departure a theologian might use, and sketching a few commonplaces regarding possible resources for the analysis of the issue. In the process, it will argue the following thesis:

Governmental regulation and intervention will always be both too little and too much: too little to protect adequately the weak of society from the selfish and predatory actions of the strong, and too much to allow free reign to the creative and humane members of society to exercise their gifts for the common good; nevertheless, such governmental regulation, precisely in its ambiguity, may be understood (at least for those with "eyes to see" or "ears to hear") as part of God's creating and sustaining care of his world and of his critical and condemning work of an "old" creation; thereby is exposed once more that which is the heart of the theologian's task, namely, to show the need for God's gift to that "old" world of the "new Creation," viz., people made new by their incorporation into the Body of Christ, the crucified and risen Redeemer and Lord.

In twenty centuries of Christian existence times—and governments—have changed. The problem of how one shall account theologically for the authority of government has changed over the centuries. What was heroically asserted in New Testament times (e.g., by St. Paul in Romans 13, almost scandalously calling Emperor Nero "God's servant for your good") is likely to be treated as mere credulity today. The notion of government as God's ministering agent of retribution is not a part of political theory today; and the heroic stance of a St. Paul or a St. Peter or of the hosts of martyrs is the result of views not widely held in our time. People like Dietrich Bonhoeffer or Max Josef Metzger are admired precisely because of their rarity. Modern Christians are a considerable distance removed from apostolic times and views, not least because their usual contact with government is in the form of dealing with a bureaucracy whose attention (or neglect) is neither benign nor malign but only bothersome—in triplicate.

Similarly, what was a matter of course from the time of Constantine until perhaps the seventeenth century is hardly any longer even conceivable, namely, that government exists to protect the Church, to make and preserve space for the Christian worship and witness and work. That is true also in areas where a kind of unofficial Constantinian arrangement obtains: in some eastern bloc countries like the German Democratic Republic, where the churches are allowed space to live and work and worship so long as they do not meddle in politics and matters of social policy and cultural formation; and in the United States, where religious institutions enjoy tax exemptions and other privileges. Fact is, the medieval synthesis has been irretrievably shattered, and with it most of the theological and ethical ideas and categories of those times.
Gone, too (just for the record), are the days of pseudo-Christian theories about absolute monarchs and the divine right of kings and emperors. Those anachronistic attempts to preserve something of the medieval synthesis after the thoroughgoing secularization of nation-states during and following the religious wars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had themselves to be shattered on the way to the modern age.

This theologian (perhaps jaundiced from having cut his eye teeth in a university classroom in the last years of the sixties) takes little comfort from the grand designs of Enlightenment divines and deistic thinkers whose thought was taken up by our nation’s “founding fathers.” The bureaucracy with which we deal is only in the remote sense as preserving Creator-endowed inalienable rights, and government of, by, and for the people is sometimes no more apparent in the halls of Congress today than it was a dozen years ago in the rabble-rousing rhetoric of the SDS or the Yippies.

No, most of the old justifications for government have been weighed in the balances and found wanting. Yet government remains, more or less effective, more or less respected, more or less justified. And it is more and more powerful, more and more felt, more and more involved in the daily lives of people. One need think only of regulated gasoline prices (or supplies), health warnings on cigarette packages, bright red announcements about products containing saccharine, a ban on further use of that herbicide of which you still have a five-year supply. Or one may ask a corporation executive or a university administrator about the increasing pile of records that must be kept and of forms that must be filed and of regulations that must be followed. One is tempted to add government to the old saw about the inevitability of death and taxes, except that the “certainty” of government is not at all so certain—a fact of which we have become painfully aware in the era of Watergate, of police department “red squads,” of FBI and CIA aberrations, of rampant inflation and uncertain energy and foreign policy.

All of this is complicated for us in the United States by the fact that the old distinctions between the government and the governed, between political control and the politically controlled, are simply not applicable—or are applicable only under radically altered circumstances. When we look at government, we are looking in the mirror. We have seen the enemy, and the enemy is us! (So, at last, that perceptive commentator, Pogo.)

It is beyond the scope of this article to develop a theoretically responsible grounding for the authority or right of political power as wielded by any government. Our concern is the more practical one: given the fact of government, and given its de facto exercise of power (and thus of regulation and intervention and protection) in broad areas of human life and social organization—given that reality, how much of such exercise of power is enough, and how shall we live with that?

It seems to me that it is possible to deal with that question with only a minimal theory of government, namely, that government exists in order to keep a fallen creation from self-annihilation. In this minimal view, government is a kind of stop-gap measure, a penultimate instrument serving penultimate ends. Far from the be-all and end-all of human existence, government serves simply to keep sinners from destroying one another. It may therefore be accorded a not insignificant place in God’s history and his plan to put all things under the headship of the risen Christ. But that status is relative to the central focus and ultimate concern of Christian theology, Christ himself. All else will have to take its place “under his feet,” as the apostle puts it—his enemies, to be sure, but also his friends—so that he may be “all in all” (Ephesians 1:20-22).

The Role of Governmental Authority

Fundamental to all theological reflection on governmental authority is a distinction, one which is fundamental also to theological reflection on all other aspects of life in the world: either something is with that cosmic Christ (and the word that announces the good news of his rule, and the community of those who trust that word for their life), or that something is outside of Christ/Gospel/Church and thus destined for the footstool (or lower). Either something serves to advance the cause of Christ/Gospel/Church, or it does not. And there is a cosmos full of “somethings” which are in the latter category—the sum total of reality outside of Christ/Gospel/Church, including things good, bad, and indifferent; including things that enhance human life and things that destroy or vitiate it; things that “do” life, and things that “do it in”; things that make life, and things that break life. Among those things is governmental regulation and intervention. Outside of Christ, they still provide security for life, while at the same time they exercise retribution upon it.

This distinction is decisive for Christian theology, because it serves to keep clear what saving faith may cling to, and what it may not cling to. It distinguishes the “righteousness that counts before God” from such other forms of justice that count before other forums. It distinguishes what is necessary for salvation from what is not. And in doing so, it intends to provide freedom for responsible participation in political life.

This basic distinction between what has to do with

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salvation and what has to do with life in the world, sometimes (unfortunately?) called the distinction between two "kingdoms" or two "regimes," serves to distinguish between God's two ways of lording it over his creation, and thus between the two ways in which the Christian experiences God's godly rule. The one operates according to the principle of retribution: deeds have consequences; good deeds have good consequences, and bad deeds have bad consequences. The other operates according to the surprising principle of mercy: deeds do not have their just consequences; people may experience something other than what they "have coming to them," undeserved favor. On the one hand, I experience God's work of creation and sustenance of me and his world, along with his evaluation of my responsibility or lack thereof. God orders my cosmos, and he needles me for my uncosmetic behavior. On the other hand, he offers me sheer and undeserved kindness and favor, and that for Christ's sake. Let me try to elaborate.

**Living With Governmental Regulation**

Outside of my faith-relationship with Christ/Gospel/Church, I am placed in a web of relationships where the "other" I face is a front for God as creator and critic. I receive life from my parents, whom I am commanded to honor and obey. That life I receive as a result not only of the union of sperm and ovum, but by the unique shape of the parenting I am given, of the schooling I receive, of the musical training I do not receive, of the counsel and the encouragement I receive in a number of directions. These, in turn, involve me in contact with other "fronts" for God's creative and critical work—teachers, coaches, pastors, colleagues, police, students. And these fronts, remember, serve both to make me and to break me—or at least to expose to me how I'm doing as creature. And, though these fronts (or, in the word used in Reformation theology, "masks") for godly criticism are themselves fallible sinners and therefore can err in their criticism of me, it is nevertheless true that their critique is often enough accurate—something I am forced grudgingly to admit in those moments of truth before the shaving mirror or in sleepless midnight hours. I experience the criticism as I experience the creating and sustaining; quite immanently, in the ordinary give and take of the web of relationships that mark the placedness, the "estate" of my living.

For example, when my younger daughter was a toddler. When on Friday evening I dragged my bones home, she greeted me with a warm hug (applied at knee level), and an expression of affection. Then, suddenly, she let go the embrace of my knees, toddled backward a couple of steps, put her arms on her hips to match the scowl on her face, and said, "Where you were, Daddy?"

Examples abound. Bad parenting produces warped children, and in their warpedness they cause their parents grief. Just as a badly-maintained automobile takes vengeance on the owner, so a badly-served "other" confronts me with the evidence of my ineffectiveness or failure: in the classroom, in the marriage bed, at tax court, at the police station, before colleagues.

The operating principle outside of Christ/Gospel/Church is a dual one, and various pairs of terms may be used to describe it: creation and criticism, security and retribution, life-enhancing and life-destroying, life-making and life-breaking. The simple truth is that deeds have consequences; people (often enough) get what is coming to them. The power of government is simply the institutionalization of that making and breaking of our life. As such, government is not God, nor is it merely an extension of individual rights. Government functions as God's front or mask for the making and the breaking of life when its officers make and carry out laws for the regulation of business and traffic, marriages and contracts, energy and elections. It is that front when it mandates parental responsibility and when it punishes abusers of children, when it builds interstate highways and when it fines speeders, when it forbids discrimination in schools and when it creates the legal space in which Sears can bring suit against the federal government for regulating things in an allegedly discriminatory way, when it establishes an income tax and when it audits a taxpayer who seems to be pulling more through a loophole than the Internal Revenue Service computer is programmed to approve.

The vision sketched so far is precarious; it depends on a view that is admittedly not empirically verifiable, and it grows out of the Christian's conviction that even behind the warped mandates of a Nero one can perceive the "servant of God." This vision can be held only with the benefit of support from outside oneself in the community of faith. Those who do not share the faith cannot be expected to share the vision, though they may understand and disagree. In any event this article is intended to articulate a possible way of getting at what is problematic about the problem of governmental regulation and intervention, and in the process to give some account of central Christian insights.

The appearance of government in this view is ambiguous, almost dialectical. Government supports
Government regulation is a front for the divine work of criticism. We are the sort of people who have to be regulated, and our grudging response is predictable from culprits.

life, and it destroys life; it makes life, and it breaks life. And it does the latter even as it does the former. That makes living with government almost as difficult as living without it. For example, regulations were announced last year which intended to cut off federal funding to schools that are perpetuating segregation, and to force discriminatory schools to pay unemployment insurance premiums and the like. Those guidelines were apparently drawn in such a way as to include the parish schools of many churches whose membership is disproportionately white but which did not establish their schools for the purpose of avoiding racial integration. In fact, the church body of which I am a member has been active in seeking to get the regulations altered. To be sure, the problem seems soluble—by writing better regulatory prose, and by finding more equitable ways to distinguish the racist schools from those which are not. Nevertheless, it is at best a curious defense when a church defends its 98 per cent white school in a 65 per cent white neighborhood as non-segregationist by pointing out that the membership of the supporting congregation is 99.44 per cent white. The congregation may escape the present dilemma, but its fundamental failure to relate properly to its neighborhood's population is exposed in the process.

The Federal Communications Commission is presently attempting to force an upgrading of 10-watt educational FM radio stations, and thus to clean up what some have come to call the "electronic sandbox" sponsored by many schools, school systems, and universities. The regulations are intended, its seems, to accelerate a kind of electronic Darwinism according to which the fittest operations are supposed to survive. Trouble is, those stations most fit for survival are not always the most "educational" in their operation. Some stations will find their life "made" with greater air space, and others will find their life "broken" when the supporting institution is unable or unwilling to invest more money. The station at my university, for example, faces likely extinction—not for lack of heart, but for lack of sufficient excellence to justify additional investment of scarce funds. It's just not a good-enough operation.

Many are saying that the federally-mandated 55-mph speed limit on our highways has not really reduced fuel consumption—not least because it forces the huge trucks to operate at design-inefficient speeds. An unexpected side benefit, however, has been a significant reduction in traffic deaths. Yet the regulation has also taught motorists to be scofflaws, and it has given a tremendous shot in the arm to the CB electronics industry. The "Catch-22" in the whole scheme has been the boost in the profits of Japanese and Taiwanese electronics firms, further complicating the very trade deficit which reduced fuel consumption was supposed to lessen.

A series of regulations has intensified the warnings about the dangers of smoking cigarettes. Despite the intense lobbying of the tobacco interests, the advertising of tobacco products on television has been banned. And the warnings have in fact prompted—or shamed—some people to quit smoking. Others have found it impossible to kick the habit, and still others have discovered that the enjoyment of (federally) forbidden pleasures is a new side-benefit of their smoking. And the total consumption of cigarettes has apparently risen to new heights.

A few years ago, in an attempt to encourage the diversification of television production and to enable local and regional programmers to have access to prime time television, a regulation limited the number of hours of network programming that could be carried by local broadcasters. Yet there is a general agreement that there has been no resultant improvement in the quality of programming. Instead, many broadcasters have filled the time with syndicated reruns of old situation comedies. One is prompted to wonder whether the problem is not something more serious than simply a badly-written regulation, whether the problem is not also a kind of judgment on either the industry or the tastes of people.

"Equal opportunity" regulations and legislation were followed by "affirmative action" as the intended cure for de facto discrimination in business, industry, and education. Yet one inescapable result has been the hiring of less-qualified people on a kind of quota system. Again the conclusion seems unavoidable: we are the sort of people who reap what we sow, and who simply must be held in by some kinds of restraints. And when we are forced to act in non-discriminatory ways, we have the depth of our previous discriminations brought home to us by new inequities.

We Are Largely Blind to the Future

The point of all of this is not that government is blind or stupid or malevolent. Such a gloomy diagnosis is not called for, and it is probably useful only in political campaigns. Rather, it is to say that even at its best governmental regulation and intervention will be both too little and too much. It will fail to protect the weakest in our society from the predatory designs of the strong, even as it fails to enable and encourage the best work of our most humane, enlightened, and altruistic citizens. We simply cannot calculate the consequences of our actions, yet those actions will have consequences—to which we are largely blind. We are blind to the future that holds the consequences of our deeds today. Thus
In the criminate order in which we live, what is required of us is that we be the sort of people who do not have to be required to be the sort of people we are required to be.

even our best intentions will often enough have unwelcome and troublesome—if not disastrous—consequences. "If only I’d known." “I had no idea that that would happen!"

In terms of governmental regulation, all of this seems to mean that any given exercise of regulatory authority—and not just the stupid ones—can be counted on to have troublesome side effects. Will public policy on abortions protect the interests of the fetus? Then those of the mother seem constricted. Shall the mother’s interests be favored? Then what of those of the fetus? And if both manage to be held in balance, what of those of the father? And, no matter what choices are made, what has the society done to itself in the process of protecting the various interests? What sort of society emerges if such questions are not dealt with openly? Or if they are?

**Christians in the Common Cause**

There are features in our situation which inevitably implicate us beyond our most broadly-conceived expectations. We are stuck in a retributive situation where, since deeds have consequences, even our most well-meaning deeds may quite realistically be expected to have startlingly troublesome consequences. It was, I believe, the Danish ethicist Knud Logstrup who put the dilemma like this: what is required of us is that we be the sort of people who do not have to be required to be the sort of people we are required to be. Therewith he points past the unwelcome consequences of our actions to the already incriminating situation in which we (and government) find ourselves. The already criminate order in which we participate at the individual level is replicated at the corporate/societal level for the organs of government.

What do these considerations imply for the Christian response to the governmental work of regulation, protection, and intervention in the lives of citizens?

1. Such governmental activity will be seen as a front or mask for the divine work of creation.
2. It will be seen also as a front for the divine work of criticism, always implicit but often explicit—implicit in that we are the sort of people who have to be regulated and who have to suffer intervention, and explicit in that overt offenses are overtly prosecuted. And our grudging response to both is predictable from culprits!
3. Moved to encourage and support such work, Christians would make common cause with others of good will. They may follow many theories of government in the secular realm, from the divine right of kings to the American revolutionary theory of government by the people—to say nothing of the party-dominated government of countries in the socialist/communist bloc.

4. One will tend to relativize government’s goals and activities, and to see them as serving only proximate ends. For Christians have a sense for what is ultimate, and their eschatology, derived from the New Testament, has been a recurring effective source for relativizing authorities both human and demonic—as well as the very law of God.

5. Christians will view the best intentions of government, if not with a jaundiced eye, then at least with an eschatologically-colored smile. When asked to explain their strange countenance, they may well offer advice like this:
   a. Don’t count on government for ultimate solutions. Even its best deeds will return to haunt it—and us.
   b. Even apart from such incalculable consequences, a reasonable government cannot adequately protect the weakest from the strongest, without reinforcing the criminate order for all citizens. Yet it will fail to do even that adequately and fairly, and therefore disappoint any and all utopian schemes, whether hatched by a government with grandiose visions or by a revolutionary movement.
   c. Resist divinizing government authority, especially when it claims to be the savior of the poor in the land.
   d. Do not be surprised if the regulators need regulating, if the investigators need investigating, if the protectors need protecting, if the intervenors need intervention.

Christians may address such counsel to non-Christians as well as to themselves. In addition, our Christian spokesperson with the eschatologically-colored smile will add some words to his own kind, words which he does not expect to be received outside the circle of faith, which are at least offensive if not absolutely scandalous to those who do not share Christianity’s view of God and Christ.

1. Since government is the best thing we have, do not hesitate to participate, to vote, to hold office, to exercise authority, to lobby, to engage in regulatory and regulated activity.
2. Do not suppose, however, that even wise governing or scrupulous obedience can make you ulti-
Christian freedom is the stuff of which heroes are made. Freed from the concern to secure their lives, Christians can risk all in the name of humane and sacred values.

mately right. Do not expect that good and faithful governmental service can bear the weight of justifying your life.

3. Do not suppose that a Christian has special or heightened wisdom or insight into the process of governing, as if a Christian government or leader could be expected to do a better job than one who does not share the faith. The Gospel and faith do not enable governmental service in the sense of conferring the power or wisdom or ability to function well or wisely.

4. Rather, the Gospel and faith enable such service simply (!) by conferring the freedom to exercise political responsibility as such. That is, the Gospel about Christ can permit faithful and responsible work in the world to be just that, unhooked from ultimate values.

5. This means that the Gospel conveys the freedom to do the works of political responsibility in their sheer limitedness as works, without making them bear the additional weight of securing one's life before God.

6. Yet that freedom is also a positive value for work in the world and for political responsibility, for it puts the whole realm of worldly responsibility under the sign of the word of forgiveness.

a. It enables the Christian thus freed to risk becoming implicated in the incriminating order, with the confidence that the Gospel offers the forgiveness of sins. In this way such freedom helps one to avoid paralysis in the face of the ambiguities and incriminations.

b. It unhooks the exercise of political responsibility from the crushing compulsion of making one's life before God thereby.

c. It makes the work of worldly responsibility less than ultimate, while at the same time, by communicating such freedom, it enables the exercise of that responsibility by creating space for it, by providing the brackets within which that responsibility can be discharged.

A dominant mode for speaking of the work of Jesus Christ is to call him "Redeemer," and thus one who wins, creates, bestows freedom from bondage; similarly the motif of freedom may properly dominate a theological description of the life of a Christian citizen. In this view, the Gospel is seen as that which frees people to face the reality of their situation in all its limitedness, future-blindness, and incriminating and death-dealing force—and nevertheless to live, really live with it. Thus Christians confess that their life, their ultimate valuedness, is "hid with Christ in God."

The freedom of which Christians speak is not dependent upon any particular political theory or social contract or set of inalienable rights. It is derived solely from their confidence that their life is given with the promise of forgiveness and favor for Christ's sake. To be sure, Christians may well prefer and encourage those governmental policies which maximize individual freedom of choice and minimize the overlay of governmental regulation and intervention. But that bias, if such it be, is grounded in the simple confidence that Christians, at least, should not need a great deal of curb or control.

The person who is a "new creation in Christ" can be counted on to take on more and more the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." And the sense that participants in the new creation have been freed by godly grace from the need to secure their life in any ultimate sense by the performance of their work in the world is a hallmark of their newness.

Such freedom is not irresponsibility. For freedom, especially ultimate and life-certifying freedom, is the stuff of which heroes are made. People freed from concern to secure their lives are the very ones who can risk everything in the name of humane and sacred values.

The Christian's Eschatological Smile

For the above-mentioned reasons and in these ways, this Christian theologian is inclined to urge people to face the uncertainties of governmental regulation with a respect due to that which makes and breaks our lives, with vigorous and responsible investment of time and energy for its improvement, with efforts to make the most of its protection for the weak while at the same time seeking to expand the free space for the humane work of persons of good will, with gratitude for its help and opposition to its excesses, and with repentance as it exposes our implicatedness in the human predicament, yet with a kind of knowing smile at its pretensions to ultimacy.

He awaits no utopia from governmental regulation and intervention, yet he is anxious to join other well-intentioned persons in struggling with the difficult questions of the extent and direction of such intervention. For any amount of regulation will likely turn out to be too little to restrain all outbursts of wickedness, yet too much to enable the best contributions to society from the most enlightened and humane of its citizens.

And he will urge the exercise of a freedom won out of the death and resurrection of Jesus for vigorous wrestling with the ambiguities of political life, for responsible participation in the work of government, and for the witness to a fully human life in Christ.
The Power
Of Proximity

Nevis Mountain Dew
and Buried Child in
The Second City

John Steven Paul

The unique appeal of the live theatrical performance springs from the proximate relationship it shares with its audience. That relationship enables the theatre to contact its audience in a uniquely immediate fashion, to "unite with our sensibilities," as Antonin Artaud said.

The theatre devotee will rightly disdain these statements as truisms. But, since the vast majority of Americans sees no performances other than those filtered through the television and film media, it knows nothing of this the theatre's special capacity. Indeed, due to a number of factors, including the geographical isolation of most quality playhouses and the extremely high price of attendance at professional productions, these days any of us are fortunate to find ourselves in a position to experience live theatre at all.

Nevertheless, in spite of the distances and the high prices, there are those who do go to the theatre. They go there, I think, for the immediacy of it. They go for the closeness, to be close enough to be touched. Voluntarily, they enter into a relationship with the theatre. They expect to be thrilled, pained, wrecked, and brained in an especially powerful way, because they'll be in direct contact with the action. No screens. No way to turn it off or change the channel. And, it has always seemed to me more difficult, or to require more of a conscious decision, to walk out on a play in progress than a film. You're there, trapped, for the duration.

To go to the theatre is to render oneself vulnerable. We invite the theatre to unite with our sensibilities, trusting that the union will be beneficial, or at least gratifying, and not a violation. As with any relationship, there is an ethical issue here. The theatre's got us, right where it wants us, and can do with us what it will. Theatre, then, can be good or bad in the sense of interesting or dull; theatre also can be good or bad in the sense of right or wrong.

Bad theatre takes advantage of the proximity with its audience to project images that excite feelings of anger, disgust, embarrassment, prurience, resentment, or violence gratuitously. Bad theatre violates our trust. We leave feeling raped. Good theatre neither projects less potent images or excites less powerful feelings. It employs its images, however, as means to a positive end. A deep laceration of the skin is not a pleasant thing, but it allows cleansing blood to flow over a dirty wound. A severe thunderstorm may be frightening or destructive to property, but it often clears stagnant or polluted air. Images in a good theatrical performance function similarly. They clear the air. They help us see. We leave feeling clean at least, and, perhaps, enlightened.

Chicago has recently seen two especially good productions: Nevis Mountain Dew by Steve Carter and the Pulitzer prize-winning Buried Child by Sam Shepard. Both were played in intimate theatres. The Victory Gardens Theatre seats about 200 people in what is actually just an over-sized room with a stage along one wall. The North Light Repertory Theatre in Evanston employs a more traditional stage-audience configuration, though the furthest seat cannot be more than thirty-five feet from the apron.1

In Nevis Mountain Dew, Carter tells the story of the family Philibert: Jared, his wife Billie, and his two sisters. The black, comfortably-situated family takes pride in its West Indian heritage. During the typically electric seconds between the time the house lights in the crowded little theatre dimmed out and the stage lights came up, an eerie, rhythmic sucking noise pierced the gravid darkness. This unfamiliar, unrelenting aural image gripped the audience until, when the stage lights flared, it connected

1 A recent issue of Chicago listed 44 professional theatre productions in the Chicago metropolitan area and many more amateur, community, and student productions. Readers are referred to Chicago for specifics, but watch especially for the fare at The North Light Repertory Theatre (2300 Green Bay Road, Evanston. 869-7278), The Apollo Theatre (2540 North Lincoln. 935-6100), The Victory Gardens Theatre (3730 North Clark, 549-5788), The Theatre Building (1225 West Belmont, 327-5252), and The Saint Nicholas Theatre (2851 North Halsted, 975-2300).
with a visual image. We were introduced to Jared Philibert, or anyway the part of him that protruded from a massive iron lung. Mostly, we saw his eyes, angry—flashing eyes—reflected in a mirror positioned above his head.

The bulky respirator dominated the room, stage and house alike. It was the tangible barrier corresponding to the intangible one obstructing the family's forward progress through life. One sister had delayed a marriage, the other a reconciliation with her estranged husband, both imprisoned in the house by feelings of guilt and pity for their brother. And, except for a single momentous exception, Billie too had locked up her body with a vow of fidelity and celibacy, though she lived in dire need of a whole man for a husband.

The action of the play occurs on Jared's fiftieth birthday. As the family rather half-heartedly celebrates, the West Indian rum known as Nevis Mountain Dew loosens their tongues. By the end of the evening, each member of the group has blurted out his or her deepest needs and darkest disappointments. Billie's confession moves her husband profoundly. In a moment of gritty resolve, Jared orders that the lights be turned out and that one of the assembled return to pull the respirator's plug.

Lights out. Rhythmic, mechanized inhal...exhale...inhale...exhale. Door opens. Darkness still. Jared: "Oh, so it's you!" No audible response. The respirator abruptly ceases its sucking. Jared gasps for breath briefly. And dies. We don't know who answered Jared's plea. In the denouement, the family, one by one, resumes forward motion. Billie has departed with the man she needed. One sister's fiance helps her pack for the wedding trip; the other sister tearfully telephones her husband. The iron lung is silent, anticipating its own imminent exit.

The collective sigh of relief sent up by both the characters in Nevis Mountain Dew and the Victory Gardens' audience at the cessation of the respirator's operation attested to the machine's visual and aural power. Its ability to reign over a setting was startling, perhaps because to the post-Jonas Salk generation the iron lung is largely unknown. From the beginning of the performance, the image functioned as a palpable nexus for the dashed hopes, fears, and frustrations of the Philiberts. Like a parasite, it sucked rhythmically, sucked inexorably, the life blood from the family and, because it was so near, genuinely tested the physical stamina of the audience. Whoever put it to rest played the tyrannicide's role.

The respirator sucked rhythmically, sucked inexorably, testing the physical stamina of all in the audience.

The image of the iron lung burned like a torch illuminating the problem at the core of Nevis Mountain Dew and singeing those of us who sat too close, prying into the lives of the Philiberts. But if Steve Carter lighted his torch in the opening seconds, Sam Shepard kept the illuminating image in Buried Child from his audience until the play's final moments. Like Nevis Mountain Dew (and much of American Drama, for that matter), Buried Child relates the story of a family with a problem. Three generations of the family have assembled on this occasion, quite by coincidence. Tilden, the deranged son of Dodge and Halie, has returned to their Illinois farm in retreat from an unexplained personal catastrophe in New Mexico. Tilden spends his hours wandering between the dilapidated farm house and the garden, which it is said has not produced a thing in forty years. His father lies immobile in front of the television set guarding against the return of another son, Bradley, who, inexplicably, takes a fancy to clipping the old man's hair. In the meantime, Dodge's wife, Halie, whiles away her days consorting, so circumstantial evidence suggests, with the village minister.

Onto this scene enters Tilden's son Vince with his girlfriend Shelly in tow. Vince was on his way to New Mexico to visit his father when he decided to stop in and see his grandparents for the first time in six years. Vince's father does not recognize him and neither his grandfather nor his uncle Bradley will admit to having the slightest notion who he is. If it were not clear to us already, the arrival of Vince and Shelly—two apparently normal people—establishes the fact of profound and ancient trouble in the house. The trouble, however, remains unnamed—truly a Pinteresque menace in its anonymity.

Buried Child burgeons arresting images. Each successive one shrouds the family and its past in deeper mystery. With Shelly the audience asks, "What's happened to this family?" Why does Bradley enjoy clipping his old father's head until it bleeds? Why is Halie constantly away from the house? Why does Tilden keep digging in the Garden? And, why has Vince come back or, more significantly, why doesn't he leave, since no one will acknowledge his status or presence? Shepard provides the answers to these questions in his own good time and in two ways: through spoken exposition and, concurrently, through a progression of images.

In Act I, Tilden totes in an armload of corn from the garden. In the second act he brings in a great mess of carrots. In both instances, this giant of a man, loaded down

April, 1980
with a living burden from a dead
garden, pulls all the stage focus to
himself, but the meaning of his
actions remains quite unfocused.
Before Tilden makes his third trip
back from the garden in the third
act, Shelly badgers old Dodge into
telling the family story. Many years
ago, says Dodge, Halie bore her son
Tilden, a son. Tilden loved it.
Dodge, outraged at its illegitimacy,
drowned the baby and buried it,
haunting his house and lineage for­
ever with the ghost of atrocity. Now
Vince has been drawn back, mys­
teriously, to receive the legacy due
the eldest son of the eldest son. In
the dimly-lit final moments of the
play, Tilden garners his final har­
vest from that surprising garden:
the tiny, mud-blackened skeleton
of his own buried child. It was the
most astounding image I have ever
seen on stage.

Grotesque? Somewhat, yes. Gra­
tuitous? I think not. For, with a sin­
gle image, the playwright had ex­
posed the two archetypal sins which
brought an American family to ruin.
The tale of Buried Child, a tale of
incest and infanticide, recalls the
classic tragedies of Attica. Yet, when
we view the Oresteia and ask, “What’s
happened to this House of Atreus
anyway?” the answer comes to us in
an expositional choric ode. Imagine
if Aegisthus had brought in the
remains of Thyestes’ children, or
if Orestes had returned with the
skeleton of his sister Iphigenia from
Aulis to Agamemnon’s house in
Argos!

Because of its unique relationship
with its audience, it is within the
power of the theatre to unshroud
a mystery, expose a dark secret, or
assemble the pieces of a puzzle with
the projection of a single image.
At its best, the theatrical image
acts as a lighted lens, illuminating
and clarifying the performance’s
message. The audience fortunate
to see good theatre gains a double
benefit: the visceral thrill of being
deeply touched and the intellectual
satisfaction that accompanies a
vision of the truth.

Deer in the Supermarket
Valparaiso, Indiana

For Spitz Ruprecht

She stood confused
slender legs stiff
sharp hooves ready to spring
on porcelain and glass.

We watched her ears
move forward
before she jumped
so swift
the light held her in space
more reflected color than deer—
and our faces smashed in glass shards
she tangled with her legs
the bright blood
ran in pools among gaudy packages.

We watched as belts were offered,
then ropes
and her wild round eyes stared beyond us
beyond even, the small park beside the store
where ferns had washed against her flanks
as she moved
in silent shadow.
Outside they carried her
outside they shot her
and we waited—
staring
as for some sign
to go.

J. T. Ledbetter
Few women have emerged from the shadows of Latin American history to receive the credit they deserved for their roles in shaping their societies and cultures. Yet in the contemporary history of one nation, Argentina, two women have risen to great heights of leadership, and each has been the wife of the same man, Juan Domingo Peron. The first, Eva Duarte Peron, reached her pinnacle of power in the early 50s and died of cancer at the age of 33. The other Senora Peron, Isabel, became vice-president in the mid-70s and succeeded her husband as chief executive from 1976 to 1978, when she was deposed by a military coup. It is with Eva, the more dramatic and clever of the two, that this article deals.

Few women have been the subject of so much controversy, at once hated and passionately adored. Eva's biography, La Razon de me Vida (My Purpose in Life or The Meaning of My Life) hides more than it reveals, but it is clear that she should not be considered a feminist in the usual meaning of that term. She never aspired to anything, she said, but to give her life to her husband's career. Perhaps so—but she nevertheless controlled the lives and livelihoods of millions of men, fought hard for women's suffrage and won, got a divorce law on the books, and once proposed salaries for housewives!

Her shrewd and flamboyant use of power exerts a fascination that still draws us more than a quarter century after her death. A version of her life is even the subject of the current rock opera Evita, brought to us by the same musical team which gave us Jesus Christ Superstar.

Eva's homeland, Argentina, was not the typical Latin community at the time of her childhood. In the early 30s it was not far behind Canada in wealth, and it enjoyed a high, if unequally distributed, standard of living. Geographically and climatically similar to the American Midwest and Great Plains, Argentina's heartland of grain fields and pastures fed millions of Europeans. Buenos Aires was the Chicago of the southern hemisphere; it had railroads and grain elevators, packing houses, food processing plants, banks and elegant shops, parks and broad avenues. It boasted of its pure Spanish and Italian majority, with generous additions of Britons, Germans, Poles, and Levantines. Argentines knew they were destined for leadership in all South America, and they looked down on their neighbors of mixed racial background. Life was good, and it would vastly improve when the Axis won the Second World War.

Actually, everything was not that rosy in the 30s, and people of Eva's impoverished background were well aware of it. The gap between rich and poor was widening, and social welfare legislation lagged. There was no Argentine New Deal in the 30s. The rich foreign corporations, opulent estancieros, and urban oligarchs lived in another world altogether from the packing house laborers and farm tenants. Argentina was far away from its northern hemisphere consumers upon whom its economic success depended, and the war caused severe hardships.

Eva learned early that men were enemies to be outwitted; they preyed upon silly girls. But she would be different; she would rise to fame and fortune and make men serve her.

Eva's early life was lived in a dreary hamlet two hundred miles west of Buenos Aires. Her mother had been seduced by someone from the local estancia, and she was only too happy to seek security as mistress to a man named Duarte. Other foster fathers for Eva followed. The Senora Duarte presided over a "boarding house" where few secrets could have been hidden from the growing child. She learned early that men were natural enemies to be outwitted; they preyed upon helpless, silly girls. But she would be different; she would rise to fame and fortune somehow, making men serve her. At the age of fifteen, she ran away with a man from a traveling tango dance band, trusting his promise of a career in Buenos Aires.

Buenos Aires in the mid-30s was an exciting and dangerous place for a girl without education, talent, or experience, without money or an influential patron. But Eva did well for herself. Leaving her guitar player behind, she won small parts in radio serials and scrounged free meals at local restaurants. The luxury she craved...
was all around her. She never worked seriously at becoming a true artist, however. She read her lines melodramatically, scorning the long hours of training needed to develop diction and stage presence. The road to success, she firmly believed, was in manipulating others, not in dedication to the arts. She used sex as a weapon, amassing a large number of "friends" as time passed, and each one boosted her a notch higher in her pursuit of money and fame.

Then came the stroke of luck that was decisive. A terrible earthquake struck northern Argentina in 1944. The whole nation responded generously to the victims; Eva figured prominently in rallies to raise funds. Undoubtedly, she felt real compassion for the sufferers who were people of her own background. It was at one of the rallies that she saw Colonel Peron, a key figure in the grupo de oficiales unidos (group of united officers) who had recently seized power and initiated a Nazi-leaning dictatorship. In her book, Eva labeled it "my marvelous day":

I put myself at his side. Perhaps that attracted his attention. And when he could listen to me I ventured to tell him, in my best language: "If it is as you say, the cause of the people is my cause: however great the sacrifice, I will not leave your side until I faint." He accepted my offer. That was "my marvelous day."!

Juan Domingo Peron was a childless widower in the late 30s. Tall, athletic, genial, well-liked, and ambitious, he cut a dapper figure in Argentine social circles, wrote pamphlets on military technique, and had even been to Europe to study the tactics of warfare. Though unimpressed with Mussolini, he returned a firm admirer of Hitler and of the efficiency the Germans exhibited in single-mindedly pursuing their goals. He was also convinced that fascism was the wave of the future. Peron assisted in the 1943 coup and was on the way to leadership when he met Eva. Believing that este mundo es para los vivos (this world is for the livewires, the go-getters), he used his wit and self-confidence to take ethical short-cuts matching Eva's own moral attitudes.

**A Woman's Rise Among Macho Men**

Eva had acquired her own radio program, an interview show titled *Toward a Better Future*, a half-hour patriotic program. Peron became the hero of that radio program. He was the only hope of the working class, Eva repeated incessantly. In turn, Juan Domingo seemed to be flattered by the adoration she professed for a man twice her age. They set up housekeeping openly, and she changed her appearance to emerge thinner, blond, wearing stylish dresses, costly jewelry, and Parisian perfumes. Her rivals soon learned that a harsh word from Eva could jeopardize their careers. It is true there were critics who grumbled about her influence. A mistress, they intimated, was one thing; but she was far from discreet, ordering her man around in public, disdaining proper decorum, offending the masculine sense of *dignidad*.

Eva steered her course straight over *dignidad* and *machismo*. She would simply make herself indispensable to Peron and see in turn that he became indispensable to Argentina. His enemies became her enemies. Eva had a ruthless determination and implacable hatred that he could never muster. Both of them, however, saw the *descamisados* (literally "the shirtless ones," or working class) as the key to their success. If the working class, so long ignored, could be united behind Peron and tied to the army; if a program of strong economic nationalism could be developed; if the Argentine people could be shown that their dreams could yet be realized despite the emerging evidence that they had been on the wrong side in the war, then the future would be theirs.

Eva and Peron first concentrated upon justice for the workers. Peron asked for and received the position of Secretary of Labor as well as Minister of War. Soon he was Vice-President too. He brought all the unions together in the Confederacion General de Trabajadores (The General Confederation of Workers) and settled most labor-management disputes by forcing employers to give in under threat of army intervention. Wages rose 30-40 per cent, and there were bonuses and paid holidays, sick leaves, and fringe benefits never seen before. The *descamisados* loved it, and they loved Juan Domingo and Eva too.

Rival army officers watched over this thrust with mounting dismay. Argentina had been forced into a last-minute declaration of war on the Axis by the United States upon penalty of exclusion from the United Nations Organization. That was bad enough; now this uppstart colonel backed by the *descamisados* was obviously going to run for the presidency. His chances of winning, with Eva at his side, were high. Consequently, they sent him an ultimatum in October, 1945: resign your posts at once and go into exile. Peron added up the odds for resistance and decided to comply. They hustled him off to detention in the Plata. Eva showed no weakness or hesitation at all. She staged a very "feminine" emotional outburst at his arrest, but no sooner had he gone than she rushed around for support from their friends, cajoling, demanding, threatening. She had plenty of money from somewhere and spent it freely.

The *descamisado* union leaders were especially indebted to her and called a gigantic rally of workers that turned the tide on October 16 and 17 of 1945. Rough, menacing, and disorderly, they marched from the factories and packing house district into the heart of Buenos Aires. The military was genuinely frightened; it reversed itself completely, asserting that Peron had only been put in protective custody to save his life from an assassination plot. Eva rushed to his side. And a huge rally shouting PE-RON, PE-RON greeted him as he stood on the balcony of the Casa Rosada, the Argentine White House. It was an emotional encounter that had

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seldom been seen in Buenos Aires. He ordered a day's holiday for them all and swore to continue as their benefactor. A few days later, he and Eva were married, and her triumph was assured.

She had literally saved him from exile and oblivion. He needed her brash boldness. A continuation of their irregular relationship would have hurt his chances for election. She in turn could not advance in Latin society without male protection. United by their common background and consuming ambition, they appeared ideally made for each other; the weaknesses of Juan Domingo were compensated by Eva's strengths. The people called her Evita ("Little Eva"), but she was a powerful woman who used power to amass power. A recent biographer summed up their program acidly as a plan to take from the rich and give to the poor—then take from the poor.

**Mink Coats and the Shirtless Ones**

After a brief honeymoon, they plunged into the presidential campaign. The Perons controlled the press and radio. They allowed the opposition to hold rallies, but used the police to disrupt and intimidate. Those outside Buenos Aires received only the news the government censors allowed. The clergy were in a quandary; the rich and give to the poor—then take from the poor. made for each other; the weaknesses of Juan Domingo were compensated by Eva's strengths. The people called her Evita ("Little Eva"), but she was a powerful woman who used power to amass power. A recent biographer summed up their program acidly as a plan to take from the rich and give to the poor—then take from the poor.

**The Argentine Chamber of Deputies called Eva "The Pampas Lily," "The Lady of Hope," and "The Lady of Compassion," the last two titles hitherto reserved for the Blessed Virgin Mary.**

And Eva succeeded in making the grand tour of Europe despite the protests of the foreign minister that it was not a propitious time to be seen hobnobbing with Franco while Argentina was negotiating with the United States for millions in technical aid. She pushed such objections aside. She needed to study the social welfare systems of the Old World, she said; privately it was felt that she wanted to catch up with those rich Argentines who made a yearly pilgrimage to Paris and Rome. "I go as a representative of the working people, of my beloved shirtless one," she told the farewell crowd of 350,000. Shirtless she most decidedly was not. Her wardrobe cost a fortune, and the plane was fitted out with bedroom, dressing areas, and dining salon. Servants carefully prepared her every entrance. The reception in Madrid was everything she could have desired, for Spain was desperate for beef and grain. She did visit orphanages, schools, and homes for the aged; she was decorated by Franco and she raised her arm in the fascist salute on his palace balcony, wearing a mink coat in the hot summer sun.

The Italians and the French were not as awed. Official receptions were smaller in Rome and Paris. She kept
the Pope waiting twenty minutes; he reciprocated by doing the same, then giving her a standard rosary when she said she would like some token of the Holy Father's favor to give to Juan Domingo. Eva reserved her most spectacular dresses and coiffures for the state dinner in Paris where a French photo magazine showed her in a cloth of gold gown that clung to her body like a mermaid's scales. She did not go to Britain because the queen rebuffed her with only an invitation to tea at Buckingham Palace. When she returned to Buenos Aires, it could be seen that she craved the plaudits of the people even more. Newspapers said the whole world awaited her message of hope, her solution to misery and hunger. She now saw social reform in its global dimensions. Her working attire was henceforth to be more serious, more befitting the global presence—tightly-drawn-back hair, tailor-made suits.

Both Perons lived beyond their means, buying town houses and rural property too. Gifts poured in from those who genuinely admired Eva, and those who needed her favors. It was reported that she often ordered clothes and ignored the bills. To remind the First Lady of her forgetfulness would have been an act of desacato. Where did the money come from? No one can say for certain. Peron had created a state trading agency, The Argentine Institute for the Promotion of Trade. All producers of raw materials were forced to sell to this organization. Prices were pegged at low levels. In the immediate postwar years, Argentina could get just about any price it wanted from hungry world consumers. The Marshall Plan had yet to put Europe back on its feet. The difference between the high prices Europeans paid to the Institute and the low price paid to domestic producers was earmarked for industrial development.

Argentina needed a more balanced economy to create manufacturing jobs at home and to cut humiliating dependence upon foreign capital. A major power needed to be self-sustaining. But no audits were ever made to find exactly where the millions went. A great deal went into the pocket of the Peronista elite, even more to the Eva Peron Foundation, and much undoubtedly into their personal accounts. The sad part of the story was that prices rose 150 per cent between 1946 and 1950, and the country had to brace itself for meatless days—meatless days in Argentina?—because farmers cut their cattle production and reduced acreage under cultivation as profits fell. Few farms could afford the new machines that might have made a difference. And hundreds of thousands of poor farm laborers rushed to the cities to take more lucrative jobs in factories and in services.

Eva set herself an exhausting schedule of work upon Argentina's problems. She scrutinized every debate in the legislature, she traveled extensively to gain votes for women, and she gave weekly radio talks, wrote newspaper releases, and was involved with Juan Domingo in every multi-million peso transaction. Above all, she operated almost single-handedly the Eva Peron Foundation. Such a grueling life had to take its toll eventually. Often she was up at daybreak dictating to her secretary while manicurists and hairdressers prepared her for her appearances and the first desacato applications for largesse were heard.

**A Fascist Government by the Heart**

Welfare was all a matter of love, she believed, "government by the heart." She often contrasted the cold, institutionalized welfare services seen on her European tour with her own personal attentions. She had a drawer full of peso notes, and an order pad which was in constant use to demand from increasingly reluctant suppliers perhaps a furnished home for one applicant, a wardrobe of clothes for another, drugs and hospital care for a third. She seldom had time or desire to devote to the serious study of social welfare. Recipients of Eva's charity were chosen at random from the thousands asked to write to her daily. Her treatment of them was said to be imperious, but they were enormously grateful nonetheless. There is no evidence that she followed through on any of theses cases of misguided generosity, and sometimes the results could be cruel. On several occasions she brought groups of children from rural poverty to Buenos Aires for a week in a luxury hotel, serving them fancy restaurant meals, treating them to movies, buying toys, then sending them back to the squaror from whence they had come. She did sincerely identify herself with the poor, and she spent fortunes that her critics insist could better have been employed to raise general living standards. Still, these same critics never admit that they had never given a thought to the poor themselves.

Eva never allowed a certified public accountant on the premises of the Foundation, so estimates of the Foundation's wealth depend upon the political affiliation of the reporter or critic. The intake had to be enormous. Every one contributed, every business firm, every union, every farm organization. The money came from taxes, from old age and medical insurance, from decrees that periodically assessed every worker a full day's wages. No property was exempt from possible expropriation. One angry legislator declared shortly before he fled into exile that the Eva Peron Foundation should be labeled "unexplored territory" like old maps of Patagonia. In her new role as Lady Bountiful (The Chamber of Deputies called her "The Pampas Lily," "The Lady of Hope," and "The Lady of Compassion," the last two titles hitherto reserved for the Blessed Virgin Mary), Eva even sent parcels to the poor in the United States; the State Department felt it politic to accept with thanks. Her offer of $10 million to United Nations relief was withdrawn, however, after her hints for election to some honorary position were ignored.
Even a land as rich as Argentina could not continue such largesse for long. The gold reserve dwindled as the national debt rose, and the peso had to be devalued again and again. Farm exports, the lifeblood of the nation, continued to decline. Farmers simply refused to work when profits were deliberately withheld from them. European orders declined as the Marshall Plan recovery started to take dramatic effect. Industrial production dropped as energy resources to support it became scarce. Not even government-decreed padding of industrial work rolls or the creation of thousands of new service jobs could solve rising unemployment problems. More important for the future, Argentine agriculture was losing out on the breakthroughs in technology, in hybrid products, in scientific animal husbandry. Nothing seemed to be working as it should. Peron finally saw the need to slow down, to say “no” to unions asking for bigger pay envelopes, more fringe benefits, less work.

Eva was not happy with such tightening of belts, but she followed her husband's lead. Juan Domingo asked for a loan from the United States and toned down his strident speeches on Yankee imperialism while his diplomats put out feelers for private loans as well, offering inducements to explore Patagonia for iron, coal, and oil. Eva insisted her love for the was as strong as ever, but she declared a number of speeches on Yankee imperialism while his diplomats put out feelers for private loans as well, offering inducements to explore Patagonia for iron, coal, and oil. Eva insisted her love for the was as strong as ever, but she declared a number of

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Eva made Peronism ring with religious fervor. Her husband assumed the aura of a saint, and their images in public places took on a new nimbus-like light emanating from their faces.

Most Argentines did not agree. The tendency was to blame Communists, North Americans, or Peron's underlings, not Juan Domingo or Evita, for what the leaders continued to call “temporary dislocations.” True, there could be found a few crudely chalked signs proclaiming \textit{viva Peron Viudo} (“long live Peron the widower”). Eva responded to this with hysterical tirades in Plaza de Mayo. Protesting that she was ready to die a thousand deaths if need be, she asked, “Why would anyone want to kill a simple woman like me?” Though Peronism had no intrinsic meaning, Eva made it ring with religious significance. Her husband took on the aura of a saint, and their pictures in public places took on a nimbus-like light emanating from their heads.

I sometimes think that President Peron has ceased to be a man like other men—that he is, rather, an ideal incarnate. For this our party must cherish him as our leader without fearing that he will dis-

Peron never spoke that way; he never indicated that he saw himself as semi-divine. On the other hand, he never restrained his wife from making these harangues, but seemed to find her deification of him humorous but tolerable. She had him get his teeth straightened, apparently more elegant and more businesslike than ever before. She posed in rich gowns before tapestries on occasion, but preferred to be seen working at her desk with her hair tied in a severe blond knot, utterly composed, pale, tireless, working steadily for her descamisados fifteen hours a day, stopping only to give those stirring nationwide addresses.

Eva reached the peak of her career in 1951 when the Constitution was amended to allow for a second six-year term, and the way was paved for her nomination as vice-president. Or so she believed. Her work for women's rights had brought national franchisement. The Peronist Feminine Party had offices in every community with lighted pictures of Juan Domingo and Evita. Peron had proclaimed, “I render homage to the women of my country in whom the men of the Revolution found an echo that fills us with satisfaction and pride.” It was, in fact, compulsory for women to register to vote; Eva organized a door-to-door campaign to persuade recalcitrants to follow through on election day. Everywhere the posters read, \textit{Peron cumple, Evita dignifica} (Peron fulfills, Evita dignifies,) with the significant dates underneath—1952-1958.

Harassment of the opposition was more blatant than in 1946. No new parties were allowed. There could be no combinations or coalitions among existing parties, no withdrawal of weaker candidates in favor of the most attractive anti-Peronista. Opponents were forbidden to use radio or TV; few printers dared make handbills. Yet Buenos Aires rallies were well attended despite all the threats. Finally, the date for the election was advanced from 1952 to November 1951, as Peron's advisors warned him of worsening economic conditions in the coming spring.

A gigantic Peronista rally was scheduled for late August in the heart of the capital, and everyone sensed that it was for the purpose of officially proclaiming Eva's candidacy. The day was declared a national holiday as preparations were made to receive two million

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descamisados—free transportation, free food and drinks, free entertainment, and a rousing speech from Evita. When only 250,000 showed up, there was stunned shock. Eva had hoped to be nominated by acclamation after a vigorous denunciation of Juan Domingo’s enemies. More than once she said she would do whatever the people wanted—and paused—but no shout followed. Later that night, the party managers made it official: Eva for vice-president.

Saint Evita, Madonna of the Americas

Eva was more than embarrassed and hurt; it was reported that she was in a state of near emotional collapse. What had happened? Was it because the people had known in advance what was expected of them and refused to be taken for granted? Were they resentful of the woman who had so blatantly manipulated them as she reached for more power? In any event, the fiesta was called off. A week later, Eva made a surprise broadcast over all networks proclaiming her decision to refuse the honor of political office.

I had not then, nor do I have now, more than a single ambition... that it should be said of me when the marvelous chapter will be written which history will dedicate to Peron, that there was by his side a woman who had devoted herself to bringing before the President the hopes of the people... and that this woman was lovingly called by the people: Evita.3

She had renounced neither work nor struggle, she promised, only honors. The official explanation was that she was only twenty-eight. She was too young for office; the Constitution set the age limit at thirty. This was patent to a lie, for her birthday had been celebrated each year; she was at least thirty-two; many said she was older. The real reason for Eva’s withdrawal from the vice-presidency was that the Army had threatened a withdrawal from the Peronista ranks, and Juan Domingo was not strong enough to stand without it. Army commanders had insisted in no uncertain terms that they could not accept Eva as commander-in-chief and potential President of the Republic.

A doctor was called in to examine Evita despite her strong protests. When she was at last persuaded to see the New York City specialist flown down at Juan Domingo’s request, the diagnosis was cancer of the uterus. Actually, her illness helped her husband’s campaign enormously. As a candidate Eva had been abrasive, disruptive; as a saintly figure who had exhausted herself in the service of Argentina, she drew universal sympathy. Masses were held and prayers said for her recovery. When she did appear on the balcony of the Casa Rosada seated in an armchair it was obvious to all how sick she was. Peron called for absolute silence so she would not have to strain herself. Her voice was hardly more than a whisper, and few were not in tears when she concluded:

My shirtless ones, I would like to say many things to you, but the doctors have told me that I must not talk. I leave you my heart and I tell you I am sure, as it is my wish, that I shall soon be in the fight again, with more strength and more love, to fight for this country that I love so much. As I love Peron. I ask only one thing of you: I am sure that I will soon be with you. but if because of my health I cannot help Peron. be loyal to him.

An entire floor of the Policlinica was reserved when she had her final operation. The hospital bulletin pronounced the cancer “contained.” A ballot box was taken to her bedside so she could join the millions of women voting for the first time. She had even arranged to have a message recorded for the very last day, reminding descamisados to go to the polls, for “I will follow you like a shadow, repeating the name of Peron until you do your duty.” And they did just that, for he was returned to office with a resounding 61 per cent of the new enlarged electorate.

Her last few months were spent in seclusion. When the end came in July, 1952, Argentina went into unprecedented mourning. Peron promised to have her embalmed like Lenin and placed in a mausoleum that rivaled Moscow’s Red Square setting. She wore to her grave a fortune in diamonds, rubies, emeralds, gold, and platinum. The Pope was petitioned to have her canonized as Saint Evita, Madonna of the Americas.

Eva’s tragedy was more in her living than in her dying. Some psychohistorians suspect she drove herself to an early death to prove to her detractors that she was indeed a saint.

Many would say today that Eva’s tragedy was more in her life than in her dying. Ambitious, magnetic, shrewd, yet selfish and vindictive too, she might have done much if she could have overcome her origins. Success came to her suddenly without warning, and it must have seemed a fairytale. It has been suggested by those inclined to psycho-historical musings that she deliberately drove herself to an early death to prove to her detractors that she was indeed a saint. Proof seemed to come from Juan Domingo’s ignominious ouster only three years later (1955) that it had truly been Eva who had been the center of the Peronista movement.

It can be granted that she had a key role in bringing Argentine women into active political life for the first time, that she encouraged them to hold office, to vie for better jobs, to make their wishes known in the land of machismo. She made the descamisado presence felt in a nation whose leadership had callously neglected a large part of its working force. She brought tragedy to Argentina too, helping her husband destroy more than the economy. The Perons pitted class against class, and damaged severely the spirit of a people who have not yet recovered their spiritual and moral balance. The Argentines had never seen anyone like Eva, and they have yet to exorcise her from their minds.

3 Ibid., p. 266.

4 Ibid., p. 277.
The recent gifts of art to the University Art Collections, some of which are photographed for this Cresset issue, expand significantly the kinds of art available on campus for contemplation by students, faculty, and the public. New to the Collections are the Eskimo’s playful sense of form (see cover) and Martyl’s dry paint and paper depiction of adobe (see inside cover). Here (see pages 21, 22, and 23) are also the violence of Appel’s cats, the fantasies of the surrealist Matta, the religious devotion of the Puerto Rican santos, and the bursting celebration of God’s creation in Margot Evans’ stitchery.

Margot Evans was spared her parents’ fate in Hitler’s death camps, and so her art gives thanks for the precious gift of life. Her stitchery, *The Days of the Creation*, follows the Genesis account of creation and was generously given to Valparaiso University by a member of Zion Temple, Michigan City, Indiana, to affirm the common bond between Christian and Jew.


Richard H. W. Brauer is Director of the University Art Galleries and Collections at Valparaiso University.
Above: Religious images used for worship in the Puerto Rican home and supplied by peasant carvers. *(Above Left)* La Trinidad by Caban, Arecibo region in early 1900s; *(Above Right)* San Francisco by the Cajigos family, Aguada region in mid 1800s; *(Below Left)* La Virgen Maria by Marcellino, Utuado region in early 1900s; *(Below Right)* Los Tres Reyes by Caban in early 1800s. University Collection. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Fillin.


*April, 1980*
There are many possible explanations for what film is doing in university curriculums across America. One of them should be acknowledged right away, since it involves a partial and therefore dangerous truth about teaching movie courses. Film is popular—we might guess—because it doesn’t seem all that virtuous. Shakespeare, by contrast, is virtuous indeed: he comes with footnotes now and perhaps never will. Despite the build-up of a “serious” critical tradition over the last thirty years, most audiences aren’t aware of systematic thought about film and wouldn’t care much if they did know about it.

To some extent this carefree attitude is the appropriate one. After all, people are relatively familiar with the conventions of film so they can accept and process them more or less subliminally. The art in movies is often invisible—not a bad thing either. In helping create another popular art form, the hard-boiled detective story, Raymond Chandler operated on the principle that Americans only thought they wanted sex, violence, and mindless excitement out of his stories. What they really wanted was art, though if you told them that you might have spoiled the show. Much the same goes for a concoction like Star Wars or Close Encounters of the Third Kind. I once heard a film critic say that Close Encounters was an avant-garde work. A similar case could be made for George Lucas’s film, which makes its impact less through comic-book narrative and characters than through an abstract kinesis familiar to the student of cubist cinema. Just don’t let the audience know!

The problem with teaching film, then, is the reverse of the usual difficulty in presenting imaginative work. Instead of moving from knowledge to fun you have to guide your audience in just the other direction. Film pedagogy begins—let us say—with Casablanca and ends with “The Motif of the Doorway in Middle-Period Bogart.” Why analyze, however, where immediate, intuitive understanding already exists? The question is not presented as a straw man: I think it suggests a genuine dilemma, a problem faced occasionally by all teachers of the arts but especially by the teacher of film.

This problem has not gone unrecognized. It is, in fact, closely connected with the classic debate in film aesthetics between the followers of Andre Bazin and those of Sergei Eisenstein. At its apogee, says Bazin, silent film depended on clever editing (Griffith, Eisenstein) and weird sets (German expressionism). By way of certain technical innovations—sound, deep-focus photography, the wide screen—film gradually moved away from these intrusively manipulative devices to a different aesthetic approach, one which emphasized—so to speak—nature over art. This new approach to film, prefigured especially in the movies of Jean Renoir, relies on an art which conceals art, which is so closely akin to nature that the viewer gains a freedom of interpretation previously barred to him. For example, to make sense out of the action on a wide screen, we must take a much more active part in looking than ever before. We don’t feel as though we’re in an aestheticized universe anymore. Instead, we gain a fresh and privileged access to the natural world registered by photography.

Film—commercial narrative film at least—has evolved very much in the direction Bazin predicted. This is not to say that movies lack artistry, that they function like more or less undigested hunks of nature, though a few critics have indeed tried to argue this position. Film capitalizes, rather, on two related techniques for eliciting audience belief. First, there is the point made above: film conventions are familiar and thus we needn’t even think of them as conventions. Second, the whole history of film pushes us towards conventions which by their very nature are disguised as a straightforward presentation of reality. This process—which can be exemplified by a range of films from fantasy to documentary—can sometimes be carried too far for the tolerance of an average audience. 1

1 See The American Film Institute Guide to College Courses in Film and Television, which lists film courses at “more than 1000 institutions.”

Films sneak us into art by apparently recording facts. The notion that facts are held together—are made possible—by an imaginative structure is unknown to most students.

recently showed Jacques Tati's Mr. Hulot's Holiday to a class of fairly sophisticated students. Tati's ingenious, elaborate attempt to revive silent comedy in conjunction with a soundtrack and the simultaneous presentation of many different actions went right by them. It looked too much like nature—it really did seem undigested simply because it calls on the viewer to do an unusual amount of information-processing on his own. Tati's art—I would never have guessed it—concealed art a little too successfully.

Against Tati's film we might set something like Apocalypse Now, where the director uses all those devices mentioned by Bazin to create a world so overwhelmingly vivid that one feels pitched into it headfirst. For the most part, students love Apocalypse Now. It allows the range of mental activity that Bazin's aesthetic promotes but it is constantly gratifying too: it makes us feel part of the action. A recent New Yorker article by Michael Arlen implies that this "Artificial Realism" is vulgar and superficial. Films are now realer than real—just as clothes were once whiter than white when treated with the proper detergent. The curious thing—and I think Arlen misses this point—is that noisy Francis Ford Coppola has a good deal in common with a filmmaker like Tati. Once you intuit the rhythm of Mr. Hulot's Holiday, you realize that it exploits the same hyperrealism as Apocalypse Now, only it does so... quietly. These absurdly different films are alike in a crucial respect. They create worlds which trade on the seeming literalness of cinematic images and sounds, which sneak us into art by apparently recording fact. Coppola's thundering helicopters and Tati's creaking doors are equally stylized. Both emerge from an art in which random detail and imaginative structure are perilously balanced.

One may glorify film's peculiar relationship to reality, as Bazin does. One may condemn it, like Arlen. No matter: either way, film offers a special pedagogical opportunity. The notion that facts are held together—are made possible—by an overarching imaginative structure is remote indeed from most students' minds. Someone or something has prepared them to think that their function is to gobble down bits and pieces of nature and bring them back up on appropriate academic occasions. Thus the challenge of film, which more than any other art is caught between conflicting loyalties. Movies are faithful at once to the automatic registration of literal fact and the resourceful synthesis of chosen images and sounds. If you understand how these two activities could possibly back each other up, then you can understand the pleasures of cinema. It is a lesson that many people need.

Something of what a student might go through in an ideal film course can be suggested by Buster Keaton's Sherlock Jr. At the beginning of the film, the hero tries to clamber up into a movie screen, into an exciting detective story. First he gets thrown out of the screen—then, when he returns for a second try he is "edited" from shot to shot. One setting after another is whipped out from under him while he hangs on desperately. Eventually Keaton becomes part of the film within the film. He does so by a process of trial and error in which the laws of the movie world are weighed against those of the physical universe. His ultimate success exemplifies the kind of pedagogical illumination available to the student of film, who discovers the pleasures of movie-going along with the dangers of literal-mindedness. Getting up on the screen is a difficult task, much more difficult than it appears to those who miss the artifice in movies or enjoy it as if it were life. Once these distinctions are made—and surprisingly elusive they turn out to be—the viewer changes. He or she is no longer the passive consumer of a substitute reality but instead a kind of hero ("Sherlock, Jr." indeed). The struggle is worth it.

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3 The New Yorker, 10 March 1980. Arlen's somewhat misconceived polemic is weakened by a confusion between "realistic" subjects and realism of presentation—a silly error for so thoughtful a critic.
Our Shadows Have Been

Walking by the willows on an ice-sunny noon
I have seen your white reflection
deep in the dark moist fertile ground

I nod you a promise
I won’t talk

You turn your face
to the sun and close your eyes
to the sun and stride forward
from your shadow

I turn my face
from the bright icy wind
noticing
our shadows
sucked away by the snow.

Bathos

The talk-show guest was explaining
how now can sometimes really be a long time ago,
that, due to the extremely slow speed of light,
the telescoped present observed by some astronomer
at any given moment may really have happened
a billion years B.C., and it had just occurred
to me to wonder whether, among the novas and quasars
to be seen in the sky that very night,
might be the galactic Garden of Eden,
that self-same cosmic centrifuge that spun us all off;

When the talk-show host is interrupted to give
the score of an important football game.

Horst Ludwig

Gary R. Shroat
God's activity in Jesus can be as much of a theological problem as God's substance in Jesus. A homopraxis view has no more illuminating power than a homoousia view.

points in the tradition of their peoples, men both embodying and giving direction to the tradition. Their concerns may be political (Churchill, Gandhi) or religious (Luther, Ignatius of Loyola). From the picture of Jesus he has previously constructed, Goulder demonstrates that Jesus was such a person. But he is not satisfied with Jesus as a "Man of Destiny"—such a Jesus being acceptable to any humanist—and he proceeds to assert more. It is Goulder's contention that Jesus is "The Man of Universal Destiny," although he wisely refrains from arguing the case (p. 57). Furthermore he believes Jesus' life was an act of God (p. 61). The only basis for this assertion is his faith "in the unity of the activity of God and Jesus," "homoousia," if you will (p. 62).

One cannot fault Goulder's faith, for without it we would not be dealing with christology at all, but after he has devoted so much thought to the life of Jesus, his position seems singularly unreflective. He compares the relation of God to Jesus to that of General Alexander to General Montgomery, or of Henry II to Beckett's murderers, but he does not at all discuss in what ways God can be said to be similar to these two. Surely more contemplation is called for, since God's activity in Jesus can be just as much of a problem as his substance, depending upon one's view of God and man. In the end, Goulder's view of homopraxis between God and Jesus has no more illuminating power than the homoousia formulation, and because he does not at all take up homoousia for discussion, no more to commend it.

The remaining essays in Part One deal primarily with the historical development of the orthodox formulation of Christ's divinity, focusing particularly upon when and how such an idea arose. Goulder's speculations in "The Two Roots of the Christian Myth" are interesting, but give the impression of pulling at straws. Fortunately, Frances Young balances his views with a more careful treatment in "Two Roots or a Tangled Mass?" and "A Cloud of Witnesses." These two essays are a mine of information, but they intend to do more. Goulder attempts to render the inspiration of the doctrine of the incarnation implausible by discrediting its (in his view) two sources (p. 84). Young sees the doctrine as the result of an historically determined development leading up blind alleys, not "a gradual dawning of the truth inspired by the Holy Spirit" (p. 29). It would, of course, be naive if one thought today of the divine truth gradually dawning on the early fathers in their multifaceted arguments, but does anyone really subscribe to that view who has thought about the matter seriously? The history of doctrinal developments has been known long enough to cure anyone of such a romantic notion. On the other hand, by itself the historical provenance of an idea says nothing about its validity. It may give cause to doubt, it is true, but the doubt needs to be confirmed by further examination. In place of the criticism of the ideas which is required, however, the essayists simply tell us that they do not fit our cultural context.

One would expect the orthodox formulations to be examined more critically in the second part, "Testing the Development," but unfortunately this is not really the case. Leslie Houlden contrasts creedal statements with experiential ones. His claim is that creedal statements, such as the Chalcedonian formulations, can only be affirmed or denied, and that once we disallow factual statements about God, they are no longer of any use. He prefers what he terms experiential belief as being closer to the real source of religion (pp. 130 ff.). Houlden's emphasis on the experiential is laudable, and it is quite true that creedal formulations can become divorced from experience. But it is incorrect to say that all creedal statements must lack the experiential dimension, or to say that once they cannot be affirmed, they can only be denied. Creedal statements can contain an experiential dimension, indeed they should, and they should also be able to be modified to truly express one's experience. In this sense, creedal formulations may prove to be of positive value, and, rather than rejecting them, we may find the solution to the issue the authors are trying to raise through them.

Don Cuppitt looks at what the incarnation has meant historically and describes four deleterious effects of the emphasis on the continuity between God and man that it implies. He urges a view which places greater emphasis on God's transcendence, but his argument is not convincing. He does not consider the benefits of an incarnational view, nor does he examine the advantages and disadvantages of an emphasis on God's transcendence. Moreover, one doubts whether the kind of "cost analysis" implied in his procedure is really an appropriate way to approach the problem.

John Hick looks at Christianity in a global perspective. His major argument seems to be that worldwide inter-religious co-operation is needed today, and the doctrine of the incarnation will not allow Christians to participate in it. (p. 180). It is difficult to see why the incarnation necessarily inhibits inter-religious co-operation, especially since there is no hint that, on the other side, Hindus must give up belief in Krishna or Rama as avatars of Vishnu, or devotees of Jodo Shin Shu their belief in the saving work of the bodhisattva Amita. Moreover, one wonders
Is it worthwhile trying to trace our view of God back to the activity of Jesus? Would it be intelligible? Or is it perhaps best to leave God's secret to himself?

whether it is proper to determine religious beliefs and doctrines by subordinating them to sociological considerations (global peace).

Maurice Wiles surveys uses of the term "myth" from the nineteenth century to the present. He argues that although one cannot prove God's incarnation in Jesus from the sources at our disposal, they nevertheless present a picture of Jesus which is compatible with the myth of incarnation. In fact, he urges Christians to regard the incarnation as a "myth" in the positive sense.

Little is said in the second part on the actual doctrine of the incarnation. Wiles and Houlden talk about ways we should view such statements; Cuppitt and Hick talk about advantages and disadvantages which are more or less secondary; all skirt what should have been a central concern, a critical examination of the doctrine itself. We find hints, as in Part One, that the incarnational view was appropriate to an earlier culture but not to ours, yet it is left to the reader to decide in exactly what ways it is inappropriate now. It is fairly easy to imagine what the essayists might come up with, writing in Great Britain with its strong tradition of logical positivism and linguistic philosophy; indeed Hick, as one would expect, gives us hints of this. But it would seem that quite a large part of the rest of the world has always viewed such efforts as singularly narrow in their approach to language and meaning. To ignore such criticism, while at the same time affirming the need for a global perspective, seems inexcusably short-sighted.

The closest the collection comes to discussing such questions is in the introduction by Wiles. Here he raises fairly well many of the problems involved with the affirmation of the incarnation, and this could have provided a good framework on which to build. Unfortunately, the introduction by itself is inadequate as a critical discussion.

Perhaps the best essay in the collection is Dennis Nineham's epilogue. Admitting that he wrote under pressure of time, he spends a good deal of his effort distinguishing what can and cannot be known of Jesus. He leaves the reader three questions: Is it worthwhile trying to trace something back to the life, character, and activity of Jesus of Nazareth? If that is done, will it be intelligible to the majority of Christians? Or is it perhaps best to leave God's secret to himself? This could, of course, serve as an excuse to abandon the question altogether, but it need not. It could be a means of opening the question, with a wiser perspective on the situation. In that case, Nineham's essay, with suitable alterations, would be not an epilogue but a prologue to what could be a fruitful discussion.

It would be unfair to judge the book in terms of positive religious suggestions made, for the authors saw themselves engaged in the task of ground-clearing, not reconstruction. Yet it is my hunch that the two cannot be too widely separated. The incarnation, however the doctrine was precisely formulated, has provided a powerful way in which Christians in the past have understood what the person-and-work of Jesus was. There seems to be implicit in much of the book the claim that in talking about Jesus' person we are not on the level of understanding but of religious experience (Young's "Jesus is 'as if' God for me"; Houlden's 'experiential belief; Hick's language analysis). Yet people being what they are, the attempt to understand seems involved in any activity or experience, and I doubt that we shall be rid of the idea of the incarnation until another, more powerful and more adequate way of understanding the person of Jesus is developed. This the authors admittedly have not done.

The question raised in The Myth of God Incarnate demands raising. The essayists of the first part succeed in providing a wealth of historical information to consider, and all the essays illuminate some aspects of the issue. But the collection suffers because the essayists do not roll up their sleeves and grapple with a theological consideration of the problem. Had such been done, the collection would have been better fitted to open the issue for discussion and to prepare for the development of a more adequate understanding of the founder of the Christian faith.

Gregory D. Alles

The Holy Spirit In
The Life of the Church

From Biblical Times to the Present.

The essays in this volume were first presented at a series of four conferences on the Holy Spirit sponsored by LCUSA's Division of Theological Studies. The conference report, signed by most but not all of the participants (about 20-25 pastors and theological professors), is presented as Appendix A of the book, and statements on the charismatic movement from the ALC, LCA, and the Missouri Synod are included as Appendix B.

The book's title is indicative of the wide-ranging scope of the conferences (and the book's) agenda, while the fact that Appendix B concentrates on the charismatic movement (as does Appendix A, including Concerns the Charismatic Movement Addresses to the Lutheran Church and Concerns Addressed to Lutheran Charismatics) shows
A Hellenistic essentialist metaphysic tends to distort the biblical image of man, while a modern psychology of the person in dynamic process is more congenial to it.

that these conferences on the Holy Spirit devoted considerable attention to the charismatic movement and its implications for the church. In fact, four Lutheran pastors and teachers who are themselves associated with the charismatic movement were participants in the study process from the beginning.

The essays treat the work of the Spirit from biblical, historical, and doctrinal perspectives. The biblical material is discussed by Gerhard Krodel (the Old Testament, synoptic gospels, and Acts) and Edgar Krentz (Paul and John). Krodel has several interesting observations about the varied and developing ideas in the Old Testament concerning the work of the Spirit. In fact, what I appreciated about the essay as a whole was the sensitivity he displayed toward diverse attitudes in all the material he covered. For instance, in treating first century Judaism he not only mentions the oft-noted fact that some Jews seemed to regard the Spirit's presence as something for the past (“When Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, the last prophets, died, then the Holy Spirit disappeared from Israel”—p. 17) or the future (Joel 4:13) or the future (Joel), but he also properly cautions against the common absolutizing of this Jewish attitude and shows examples from that period of a contrasting attitude.

The historical dimensions of the study are treated in essays by William Rusch (“The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the Patristic and Medieval Church”) and Bernard Holm (“The Work of the Spirit: The Reformation to the Present”). Rusch divides the period he treats into three parts, each with a characteristic emphasis (an oversimplification, as he himself notes, but his analysis struck me as helpful and interesting): 1. up to 300 A.D.—a be-

nign neglect of the person and work of the Spirit (though obviously not unaware of the work of the Spirit, early Christians concentrated on the person and work of the Son in this period, says Rusch); 2. the fourth century—a pre-occupation with the person of the Spirit (is he a person of the godhead or a creature?); and 3. the fifth century onwards—engrossment with the mode of origin of the Spirit (does he proceed from the Father or from the Father and the Son? a question that drove a wedge between the eastern and western church).

Holm sees in the medieval period a displacement of the Spirit by the visible church as mediator of salvation. This was changed by the reformers, who in emphasizing justification by faith not only highlighted the work of Christ but also that of the Spirit (“calls, gathers, enlightens, sanctifies”). According to Holm, in the age of orthodoxy the Spirit’s importance again receded, giving way to the “order of salvation,” an orderly series of phases in a believer’s appropriation of Christ’s benefits.


In the developing understanding of the role of the Spirit that has occurred down through the centuries, Quanbeck sees some patterns of thought that tend to distort biblical images (he says that of hellenistic thought and its “essentialist” metaphysic), others that tend to be more congenial to biblical modes of thinking (this is his appraisal of modern psychology, in so far as it stresses the dynamic-process character of human personality and the unity and dignity of the person). Ditmanson’s plea is for a view that encompasses the renewing work of the Spirit both within the church (the arena of his “first fruits” activity in the world) and beyond its confines, where the Spirit is at work in the “wider circle of physical creation, human personality, the structures of culture, the events of history, and the ultimate consummation” (p. 216).

Karlfried Froelich, unimpressed with the idea that charismatic manifestations of the Spirit were only for the apostolic era, and seeking rather to understand them as possible proleptic signs of the breaking in of the kingdom (pp. 140-41), strives to develop a model that is open to these phenomena without assigning them centrality, a model that overcomes the world-fleeing and world-negating tendencies to which these phenomena are sometimes prone. Taking his cue from Regin Prenter’s treatment of Luther, he finds a model in an incarnational emphasis that (1) keeps the Spirit wedded to the word, that (2) sees that Paul’s catalogs of gifts combine activities that seem to us spectacular (tongues, healing, prophecy, etc.) with those that seem mundane (giving, administration), and that (3) sees an openness to a wide spectrum of the Spirit’s gifts as “a longing for the consolation of the Spirit down here on earth, in the concrete experiences of our limited human existence” (p. 149).

Froelich’s cautious openness to charismatic phenomena is also characteristic of what I regard as the single most important item in the book, “The Charismatic Movement in the Lutheran Church in America—A Pastoral Perspective,” a document prepared by the LCA Division
When healing does not occur, the Christian can neither regard it as God's will that the sick should not recover nor as the fault of a weak faith in the patient.

for Parish Services. It offers useful definitions of terms and it shows the importance of distinguishing between various experiences people in the charismatic movement have had and the verbalizations offered to explain these experiences. This is particularly true of what is usually called “baptism in the Holy Spirit.”

Stressing the biblical and confessional insight that baptism with the Holy Spirit is not to be separated from baptism with water, the document offers a variety of explanations of this experience. In so doing it helps people who have had such an experience to avoid the alternatives of denying its reality or of understanding it in classical Pentecostal terms, which tend to separate water baptism and Spirit baptism.

There are helpful insights on prayer for healing and sound advice for when healing does not occur: “the Christian can neither regard it as God’s will that the person should not recover nor as the fault of a weak faith in the patient. The Christian can only bow in humility before a mystery not revealed and continue to pray and offer comfort” (p. 263). The LCA document does not hesitate to caution, to correct and to warn of dangers, yet it does this with winsome openness. This attitude, in so far as it is followed, will make it easier for LCA charismatics to stay involved in the life of their congregations, where they can be cautioned and corrected and where, at the same time, they can offer to the congregations as a whole some of the blessings and insights they have received.

The LCMS statement on the charismatic movement (from 1977, building on their earlier document) with which the book ends is, in my view, a disappointing contrast to the LCA document. If its closed attitude were followed in the church body from which it stems, there would be no LCMS charismatics around to hear its (sometimes valid) cautions, nor to provide the mutual enrichment they could in turn offer (which, I guess, the authors of this document would like just fine). In Paul Opsahl’s preface to the Conference Report, signed by most of the participants, he noted that one person “declined to identify with the document solely because of the sentence (p. 242), ‘The movement should be allowed to develop’” (p. 223). I neither know nor care whether this person is a member of the Missouri Synod, but his spirit certainly lives in the LCMS statement. Fortunately for the readers of the book there is so much more in the book, so much that invites growth and learning and dialogue.

Everett Kalin

The Funeral
And the Mourners

Abingdon Press has provided a valuable service in reprinting this classic little treatise by Paul E. Irion on the pastoral care of the bereaved. Irion originally wrote this book in 1954, long before the onslaught of publications related to dying and the grief process. Acknowledging his indebtedness to Freud and Erich Lindemann, who did the first empirical study of grief in 1944, Irion uses psychological insights to help the pastor understand the needs of people at the time of the funeral and afterwards. Yet Irion is never guilty of psychological reductionism; nor does he suggest that the function of the pastor is to be an agent of mental health. He is instead a firm advocate that the Gospel is (or should be) always addressed to specific human needs. If the needs are not clearly identified, pastoral care is likely to be misdirected.

The weakness of this text, in my judgment, is that it lacks theological substance and liturgical sophistication. The note of celebration in the midst of death is largely missing, as well as any reference to baptism as the source of one’s security and hope in the face of death and loss. Though Irion has two chapters on the funeral service, he demonstrates very little understanding of the liturgical tradition of the church, ancient or contemporary, although it should be said in his defense that most of the current liturgical scholarship on the funeral was not available to Irion when he originally wrote the manuscript.

In spite of these weaknesses, this remains one of the most readable and useful guides for pastoral care of the bereaved, especially on so many of the practical questions which must be faced in this important ministry. All too often in the current literature on grief counseling, the role of the clergyman is totally ignored. The reprinting of this volume is a reminder of the centrality of the pastoral role in the grieving process and also of the need for some contemporary studies to supplement Irion’s work.

Thomas A. Droege

The Making of the Popes 1978


Part journalism, part pop sociology, part astute theological interpretation, The Making of the Popes 1978 is an illuminating and engagingly-written report of the elections of the Popes John Paul. Written in the spirit of Theodore White and in the style of Norman Mailer, author Greeley is himself one of the characters in his story—an “agent provocateur” giving news conferences and television
Pastoral care is misdirected if the Gospel is not addressed to specific human needs.

Interviews, publicizing his own job description for the pope, and tinkering with his computer and colleagues' theories at the National Opinion Research Center.

Greeley tells the election story, and he also argues a case for a kind of papacy appropriate for the modern scene, a case for a pope who will be "a hopeful holy man who smiles." That two such men should have been elected in 1978 as a result of a successful (anti-curial) coalition is the story's happy ending.

The book is flawed by a kind of untidiness; some of the same ground is covered several times, and smaller points are repeated in several contexts in ways that seem merely repetitious. And Greeley wages a campaign for the ouster of Chicago's Cardinal Cody by weaving into the papal election story several episodes which give the author occasion to rehearse allegations of Cody's incompetence in particular, and of the American cardinals in general—all of which strike this outsider as gratuitous and somewhat self-serving.

Still, the book is a fascinating report. It lifts, somewhat, the heavy curtain of secrecy about the workings of the Vatican, and for that any Christian who loves the Church as much as Greeley obviously does will be grateful, and will echo Greeley's advice to the new pope: "Don't let them get to you, Holy Father. Don't let them get to you."

David G. Truemper

Growth Counseling


Howard Clinebell is the author of the well-known text Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling, and is considered by many the leading authority in the pastoral counseling movement. His most recent work, Growth Counseling, has been heavily influenced by the human potential movement. Clinebell emphasizes growth-centered rather than problem-centered counseling, using the heritage of the Hebrew-Christian tradition to argue for the development of human potential from a perspective of hope and faith. By "growth" Clinebell means any change in a direction of greater wholeness and the fulfillment of one's potential. The term "counseling" refers to a short-term process of enabling persons to use their full potential.

This book is almost entirely a theoretical polemic for a growth perspective in counseling, though Clinebell has supplied some creative exercises at the end of each chapter to enable the reader to experience this perspective. These exercises are one of the few redeeming features of a book that has very little in it which is original. Clinebell borrows heavily from the leading exponents of the human potential movement and adds an emphasis on spiritual growth. His book is perhaps best characterized as an attempt to sacralize that movement. The spirituality he advocates, however, is a rather vague religion-in-general which would allow for no distinction between a Christian and a humanist like Erich Fromm, whom Clinebell quotes freely.

The strength of Clinebell's Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling is in the practical application of various types of counseling that he recommends to pastors. In his forthcoming book, Contemporary Growth Therapies: Resources for Actualizing Human Wholeness, Clinebell promises insights and techniques for facilitating growth. Perhaps in his next book Clinebell will actualize some of his rich potential for creative application of secular counseling methods for situations pastors face in their daily tasks.

Thomas A. Droege

Barbarians are always at the gate, and right behind the barbarians are the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

It would be more Christian—and, in the long run, more humane—if those of us who have been given one little talent would look at that earnest face in the mirror some morning and say: "All right. I have only this one talent and it isn't going to produce any tracts that will stir men's souls. But the one thing that St. Paul the Apostle and Popeye the Sailor Man both knew to be true of themselves I know to be true also of myself: 'I am what I am. ' And Paul could even add that this was by the grace of God. If that grace called him to the foolishness of preaching, it may also command me, in a time of the breaking of nations, to write little pieces for the amusement of the beleaguered. And if I am wrong, I believe in the forgiveness of sins."

So, Epstein, let's be about the thing we have been given to do, and let Fenyesi write the tracts.
The Gift Of Whackiness

John Strietelmeier

Last November, in a review of a book of familiar essays by Joseph Epstein, Charles Fenyvesi told his New Republic readers that “These are times that call for tracts rather than essays—purposeful jogging rather than a stroll. Epstein and his fellow essay writers are elegantly out of fashion.”

Well.

One does appreciate sober-sided, salt-of-the-earth type citizens who will not smile until all may smile. They are the caring folk who support worthy causes, write letters to the editor, organize improvement committees, try their best to get out the vote, badger management at stockholders’ meetings, spend their weekends picketing for righteousness or against wickedness, worry about the still-doubtful fate of the whooping crane, and generally take upon themselves the whole distressing burden of the world’s sad weight. If there were more such people in the world we would undoubtedly have fewer starving children, fewer lonely old people, better government, more responsible business behavior, a healthier and more attractive environment.

On the other hand, if there were only such people in the world it might be a pretty cheerless place. Or so, apparently, it seemed to God, who chose to give some of His children no apparent talent except “the gift of laughter and a sense that the world is mad.” And so, along with prophets and priests and godly kings and schoolma’ms and editorial writers He also gave the world clowns and comedians and music hall singers and writers of light verse and essayists. And to all these gifted people He gave the same command: “Occupy till I come.” From that command Martin Luther derived a doctrine of vocation which changed the nature of Western Civilization by delivering it from the heresy that being a king is somehow a holier thing than being a clown.

But the man or woman who has been given only the gift of whackiness gets little or no encouragement from good, responsible, serious-minded people like Charles Fenyvesi. For there has never been a time in the long and gruesome history of the human race when times were right for whackiness. The times have always called for tracts rather than essays, for purposeful jogging rather than a stroll. There never was a time when an essayist like Joseph Epstein was in fashion. The world doesn’t need essayists, an obvious truth that makes such other one-talent performers as clowns or comedians or music hall singers fretful.

One well-known one-talent man who used to worry a great deal about not being serious enough was that eminent Victorian, Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan. It was the great dream of his life to write something long and ponderous that would convince the critics that he was a serious composer. Indeed, he did compose a couple of serious things which still survive, more or less: the melody of “Onward, Christian Soldiers” and a lugubrious piece called “The Lost Chord.” But in the wisdom and providence of God, Sullivan fell in with an irreverent word-smith named William Schwenck Gilbert and got involved, all against his will, in writing the music for some comic operettas. Sullivan was ashamed of this prostitution of his talent and repeatedly vowed never to do another operetta. But he always did. And today hardly anyone would deny that the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas have probably done more to glad the human heart than all of the religious music composed in England in the nineteenth century, with the possible exception of Monk’s “Abide With Me.”

God gave some of his children no apparent talent except “the gift of laughter and a sense that the world is mad.”

There is a great essay by C.S. Lewis called “Learning in Wartime” which is the perfect answer to the Fenyvesi kind of criticism. Lewis makes the point that if we are going to wait for the refinements and adornments of civilization until we have taken care of all of the “serious” business of the human race, we will never get them. He’s right. The barbarian is always at the gate and right behind him the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. The wise in every genera-

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