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TIKKUN

High Holy Day Supplement

Israel: America's Moment?

A BIMONTHLY JEWISH CRITIQUE OF POLITICS, CULTURE & SOCIETY SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1997 $6.00

Jewish Social Responsibility

Arthur Waskow ▪ Evely Shlensky ▪ David Teutsch ▪ Mark Jacobs ▪ David Ellenson et al.

Incarcerating Blacks
Congresswoman Maxine Waters

Shlomo Carlebach
An Interview

Affirmative Action
Jerome Karabel

Public Exposure
Jyl Lynn Felman



Alan Dershowitz vs Peter Gabel (Round Two)
The Ethical Responsibility of the Defense Attorney

Fiction by Amoz Oz ▪ Bradley Shavit Artson on Biodiversity ▪ Steve Weissman on Cuba
Ross London visits the Whaling Museum ▪ Mikveh by Adrienne Ross

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Books on Che Guevara and Bruno Bettelheim

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The Long Night

Nah sind wir, Herr,
nahe und greifbar.

We are near, Lord,
near and graspable.
Paul Celan

Then night comes, then the terrible cattle
Come then, teeth like brown pearls

That's the cream: when it becomes a matter of survival

A lamp burns on the table and under it
A dress lies with one arm severed

In the sky a cat skull loses its sight, becomes something else
A cloud forms, red like the bull's albino eye,
And tells extravagant lies in another language

L'usine, the factory, gorgeous monstrousness
Fields around it stand wet like rice paddies

Silver on the slough pond, ice hydras groping,
Blind with want, down to fecal earth
A lens of fingers, cracks in the face of a hill

Night, no horizon: only the cattle
Are close and graspable, turning their white faces
A few trees give only skeleton cover

Is there dirt under the stubble, or empty space?
What skills do you bring to this? A ray-
Toothed millstone gapes at its center,

Congenital absence, whispers *ice on the moon*

—Gwyn McVay

This is your <u>last issue</u> of TIKKUN—

And it's the wrong time to stop subscribing!

We are the only magazine that gives you the inside discussions of the Israel peace movement—and consistently provides an alternative to the establishment positions in the Jewish community. It's a voice that's needed more than ever, now that Israel has moved away from the peace process. As President Clinton and Secretary of State Albright consider strategies for U.S. involvement in the peace process, they need to hear from the strategic peace-oriented thinkers whom we print in TIKKUN.

American society needs TIKKUN as well. In an age of cynicism and despair, TIKKUN is one serious progressive voice that retains a sense of possibility for healing and transformation of the world. We are the place where you can learn about the latest thinking in how to develop a Politics of Meaning strategy (e.g. the Social Responsibility Amendment to the Constitution, the development of Ethical Impact Reports, the refinement of thinking about how to bring a transformative vision into law, medicine, education, social work, and the labor movement). And we also provide some of the best cutting-edge thinking and writing on American culture and politics, contemporary social theory and psychology, books and film, not to mention Jewish issues.

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Letters to the Editor

Dershowitz vs. Gabel

To the Editor:

Peter Gabel's critique of the criminal defense lawyer hinges on a false premise: that defense attorneys believe "the presumption of innocence, combined with the right to counsel, justifies and even requires the criminal defense attorney to do whatever is legally allowable to secure his or her client's acquittal." This is the sort of one-dimensional demonizing we're accustomed to hearing in our corner of the legal profession, but somehow it surprised me to see it surface in Tikkun. In reality, our daily experience is not the bloodless manipulation of the legal process that Mr. Gabel imagines, some amoral deployment of technicalities to walk our clients out the courtroom door. In fact it's much more an experience of crashing up endlessly against an unrelenting brick wall of political expediency, complacency, prejudice and cowardice.

Law practice in the criminal courts is morally complicated far beyond anything Mr. Gabel describes in his article. It is rarely about the clean questions of who is "guilty" and who is "innocent." It is usually instead a tricky unraveling of a tight and chaotic knot: What did my client really do? Why did she do it? Was he mentally ill/drunk/loaded at the time? What reliable information do I have about what happened? How do I factor in the cop who lies about where the gun was found, or what my client said about it, or whether she said anything at all? How do I sort out the purchased testimony of the snitch? Might there be evidence of my client's innocence that's been "disappeared" by

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the prosecution? What do the formal charges have to do with what really happened? Would a sentence on those formal charges fairly punish my client for his true level of involvement, and for his true moral culpability? If I were God, what would I consider the right outcome in this case?

The criminal defense attorney rarely represents an OJ. Overwhelmingly our clients are poor, people of color, and truly presumed guilty by the judges and juries who theoretically bring them to "justice." Prosecutorial agencies regularly rely on this presumption, overstepping and overreaching in order to nail down a conviction, confident that the political will—and the judicial willingness—to hold them accountable vanished with the hysteria that brought us Three Strikes and You're Out.

The criminal defense lawyer is the person designated to do battle for the defendant in this arena. And it's a sad fact that in this deeply flawed adversarial process the closest we ever get to morality may very well be defense counsel's efforts to bring the charges into some rational relationship to the crimes actually committed, to mitigate the ferociously punitive sentencing schemes now in effect in both state and federal courts, and to bring about some kind of reconciliation between victim and offender. Most of us do our work with the understanding that only we stand between our clients and society's fear and hatred of them, and that our passion to reach the fair outcome is the only leavening of justice in the whole proceeding.

Criminal defense lawyers daily observe the scant respect accorded the constitutional presumptions Mr. Gabel finds outmoded; as a result, we tend to understand political realities in a different way than our neighbors do. We see that the danger of government violence deployed to suppress unpopular minorities is still a clear and present danger. We see—every day and first hand—that Constitutional protections are not technicalities.

I applaud the creative and important thinking about these problems that underpins Mr. Gabel's Legal Renewal proposal. I only ask of him, until that millennial day when the court system becomes

The Resurgence of Jewish Literature in America

December 4th 8 PM at the New School of Social Research
66 West 12th Street, Tishman Auditorium

A roundtable discussion with **Melvin Jules Bukiet, Robert Cohen, Rebecca Goldstein, Jonathan Rosen, Thane Rosenbaum, Dani Shapiro,** and **Steve Stern**. . .with introductory remarks from **Michael Lerner.**

The roundtable will be based on a literary supplement on contemporary Jewish fiction which will appear in the November/December issue of TIKKUN.

CREATE A TIKKUN SALON/FORUM IN YOUR AREA

Many readers find that TIKKUN articles provide a great starting point for really provocative and stimulating discussions—and a great way to meet people who share your interests.

Take, for example, the debate between Dershowitz and Gabel in the current issue, the proposal by Rabbi Lerner for the U.S. to offer a detailed "final status" plan for Israel and the Palestinians, the analysis of the movie *Contact,* or the questions we posed about what kind of responsibility we should demand of Jewish leadership (not all of which were fully answered in the responses we printed). Any of these could be the topic of a stimulating forum.

So here is what you do:

1. Hold the salon/forum in your home (yes, even if it's a small apartment, the first time it will feel good if too many people come and they decide to hold it some larger place the next time).

2. Send out invitations to everyone in your address book—and send notices to your local newspaper, your cultural alternative newspaper, and your Jewish newspaper and ask them to include it in their listings.

Here's a sample listing:

TIKKUN Salon/Forum on (for example) "Should the U.S. Push Its Own Vision for Peace in the Middle East?" We will use Rabbi Michael Lerner's call for strong U.S. intervention in the September/October issue of TIKKUN as the basis for a general discussion of the issues. If you are pro-peace movement but unsure about strategies, you'll like this discussion. Price of Admission: This evening will be vegetarian potluck, so bring a main course dish to share for about ten people. You'll find our salons are a great way to meet people who share your ideas. It's at (address) on (date and time), sponsored by TIKKUN Magazine. For more info, call me at (your phone).

3. Post this notice at all local churches, synagogues, community centers, coffee houses, and colleges in your area (so give yourself enough time to get the publicity out—try your first meeting at the end of October, and *don't* make it on Friday night, Saturday or Sunday mornings when religious people can't make it).

4. Start the forum with a summary of the article being discussed. Insist that in all future meetings people *read* the article before coming, but nevertheless be sure to have someone with responsibility for making a fifteen minute starting presentation. Then you're on your own. Let us know how it went. (Call Kelly Silbernagel at 415/575-1200 to discuss what happened.)

a justice system, that he resist the urge to paint us all with one unrealistically simple brush. In fact, most defense attorneys do care, and care deeply, about consequences. We wish passionately—desperately—to work in a system in which mutual trust and respect prevail among the professional participants, and in which those participants (judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, defense attorneys) unanimously and in good faith strive to discover and to implement a fair outcome. Such a system would respect the humanity of both victim and defendant; it would promote healing and reconciliation.

We're only likely to get to this place if people agree about the aims of the prosecutorial process. We would have to abandon as a society our zeal for retribution, our public thirst for blood, our idea that the court system is a place to play out our gladiatorial fantasies. But from where I sit, it frankly seems unlikely that I'll be able to turn in my sword and shield anytime soon. More's the pity.

PATIENCE MILROD
Fresno, California

Peter Gabel responds to Patience Milrod in the continuation of his current debate with Alan Dershowitz on page 20-24.

To the Editor:

I wish to affirm the following points made by Peter Gabel in his target response to Alan Dershowitz and Yale Kamisar (July/August 1997):

1. "We must stop seeing the legal system as an amoral, hyperindividualistic environment in which protecting civil liberties becomes a justification for criminal defense lawyers doing anything they can to get their clients off even when they know or strongly suspect or even believe that their clients are lying or have been guilty of acts of cruelty or brutality."

2. "Neither the presumption of innocence nor the right to counsel justifies an effort to obtain a verdict of not guilty if the lawyer does not believe his or her client is in fact innocent."

3. "Lawyers must reject their current public identity as technical rule-manipulators indifferent to their clients' ends and free of moral responsibility for their clients' conduct."

4. "Abolition of the adversary system as it exists today."

Laws and rights are intended to protect people from oppression and abuse. They can be used responsibly in a moral and ethical way or they can be used selfishly without regard to whom or what is affected. I am not a lawyer but my common sense tells me that the right to counsel and to civil liberties protection is to



protect the innocent. My ethics tells me that it is wrong to use those same rights to knowingly free the guilty.

Yale Kamisar says "It is not the defense lawyer's job to pass judgment on his or her client." That may be one's lack of professional responsibility. I suggest we all have a higher responsibility from birth as human beings. If a lawyer knows a client is guilty, the human responsibility to society and to the victims should transcend the rules for lawyering. Being a lawyer or judge is not a license to shed inherent human ethical and moral responsibilities. The courtrooms should stand for morals, ethics, and a search for the truth, not for winning or losing in an amoral climate as is now the case.

Mr. Kamisar says the defense function is vital to the system. I agree the defense function is vital to protect the innocent. However, the search for truth in a moral environment should be the highest goal for all lawyers and judges.

MARTIN JACOBS
Center for Management Development, Inc.
Raleigh, North Carolina

To the Editor:

Your objection to the very conventional position on legal ethics expressed by Alan Dershowitz and Yale Kamisar is not limited to criminal defense; lawyers in civil litigation are also compelled to seek victory even if the client has acted wrongly. I have yet to attend a mandatory legal ethics seminar in the 20 years I am out of law school where this issue is faced head-on, since "vigorous" advocacy for all clients is so ingrained as a value. Failure to provide such representation is itself viewed as an ethical lapse and the lawyer's only other option in most cases is to turn down the business in advance. Even though the opponent is similarly represented, how often does justice prevail when each lawyer then does his/her best to blunt the other's efforts and only on occasion do the two sides possess similar power and resources?

Lawyers generally do what their clients want. Clients love their ruthless hired guns even as they exchange barbed lawyer jokes; the problem is similar to admiring the influence of one's legislator while decrying the corruption in Congress.

I wish there were more slots in the legal profession where the pursuit of social good and real integrity can consistently go together. There is promising growth in the direction of mediating disputes, but this is surely an exception to the win/lose tradition of litigation which generates such mixed results in our society.

ROY LOWENSTEIN
Westerville, Ohio

To the Editor:

If there is one thing that saddens me concerning the debate between yourself and Alan Dershowitz, it is that you felt it necessary to publish the latter's rant.

I read TIKKUN in part because there is a lack of alternative media. I can read about Dershowitz's shenanigans in many mainstream publications. I do not wish to read this man, or others of his ilk, in the pages of TIKKUN.

It appears that once again, in an effort to be fair and reasonable, and to provide "balanced" coverage, progressives have been seduced into allowing their media to be used as a forum for right-wing diatribes. Why do we do this? The mainstream media gives us short shrift, so why should we attempt to be fair and balanced? It is not possible to drive this route anyway.

And by the way Mr. Dershowitz, I have no intention of buying your book and putting more money in your pocket. I

. noticed you did not invite readers to write to you if they found Rabbi Lerner's review accurate. Finally, I am no ghost writer. I am very much real and a Christian supporter of the concept of *tikkun olam.*

MARK P. SATTERLY
Hamilton, Ontario

Jewish Philanthropy vs. Jewish Ethics

To the Editor:

With speculation and conjecture, David Biale tries to make the case that the time for giving to United Jewish Appeal is past and that American Jews should re-focus their philanthropic efforts ("The Politics of Philanthropy," July/August 1997). However, his one-sided view of UJA does a disservice to its unparalleled network of humanitarian, social service and economic development programs in 60 countries around the world. Tearing something down is always easier than building it up and, unfortunately, that is the route that Biale takes.

Contrary to Biale's assertion, UJA is not "running scared." Our 1997 UJA Federation Annual Campaign is up by at least nine percent over last year and shows no signs of slowing as we move into the 1998 campaign year. However, leading off with that assertion sets a hostile tone that informs the rest of Biale's writing. While our recent *New York Times* advertisement clearly emphasized the universal nature of UJA's work, showing that the needs we serve are divorced from political controversy, Biale cynically chooses to attack it and its motivation.

For example, Biale engages in the absurd contention that "the little boy [in the advertisement] is clearly Ashkenazi and not orthodox," concluding that UJA favors one constituency over another. Biale should take a look at our campaign literature, which shows Americans the different faces of Jews in need around the world, from Bombay to Beersheva to Boston. Moreover, our advertising and marketing materials have shown the world how Israel rescues and cares for our Jewish brethren from Ethiopia, without regard to the color of one's skin. We take umbrage at the implication that UJA is a racist, elite organization. I challenge Mr. Biale to find another organization that touches as many lives in as many diverse communities.

It is precisely UJA's influence and effectiveness in accomplishing our mission that contradicts the argument in favor of small, targeted giving. If Jewish philanthropic support is parceled out among disparate organizations, each with a narrowly focused mandate, other needs that UJA now meets will fall through the cracks. Rather than engendering pluralism, such fractionalization is bound to increase competition among organizations and divide us more than it unites us.

We believe that the whole of UJA, acting as an umbrella organization for various beneficiary agencies, is greater than the sum of its parts. By serving so many myriad agencies in so many places, only the UJA has the resources needed to dispatch aid to everyone who needs it. In addition, Jews who give to UJA know that they are contributing to needy causes around the world. No gift touches more lives.

Finally, the "charity" that Biale writes as characterizing UJA's funds in Israel is an outdated perception. We are well aware that the economic needs in Israel are different now than in decades past, and UJA is at the forefront of forging new models of philanthropy. Partnerships between U.S. Jews and Israelis now form a basis of Federation campaigns, rather than the old beneficiary-recipient relationship, and economic development is a key component of UJA's beneficiary agencies. However, we must not forget that many Israelis still live below the poverty line, and that tens of thousands of immigrants from the former Soviet Union continue to pour into the country.

UJA stands by its work proudly, affirmed by the increasing campaign donations of the past few years. We invite American Jews to find out more about our work and become involved in our unparalleled mission to rescue the imperiled, care for the vulnerable and revitalize Jewish life.

RICHARD L. WEXLER
UJA National Chairman

David Biale responds:

Richard Wexler's defensive response to my "Politics of Philanthropy" only confirms my "speculation and conjecture" that the UJA is worried about the future. The real address for his letter, like the advertisement in the New York Times, is not me but Federations like San Francisco that are increasingly looking for alternatives to the UJA. It is their criticism, not mine, that prompts him to write.

I never said in my article that the UJA is a racist or elitist organization, but I do stand by my analysis of the photograph they chose to run with their ad. The subliminal message was clear, even if not explicitly intended by its authors. Indeed, not only the UJA, but American Jews in general, will increasingly have to decide how to respond to an Israel that looks less and less like them: religiously orthodox and ethnically Middle Eastern. No amount of philanthropic boilerplate can evade this inevitable confrontation.

Finally, the tired claim, repeated here by Wexler, that the UJA is "divorced from political controversy" is itself a political position. By persistently avoiding the moral issues raised by the Occupation, the UJA is complicitous in its perpetuation. I urge those who wish to support worthy causes in Israel without supporting the Occupation to give generously to the New Israel Fund or to independent funds like those established by the San Francisco Jewish Federation.



C.I.A. and Drugs

To the Editor:

Peter Dale Scott's article on the CIA (July/August 1997) and the San Jose Mercury story mischievously chides the LA Times for citing me in the Times' discrediting of the Gary Webb and San Jose Mercury story. Scott wrongly notes that

I was in charge of the CIA contra operation and am therefore a suspect source. As a point of fact, I was in the Central American Task Force at CIA from 1982 to 1984, supervised by Duane R. Clarridge. At the urging of Clarridge, CIA director Bill Casey removed me because of my less than enthusiastic endorsement of the contra paramilitary program.

Scott then observes that I moved on to supervise the "CIA aid to heroin-trafficking guerrillas in Afghanistan." I assume he really means to say that I was Director of Intelligence Programs at the National Security Council coordinating military assistance to the Afghans who were resisting the Soviet Union's invasion of their country. Of course, that would have been less dramatic but more truthful than his own fanciful construction. Scott then attempts to deliver a *coup de grace* by asking your readers to remember me as the person who told a TV audience that the Oklahoma City bombing was obviously the work of Arab terrorists. Wrong again. That dubious honor belongs to Steven Emerson, who was subsequently fired as a CBS news consultant.

It's unfortunate that TIKKUN published Scott's dead horse flogging of the CIA and Drugs story and his attempts to deprecate the *Washington Post*, the *LA Times* and the *New York Times* because they disagree with his preconceptions. Gary Webb was wrong on his timeline, wrong on his facts, and discredited by his own editor. Scott is just wrong.

VINCENT M. CANNISTRARO
McLean, Virginia

Peter Dale Scott replies:
In my story, I wrote that the CIA unquestionably did have knowledge of the drug-money reaching the Contras, and that it was devious of the L.A. Times *to cite Vince Cannistraro's attempt to deny this fact without identifying his responsibility for the Contra program. Mr. Cannistraro's oblique response does more to confirm than rebut these charges. He confirms that he was "in" the Central America Task Force at CIA which oversaw the Contras. (Actually he was the head of it; his superior Clarridge was Chief of Latin American Division.) He confirms that he supervised the aid program to guerrillas in Afghanistan. I concur that they were resisting the Soviet invasion; just as he cannot deny that in that period these guerrillas deluged the world, and the United States, with heroin. (In 1979, the first year of the program, the number of drug-related deaths in New York City rose by 77 percent.)*

Our differences over the facts he raises are minor. He claims that he was removed from the Contra program because of his "less than enthusiastic endorsement" of it. Other sources, such as the pro-Contra Washington Times *correspondent Glenn Garvin, write that he was the chief of three officers removed after reprimands because of their responsibility for the notorious and illegal CIA manual calling on Contras to "neutralize" state officials. He denies that he told a TV audience the Oklahoma City bombing was the work of Arab terrorists; I would have sworn that I saw him on CNN (not CBS) do exactly that. But even if I were wrong about the TV, that would not turn our CIA-drug crisis into a "dead horse."*

Since the Webb stories (and possibly because of them), two leading CIA assets have been indicted for cocaine-smuggling. One is Venezuelan General Ramon Guillen, charged with smuggling a ton of cocaine into the U.S., and possibly as much as 22 tons. No doubt about CIA knowledge here: one of the tons was imported with the approval of CIA Headquarters, overruling the objections of DEA. The other is former Haitian police chief Michel Francois, charged with smuggling 33 tons of cocaine and heroin. In both cases the drug-smuggling agencies these men headed had been set up with CIA help.

Whatever are Mr. Cannistraro's motives for denying this scandalous and criminal situation, they have to be more than purely psychological.

Corporate Health Care

To the Editor:

It is difficult to argue with Dr. Amsel's ("Corporate Health Care," May/June 1997) exposé of the ways of corporate manipulation of health care, and I fall completely behind his plea to the current American administration. There are however more crucial perspectives with which to examine the current state of affairs. The paradigms of meaning and community are quite usefully applied to medical care.

Meaning has been removed from healing and the result is called health care, as medicine as a profession has put making money above making well. The corporate takeover of health care has been enabled by the medical profession's adoption of a business model. Doctors began to see themselves as managers of auxiliary staff, signers of prescriptions already printed by the drug companies; offices had dollar per hour production quotas; the most widely read physician's journal became *Medical Economics*, even as continuing education courses for medical licensure included how to invest in stocks. Doctors made their practices into businesses, they stepped back from the healing process, and guess what? Big business saw a great opportunity. With doctors as businessmen, why couldn't businessmen be doctors?

Most doctors don't seek out the underlying causes of their patient's diseases; they'd prefer to prescribe a drug than suggest a change in lifestyle. They rely completely upon technology, the exact workings of which is a mystery to them. They have become an arm of the pharmaceutical industry which corrupts them with money and disinformation; placebos are in fact 42 percent effective vs. 55 percent for real drugs and the difference is decreasing. Doctors reject alternative modes of treatment and see their role only as dispensers of the latest Western, i.e., corporate, medical technology and drugs. They carry out the most expedient (to them) forms of treatment, e.g., cesarean birth vs. sweating out a long natural labor, heart bypass surgery vs. extended dietary and exercise counseling.

American medicine has become both expensive and ineffectual: an easy target for the corporate machine, armed with its omniscient computer system, and maintained by cold-blooded technocrats. The corporate takeover of medicine is, however, a loss by default. If doctors were true to their calling, it would have been unthinkable.

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The photograph of Robert Reich on page 75 of the July/August 1997 issue was courtesy of Rick Reinhard/Impact Visuals.

EDITORIALS BY MICHAEL LERNER

Piggery in America

Taxes and the One-Sided Class War

When President Clinton and Republican leaders of Congress passed and celebrated a massive tax break in August, most of it for the rich, there were very few voices of protest. And no wonder, with the *New York* ("Everything is Fine") *Times* defining all who protested as "on the extremes," people like U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone and Minority Leader Dick Gephardt had to feel that their courageous vote against the "bipartisan" assault on the poor and working poor would marginalize them.

Just to understand how regressive this new tax system is, please take a moment to look over this chart, prepared by the Citizens for Tax Justice.

The media didn't give us the slightest hint of quite how reactionary the plan really is. Did you get from media accounts that it raises the average tax charges for the poorest by $39 per year, while decreasing the average taxes on the richest 1 percent by $16,227? It's at least as bad as the plan President Clinton promised he would never sign, yet now is celebrating (along with Al Gore, who seems equally ecstatic about the result). Remember all your friends who told you they "had" to vote for Clinton/Gore because they believed that once reelected he would come out of the closet as a progressive? Here is one of the most regressive redistributive plans to have been passed in America in many decades.

The Clinton/Gingrich Tax Changes
(passed August 1997)

INCOME GROUP	AVERAGE TAX CHANGE	% OF TOTAL TAX CUT
Lowest 20%	$ +39	tax hike
Second 20%	–8	0.3%
Middle 20%	–171	6.4%
Fourth 20%	–482	18.1%
Next 15%	–1,163	32.8%
Next 4%	–1,772	13.3%
Top 1%	–16,227	30.6%
ALL	$ –529	100.0%
Actual Annual Cost (at 1997 levels)	**$–64 billion**	

Citizens for Tax Justice, July 30, 1997.

We don't normally use the language of "class war" because we think it tends to suggest that the wealthy are a group of evil people consciously trying to screw the poor. That's too simplistic and too demonizing. Many of those who benefit from the way the economic system hurts people are quite decent people. They share with the rest of us the conviction that nothing much can be changed, the depressive feeling that any deep connection among people is likely to fail and that hence any attempt to challenge the "dog-eat-dog" nature of the social reality is utopian poppycock, and the despair of a life in which meaningful connection to their highest ethical and spiritual goals seems out of reach from daily life experience in the world of work. Like so many of us, they are hungry for substitute gratifications to fill the emptiness in their lives, and often find that the "high" that they get from being able to accumulate wealth and exercise power seems a better alternative to the absence of meaning than, for example, joining some fundamentalist group or becoming a drug addict or having extramarital affairs. All too often, they massively deny to themselves that the advantages that they get by cutting taxes and reducing the funds available to provide care actually results in physical and emotional pain for many other people.

So here we have America in 1997: with at least 2 million people homeless, millions of people without adequate health care, and millions more underemployed or unemployed, and this is the moment that Clinton and the majority of Congressional Democrats decide that we don't need government funds, so we can cut taxes. Read the newspapers in this same period and you learn that skyrocketing health care bills are forcing a dramatically growing percentage of the working poor to declare bankruptcy because they can't pay their medical expenses.

Or listen to the voices of UPS strikers as they talk about trying to survive financially on the part-time jobs that UPS has increasingly been offering, following the national trend in corporate offensives against workers' rights. Many American corporations have increased their profits by following a similar strategy, hiring part-time workers who are given no benefits and can be easily dismissed. Growing numbers of these workers realize that the problem isn't just UPS, but the entire way corporate America functions. Leatha Hendricks, walking the UPS picket line in Willow Springs, Illinois, caught the mood of many of these (mostly white, mostly middle income, mostly middle-aged) strikers when she said "People don't even look at workers as human beings anymore…My name is Leatha, but to them, I'm just a machine. All they care is that you've got some strength in your back. And when your back goes out of whack, it's over. You're gone."

This is America where the stock market, even when it "falls," has never been higher, and where the corporate rich complain about the need to find some safe place to keep or

reinvest all their superprofits. This is America where rumors of increases in pay for workers are greeted with Wall Street hysteria and condemned as "wage inflation."

When people are able to hear a decrease in unemployment as a cause for alarm, they have become so detached from the reality of other people's lives and suffering that they can almost appear to be "class enemies" of the poor. The somewhat distorted language of class struggle seems to fit because the insensitivity toward working people and the poor has reached a depth of depravity. With the Democratic Party fighting for the right to be perceived as the party of its upper middle class and wealthy contributors, there is almost no one seeking to represent the interests of American working people. It's a one-sided class war.

Economic issues are a reflection of the soul of a society. Never has America's spiritual crisis been more evident than in the way that people are so self-involved in their own struggles to "make it" or "make more" that they are unable to hear the pain of others. Of course, many people will respond to all this by saying that in pursuing their own self-interest they are merely doing what everybody else is doing ("just keeping up with traffic, officer"). That's precisely why we need a spiritual transformation in America.

Without a progressive force to articulate a spiritual challenge to the ethos of selfishness, many very decent Americans will continue to believe that there is nothing that can be done to change the moral degeneration that the Clinton/Gore/Gingrich/Lott tax cuts represent, and so will instead put their energies into making sure that they get the best possible deal for themselves in the process.

Going to the Movies

"Contact"—A Spiritual High

Admittedly, I was likely to be intrigued by a film that featured a meaning-oriented spiritual advisor to the president. Been there, done that.

But there's much more to this film than the insertion of Clinton at key moments to give it life.

This is in fact a meaning-oriented film that challenges a narrow empiricist scientific method and calls for an expanded conception of "experience." In the dominant materialistic worldview, that which is "real" is that which can be subject to verification or falsification by some relevant sense data. If it comes to us through our eyes, ears, mouth, or bodily touch we can trust it, but everything else is questionable.

Scientists have long insisted that many of their key insights did not come through empirical observations of this sort, but through intuition or inspiration. But the philosophers who surrounded them quickly reminded them that the method of arriving at their ideas wasn't as important as the way that those ideas would be verified or falsified, through empirical (sense-data) observation. What could testify better to the triumph of this worldview than the word we now use to signify something that is not to be relied upon: "non-sense."

This empiricist worldview was developed as an explicit assault on the hold of religion and spirituality on the medieval mind. People were quite legitimately angry at the way that religion and spiritual language had been appropriated by ruling elites and used as a justification for a feudal economic and social system. The rising class of merchants and bankers were particularly interested in undermining a social system that put restraints on their ability to make unlimited profits and pay low wages. So they eagerly embraced the new philosophy which accompanied and seemed to validate the emerging science of the 18th and 19th centuries, and used that philosophy to show that all spiritual and religious systems were necessarily "non-sense."

That knowledge must be derived from sense data seemed transparently true to many people because empiricism seemed the simplest and hence most elegant way to explain the universe. Moreover, because the same sense data seemed to be available to anyone facing similar circumstances, the knowledge derived from it would not be "merely subjective," but could be intersubjectively verified and hence "objective." William of Occam's famous "Razor" warned us not to create more elaborate explanations of any phenomenon that could be explained in a simpler way, and the empiricists told us that the simplest and most elegant way was to look for the sense-data foundation of any knowledge claim.

The idea that data that is publicly observable and repeatable under standard conditions is necessarily superior to internal experiences, intuitions, or other ways of verifying truth is itself a belief system, the belief system we call empiricism. It cannot be justified by its own criterion of truth—because this fundamental principle is not derived from or provable by some sense-data experience. Rather, it is a matter of faith. It is a metaphysical principle as much as any religious belief. But this belief system became the common sense of the contemporary age.

Contact sets out to challenge Occam's Razor and the entire empiricist philosophy on which it is based. The heroine, a young scientist (played by Jodie Foster) who has been a staunch advocate of a narrow empiricist scientism in opposition to the meaning-oriented presidential advisor (with whom she has had an affair), discovers intelligent life on another planet, and eventually gets transported to that planet and experiences it firsthand. But the experience is not registered by any of the devices that her earth-bound colleagues have available, and so they, and the entire array of government officials, are determined to make her recant. She does not, but is forced to acknowledge that her own experience of travel to another reality is not verifiable by any intersubjectively available sense data. The narrow empiricism which had become her religion is shown to be inadequate to the complexity and mystery of the universe.

This, of course, is what spiritually-oriented people have been claiming for millennia: that they have experience that

is real even though it is not intersubjectively verifiable through sense data. They point to the fact that experiences of love, beauty, and ethical value are also not intersubjectively verifiable and hence have never been able to be made the object of empirical science.

Scientific materialism and the empiricist worldview on which it is based have proved very useful when humanity sought to exercise dominance over nature. Being able to control aspects of our physical universe has been an important and at times life-saving goal. But when science is turned into scientism, a kind of religion of its own that is intolerant of any truth-claims that do not ultimately derive from scientific or empiricist principles, it can become a destructive force. By invalidating ethical knowledge, this kind of scientism teaches us that all ethical judgments are "merely subjective," thus trivializing the views of those who believe that scientific knowledge and technology should be subordinated to the needs of humanity.

Many scientists and technicians sell their knowledge directly to the corporations, or to universities whose agendas are shaped by corporate interests, or to the Defense Department. But when this way of developing science is questioned, the defenders of the market-dominated society have a simple answer: "How we use science or whose interests it serves is not a scientific question. You are entitled to your subjective value judgments on this question, but others will disagree and there is no real way to decide among the different perspectives except to be tolerant of all views." Meanwhile the corporate dominance continues.

In contrast, there is another way of approaching the world that starts from a different concern: not how to dominate and control it, but how to respond to it with awe, wonder and radical amazement at the glory of all that is. This is what I mean by spirituality. It is this spirituality which has been largely discounted, trivialized, ridiculed, and marginalized both in our universities and in our public life. I recently challenged the "Media and Democracy" conference—a group of lefty media folk who complain about the mainstream media's exclusion of left and minority voices—to include in their own media and in their conference some knowledge of the progressive spiritual and religious voices that lefties normally discount or ignore. But their conception of inclusion doesn't go that far!

Contact dares to question the dominant scientism. It is not anti-science. Nor are we. Science has an important role to play. But the empiricist worldview that has come to be the dominant shaper of "common sense" (that word again) is deeply distorting to our public and private lives. Congratulations to film-maker Robert Zemeckis for daring to take on the dominant religion of our times. Underneath all the special effects and Hollywood superficiality of some parts of this script is a very deep and important message.

The film is a box-office success. Why? Because something is happening in the culture, even though the news media and television haven't caught on yet. There is a deep spiritual



A scientifist (Jodie Foster) after her Congressional testimony challenging the scientific worldview in "Contact."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANCOIS DUHAMEL/WARNER BROS.

revival taking place. It has progressive and reactionary potentials, depending on who become involved and how successful they are at shaping the direction. This spiritual turn is almost certainly a response to the piggery described in the editorial above, though it can take the form of "the world is screwed up so let's create our own local church, synagogue or community where we can have some decent treatment of each other and some decent values, because we are never going to be able to impact on the larger society" just as well as the form of "let's change the larger society to reflect our highest values." Whatever form it takes, this spiritual focus is the wave of the next millennium.

We've been trying to alert people in the progressive world to this revival, and to encourage them to address the crisis of meaning and values in American society. Perhaps the success of *Contact* will make our task easier.

"Blacks and Jews"

The problems continue, and so do the prophets of doom.

The recent movie on the topic of Black-Jewish relations by Berkeley film makers Alan Snitow, Debra Kaufman and Bari Scott is a bad film that makes matter worse.

The film's premise is that there seems to be an inevitable scenario of denunciations and counter-denunciations from each community whenever an incident arises. What the film never does is to seek to understand why the tensions arise and how they might be transcended. Instead, as one astute observer noted, it does the very thing it bemoans: sensationalizing the instances of conflict and ignoring the much greater picture of cooperation, harmony or benign neglect between the two communities. So we return to the oft-told story of the near-pogrom in Crown Heights or the wildly exaggerated incident in which some Black teenagers laughed at a showing of *Schindler's List*.

These stories may grab attention, but they are at once too exaggerated and don't really connect with the problem where it exists most intensely: in the consciousness of Jews who have decided that Blacks no longer deserve our caring and support to overcome the legacy of institutionalized slavery, and in the consciousness of some Blacks who unfairly blame Jews for their oppression.

American Jews who fought vigorously for reparations for the Holocaust and who continue to support state-instituted affirmative action for Jews in the form of the "Law of Return" in Israel have great difficulty supporting the quest of African Americans for similar compensation and support as they seek to overcome 400 years of slavery, oppression and discrimination. Meanwhile a troubling number of younger African Americans, particularly those on college campuses, have too often flirted with virulent anti-Semitic fantasies that rival and sometimes outdo that which they can hear from



Cornel West and Rabbi Michael Lerner after one of their many public dialogues.

Louis Farrakhan. The movie really skirts the difficult problems, just as it eschews any serious analysis.

Without such an analysis, there are few grounds for hope, and many people who saw the movie when it was broadcast on national public television felt depressed and immobilized afterwards.

The tensions are real, but so too are the hopeful signs. For over three years, Cornel West and I have traveled the country creating public Black-Jewish dialogues. We've found a huge response, and not only among Jews (as the common wisdom would have it) but also among young African-Americans who have too few role models of healthy and non-obsequious examples of cooperation. Here, as in so much of America, people continually oscillate between the mainstream messages of cynicism and despair and an alternative message that the world could still be healed and transformed.

What people told us over and over again is that they rarely hear anyone putting forward a message about how to transform America. What they hear from the left, instead, is a much more narrow message about how the groups that have been excluded can or should get a bigger part of the pie—and that message reenforces the very separation between groups, as each begins to strategize about getting its part. What many Blacks and Jews want to hear is some way that they could focus on something more than getting their fair share, some higher spiritual vision. Or, as Jim Wallis of *Sojourners* is wont to put it, finding common ground often requires moving to higher ground. It's this higher ground that is so markedly absent from the film.

Because the filmmakers have been shaped by the hostility toward spirituality and religion that are part of the collective unconscious of the lefty communities from which they emerge, they completely ignored the ways that both Jews and Blacks have rich religious and spiritual foundations which provide a basis for finding that "higher ground." Indeed, it was precisely Martin Luther King's ability to draw upon the rich religious heritage of the Black community in his articulation of the struggle that made it possible for tens of millions of Americans of every racial and ethnic group to move to higher ground with him.

In the 1990s, both the African American and Jewish communities are divided between those within them who still seek to draw upon these same religious, cultural and historical roots to move their community to a more universalistic and outward-looking stance and those who have bought into the dominant materialism, selfishness and cynicism of American society and who therefore recast their struggles in narrow and chauvinistic terms. A serious film would have sought to explore the interaction between those tensions within the communities and the way that cynicism and despair have become dominant in the larger framework of American politics.

Cornel West and I made these points to the filmmakers in the hour of interview that they shot with us, but they instead chose to focus on the one moment when we were heatedly arguing (thus reenforcing the notion of conflict, rather than the reality of cooperation). Unfortunately, Snitow et.al. have opted for cynicism, sensationalizing and superficiality, underplaying both the problem and the possibilities of transcendence. Shame on them.

Yet the desperate attempt of reviewers and audiences to find something positive in this rather one dimensional and draggy movie is a testimony to how hungry people are for some way to say that they still care. It is that enduring legacy of caring in both communities that Snitow, Kaufman and Scott exploit. A serious film on this topic remains to be made. ❑

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HAROLD FEINSTEIN

America's Moment to Bring Peace to the Middle East

Rabbi Michael Lerner

The bombing of a Jerusalem market by Hamas terrorists was outrageous and unforgivable. But it was also the totally predictable outcome of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's policies. And it has created a new reality in which the U.S. is now considering an expanded role in the peace process.

It's time to hold Netanyahu and his coalition of ultra-Orthodox and ultra-nationalists accountable. Remember that Netanyahu promised that he could end these kinds of terrorist attacks, while still pursuing peace? Well, abandoning the peace process in the name of being tough only served to relegitimate the most extreme factions in the Palestinian world. The bombing proves that his strategy is not working. What, exactly, did we expect Palestinians were going to do when Israel broke the peace process by its construction of a new Jewish settlement at Har Homa in East Jerusalem? If, from the Palestinian standpoint, Israel's land grab was continuing and accelerating, and if "new facts were being created on the ground" while the diplomats talked, it was inevitable that many Palestinians would begin to see the peace process itself as little more than a PR cover for Israeli expansion.

Palestinians have no army, they have no economic leverage, they have no vote in the country that continues to rule over most of the territory of the West Bank. With the peace process undermined by Netanyahu (who has made no bones about his opposition to the idea of Palestinian national self-determination), many Palestinians feel greater despair than ever. Both Israel and the Palestinians have their religious fundamentalists. No matter what Israel does, some Islamic fundamentalist will never be happy as long as Jews have their own state in the Middle East. But most Palestinians respond to that kind of extremism only when their more moderate leaders seem to be making no progress toward Palestinian self-determination. That's why Palestinian fundamentalists usually wait for public opinion in their own community to be so deeply frustrated that people are willing to consider acts of desperation as the only way to articulate the generally-felt hopelessness.

Liberal Jews in the U.S. will never excuse or accept the morally disgusting behavior of terrorist assaults on innocent Israelis. No action or inaction on the part of the nationalists and chauvinists who currently control the Israeli government could be sufficient to justify the use of violence against Jewish civilians. We don't "understand it," and we don't exonerate the terrorists from moral blame.

But we do know that the only way to save Jewish lives, and Palestinian lives, is for Israel to live up to the Oslo accord, get out of the West Bank, and allow a demilitarized Palestinian state to take its place among the family of nations. As long as that doesn't happen, Hamas and other religious fundamentalist organizations will seem to be the only available option.

Most American Jewish progressives have no affection for Arafat and his authoritarian style of rule. And Arafat self-destructively undermined his own credibility by freeing Hamas operatives from prison and ending cooperation with the Israeli security forces. He remains tone-deaf to the reality of Israeli paranoia, unable to realize that despite their overwhelming military power, the Israeli people remain trapped by their history of persecution and genocide in a perception of themselves as eternally vulnerable to annihilation. Arafat has made real mistakes.

Yet de-stabilizing the Palestinian Authority, as the ADL and other conservative American Jewish organizations are seeking to do, can only play to the needs of Hamas, which remains the major alternative should Arafat be undermined.

Moreover, we should be aware of the irony of demanding "cooperation" with Israeli security forces which have a proven record of using torture and other unacceptable violations of human rights. Israel and the U.S. demand that Arafat get tough, then criticize him for not following normal standards of civil liberties.

The Palestinian people are entitled to the same protections and rights as any other people on the planet, and those rights should not be abrogated on the flimsy justification that among them are a small group of terrorists who most Palestinians do not support. Liberal and progressive Jews protested the use of torture and the jailings without trials that have been a constant fare of Israeli rule in the West Bank, so we will not approve of similar measures taken by Arafat against his own population.

Moreover, no matter how much repression and torture Arafat tries to impose on his people to accede to pressure from Israel and the U.S., he will only succeed in overcoming the

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violence-producing despair of his people if he can deliver substantial national self-determination, and this is precisely what Netanyahu's government is committed to thwarting.

Netanyahu's response to the terrorism has been to punish the entire Palestinian population. The West Bank was flooded with Israeli troops who blocked roads and set up checkpoints to make it difficult for Palestinians to move from village to village. Yet few Palestinians had anything to do with the terror attack, and few could have stopped it.

Instead of rising in criticism of these policies, the official organs of the American Jewish community remained silent or actually joined in Netanyahu's propaganda offensive. The Anti-Defamation League joined in hot competition with the Conference of Presidents of Major (sic) American Jewish Organizations to see which could sound more jingoistic and outrageous in its attack on Arafat (who had immediately condemned the bombings).

Underlying all of the empty rhetoric is the inability of Jews to accept the fundamentals of the situation: Israel is occupying the land and running the lives of a subordinate and mostly unarmed civilian population.

Madeline Albright's initiative to take up the Netanyahu offer of moving to the final status negotiations (rather than wait for Oslo accords interim arrangements to be implemented) makes sense. But Albright says that before moving to the final status negotiations, Arafat must make a 100% effort to cooperate with Israel on security measures, and the definition of that 100% will be given by the Israelis. In short, Arafat must appear to be a total puppet of the Israelis to his own people. But if he does appear to be that kind of a puppet, what moral authority can he exercise within his own world to actually convince people not to engage in terror? And what is the reward for this cooperation? Not Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, but Israeli participation in "final status" negotiations at which the Netanyahu government will oppose any serious withdrawal of military occupation.

Secretary Albright, in listing prior conditions, said that "a moral atmosphere in which advocacy of violence and terror withers away" is a precondition. But to accomplish that, the moral atmosphere would have to include not only a willingness of Arafat to give more cooperation to Israeli security forces, but also on Israel's part a total suspension of building on Har Homa in East Jerusalem, a ban on further expansion of (existing or new) settlements on the West Bank, implementation of free and non-harrassed travel for Palestinians between the West Bank and Gaza, the opening of an airport and seaport in the Gaza Strip, and a cessation of Israeli policies of punishing the entire Palestinian population for acts of terror perpetrated by a few. If you treat the entire Paletinian people as the enemy, don't talk about "a moral atmosphere." Moreover, this definition of reality puts a veto to the peace process in the hands of Arab extremists.

If Secretary Albright really wants to move to final status talks, the Administration could do one thing that would change the situation—come forward with a plausible picture of an outcome to those negotiations that both Arafat and the Israelis (at least the Labor Party) could live with. If the U.S. would publicly outline a plan for a final settlement, Arafat would have the political ammunition he needs not only to accept Netanyahu's plan for final stage talks, but also to deliver a renewed struggle against terrorism. Short of that kind of accomplishment, he is going to have a difficult time convincing his fellow Palestinians to be more aggressive in repressing terrorism. The notion of the U.S. as a neutral third party simply hasn't worked—it's time for the U.S. to put forward its own ideas and to pressure both sides to accept a reasonable compromise. At Oslo, diplomats felt they could avoid that by setting up a process rather than detailing an actual solution. It didn't work. Now we need specific solutions, and the U.S. should play an active role in shaping a vision that is adequately respectful of Israeli security and of Palestinian rights for national self-determination.

One reason why the U.S. has not yet taken this step is because the Clinton administration fears the anger of a section of the Jewish world that would attack any plan that involves giving Palestinians substantive national self-determination. Madeline Albright's speech repeated this self-protective mantra: we (the U.S.) will only bring the parties into a negotiating process, but the solution must emerge from the parties themselves. Under the current circumstances, this is simply not going to happen. Benjamin Netanyahu has neither the wisdom nor spiritual depth to transcend the anger and pettiness of the Jewish right from which he emerged to provide the leadership that would be necessary. He is no Menachem Begin. So the negotiations will ultimately be a meaningless ritual until the U.S. uses its power and influence to energetically advocate (if necessary, directly to the Israeli population over the heads of its current leaders) a reasonable solution, or until the current government is replaced (the next election may be three years off, and many people will die between now and then).

If Clinton could get beyond the loudmouths in the American Jewish establishment and the media and listen to the many American Jews who deeply yearn for peace, he might get more courage to take this route.

Unfortunately, once again the people who support peace have been far too quiet.

Could Clinton buck the American Jewish establishment? YES. George Bush did it in 1991 when he refused "loan guarantees" to Israel as long as Shamir continued building in the West Bank. Bush's willingness to put economic pressure on Israel convinced many Israeli swing voters that bucking the U.S. was too costly, and this perception contributed decisively to the election victory of Rabin in 1992.The same thing would likely happen if Clinton and Albright were to articulate a detailed vision of a peace agreement that allowed for a demilitarized Palestinian state (including full recognition and U.N. membership), provided adequate assurances for



Israeli police shoot at Palestinians in the weeks *before* Hamas terrorism in Jerusalem.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MATI STEIN/AP PHOTO

Israeli security, and provided adequate economic support to make the Palestinian state viable. Such a conception could be sold to the American public and to a majority of Israelis.

Undoubtedly, such a courageous move would have some costs. Some wealthy American Jews would stop contributing to the Democrats, most Jewish newspapers would predict electoral doom, and the Republican Congress would try to make political hay in the hopes of picking up many Jewish voters in New York and Los Angeles. But the consequences are greatly exaggerated. Faced with a Republican party that has been swinging further and further to the Right, most American Jews would still vote for Gore in 2000, even if they resented the Clinton administration's policies on Israel. And a large section of American Jews would recognize this action as the real support that Israel needs—the kind of pressure for peace for which many Jews would be grateful.

How wonderful it would be if Israel used this coming year, 5758, the 50th anniversary of its founding as an independent state, to bring real reconciliation with the Palestinian people.

If that doesn't happen,we the Jewish people could make an act of atonement and solidarity with the peace movement in the following way: let us create a Jewish Peace Corps that goes to Israel and Palestine this coming summer and begins to rebuild Arab communities damaged by the Occupation, and Mizrachi and Ethiopian communities whose social justice needs have been ignored while billions of dollars have been squandered in building the infrastructure for West Bank settlements. We would go only to communities where we had been invited. This act of moral witness will not convince Netanyahu, but it could be an important counter-voice to the 50th anniversary celebrations that ignore the ongoing suffering that Israeli policies have caused, and it could be a way that the Jewish people reclaims its moral and spiritual foundation. Ads in the *N.Y. Times* are not enough—this is a moment for Jews to reject the chauvinist and ultra-nationalist strands of our tradition and embrace the highest spiritual vision of Torah that recognizes every human being as created in the image of God, and insists that we create a society that embodies that vision. As the Jewish people enters the New Year, we pray that the spirit of love, the commitment to justice, and the dedication to *tikkun olam* will become embodied in us and in our entire people. May we be inscribed for a Year of Peace. ❑

ISRAEL AFTER THE BOMBING

Before and After

Mark LeVine

I never go to the *shuk*. My wife likes the cheaper and fresher vegetables there, but I knew that markets were a favorite target of the pre-State Jewish terrorist groups, and figured sooner or later, in a country where "remember" and "revenge" are national preoccupations, Hamas would return the favor. But even as Israelis retreat from the reality of a stillborn peace process and the suicide bombings that accompany it, they continue to sustain an illusion of normalcy that allows them to continue to shop in markets and ride buses, and feel that Hebron, Gaza, even East Jerusalem, are as far away as Bosnia or Northern Ireland, and thus somebody else's war.



Indeed, as I began telling an Israeli friend about my latest excursion into the netherworld of Israel's psyche, her eyes glazed over and her face took on the contorted expression normally reserved for smelling spoilt food. "Gaza…I don't know…that's like a thousand miles away…." It is reactions such as these that have made living in Israel for the past eight months such a draining, even despairing experience. It is also why Hamas likes to bring the war home periodically.

And it was despair that accompanied me on my latest trip through the more-or-less Occupied Territories to Hebron.

Certainly, Hebron is not the place to restore hope. Block after block bears some symbol of continued occupation. This type of structural violence while less 'newsworthy' than the more widely publicized clashes are more enduring and thus more dangerous. Looking up we could see the huge crane over one of the four Jewish settlements that continues to expand in the heart of the Old City. At our feet was a torn up street whose repair, funded by U.S. tax dollars, is continuously thwarted by settlers who threaten and attack Palestinian workers. Residents now have to pass through numerous checkpoints just to go from one neighborhood to another.

A local Palestinian journalist, himself shot by soldiers while covering the 1994 Goldstein massacre, describes the Israeli policies as "the judaization of the city. Settlers can build as much as they want without any permission, while our plans have to go through the Israeli security administration. And they say *we* are occupying *their* city—400 settlers in a city of 120,000 Arabs…." As the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* wrote in assessing the reasons for the latest bombing: "The relationship between Israel and the Palestinians is still that of conqueror and conquered."

If life in Hebron is bad, Gaza—one of the most densely populated areas on the globe—should have been more depressing. But it is here that the opposite emotion slowly began to surface, although not right away. Our first day began with a visit to a torture treatment center funded by Grassroots. It is in places like this where costs of the continuing occupation are most evident. Of the more than one hundred thousand Palestinians imprisoned by Israel since the Intifada began, as many as 80 percent return home bearing scars of psychological or physical torture that will affect their families for years, particularly children. As Palestinian psychiatrist and human rights activist Eyad Sarraj describes it, "the young kn[ow] Israel through its soldiers, their shooting, torturing, demolishing houses and beating fathers. The Oslo agreement did not change any of that. Palestinians feel betrayed and alienated." Given this dynamic, he continued, there is no wonder why there is "no end to the queue of waiting potential martyrs."

Indeed, driving through the refugee camps that surround Gaza City and speaking with residents, many of whom still live beside open sewers and without running water, it's easy to understand not just their anger at Israel, but also why Arafat's name is barely heard on the street anymore. Corruption in the Palestinian Authority is rampant, as an historic report by the Palestinian Legislative Council confirmed, the gap between rich and poor is quickly widening, and the dozen or so security services are becoming little more than extortion rackets, barely under the President's control. The Legislative Council itself is being obstructed by Arafat at

PHOTOGRAPH BY EYAL WARSHAVSKY/AP PHOTO

Mark LeVine is former National Coordinator of the Foundation for Ethics and Meaning and presently a Fulbright-Hays Fellow doing research in Israel and Palestine.

every turn "precisely because he wants to remain a dictator," as one senior Palestinian official explained.

Yet much more powerful than the plethora of depressing sights and statistics that too often defines Gaza was the determination of so many of the Palestinians with whom we met to struggle and work together in ways reminiscent of the solidarity that characterized the pre-state Jewish Yishuv and nascent Israeli society, but now are little more than bittersweet memories for most Israelis. "Secular" therapists at the rehabilitation center have convinced local religious leaders to refer patients to them; women's organizations, "helped" by the desperate economic situation, are working with men to encourage women to rethink their role in society, and more practically, to start their own small businesses. A health worker in a small village in Southern Gaza related how she recently informed her husband that the second child she's expecting will be their last…

In fact, the grassroots energy that is attempting to fill the void left by the political stagnation is a very positive development, whose origin was most eloquently summed up by Dr. Haider Abdul-Shafi, the elder statesman of Palestinian politics in Gaza, in a conversation days before the bombing: "People kept telling me 'it's hopeless', to the point where I had to sit down and ask myself if they were right. But I realized that it's *not* hopeless." He continued, "Yes, there's no point even worrying about the present negotiations. Israel is too strong. [But] the way to fight it is to think long-term—decades—and start organizing right from the base." And this is why violence is no longer a viable option: "People are saying that a new Intifada is called for, but there's no use; we need to think rationally and put the Palestinian house in order, and for this, democracy is the crucial issue. We can't reflect a positive picture to the world without democracy."

The story of grassroots activism in the face of political frustration is one Israelis need to hear and learn from. The lack of similar activities in Israel is undoubtedly a major reason why so many Israelis seem so broken while Palestinians, living in much more difficult circumstances, are not. In fact, the sad truth is that most so-called left-wing Israelis no longer have the drive or the desire to do more than pay lip service to fighting Netanyahu's reinvigorated occupation, as long as his policies don't interfere with their drive to live a "normal" life.

Peace activist Uri Avneri put it more "bluntly": "There is a nucleus of moral corruption among the 'nicest' people in Israel who believe in all the right things, but would never do anything about it…the whole conflict is like a play for them, not real… They give their 100 shekels and forget about it because it doesn't concern their daily lives, or wallow in their 'fashionable despair'." Meanwhile, Netanyahu is only too happy to oblige the nihilistic consumerism that increasingly defines Israeli culture, because the more "comfortable" the emerging yuppie elite becomes the less incentive they will have to struggle for anyone else's rights, least of all Palestinians.

The people's "despair" has thrown the leadership of the peace movement into absolute despair, and a poignant indicator of just how deep that feeling runs was the belief, expressed by one senior activist two days before the bombing, that only significant violence by Palestinians will shake Israelis out of their complacency. Just when Palestinians are being told violence is no longer a useful instrument in their national struggle!

Speaking to me after the bombing, Peace Now Director Mossi Rav clarified his colleague's assessment, saying that most likely the speaker was referring to violence in the Territories, not in Israel. If only Peace Now and Hamas could coordinate their activities better. But in the meantime, as so many Palestinians have asked me, if Jews aren't willing to put their bodies in front of Israeli bulldozers and engage in other acts of non-violent protest against their government's policies, what alternative to violence exists for us?

Indeed, one theme echoed by Israeli peace groups and Palestinian journalists is how hollow Palestinian expressions of sympathy by Palestinian leaders rang in comparison with the aftermath of the 1996 bombings: "These are mere words, a show, lip service," was how a journalist from the Arabic daily *al-Quds* described it. A more somber Dr. Abdul-Shafi explained in our conversation the weekend after the bombing, "In light of the dead peace process, no one can stop terror…. It's obvious that the people aren't against it, as they know this peace process is exploited by Israel to violate our rights. So what interest do they have in stopping the violence."

Perhaps Uri Avneri had the best take on the attitude of most Palestinians, as he compared it to the last days of the Mandate, when his Irgun comrades hung two "totally innocent" British soldiers in retaliation for the British hanging their comrades. "Looking back it was a very ugly incident… these men were non-combatants, uninvolved in 'occupation', but the entire Yishuv fully supported it, there was no other way to show the British that we weren't going to lie down…. There comes a point when the people feel even civilians 'had it coming to them.'"

A dangerous correlate to the despair that is pushing so many Israelis away from actively fighting for peace is apparent in the tactics underlying another of Israel's existential struggles, the Conservative and Reform Jews' fight against the legal, cultural and political domination of the Orthodox establishment in Israel's religious life. This dynamic first became clear to me in the wake of the violence at the Western Wall during Shavuot, when seemingly no one made a connection between the discourse of non-recognition and dehumanization that permeates Israel's relationship with Palestinians, and the similar dynamic governing the relations between Orthodox and non-traditional Jews.

More specifically, if violence and repression are considered by the Israeli government to be a legitimate means of dealing with Israel's national "Other," isn't it logical that many Orthodox Jews would follow Netanyahu's cue and behave similarly toward their religious "Other." How can Reform and Conservative leaders expect to win any lasting recognition from the State, Orthodox Jews, or the wider public in the absence of a larger national rapprochement between Israelis and Palestinians?

Before the bombing, Conservative spokesperson Rabbi Eniat Ramon dismissed my connection between the country's "political" and "religious" conflicts in favor of a more limited and focused struggle by her movement. She explained that "Conservative and Reform Jews are looking for recognition not from Orthodox Jews but from the secular



Israeli State. As far as I'm concerned, I have no business with the Orthodox. I'm fighting for the State of Israel to give us [our] rights, and to get the 70 to 80 percent of the non-Orthodox Israeli public to take control of their Judaism."

But if the Conservative and Reform movements don't have the courage to challenge Israel's policies toward Palestinians, and the demeaning of "the Other" that goes along with it, they are likely to be the victims of a similar dynamic. If Conservative and Reform Judaism were to appear to the Israeli population to have something important to say about their political world, and if that message was not just the predictable reactionary message of most of the Orthodox world, they might build a constituency ready to fight for pluralism.

Reform and Conservative Jews should be seeking a societal-wide *T'Shuvah*—a repentance of the tendency to demean the Other, whether that be the Arab "Other," the Ethiopian-Jewish "Other," the Reform and Conservative "Other," or anyone else who doesn't fit into the Zionist dream as conceived at the beginning of the 20th century. As Rabbi for Human Rights director Jeremy Milgrom points out, the pragmatic strategy of the Conservative and Reform movement undercuts the possibility of generating a deep *t'shuvah* that alone can "cleanse down the roots and reorient people.... It's cosmetic *t'shuvah*."

Uri Regev, the Reform movement's representative on the joint rabbinical commission appointed by Netanyahu to reform the proposed Reform Law, supported Ramon's strategy of focusing on internal lobbying and maneuvering within the state sector. He drew a parallel between the dynamics of the Palestinian Intifada that led to the Oslo process and the "Jewish Intifada" that forced Netanyahu to establish his commission and will hopefully lead to legal recognition of Reform and Conservative Jews. Yet Oslo is in a shambles for precisely the same reason—it thought it could use technical steps to develop a process of separation of the two peoples (meanwhile, continuing to enjoy the economic and territorial benefits of the Occupation) without developing reconciliation or mutual understanding (which, supposedly, would follow from the political agreements). In short, no *t'shuvah*, only pragmatic steps.

But this kind of pragmatism hasn't been working. One need only see the newest physical attack (by Orthodox Jews and the police who serve them) on Conservative Jews trying to daven at The Wall on Tisha B'Av in August to realize that this strategy isn't working. Indeed, after the Jerusalem bombing, the positions of both rabbis became more nuanced. Rabbi Regev explained how he "can't plan an intra-Jewish struggle for a time of war, because only during peace does the environment exist in which pluralism can thrive." Rabbi Ramon (speaking personally and not for the Conservative movement) also connected the struggles for peace and religious pluralism in a way she had declined to do beforehand, declaring the Orthodox are both "totally against peace and against the reform bill," and warning that "it is important for North American Jews to be alarmed at Netanyahu's connection to the 'fundamentalist' and 'messianic' forces around him—that is, the wealthy ultra-Orthodox backers of his campaign from the United States, their fundamentalist Christian allies who want to 'rebuild the Temple' and the National Religious Party."

It is these linkages that really need to sink into the minds of Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist and Renewal Jews both in the U.S. and in Israel. The Right understands this. When the Lubaviches funded the infamous "Bibi is good for the Jews" campaign during last year's elections, there were few protests because most people thought it was just Arab-baiting; in retrospect it's clear that it was Jew-baiting too.

But as long as Israel's non-Orthodox political and religious

PHOTOGRAPH BY ZOOM 77/AP PHOTO

leaders don't find it in their "direct interest" (as one rabbi described it) to challenge the political—and thus ultimately the religious status quo, they will find their issues refracted through the same lens of public indifference to the problems facing "the Other" and thus left to fend for themselves, just as a large section of that public seemed similarly indifferent to the fate of Palestinians in the months before the bombing in the Jerusalem *shuk*.

Israelis and Palestinians need each other more than ever. But time and hope are running out. What is desperately needed is a real *t'shuvah* to bring about peace and reconciliation both between and within the two societies. ❑

Seeking Israel's Lost Soul

David Newman

The horrors of this summer's terrorist outrage in the crowded market in Jerusalem generated the predictable responses. The country united for grieving and mourning for a few days, then returned to charges and counter-charges about whose policies and approaches were responsible.

Prime Minister Netanyahu has managed to come out of this act of terrorism with an improved image in Israeli politics. His tough stance and his harsh words are ready-made for such situations. He is expert at talking about the actions and crimes of the "other," far less experienced in talking about peace and the responsibilities of the "us."

Yet terrorist acts of this sort should make us even more determined to find the solutions, rather than use them as a convenient excuse for suspending dialogue.

To do that, we have to get beyond the tendency of most Israelis to see the Hamas fundamentalists as representing the entire Palestinian nation. Yet the response of Labor governments when they were in power and of Netanyahu now is to shut the borders, and in other ways to act as though the terrorist acts are coming from the entire Palestinian people, who then deserve to be collectively punished. Years of this kind of scapegoating and misperceiving the situation has shaped a public consciousness in Israel which is easily manipulated by Hamas, a group that seems quite happy to derail the peace process and thereby "prove" that the path of accommodation with Israel being pursued by Arafat "isn't working," so people would have no place to turn but to Hamas.

After years of both major Israeli parties responding to terror in this way, it is no surprise that many Israelis have learned to see the entire Palestnian people as an enemy. In the week before the terrorist attack, glancing briefly through *Ma'ariv,* a popular tabloid, two pieces caught my eye. The first reported that a survey taken of Israeli youth shows that over 70 percent of the respondents believe that Arabs collectively pose a danger for Israel, over 60 percent do not approve of equal rights for Arabs and believe that Arab representatives in the Israeli Knesset endanger the security of the country.

The second article concerned the role of the military leaders within contemporary Israel. The writer argued that the current military hierarchy is still a fallout from the Rabin and Peres days, that they are too pro-peace, always looking for negotiated solutions to the problems which crop up daily with the Palestinian Authority. Always thinking and debating the territorial configurations of the next stage of Israeli-Palestinian talks (if, and when, they are ever to take place). The writer argued that this is part of the defeatist attitude enveloping Israel. It is time, he urged, to replace these generals and senior officers with younger, more committed personnel who will be prepared to take a harder line; who will remember that the role of the army is to fight, to show its strength, to make others afraid. Only thus, he concluded, will the "other" side know who it is doing business with, and will come to respect the fact that the new administration will not "give in" as easily as the past one.

The tabloid columns much more accurately represent public opinion than does the limited audience of my preferred newspaper *Ha'aretz,* a paper which is known for its left of center criticism of the present government for their failure to pursue the peace process. The sad fact is that most Israelis, including many who voted for the Labor party in the last election, do not truly believe that this thing euphemistically known as "peace" is really possible. The recurrence of violence, the general mistrust of the "other" in the guise of the Arab-Palestinians, the need for a strong and mighty army—all these are basic attitudes which have not changed during the past fifty years, and do not appear to have been affected by the Oslo Accords and the interim Israeli-Palestinian agreements

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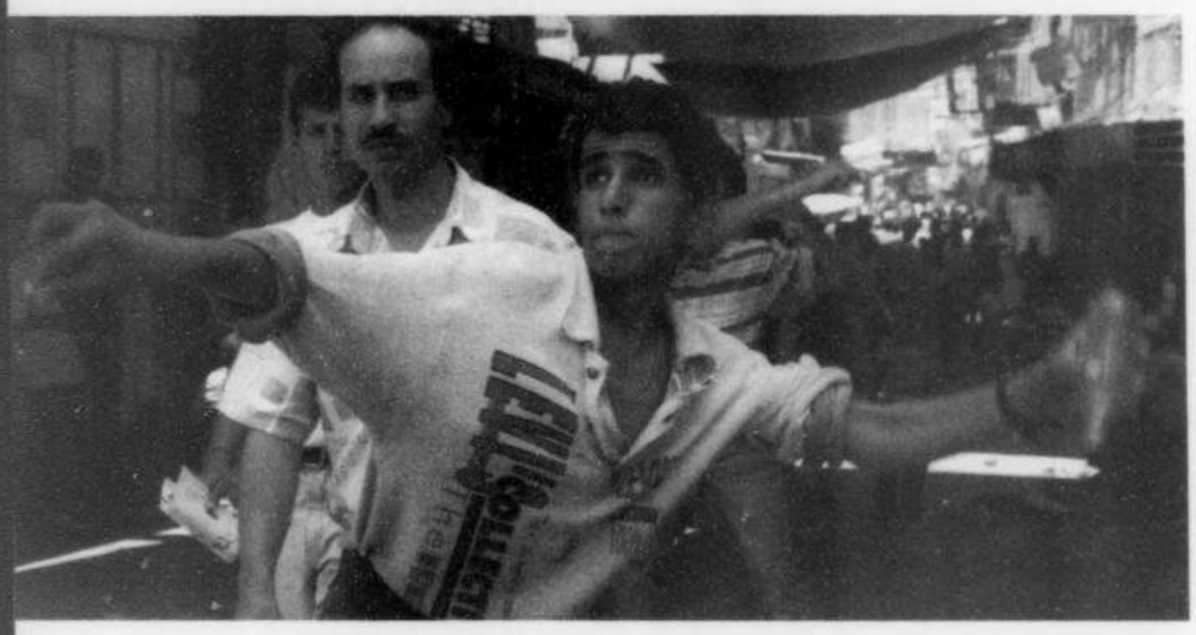
David Newman is professor of Political Geography and Director of the Humphrey Institute for Social Research at Ben Gurion University. He is a political columnist for the Jerusalem Post *and is a writer for* TIKKUN *magazine.*

which have been implemented at this stage.

And if we were just reaching the point in Israel where attitudes were slowly beginning to change, along came the Hamas suicide bombers and the Jerusalem market outrage on the one hand, and the Netanyahu administration on the other, each playing into the hands of the other, and, together, succeeding in taking the discourse back to where it had been prior to the Oslo Accords. The 1996 elections were won and lost around the traditional security discourse, not around peace or a vision of a new Middle East or the human rights of others. Netanyahu has succeeded in rousing the wrath of the entire Arab world, repeatedly hinting at the military threat emanating from Syria, and even causing an anti-Israel rhetoric in Egypt of an extent that had not been heard since the signing of the Camp David Peace Accords.

The left wing have proved an ineffective opposition to the Netanyahu administration. While the nationalist right wing, especially the Gush Emunim, Kach, and settler diehards, continue to exert relentless pressure on the government not to give in, not to exchange territory for peace, and to expand settlements, the Labor Party, Meretz, and the pro-peace camp remain strangely silent and ineffective.

The right wing continue to act as an opposition whether they are formally in power (as they are at present) or in opposition. For their part, the left wing act as though they were in



power, never acting as though they need a strategy to convince people of their perspective They feel no need to organize demonstrations or to mobilize popular opposition, much less to think about what it would take to speak to sections of the population from whom they are alienated.

When people on the left do express their opposition, it is in the context of meetings, coffee houses, and cyberspace—methods of communication unlikely to reach groups of economically disenfranchised residents of poverty neighborhoods and development towns who have yet to be persuaded that the pro-peace message makes sense. It is this elitist attitude that makes it easy for the Netanyahu government to retain its support amongst the socially deprived and residents of the poverty neighborhoods and development towns—by continually pitting them against the perceived power of the social and political elites who support the Labor Party. The Likud and its anti-establishment pose has commanded the loyalty and support of these groups, despite the fact that the Likud's free-market policies are not serving the economic interests of this major constitutency. The cosmetics of having David Levy—who proudly bears the flag of the North African community and who interprets every political setback as an ethnic slight—as a senior member of government, openly espousing the need for social justice and greater equality but in reality doing absolutely nothing to advance the prospects or economic status of these people, has also proved a successful political card for the Likud.

During the tenure of Israel's first Likud prime minister, Menachem Begin, the economic and political elites remained largely untouched. The Likud party were political novices. They did not know much about government and administration. They were even shocked by the fact that they had actually won an election for the first time in Israel's thirty year history. But Netanyahu is of a different mould. He, like Barak and Beilin, was born into a post-state reality, sees himself as being in the image of Clinton and Blair, a man of the contemporary world and, in his own particular case, socialized as much in the United States as in Israel. He is determined to change the structure of these elites, to bring in his own supporters to positions of power, to change the workings of the rigidly controlled economy through the magic workings of unlimited privatization. And if the social classes become even poorer on the way, if the morality of government gets sunk by the criminal behavior of its hooligan justice minister, if other ministers have taken handouts from the Russian mafia, this is not important. Such charges can always be dismissed as the machinations of the disinherited elites. Political rhetoric and demagoguery at its simplest—but it works.

I'm particularly disheartened at the behavior of religious parties, who have the largest representation they have ever held in an Israeli government, controlling such key social portfolios as Education, Interior, and Welfare affairs. Rather than use these ministries to attain greater social equality, in the true spirit of scriptural and prophetic teachings, they use their power to favor their own sectoral interests. And for most of them, they are quite happy to have an intransigent government who backs up their own distorted religious views of territorial exclusivity and irredentism. How different from the religious ideals which I now try to pass on to my children and embody in our religious practice.

For a society which has always tried to market the concept of a "united" people (at least as far as the Jewish population of the country is concerned), the ethno-social card has become an increasingly powerful political pawn. The past five years have seen an unprecedented growth in the support of the socially deprived groups for the Shas ethno-religious party, and it is unlikely that this support will be strongly dented by the recently formed secular "mizrachi" party, or by the rise to prominence of Shlomo Ben Ami with-

PHOTOGRAPH BY MATI STEIN/AP PHOTO

in the Labor Party hierarchy.

The Labor party and Meretz have been notoriously unsuccessful in speaking to these groups because the Left tends to denigrate the religious and national traditions that provide a central aspect of identity and pride in the lives of the economically impoverished. The Left refuses to adopt a politics of meaning that would speak to the spiritual needs of the Israeli population, or which could understand the hunger that these groups have for recognition after decades of being disrespected and under-recognized. In some ways the Left is so hostile to these "meaning" issues that they are unable to recognize any needs that are not narrowly economic or that are not connected to the peace issue. Yet for the economically disenfranchised, for the newly arrived Russian immigrants and for those many Israelis (not just ultra-Orthodox) to whom religious heritage—in whatever form—remains an essential part of their lives, the left wing's hostility toward meaning guarantees the continued success of the political right.

While Israel remains a vibrant democracy, it is a game which is only played out amongst those groups who are favored by the very definition of the State as a Jewish state, rather than a "state of all of its citizens" (the emerging position of those who are called post-Zionists). The ultra-nationalists will do all they can to resist this extension of Israeli democracy, and it is they who currently hold the reins of power and who are determined to push Israel back into an era of isolationism, xenophobia, and Jewish exclusivity. How else can one explain the recent decisions by the Ministry of Education to create new programs aimed at inculcating "national and patriotic" values amongst Israel's youth, or the recent government decision to force every public institution—even in the non-Zionist ultra-Orthodox and Arab sectors—to prominently display the State flag?

At fifty, a country should pass from its earliest formative stages into the first stages of maturity, of growing up, of recognizing the realities of the surrounding region, of understanding the needs of neighboring populations. But instead, under Netanyahu, it is retreating back into the siege mentality of the immediate post-Holocaust years, of recreating an image which is outdated and which no longer represents any form of reality.

What better mark of celebration could there have been for Israel's fiftieth year than for a final peace agreement to be signed with our Palestinian neighbors. But clearly this is not to be the case. It awaits a new message, not simply one of conflict resolution, but one which marks the beginnings of reconciliation—both internal and external. And for that to happen, the message must be one with which the Israeli populace, Zionist, non-Zionist and post-Zionist, Mizrachim and Ashkenazim, religious and secular, can identify with. That is the real challenge facing Israeli society as it enters its jubilee year, the year which in tradition marks "*shnat dror,*" a year of freedom—not only of the physical body, but more importantly, of the soul and the spirit. ❑

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CURRENT DEBATE

The Moral Obligation of

In the July/August issue of TIKKUN, *professors Alan Dershowitz, Yale Kamisar, and Peter Gabel clashed on the degree to which a defense attorney has ethical obligations to the community that may conflict with the type of "zealous representation" that sometimes allows murderers, rapists, and people guilty of violent and cruel acts to go free. In this issue, the discussion deepens.*

ALAN DERSHOWITZ, *professor of law, Harvard University:*

☞ Dear Editor:

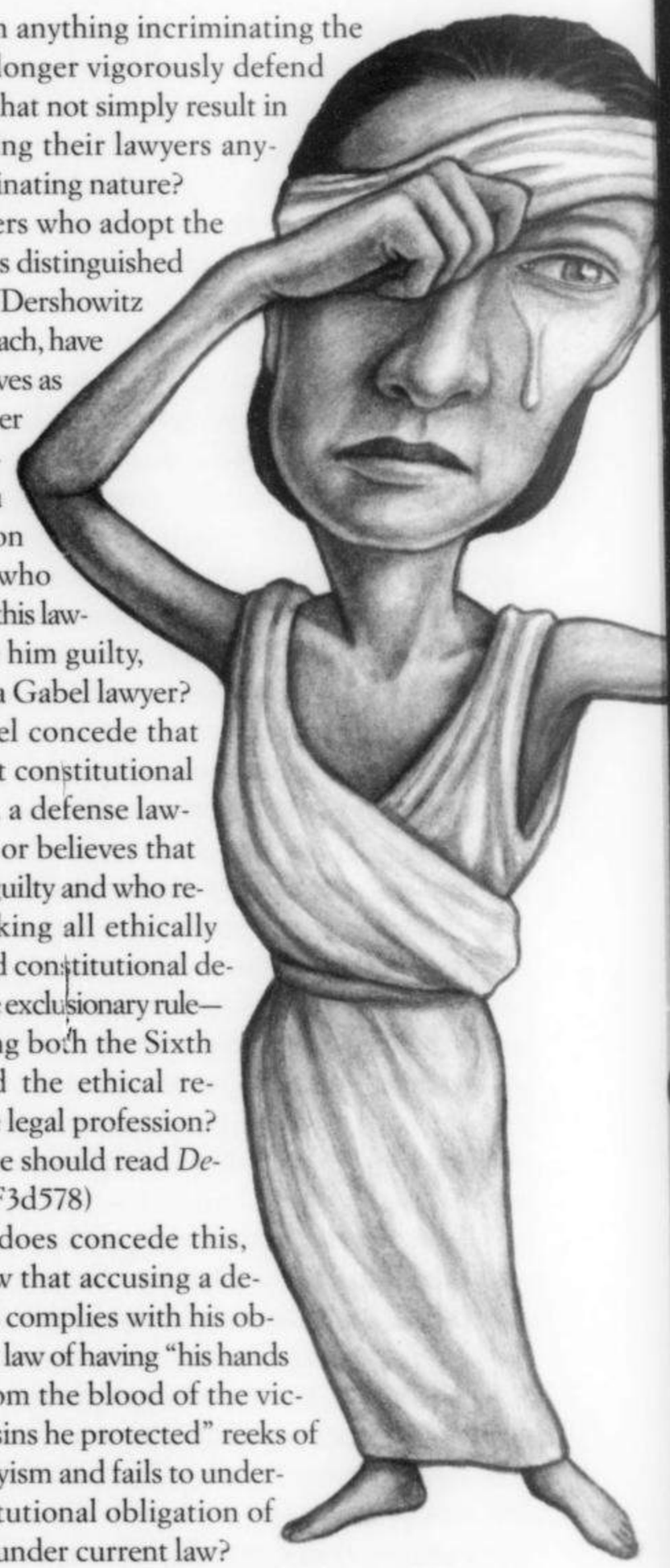
There are few more dangerous ideologues than those who believe that truth can be arrived at without process. You would have thought that Peter Gabel might have learned that lesson from both communism and nazism which adopted procedures closely akin to the one he proposes. Those who tried witches and conducted inquisitions also believed that they were serving "the well-being of the wider community and the creation of a more human and just society." Gabel's road may be paved with good intentions but it will surely lead to hell.

Gabel says, "in cases where the client is charged with committing acts of brutality or cruelty, neither the presumption of innocence nor the rights to counsel justifies an effort to obtain a verdict of not guilty if the lawyer does not believe his or her client is in fact innocent." Indeed he goes further and says that, "the moral situation is not changed significantly when you strongly suspect or even believe that your client is guilty of such conduct." This approach virtually abolishes the role of defense counsel and turns every "defense" lawyer into a prosecutor and judge whose job it is to "suspect" his or her client and treat the client as guilty based on mere suspicion. It is a role with which I am quite familiar, since I encountered it when I represented Soviet dissidents in the 1970s and 1980s.

To illustrate the naïve nature of this simple minded approach, I challenge Professor Gabel to respond to the following questions:

1. Assume a system in which the exclusionary role—either under the Fourth or Fifth Amendments—continues to exist. Assume that you have been appointed to represent a woman facing the death penalty for killing her abusive husband. Assume that the police broke into the defendant's home without a warrant and discovered evidence suggesting that the murder was planned. Would Gabel preclude the woman's appointed lawyer from invoking the Fourth or Fifth Amendment so as to exclude this evidence? Would Gabel also deny the lawyer the right to object to hearsay testimony in cases where the lawyer suspected that his or her client may be guilty?

2. Assume the same case. Would the appointed lawyer be obliged to tell his client in advance that whatever the client told him would not be kept confidential and that if the client told him anything incriminating the lawyer would no longer vigorously defend the client. Would that not simply result in clients never telling their lawyers anything of an incriminating nature?



3. Would lawyers who adopt the Gabel approach, as distinguished from the Kamisar/Dershowitz civil liberties approach, have to identify themselves as Gabel lawyers, rather than as defense lawyers? If so, can you imagine any reason why a defendant who might suspect that this lawyer might believe him guilty, would ever go to a Gabel lawyer?

4. Does Gabel concede that under the current constitutional and ethical rules, a defense lawyer who suspects or believes that his client may be guilty and who refrains from invoking all ethically available legal and constitutional defenses—such as the exclusionary rule—would be violating both the Sixth Amendment and the ethical requirements of the legal profession? (If he does not, he should read *DeLuca v. Lord,* 77 F3d578)

5. If Gabel does concede this, does it not follow that accusing a defense lawyer who complies with his obligation to current law of having "his hands still dripping from the blood of the victims whose assassins he protected" reeks of blatant McCarthyism and fails to understand the constitutional obligation of defense counsel under current law?

Arriving at truth in a system committed to civil liberties is a complex phenomena. Gabel's simple-minded solutions will move us back to the dark ages where truth could be found by the rack and the star chamber.

Defense Lawyers (Part II)

PETER GABEL, *professor of law, New College of California School of Law:*

☞ My dear Mr. Dershowitz:

Before I respond to your "challenge," may I reach out to you across the mental and spiritual constraints imposed on us by our legal training to ask that you hear the main point that I was making in my initial response to you and to Yale Kamisar?

America is in the midst of a spiritual crisis that is only being spoken to by the Religious Right, the Promise Keepers, and various marginal new age movements that cannot really counter the moral suffering engendered by the selfishness, individualism, and materialism of the competitive marketplace. In spite of an outpouring of a kind of inflated-balloon pseudo-optimism generated by the Internet and other new technologies, people feel isolated from one another, trapped in meaningless routines, peering out at a world of artificial role-performances (think of your local newscaster) and social and cultural violence. We are also probably—not possibly, but probably—eroding the world's ecosystems and extinguishing natural species at an increasing rate so that it is not clear that our own species will survive for many more generations. Yet the collective psychic pain associated with our sense of isolation and disconnection from each other and from any collective sense of meaning and purpose is so great that we cannot even respond decisively to this moral and spiritual crisis. With the help of Prozac or Valium or alcohol (or crack cocaine for that matter), people survive day-by-day in a state of collective denial, which is maintained in significant part by everyone communicating to the other that everything is basically fine. As a result, each person in his or her peering-out isolation imagines that the floating pain of everyday life is a result of his or her own personal failure and to avoid humiliation covers this up by joining the spinning circle of collective denial and putting on a good face, the face of the artificial role-performance. If you think I'm exaggerating the matter, then I challenge you, Alan Dershowitz, to turn on your television, turn off the sound, and watch 15 minutes of professional wrestling; then turn on the sound and watch 15 minutes of *Melrose Place* or listen to the grotesque violence and cynicism of *Crossfire* or the *McLaughlin Group* or watch the pathetic "light-hearted" collective putdowns of family life and friendships contained in the endless series of vapid sitcoms that have now dominated evening cultural life for several decades.

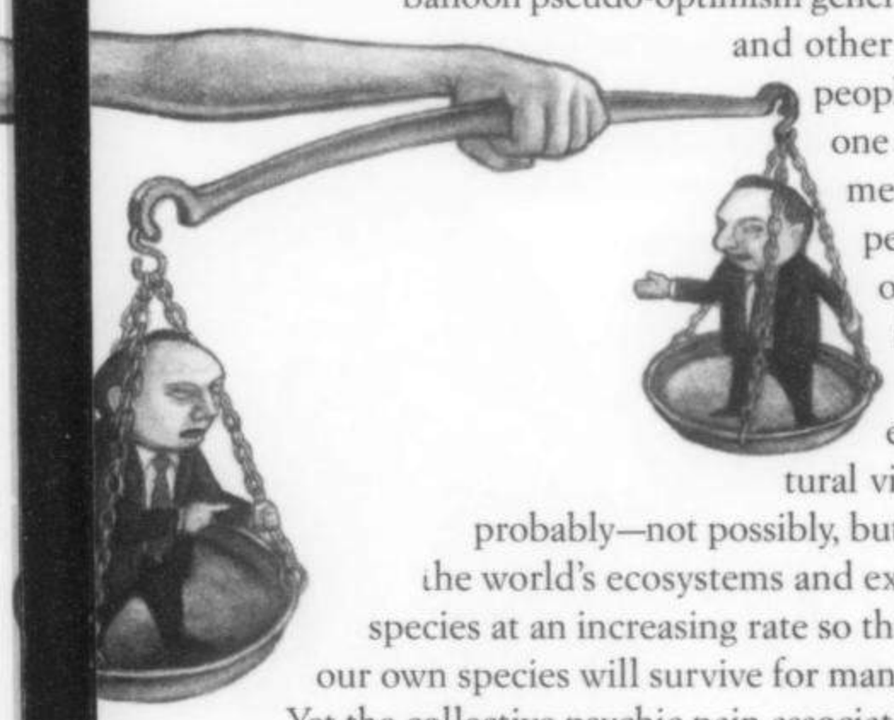


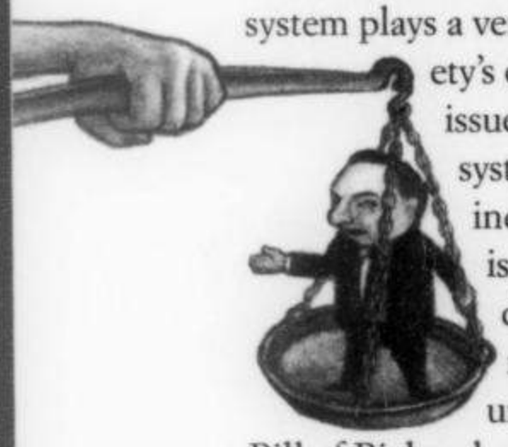
ILLUSTRATION BY RUSS ANDO

If I am exaggerating, I'm exaggerating for effect. Of course we care for our loved ones, and life continues to have its positive aspects, even its joys. But what I'm saying is essentially true.

This "system" of spiritual immiseration is maintained by routinized organizations of experience that we call cultural institutions—the family, schools, corporations, professions, the entertainment and sports industries, and so on. These institutions all have positive aspects that form our very cultural and personal identities—they are conduits of social connection, but in spite of their positive aspects they are overloaded by negative co-efficients of adversity. They tie us together and at the same time profoundly alienate us from each other. They bottle up our longing for mutual affirmation and authentic social connection at the same time that they provide us with the socially legitimate channels for experiencing what affirmation and connection there is.

In order to overcome the spiritual crisis that I have briefly described, we must transform our cultural institutions—we must infuse them with spirit, with the spirit of community expressive of our longing for empathy, trust, connection, solidarity, recognition, and meaning. And we must reshape the channeling process that organizes our social experience within these institutions so as to gain traction for, and foster the development of, this spiritual foundation. It won't do any good to either seize State power or replace capitalism with socialism or pass campaign finance reform or engage in any other external manipulation of the cultural landscape—because what is needed is a healing of an internal distortion in the interspace of human relations, in the "between," as Martin Buber put it, where we connect through reciprocal recognition with the life-force, with the force for Good in the universe itself.

Among the most important of the cultural institutions that we must transform is what we call the legal system,

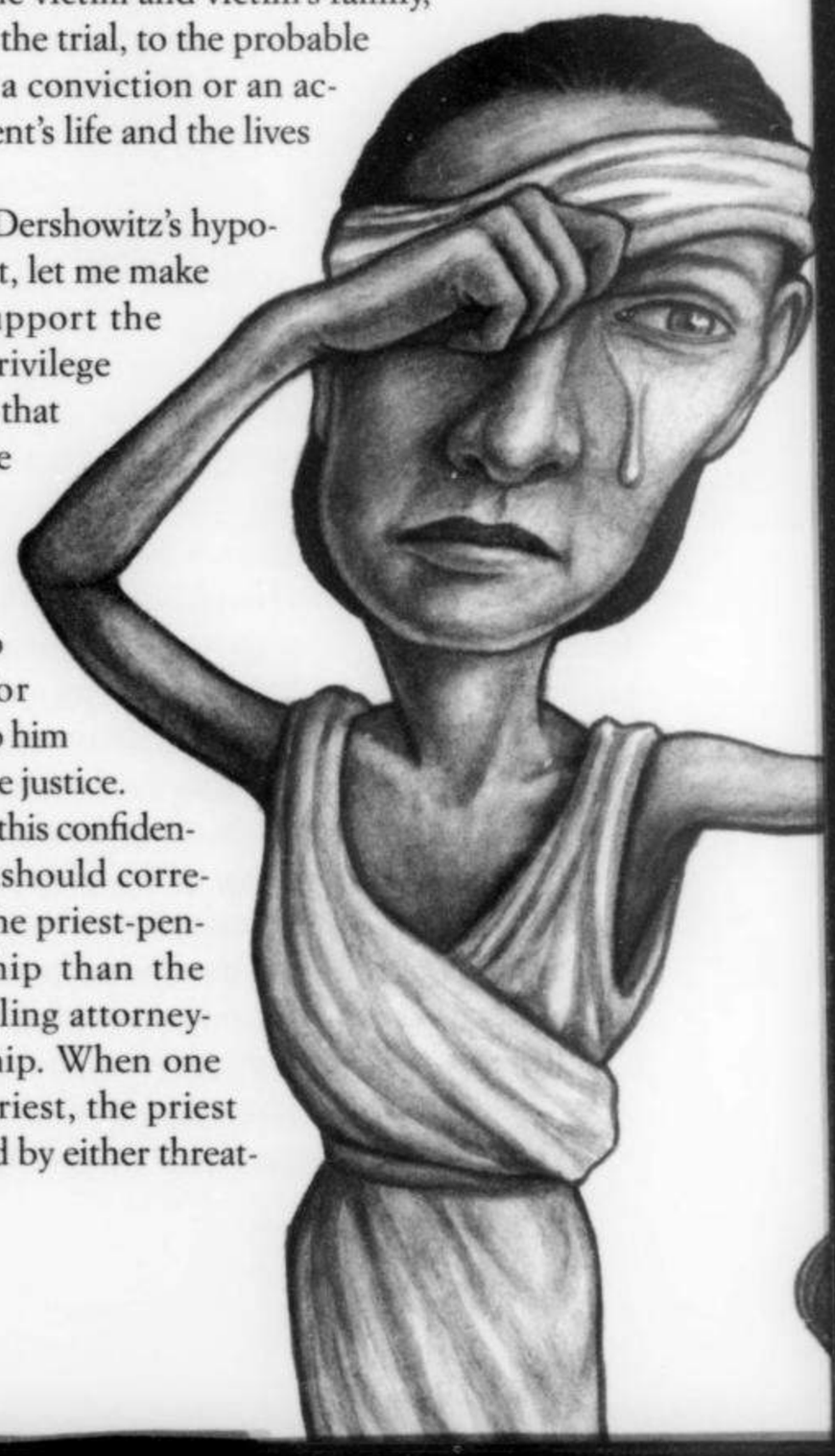


although it is not really a "system" but a culture masquerading as a system in order to make it appear as a fixed thing that can't be changed. As the single most important public arena for addressing the distortions and breakdowns in human relations that reveal themselves in our everyday life, the legal system plays a very important role in establishing our society's ethical culture. As I emphasized in the last issue where this debate began, the current legal system is obsessed with protecting the isolated individual from State power and from other isolated individuals or institutions. Two hundred years ago, it was a stunning achievement to invent and instill a set of cultural understandings like those contained in the Bill of Rights that confirmed the sanctity of individual existence—of conscience, of family and home life, of the autonomy and presumed innocence of the individual mind—against the many forms of group coercion that had desecrated and abused the individual for thousands of years up to that time. But in our time, this very achievement has become an important source of our spiritual crisis. In the name of protecting the individual, we have created a legal culture that fosters mistrust and mutual hostility and that blocks our ability to heal the cultural distortions that imprison our longing to reach each other, to understand and recognize each other, and to help each other up (not out, but up). And within this legal culture, we have created lawyers who have been taught to win at any cost (the duty of "zealous representation"), to manipulate rules to serve their clients' ends while being indifferent to the moral consequences of those ends (the Bar Exam requires you to "argue both sides" as if legal reasoning were an amoral skill), and perhaps most important, to see themselves as professional appendages to a "system" that is external to them and absolves them of moral responsibility for the practical and spiritual consequences of their own actions. If you collude with your client's lying in a murder case or if you win a clever procedural motion that allows your client to continue to pollute lakes and streams, it is the "legal system" and not you who bears responsibility for the consequences. You are just following orders, which in this case corresponds to the current ethics of the profession.

My differences with you, Mr. Dershowitz, are reflected in the first phrase of the set of questions you pose to me. You say, "Assume we are in a system which continues to have the exclusionary rule. . .," referring to the current practice of excluding evidence illegally seized by the police. But I do not perceive the legal arena as a fixed external "system" to which I am a technical appendage, but as a spiritual and moral culture which I help to create and shape. If I were to try to respond to you within your framework, you'd have me in a box—how could I not apply the exclusionary rule if that is my predetermined role as defense counsel within "the system"? With all respect, it is this kind of "rigorous" Socratic questioning by their professors that leads each new generation of law students to become amoral technicians rather than spiritual and moral agents. They make the law review by giving correct answers to leading questions.

From my point of view, the question you pose leads in quite a different direction. In seeing the law as a very important moral and spiritual culture rather than a system, I think it becomes the responsibility of all of us engaged in it to either affirm the hyperindividualism and social alienation that the current culture produces and reproduces, or to challenge those values by our own cultural interventions. If you believe as I do that it is a moral imperative to foster a process of empathic healing in resolving conflict in order to save the planet and realize the longing for mutual recognition immanent in the human soul, then the "role of the lawyer" is to contest the prevailing culture while working within it. This is why I described the politics-of-meaning view of the lawyer as "a 'calling,' a spiritual and activist pursuit aimed at healing the ingrained distortions in human interaction that disable us from repairing our communal fabric."

In the last issue I argued on this basis that criminal defense lawyers should no longer routinely participate—citing the presumption of innocence and the State's obligation to prove its case—in justifying false denials of responsibility by clients who commit violent and cruel acts. If they are going to publicly represent such clients as practitioners of justice, they should manifest a compassionate moral presence and exercise compassionate moral judgment in every phase of the representation—from the way they relate to their client and the victim and victim's family, to the conduct of the trial, to the probable consequences of a conviction or an acquittal for the client's life and the lives of others.



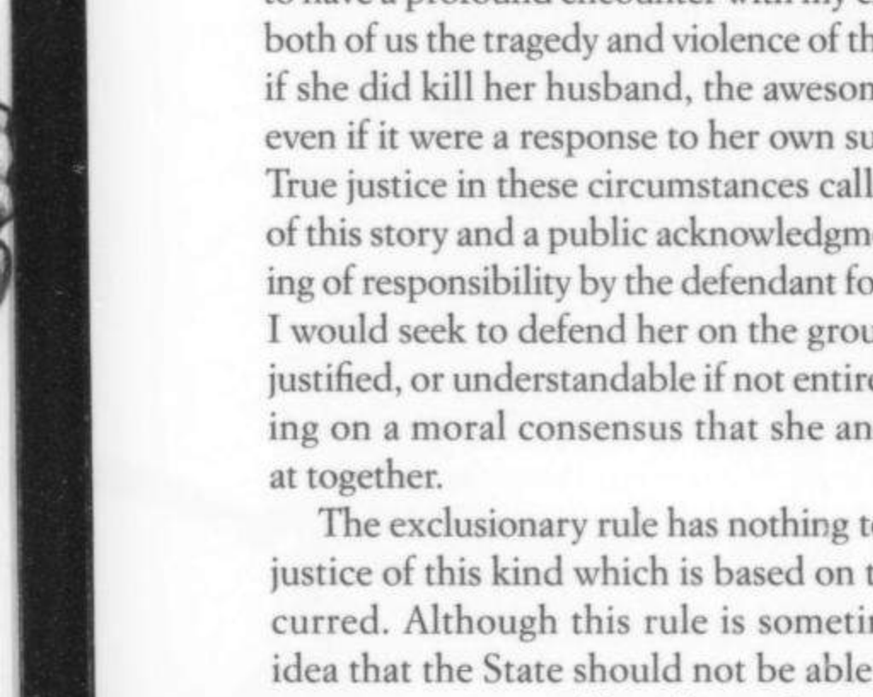
Consider Mr. Dershowitz's hypothetical case. First, let me make it clear that I support the attorney-client privilege because it is right that every person have a confidant familiar with the complexity of legal culture who can advocate for him or her to help him or her receive true justice. But the nature of this confidential relationship should correspond more to the priest-penitent relationship than the currently prevailing attorney-client relationship. When one confesses to a priest, the priest does not respond by either threat-

ening to turn you in or promising to try to get you off. He or she offers a moral and spiritual engagement that seeks to help you heal yourself through absolution and makes him- or herself available to assist in that process.

The use of the prevailing attorney-client relationship by criminal defense lawyers is often morally obscene. Since the ethical rules governing lawyers constrain the type of defense the lawyer can put on when he or she knows his or her client will perjure him or herself, all criminal defense lawyers are taught from the first year of law school on to subtly or openly discourage their clients from acknowledging their own guilt. They are taught to want to learn only enough to mount the best defense in light of the State's evidence or to negotiate the best plea bargain. Since as many as 90 percent of a defense lawyer's clients are guilty, this means that the practice of justice is often directly correlated to collusion with lying. This inevitably fosters a moral cynicism that may already deeply affect the client's being and, from my experience, also gradually has a spiritually deadening effect on the lawyer.

Therefore, the first thing I would want to know if I were representing a battered woman charged with killing her husband is not whether incriminating evidence seized by the police could be kept out of evidence by use of the exclusionary rule, but whether she actually committed the killing. Certainly, if I believed she did kill her husband, I would only be reinforcing the amoral individualism of the existing legal culture if my first act were to seek to exclude the evidence that formed the basis of my belief. Instead, I would seek to have a profound encounter with my client that revealed to both of us the tragedy and violence of their relationship and, if she did kill her husband, the awesome nature of that act even if it were a response to her own suffering at his hands. True justice in these circumstances calls for a public telling of this story and a public acknowledgment and a public taking of responsibility by the defendant for what she did. Then I would seek to defend her on the grounds that her act was justified, or understandable if not entirely justified, depending on a moral consensus that she and I sought to arrive at together.

The exclusionary rule has nothing to do with restorative justice of this kind which is based on the truth of what occurred. Although this rule is sometimes justified by the idea that the State should not be able to convict someone with evidence that is "tainted" because of how it was obtained, the rule is primarily intended to discourage police from raiding the homes of innocent people without a warrant by prohibiting the use of even incriminating evidence seized in this manner. In the good society toward which we are aiming, in which only conduct which ought to be criminalized were criminalized and in which police were no longer the inheritors of a paramilitary and patriarchal history, the exclusionary rule would make little sense because it seeks to correct one injustice—improper police conduct—by arguably facilitating another—restricting access to the truth of an entirely different event. In Mr. Dershowitz's hypothetical case, its use would serve to deny the client the opportunity to be vindicated for what she actually did by pretending that she did not do it.



However, we do not yet live in the good society toward which we are aiming, and this brings me to an essential point about the nature of the spiritual struggle within existing legal culture that I am arguing for. The point is raised very powerfully by the presence of the death penalty in Mr. Dershowitz's hypothetical. It is also raised by the reality of the influence of class and race on crime, by the inhumanity of the present prison system, by the irrational criminalization and sentencing practices associated with drugs, and many other structural injustices that distort the cultural reality of the criminal law.

That point is that the effort to transform legal practice into a spiritual and activist calling, to see it as an important means of healing the misrecognition of one another underlying so much social conflict, is a morally and politically complex one. At the political level, it requires building a movement of lawyers who reject the spiritual insensitivity of current legal processes like the adversary system itself and who make their presence felt in organizations like the American and State Bar Associations and the American Association of Law Schools. At the moral level, it requires making difficult decisions all the time that take account of the realities of the existing system—a process that could well lead a lawyer and a client facing the death penalty, like the battered woman in Mr. Dershowitz's case, to use the exclusionary rule to keep out evidence of a killing the client did in fact commit. By the same token, if the parties were reversed and the evidence led the lawyer to believe that the batterer had probably killed his wife—which may have been true in the O.J. Simpson case—the moral context may call upon the lawyer to urge his client to acknowledge his act and the suffering it has caused, while seeking some mitigation of the sentence based on compassion for the cultural brutality the defendant himself has suffered (I thought the Simpson case cried out for some discussion of the story of a black man raised in the projects of San Francisco who made it in white society by adopting what the writer Franz Fanon called a white mask, and the effect of this history, if any, on his experience of rejection by his wife). In still a third complex circumstance, if the lawyer has genuine doubt about his client's responsibility for the murder, but knows he was a batterer, I think he should condition his willingness to represent the client on the murder charge on the client's willingness to face the causes of his battering behav-

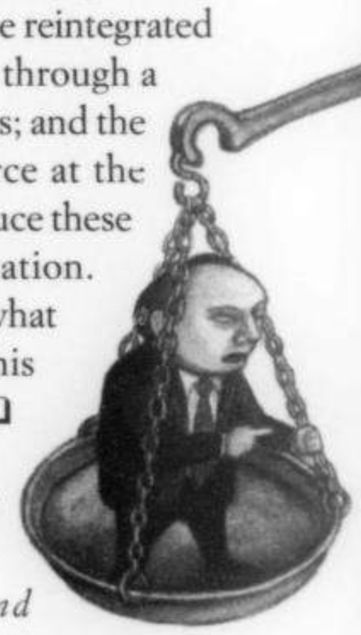
ior and perhaps apologize to his victims that are still alive. Any lawyer who simply uses the exclusionary rule to gain an acquittal of a known batterer of women who may have brutally murdered his wife—without assuming serious moral responsibility for ameliorating the suffering of the client's past and future victims—is in my opinion behaving unethically because he is denying responsibility for the effects of his own acts as a lawyer. And in the larger sense, his cultural intervention will have contributed to the notion that we are all disconnected individuals without responsibility for each other's fate—the very means by which the existing legal culture contributes to the spiritual crisis of the larger society. To answer your fourth question, it is precisely the problem with the existing legal profession that such conduct is considered ethical and even compulsory. Fortunately, no lawyer is compelled to take a case with important moral consequences if he or she knows existing cultural constraints will force him or her to behave in an immoral manner.

And yet I must also acknowledge the moral complexity of Mr. Dershowitz's own position in light of his worthy statement in the last issue of TIKKUN that he never turns down a capital case. If he does not believe that pressing his client to acknowledge responsibility and seek mitigation in sentencing based on his social and cultural history will succeed, the lawyer may have to support a plea of not guilty and use all available defenses to save his client's life. My point is that even in this circumstance, the lawyer must to the best of his or her ability assume responsibilty for the moral consequences of the acquittal. Confront the client with his battering. Expect reciprocity for your defense of him. Consider what is likely to happen to others if he is freed and try to influence what happens, perhaps by consulting with the client's friends and family (to the extent consistent with the attorney-client privilege). Insist that he seek spiritual and psychological counseling and honestly face his terrible sin.

But however morally complex and sometimes contradictory the lawyer's position is, the point is that the legal profession must transform its very conception of what it means to "represent" someone before a court of justice, which is to say before God (whether you believe in God or not), if the profession is to contribute to healing the world rather than continuing to contribute to harming it. Justice is a spiritual and moral healing of a distortion in human relationships: it can only occur if "representation" means seeking to manifest the client's presence as a spiritual and moral being engaged in meaningful and morally consequential relationships with others, rather than as the isolated and abstract rights-bearing individual that is the hallmark of existing legal culture. This kind of representation requires lawyers themselves to be present to their clients as moral beings rather than as technical "experts in the law" and to develop the capacity for moral empathy required to link each particular case, each "representation," to the creation of a less alienated and more spiritually connected world.

I am certainly not saying that responsibility for this transformation falls uniquely upon criminal defense lawyers, and I fully recognize that there are many, many defense lawyers like Patience Milrod *(see Letters, page 2)* who are struggling to embody this kind of caring, ethically committed presence in the often Kafka-esque settings of the lower-level criminal courts throughout the country. I most certainly do not think that Ms. Milrod and the many courageous lawyers like her should "turn in their swords and shields" and sacrifice their clients to the ferociously punitive sentencing schemes and the hateful dehumanization that she so eloquently describes. By all means, Ms. Milrod, use all your legal and human skills to defend your clients' rights and humanity. I have nothing but admiration for you, and I identify with you.

But if you want the situation to change, I think you need to join those of us who are in revolt against the moral and spiritual bankruptcy of the entire legal culture that is enveloping you. That culture is partly constituted by the narrow, individualistic rights-based model that you are struggling to use for good purposes but that nonetheless both mirrors and helps to create the spiritual fragmentation—the awesome global disconnect—of the entire society. It is this very environment that generates the zeal for retribution and the public thirst for blood that you speak of in your legal work, and changing that environment requires that we build a movement which rejects the cynical paranoia that characterizes our adversary process and affirms the possibility of a legal culture founded on empathy, compassion, and the capacity to actually see each other in our common humanity. This may take a long time, and its success will depend upon the ability of movements like the Politics of Meaning to introduce a whole new paradigm of spiritual politics into the larger culture. But there are already small steps that suggest the effort is far from impossible—the transformative mediation movement; the efforts of visionary prosecutors like Ronnie Earle, District Attorney of Austin, Texas, who has helped create community justice courts that provide the opportunity for non-violent offenders to be reintegrated into their communities prior to arraignment through a redemptive process of apology and forgiveness; and the beginning efforts of our own legal task force at the Foundation for Ethics and Meaning to introduce these ideas into Bar Associations and legal education. Against us, we have what is; in favor, we have what everyone is longing for, however invisible this longing sometimes appears to be. ❑



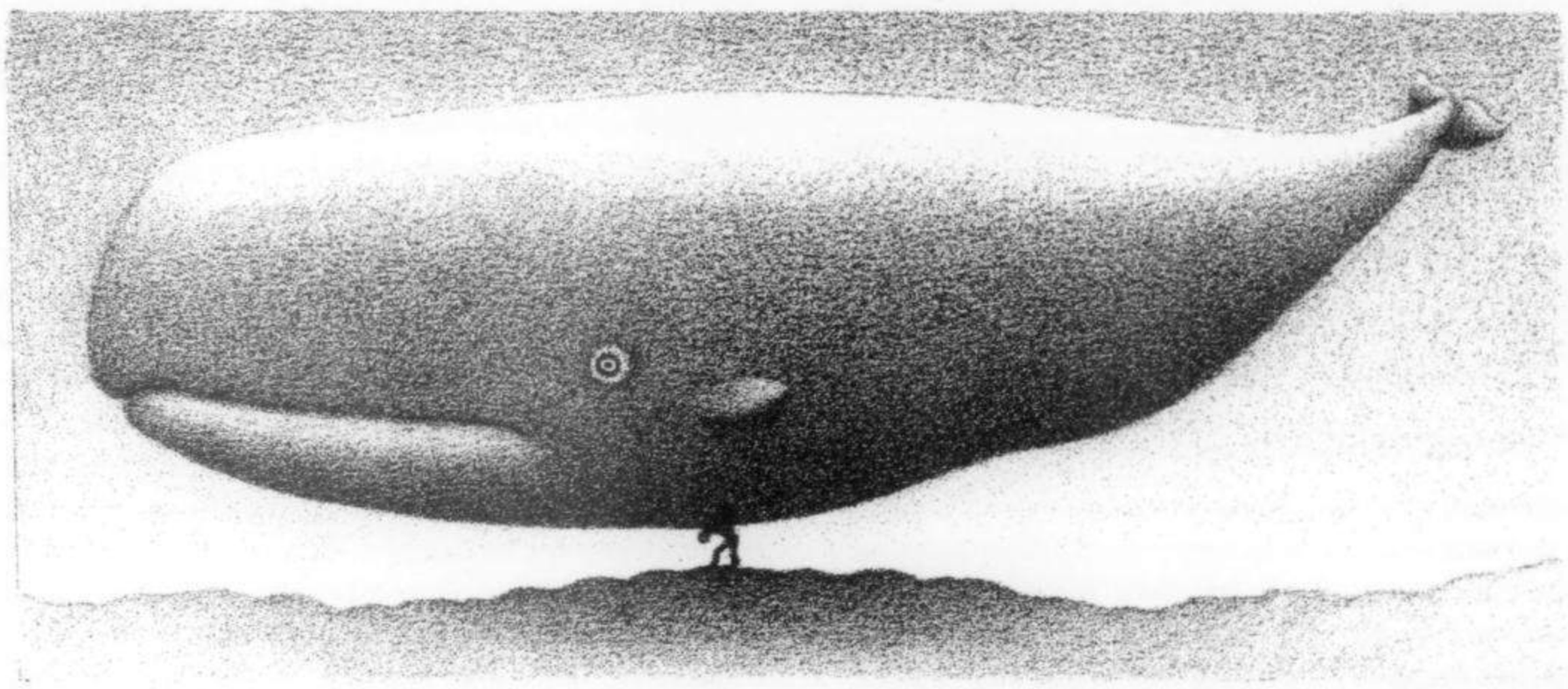
(To learn how to become part of the Politics of Meaning Legal Task Force, contact Christy Croxall at the Foundation for Ethics and Meaning, 26 Fell St., San Francisco, CA 94102 or at meaning@ncgate.newcollege.edu)

A Visit to the Whaling Museum

A Meditation on Whales, Jews, and Politics

Ross London

There is a fine old whaling museum in New Bedford, Massachusetts not far from where my brother lives. I had visited it about twelve years before and was fascinated by its memorabilia of the whaling industry which flourished in New Bedford during the early days of the 19th century. There were colorful paintings of whaling scenes, models of whaling ships (including an enormous scale model that you could climb aboard), and dozens of ingenious tools for hunting, skinning, and rendering oil from the whales. Then of course there were mementos of the whales themselves—intricately carved scrimshaw teeth and bone, corset stays from baleen, inlaid sewing boxes of whale bone—even fancy whalebone toothpicks. I remember spending hours entranced by these exhibits, imagining the courage of the whaling men who sailed as far as Alaska in search of these powerful and elusive giants.



I returned last year to share the wonders of the whaling museum with my ten-year-old son. This time it was very different.

This time the whales, who previously seemed little more than brute forces of nature now looked shockingly vulnerable. It was the whale hunters who now seemed brutal and unaccountably remorseless for the havoc they inflicted on these innocents. The implements of their trade now seemed barbaric—the sharpened harpoons, the long blades, the enormous pots that melted down body fat into commercial oil. The descriptions of the hunt, the kill, and the butchery now seemed pointlessly cruel. Worse yet was the horrifying spectacle of the whale skeletons—defleshed, dried, sawed, carved, incised—proudly displayed in neat cabinets. I could not help but imagine a Nazi museum of Jewish artifacts, the hordes of smiling German families that came to see the mementos neatly on display of an extinct race and how the battle against the Jews was heroically fought and won.

And yet, not twelve years earlier, I had been one of these smiling faces filing through the whaling museum—staring with fond appreciation at the skill of those who slaughtered the whales. I was in fact staring across an abyss of time to another consciousness; but it was not a stranger I was seeing. I was seeing myself.

It was not as if twelve years ago I was oblivious to the fact that whales are intelligent beings, capable of thought, feeling, and very likely, consciousness. It was that I, along with just about everyone else of my generation, had come of age at a time when the slaughter of whales was somehow "okay," and that whatever primal revulsion we may initially have had at their slaughter in our youth could be laughed off as just a matter of infantile incomprehension that would be eventually outgrown.

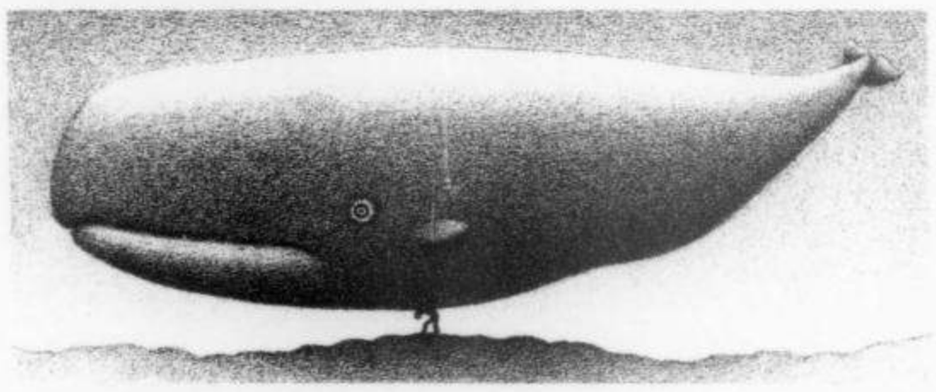
ILLUSTRATIONS BY AMY HILL

Ross London has contributed to numerous legal journals and news publications on crime, civil rights and public policy. Prior to his current career as a Juvenile Court Official and Municipal Court judge, he worked as a Peace Corps volunteer in India.

In just this way, each of us comes to accept the mistreatment of others as normal. We come to accept their suffering as a mere fact of life. We learn to make peace with evil. And this is not because we ourselves are evil or in any way desire a world of misery. It is because we humans have the unique gift of adaptability. This is our most precious inheritance—and it is our curse.

Human beings are fabulous survivors. Our bodies are hairless and weak, our teeth and nails are pitifully defenseless. Our senses are unremarkable and we are prone to any number of diseases. Alone and untutored, we cannot survive anywhere for very long. And yet we survive everywhere—in every climate, at every altitude. We refashion the world to suit our needs. We orchestrate the birth and death of living beings for the express purpose of consuming them. We read each other's minds by the medium of organized sound we call language. We transcend the natural world—and it all seems "second nature" to us because of the power of our minds to readily adapt to any new phenomenon. Our culture continually creates a new reality which surprises, intrigues, puzzles, upsets, excites and confounds us at first, but which always ends up being experienced as perfectly normal.

The human mind is so designed that it cannot remain shocked by any occurrence for very long. A new experience becomes, in time, routine. A new word loses its strangeness and becomes an effortless part of our working vocabulary.



A new thought no longer startles us but becomes a transparent instrument for the discovery of yet newer thoughts. We ceaselessly convert the shock of the new into "conventional wisdom." We accommodate ourselves to every circumstance—even the most horrific experiences in time become accepted as the way of the world.

How could the Holocaust have happened? How could ordinary men and women in Germany, Austria, Poland, Russia, France, Belgium, Holland and elsewhere, how could they have come to accept the degradation, disenfranchisement, and finally, the systematic extermination of their Jewish neighbors? Although in the early stages many people were disgusted by the treatment of Jews, in the end the "conventional wisdom" among these people—and among many Americans as well—was that it was simply an unfortunate fact of life. The crazy, weird rumors of Jews being rounded up downtown turned out to be true. The nightmarish spectacle of Jewish friends, classmates, and physicians, herded into columns and marched down the street at gunpoint became, soon enough, merely an unpleasant part of the urban landscape.

To many others, perhaps to most, the elimination of Jews was perceived as a matter of civic duty. The conventional wisdom among the vast multitude of Europeans for centuries was that Jews were not only essentially different from everyone else but, by their very existence, were an affront to Christian civilization and values. If the Jews were correct in rejecting the divinity of Jesus, early Christian theologians reasoned, then Christianity must be nothing but a pathetic sham. But if Christianity is correct, if God brought forth Jesus into this world as mankind's salvation, then the Jews are willful adversaries to God's plan on earth. This was the "Jewish Problem" for Christian nations—a problem for which medieval Europe provided an unbroken series of creative solutions. Segregation, degradation, persecution, and expulsion of Jews became standard, unquestioned features of the dominant culture.

This medieval mindset was not obliterated by the scientism of modern times. If anything, the irreconcilability of the "Jewish Problem" became finalized by the rise of biological rather than theological explanations for human differences. The perversity of Jews in willfully rejecting Jesus was now understood to be an immutable feature of their physical being. The hope advanced by 19th century social reformers of settling the "Jewish Problem" through education and assimilation became regarded as a liberal fantasy, and indeed, as a pretext for fraud perpetrated by an endlessly cunning adversary.

How did the Holocaust happen? It happened because the conventional wisdom of an entire generation of Germans was that Jewish life, like certain microbial life, was antithetical to the health of their society. The only logical and effective solution to the "Jewish Problem" was elimination—a solution that was openly discussed by Europeans long before Hitler. The unpleasantness of the mechanisms of elimination affected each member of the majority population differently. Those Germans with delicate sensibilities were not at all prompted to protest or rebel but, instead, were content to assign the more unpleasant tasks to those who had the stomach for it. Others found the enterprise of rooting out, torturing, and killing these "Jewish devils" to be great sport. No Jew—no matter how well disguised as a sobbing grandmother, or pleading teenager—could pull the wool over their eyes!

If you or I had come across a German mistreating a Jew, in even a minor matter, what arguments would we have used to get him or her to stop? What evidence would have convinced them that these people whom they mistreat are not devils but in fact are innocent human beings? It was not the objective facts that set the groundwork for the Holocaust; it was the mental landscape of the *culture*: the culminating achievement of each generation.

What condemned the European Jews was the *idea* of "the Jew." Any Jew today who doubts the power of ideas

must contemplate this.

How could it have happened? The answer to this question lies in the fact that it *did* happen—and it happened in front of our eyes. It happened all over Europe. It happened throughout history. It happened only yesterday in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and a score of other countries. It happens not because people are evil—but because people are malleable. Given the right upbringing, a lifelong immersion in a profoundly anti-Semitic culture—the right *circumstances*—I myself, this bundle of genes and chemicals, would have pulled the trigger killing a Jewish girl at the edge of a mass grave. And so would you—given the right circumstances. It was not a host of evil monsters who pulled those triggers all over Europe and who continue to do so today all over the world: it was our own kind.

And it was not a group of cowardly sheep who dug out their graves, stripped, and waited to be shot. It was people who had come to accept the horror that was being visited upon them and their loved ones as an unfortunate fact of life too. Look at their pictures. They were already numb—there was no rage—they just wanted it to be over.

We get used to things. We're good at it.

"Let's go," I told my son as I ushered him out the door of the whaling museum. "Let's go home."

It was easy to walk out of a museum—and leave behind another world. But what of the world I was returning to? What cruelties and injustices had I come to accept as a mere "fact of life"? And, more importantly, what was I doing about it?

I thought about the whales. During those twelve years between visits to the whaling museum, my consciousness of the suffering of whales was truly raised—not by my own efforts, but by the efforts of people who communicated a new understanding to me. Truthfully, I was not overly receptive at first. In fact, the idea of a whale's "right to life" struck me as mildly ridiculous (perhaps in the same way we now react to those who protect the lives of crabs and lobsters).

When did it happen that this feeling of oddity disappeared? There was no single moment of realization—no concession to a winning argument. But somehow I, along with a critical mass of people, made the transition to a new "take" on whales. The immense efforts of those who lectured and wrote, who organized and demonstrated and lobbied, who *created*, who *communicated*—these efforts had finally achieved the remarkable goal of *changing my mind*. In the same way, within my own lifetime, men have come to understand that the assignment of an inferior status to women is not only conceptually wrong, but self-evidently and viscerally wrong. This transformation did not happen by itself. It was the result of ceaseless efforts by many people—in the face of strong opposition, derision and, not least of all, apathy—to dislodge the almost universally held conviction that male dominance is an inherent characteristic of our species.

There is nothing inevitable about this process of transformation. It is not as if people are suddenly receptive to certain ideas that are somehow "in the air." At any given time, we have available to us a multitude of compelling ideas, each competing for our attention. Which one gains prominence is less a matter of the inherent logic or plausibility of an idea so much as the result of powerful social forces of legitimization.

In the same way, there was nothing inevitable about the Holocaust. It did not have to happen. It would not have happened if the decent people of Germany and throughout the so-called civilized world had not looked the other way. But it did happen—this colossal failure of the world's conscience. As many times as we replay the movie, we come agonizingly to the same last scene: the unspeakable nightmare from which millions of our Jewish family never awoke.

"Never again," we cry out. But what do we mean when we say those words? When we vow "never again" we should not delude ourselves into thinking that armed resistance will be sufficient to prevent another Holocaust. When we say "never again" we should not imagine that even the sovereign nation of Israel will protect the world's Jews in time of crisis. Israel, to be sure, must remain fearsomely powerful in its region to discourage its adversaries, but we must recognize that Israel will continue to exist down through the generations only as long as it retains its hold on the conscience of the world's superpowers.



No, when we say "never again" we pledge never again to be passive in the face of evil by assuming "this too shall pass." Knowing full well that people ultimately conform themselves to their social reality—whether exalted or debased—we have a spiritual, moral and existential duty to bring to fruition our vision of a just world. If good people abdicate that role, there are any number of psychopaths who would not hesitate to impose their vision of the world upon us.

When we say "never again" we say that never again will we forsake our mission to work for justice and tolerance in the world. Never again will we forsake our role of participating in the affairs of this world with integrity and commitment. Never again will we justify our reluctance to confront hate-mongers by invoking their right to free speech—when it is given to us to exercise our *own* right of free speech to condemn them and shame them with the truth. Never again will we despair at God's inaction, when it is given to us to apply our talents and energies to the hard and beautiful

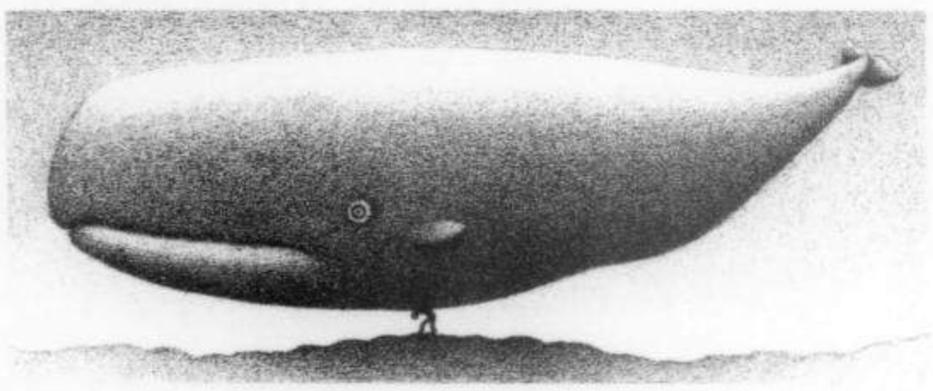
struggles at hand. And, sadly, never again will we assume the inevitability of human progress toward enlightenment. Enlightenment, we have come to know, is a fire that requires constant tending.

If it means anything to be a Jew, it means that we have a special mission to tend that fire. Our holy covenant is to become a "light unto nations" (Isaiah 49:6), to interject into the Hobbesian world of egotistical striving an equally powerful yearning for justice: to actively and passionately contribute to the shaping of a peaceful and just human society. Our ultimate protection as a perpetual minority is in the creation of a world in which the equal rights of minorities is understood to be an obvious component of justice. A world which can still recognize the voice of its conscience. If it means anything for the Jews to have been "chosen," it is to enable the world to hear that voice.

The Holocaust has taught us not that people are evil; it has taught us what happens when good people fail to take responsibility to oppose ignorance and hatred at every turn. The Holocaust has taught us to take decisive action against evil at the earliest opportunity—before it has become entrenched and powerful, before it has become suicidal to oppose it, before it has become a "fact of life."

The Holocaust has taught us to become, in a word, *political*.

This is still not an easy notion for many Jews to accept.



We Jews have lived at the margins of history for so long and have, in our wanderings, so inured ourselves to the political power of the majority, that the sense of powerlessness became one of our defining characteristics. Time and again, we offered up our servitude in exchange for a bit of security. While there was some theological justification for this approach, the most compelling rationale for the political disengagement of Jews is that it worked exceedingly well for nearly 2000 years. We do not hear very much about the groups of armed and organized Jews who forcefully resisted pogroms—because they were crushed. The Jewish communities who managed to survive did so by enduring generations of humiliation and deprivation. They adapted well: their culture and communal psyche became by turns private, ironic, fatalistic, suspicious and other-worldly. Our survival, we understood, was dependent on the caprice of our masters. It was the best deal we could come up with: we stay quiet and meek and the Prince suffers us to live on his land.

The Holocaust changed all that. We came to understand that our passive obedience was regarded by our masters as cowardly, and that our marginal existence was perceived by the rest of the world as parasitic and ultimately expendable. In the agony of our dying, we vowed never again to fatalistically accept our role as pathetic victims: if the world could not stop itself from hating Jews, let them hate us because of our power, not because of our weakness. At the same time, we vowed to vigorously assert our humanity and our right to live—not by denying those rights to others, but by insisting on the universal recognition of those rights.

It has not been easy to maintain these ideals. It is harder still to work for them. In our country, in our world, it is no longer the Jew who suffers, and so the urgency for action and reform is blunted. But only at times such as these can evil be defeated without heroic measures. The Holocaust has taught us that, while many Jews and Gentiles acted with extraordinary courage, courage is the exception rather than the rule in human affairs. Courage, we know, is an extraordinary human virtue because it is so rare and so contrary to our instinct for self-preservation. And so, if action is ever to be taken against injustice, intolerance, and ignorance, it must be taken now, while there is still time—and not a future time when evil has become firmly rooted and when our opposition would unfairly jeopardize the security of our dependents. If action is to be taken it must be taken by us—not by someone else with more time, more money and more self-confidence. By *us*—together if possible, and alone if necessary.

The Holocaust has taught us never again to despise politics; but to embrace politics as the means by which our ideals find expression in the real world. The life of politics is not just about in-fighting and the clash of egos, it is the sum total of all the forces that bring about change—for good or for ill. And so, while politics can be and often is the means by which cruel and ignorant people determine the fate of a community, it is also the very means by which our culture—our mental landscape—can be diverted from the brutality and prejudice that exists in every human population, and can be pushed, persuaded, prodded, inspired and, ultimately, *led* into a worthy and honorable direction.

We drove away from the Whaling Museum as the winter sun was setting. I wondered if I would ever go back there again. And if I did, I wondered what it would look like to me. Would I look back on this day as an example of trendy squeamishness? Or, perhaps, as the stirring of a new awareness of our place in nature that is still evolving?

And would I have some part in bringing about that new awareness? Whatever awareness will take place is something that will result from processes already in motion, even as we sit here.

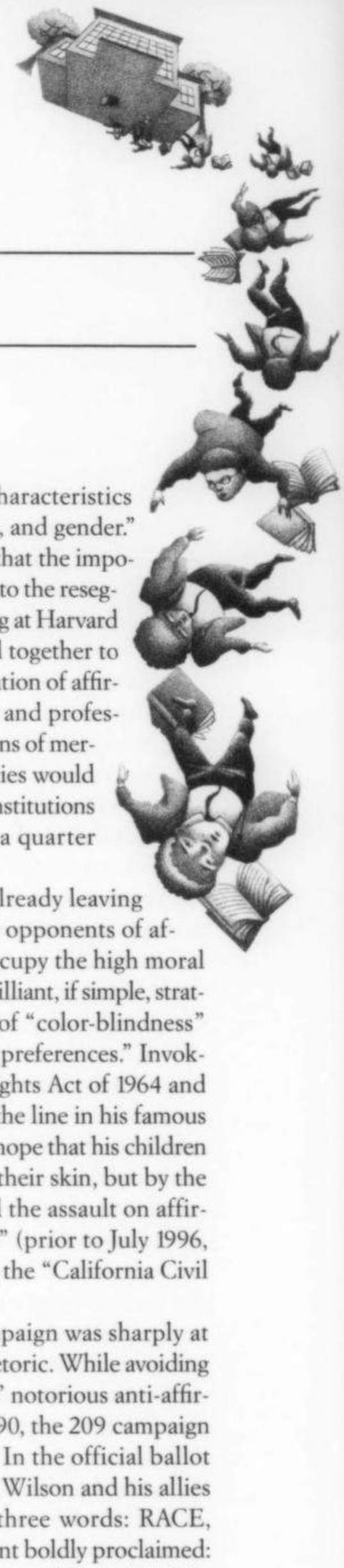
I pray that we invest ourselves into this process—this seamless river of unending transformation. I pray that we pour our good nature, our wisdom, and our energy into this process—for the sake of the dear little planet, for the sake of each other, and for the sake of our own souls. ❑

POLITICS

Reclaiming the High Ground

Can Affirmative Action Survive?

Jerome Karabel



Thanks to the University of California and the University of Texas, we now have our first glimpse of what a post-affirmative action America might look like. At the University of Texas Law School, in recent years the nation's leading supplier of minority lawyers, the number of African Americans in the entering class has plummeted from 21 last year to three this fall. At UC Berkeley's Boalt School of Law, the figures are even more startling: only 14 black students were admitted (compared to 75 last year), and not one plans to attend. Boalt will, however, have one entering African American this year—a student accepted last year who deferred admission. As Amy Wallace of the *Los Angeles Times* pointed out, this will leave Boalt with the same number of blacks in the entering class as the University of Mississippi in 1962.

The shocking figures from Boalt have produced an enormous public outcry. Ward Connerly, the chief sponsor of the 1995 Regental resolution that banned affirmative action at the University of California and the director of the campaign for Proposition 209, has apparently decided that the best defense is a good offense. The real blame, Connerly has charged, rests with Boalt's Dean, Herma Hill Kay. In an interview with National Public Radio, Connerly alleged that Dean Kay "has consciously been involved in trying to keep the numbers down." When challenged by a reporter about his accusation, however, Connerly admitted: "I do not have any proof."

Beneath the heated charges lies a fundamental issue: should a university pursue strictly "color-blind" policies in selecting students and, as Mr. Connerly has put it, "let the chips fall where they may." The current sentiment among most college and university presidents is that such a policy would be a grave mistake. The Association of American Universities, an organization consisting of 62 of North America's leading research institutions, issued a statement in April, reprinted in the *New York Times*, "On the Importance of Diversity in University Admissions." Insisting that "the evaluation of an individual applicant…cannot…be based on a narrow or mainly 'statistical' definition of merit," the statement reaffirmed their support for the continuation of admissions policies "that take many factors and characteristics into account—including ethnicity, race, and gender."

Researchers, too, have also warned that the imposition of "color-blind" policies will lead to the resegregation of higher education. In a meeting at Harvard University last April, scholars gathered together to consider the implications of the elimination of affirmative action for admission to college and professional school. Given prevailing definitions of merit, their conclusion was that these policies would lead to levels of segregation in leading institutions of higher education not seen in over a quarter of a century.

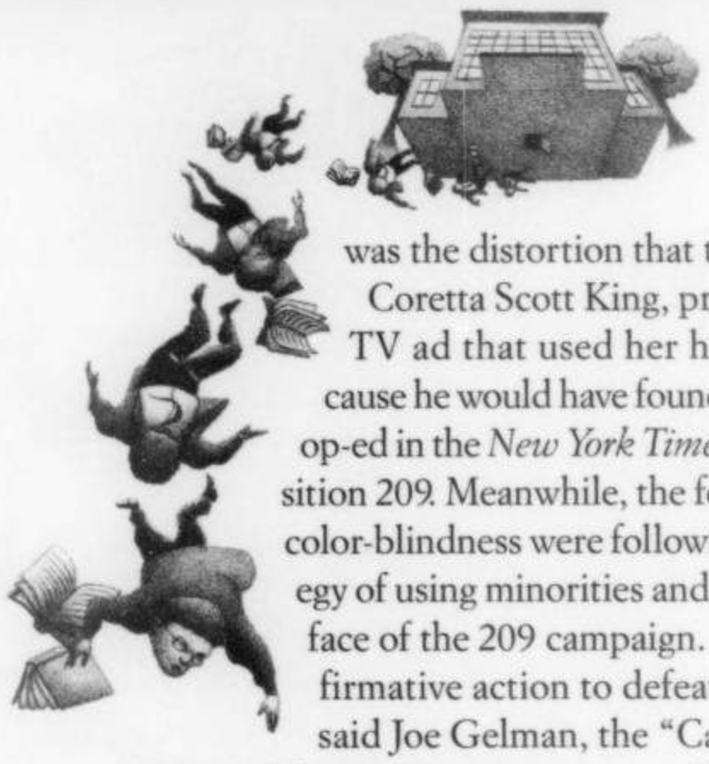
Though Mr. Connerly's policy is already leaving many casualties behind, he and other opponents of affirmative action have continued to occupy the high moral ground. They have done so through a brilliant, if simple, strategy—deploying the resonant rhetoric of "color-blindness" while consistently denouncing "racial preferences." Invoking the moral authority of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and of Martin Luther King, Jr. (especially the line in his famous 1963 speech in which he expressed his hope that his children would "not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character"), they call the assault on affirmative action a "civil rights initiative" (prior to July 1996, Proposition 209 was widely known as the "California Civil Rights Initiative").

But the reality of the pro-209 campaign was sharply at variance with its soaring civil rights rhetoric. While avoiding tactics as overtly racist as Jesse Helms' notorious anti-affirmative action "white hands" ad of 1990, the 209 campaign was not above playing the race card. In the official ballot argument on behalf of 209, Governor Wilson and his allies capitalized three words—and only three words: RACE, RACE, and RACE. The ballot statement boldly proclaimed: "Today, students are being rejected from public universities because of their RACE. Job applicants are turned away because their RACE does not meet some 'goal' or 'timetable.'"

As the campaign progressed, the pro-209 forces continued to invoke the name of Martin Luther King, Jr., despite being well aware that he had been a supporter of what they call "preferences." ("Giving a man his due," King wrote, "may often mean giving him special treatment.") So flagrant

ILLUSTRATION BY AMY HILL

Jerome Karabel is Professor of Sociology at the University of California at Berkeley. He has written widely on higher education and social inequality.



was the distortion that the normally reticent Coretta Scott King, provoked by a pro-209 TV ad that used her husband's words in a cause he would have found abhorrent, wrote an op-ed in the *New York Times* denouncing Proposition 209. Meanwhile, the fervent proponents of color-blindness were following a calculated strategy of using minorities and women as the public face of the 209 campaign. "It was like using affirmative action to defeat affirmative action," said Joe Gelman, the "California Civil Rights Initiative's" campaign manager until fall 1995. "We were being pretty cynical, I have to admit."

Though 209's authors, academics Tom Wood and Glynn Custred, would have preferred that the movement to eliminate affirmative action be non-partisan, the reality was—and remains—that the intellectual and financial support that has sustained it comes primarily from the right wing of the Republican Party. Intellectually, the *National Review* circle offered the CCRI indispensable early support; indeed, the first two intellectuals to write on behalf of it were its former publisher, William Rusher, and its editor, William F. Buckley, Jr. (Patrick Buchanan was the third). Mr. Buckley's January 1994 article in support of CCRI, in which he invoked the Civil Rights Act of 1964, was particularly ironic; during the time it was actually before Congress he bitterly opposed it as an invasion of "states' rights." Indeed, just before the 1964 Civil Rights Act became law, Mr. Buckley took the occasion to denounce the Supreme Court's 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision integrating the schools as well as Dr. King himself.

Several years earlier, in 1957, Mr. Buckley had made his opposition to integration even more explicit. "The central question that emerges," he argued, "is whether the white community in the South is entitled to take such measures as are necessary to prevail, politically, and culturally, in areas in which it does not predominate numerically. The sobering answer is Yes—the white community is so entitled because, for the time being, it is the advanced race…The question, as far as the white community is concerned, is whether the claims of civilization supersede those of universal suffrage…*National Review* believes that the South's premises are correct."

While the explicit defense of white privilege is no longer in fashion among respectable right-wingers, Mr. Connerly has turned to ultra-conservatives in his quest to propel the anti-affirmative action movement onto the national stage. The centerpiece of his effort, whose founding was purposefully announced on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday, is an entity he is calling the American Civil Rights Institute. Among its leading "founders and advisors," according to the *New York Times*, are Clint Bolick, director of litigation at the Institute for Justice and originator of the racially charged description of Lani Guinier as a "quota queen"; Grover Norquist, president of Americans for Tax Reform and a key architect of the "Gingrich Revolution"; and Thomas L. Rhodes, co-founder of the Project for a Republican Future and current president of the *National Review*.

Yet if both the history and the recent campaign activities of those leading the movement to eliminate affirmative action have forfeited their claim to the moral high ground, this does not mean that defenders of affirmative action have succeeded in occupying it. Far too often, proponents of affirmative action have staked their claims to the specific interests of minorities and women rather than in terms of the larger public good. When affirmative action first came into being it did so as part of a larger movement expressing a coherent moral vision of a better America. Such a vision is now lacking not only in the civil rights movement, but within the larger progressive community within which it has been historically located. Instead, to much of the public, it seems that civil rights and women's groups are themselves "special interests" rather than defenders of the common weal.

If advocates of affirmative action are to regain the moral high ground, they must do so by appealing not to group interest but to such universal values as inclusion, community, and equality of opportunity. This appeal, in turn, must be linked to a larger moral vision of social and racial justice. If affirmative action is to survive, its defenders must explain, simply and forcefully, how the nation as a whole will be diminished by its elimination.

This will not be an easy task. But a defense of affirmative action is possible if civil rights advocates start to rely less on the results of dry statistical studies and more on the stories of individual human beings. Supporters of affirmative action would also do well to avoid rhetoric that pits white women and people of color against white men. Such rhetoric has not proved convincing to white women, over half of whom voted for 209. Moreover, it implies that affirmative action is a zero-sum policy whose gains are purchased at the expense of Caucasian males (who comprise about 40 percent of the electorate). A more promising strategy would be to emphasize how affirmative action, by expanding the pool of talent beyond earlier boundaries and fostering inclusion in a society wracked by division, has made America a better country than it was in 1965. Ironically, it was the pro-209 campaign whose radio and TV commercials ended with the phrase, "Bring us together." A key task of proponents of affirmative action is to make that slogan their own.

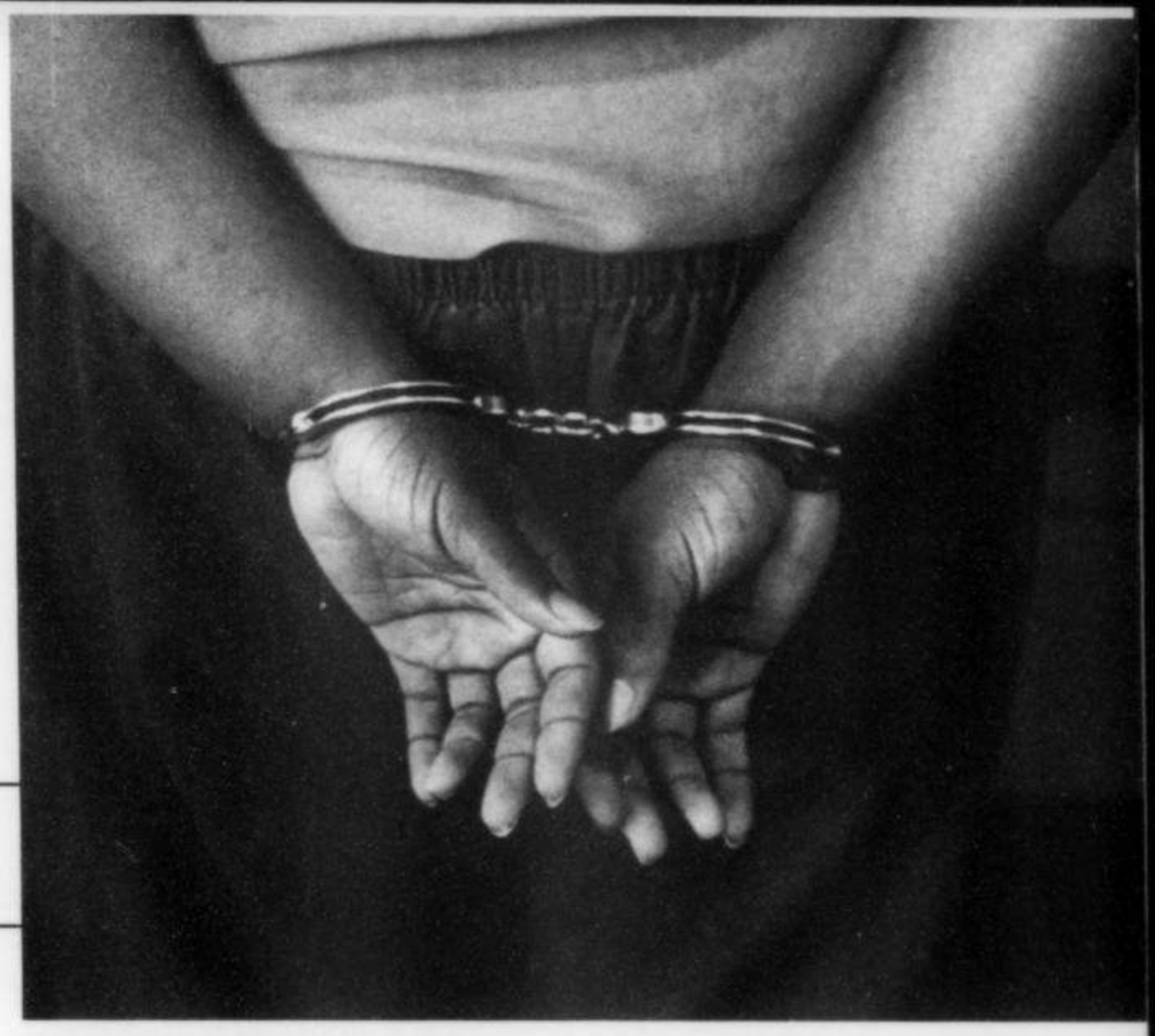
At a recent luncheon with Dan Rather at William F. Buckley, Jr.'s home, Mr. Connerly described the passage of 209 as "the start of a counter-revolution in race relations." Judging from its effects in resegregating higher education in California and Texas, this is no exaggeration. Those who wish to restore the mantle of civil rights to its rightful owners should learn what they can from 209's victory and face the precariousness of their current situation forthrightly. For if they fail to do so, America is likely to see, all too soon, the results of Mr. Connerly's counter-revolution: the greatest setback to opportunities for African Americans since the advent of Jim Crow. ❑

POLITICS

Confronting the Realities of a Public Policy Gone Wrong

The Incarceration of Black America

Congresswoman Maxine Waters



PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE CAGEN/IMPACT VISUALS

When Congress passed its latest slew of mandatory minimum sentencing laws in the 1980s, the notion was to get tough on crime, especially drug-related crimes. The plan was to unclog the court system, jail drug kingpins who were preying on our nation's young people, and prevent "liberal" judges from letting criminals off too easily.

The "war on drugs," "get tough on crime," "three strikes, you're out" slogans that politicians used so well on the campaign trail have been sadly crafted into laws with little consideration for their human consequences.

For more than two decades as an elected official, I have witnessed the negative impact of wrong-minded public policy on black communities and, especially, on black youth. Too often, legislators vote on bills without fully understanding their impact on individuals. In many cases, they would prefer not to put a face on those who are affected.

I believe that unless we fully understand how legislation impacts the lives of the people we govern, we are doomed to pass laws that create more problems than they solve. This is most evident when we examine how mandatory minimum sentencing laws impact poor communities.

These mandatory minimum laws remove from the hands of judges and other court officials the ability to examine the individual circumstances of each case before sentencing. A judge's discretion can mean the difference between a young person going to jail and having his or her life irreparably damaged or being placed in a program that might have a chance to save a human being.



Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), was elected in 1990 to represent the 35th District of California. She has made the elimination of drugs in our neighborhoods the number one priority for the CBC.

While judges cannot be caseworkers, they can look at the circumstances of a young offender's life to make rational and reasoned evaluations of someone's risk to society. For example, a teenage female addict, called a "strawberry" on the streets of South Central Los Angeles because she sells her body to support her habit, needs help and intervention, not a five-year mandatory minimum prison term. A young crack-addicted mother who passes her habit to her infant needs help—first to kick her own habit and then with educational and employment opportunities—so that she can support her child.

Mandatory minimum sentencing laws do little to help in cases like these; they only punish. And, more often than not, they unfairly punish African American and Hispanic defendants as compared to whites who commit similar crimes. Nowhere is this more evident than when we examine the disparate sentencing laws surrounding the possession or distribution of crack cocaine versus powder cocaine.

In 1986 and 1988, Congress mandated harsher sentencing for crack cocaine distributors and users than for powder cocaine, despite the fact that they are simply different forms of the same illegal drug. Crack cocaine, a cheaper version of cocaine than powder, is more commonly found in poor communities.

Under the current sentencing mandates passed by Congress, a young person convicted of trafficking in five grams of crack cocaine receives a five-year mandatory minimum penalty. A young person selling the same amount of powder cocaine would be charged with a misdemeanor offense punishable by a maximum of one year. It would take possession of 500 grams of powder cocaine to receive the same five-year mandatory sentence the defendant with 5 grams of crack receives. This statutory 100 to 1 ratio of powder to crack has relegated a

disproportionate number of black and Hispanic youth to long-term prison sentences that stigmatize them for life.

The recent recommendation by Attorney General Janet Reno to reduce the disparity to a 10 to 1 ratio is an improvement, but does not end the imbalance. Indeed, the rationale presented by Reno to reduce the disparity to 10 to 1 is equally persuasive when applied to the question of eliminating any sentencing disparities between crack and powder cocaine. The violence associated with crack dealing has dropped over the past few years. There is an almost even split between crack users and powder users, and the treatment programs for crack and powder users are similar, with similar success rates.

In addition, both Attorney General Reno and drug czar General McCaffrey concede that the disparity has led to selective prosecution of African-American and Hispanic young men within the federal courts. This is true even though "crack cocaine use is more prevalent among young whites than among young blacks," according to the Office of National Drug Control Policy. In 1994, for example, "a larger percentage (3.2%) of whites aged 18-25 used crack cocaine than did blacks in the same age group (1.8%). Additionally, in 1994, a larger percentage of whites in age groups 12-17, 18-25 and 26-34 used cocaine than did blacks in the same age (group)." Yet, "blacks and non-whites are sentenced for crack violations disproportionately."

The impact of the sentencing disparities is staggering. Today, African-American males make up 6 percent of the American population and only 15 percent of the drug-using population. Yet, they now represent 35 percent of drug arrests, 55 percent of drug convictions and 74 percent of those serving prison sentences for drug-related offenses. One in three black males between the ages of 20 and 29 is under criminal justice control. One in 15 is incarcerated. Ninety-four percent of the crack offenders in federal courts are African American. In practice, the "war on drugs" has become synonymous with a war on black communities.

In addition, this so-called war has disenfranchised large segments of African Americans by taking away their right to vote. A recent study by the Sentencing Project estimated that 1.46 million black males have lost the right to vote due to a felony conviction.

Two years ago, we attempted to remove the disparities between the sentencing for crack cocaine offenses and powder cocaine offenses. The United States Sentencing Commission reported that there was no scientific basis for the disparity and acknowledged that blacks were more heavily impacted by the disparity than whites. Despite these arguments, Congress rejected the recommendations by a vote of 332-83. Ironically, the Sentencing Commission was created specifically to ensure that sentencing policy in our nation is fairly and equitably administered and protected from the political world.

In addition to fighting to correct the harsh and unfair sentencing disparities between crack and powder cocaine, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) has proposed several initiatives to address the drug problem in our communities.

Instead of dismantling economic and educational opportunities for poor communities, we should target more resources toward programs that work to rebuild our neighborhoods.

Currently, the federal government spends $15 billion each year on law enforcement, treatment and prevention programs in its "war on drugs." The CBC anti-drug initiative calls for a $200 million allocation for drug courts to treat low-level or first-time non-violent drug offenders, especially youth. There are successful drug court programs, such as those in New York City, that demonstrate the important role these programs can play in helping young people solve drug-related problems.



PHOTOGRAPH BY J.K. CONDYLES/IMPACT VISUALS

We must give special attention to youth who come into contact with both the juvenile justice and the criminal justice system. Helping young people through mentoring and educational programs at an early age is a critical component in crime prevention programs.

We must treat prisoners for their drug addictions. Given the overwhelming rise in the number of drug offenders serving mandatory minimum sentences and the number of these prisoners who will be released from prison, treating prisoners for their drug addiction is in society's best interest.

As we look for answers, we must remember that all problems have real human faces. Our solutions must also. ❑

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Should leaders of the Jewish community be chopping down old growth redwoods, promoting alcohol consumption, or making millions from the sale of cigarettes?

JEWISH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Jews have been actively engaged in addressing the moral problems facing the larger society. But sometimes we have been unwilling to give a similar scrutiny to our own communal institutions. Yet *tikkun olam*, the healing and repair of the world, must also include healing our own community and its distortions. What more appropriate moment than the issue of TIKKUN magazine closest to the Jewish High Holy Days, the time when Jewish tradition asks us to engage in strenuous self-scrutiny and to change directions and return to the deepest core of our being, for us to refocus on the quest for Jewish Social Responsibility!

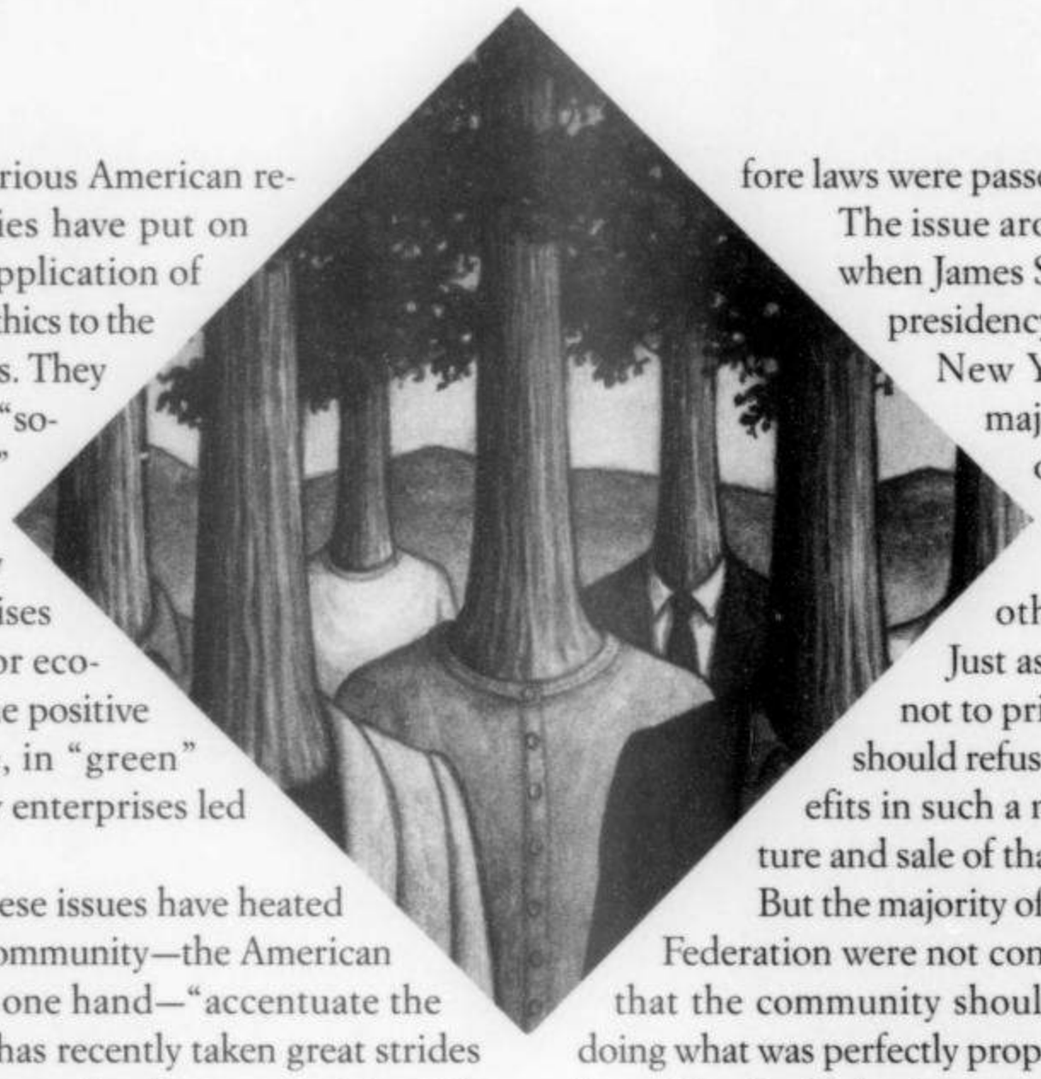
We begin with an article by Rabbi Arthur Waskow who approaches these concerns by addressing the ecological issues. We posed a series of questions to a variety of Jewish community leaders, and print their responses. We follow that with Rabbi Brad Artson's account of the Jewish commitment to biodiversity, and with a *T'shuvah* (repentance) workbook focused more on individual transformation but which might be adapted as a basis for designing a Jewish communal institution *t'shuvah* process.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RUSS ANDO

JEWISH SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Redwoods, Tobacco, and Torah

Arthur Waskow



For two decades, various American religious communities have put on their agenda the application of religiously rooted ethics to the behavior of large corporations. They have done so chiefly through "socially responsible investment" funds. Such funds either eliminate the negative (by refusing to invest in enterprises that are for example racist or eco-destructive) or accentuate the positive (by investing, for example, in "green" businesses and creative new enterprises led by women).

In the last six months, these issues have heated up in at least one religious community—the American Jewish community. On the one hand—"accentuate the positive"—The Shefa Fund has recently taken great strides in persuading major Jewish pools of money to join with Christian institutions in revolving loan funds to support inner-city enterprises.

On the other side—"eliminate the negative"—objections have been raised to the behavior of specific businessmen who are not only Jewish but are involved in organized Jewish life. There is evidently something in the air, since such concerns have erupted on opposite sides of the continent, in two quite different industries—tobacco and lumber—and without any previous coordination. The questions that have surfaced pose some important dilemmas not only for Jews but for members of other religious communities as well.

What are the two cases? In New York, two Jewish philanthropists, Edith and Henry Everett, have long urged the Jewish community to address the sale of cigarettes as a violation of the prime Jewish value, *p'kuach nefesh*—saving life. When they began, there were few people who thought this was a "Jewish issue." But gradually others have come to agree with them. The *New York Jewish Week* was convinced to stop taking ads for cigarettes, and many Jewish Community Centers and Federations forbade smoking in their buildings before laws were passed to that effect.

The issue arose in a new and sharper way when James S. Tisch was proposed for the presidency of the Jewish Federation of New York. For the Tisch family's major business holdings include ownership of a major tobacco company, Lorillard.

To the Everetts, among others, the logic seemed clear: Just as the community had decided not to print ads for a deadly drug, so it should refuse to honor someone who benefits in such a major way from the manufacture and sale of that deadly drug.

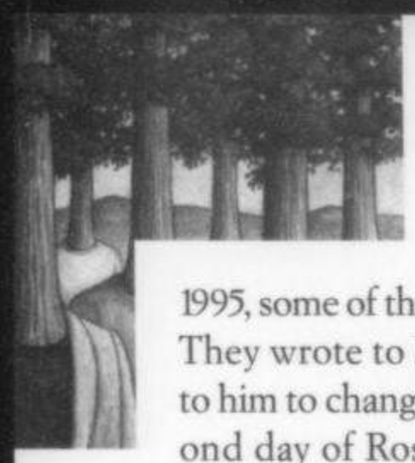
But the majority of those with voting clout in the Federation were not convinced. Many leaders argued that the community should not penalize someone for doing what was perfectly proper under American law, thereby putting Jewish businessmen at a disadvantage in American society and depriving the community of an effective leader or a major donor. Mr. Tisch was elected to the Federation presidency.

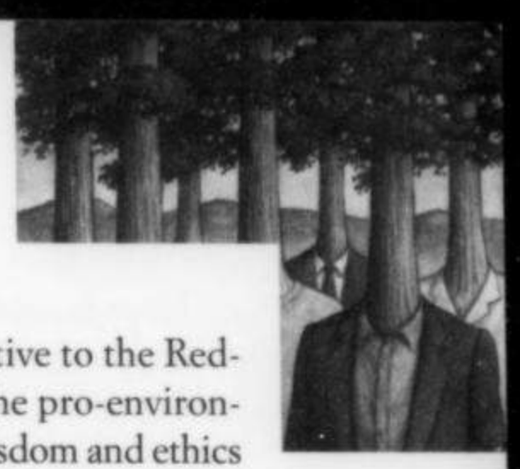
Meanwhile, in California and Texas, a similar conflict emerged. The last privately owned old-growth redwood forest—the Headwaters Forest in Humboldt County, California—is owned by the Pacific Lumber Company, which used to be independent but in 1985 became the target of a hostile takeover by Maxxam Corporation. Maxxam is publicly held, but the majority of its stock is held by Charles Hurwitz, a Jewish businessman who lives in Houston, Texas, and his family.

Following the junk-bond financed takeover, Maxxam doubled the rate of logging ancient redwoods and set off a twelve year storm of litigation and controversy. Former Pacific Lumber shareholders have won $150 million claiming that the takeover was accomplished by means of fraud; pensioners won $7 million on claims of breach of duty in Maxxam's treatment of their pension fund; lawsuits are still pending on behalf of the non-shareholder constituencies; and environmentalists won a U.S. Supreme Court decision restricting logging in one of the ancient groves of Headwaters Forest.

After the Maxxam takeover, the redwood forest became the site of demonstrations and protests involving thousands of activists—scattered among them, some members of the few small Jewish congregations in the remote redwood region. In

Rabbi Waskow is a Pathfinder of ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal; director of The Shalom Center, a division of ALEPH and the author of Godwrestling—Round 2 *and* Down-to-Earth Judaism: Food, Money, Sex, and the Rest of Life.





1995, some of these Jews took a more explicitly Jewish stance: They wrote to Mr. Hurwitz at High Holy Days, appealing to him to change his logging policies. A year later, on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, two local rabbis joined with more than a thousand people who were arrested for peaceful civil disobedience on Maxxam's land in the redwoods (among more than five thousand demonstrators).

Then just before Yom Kippur, these two rabbis and a third from the redwood region placed an open letter to Charles Hurwitz in the Houston Jewish weekly newspaper. These "Redwood Rabbis" urged Mr. Hurwitz to make a *teshuvah shelaymah*, "a genuine change of direction," and suggested that he had the "opportunity to do a historic deed of goodness, a great mitzvah" by dedicating himself to the protection of Headwaters Forest.

In February, the Redwood Rabbis, now with support from Jewishly rooted environmentalists across the country, led 250 people in a ritual celebration of a day set aside in the Jewish sacred calendar as the New Year of the Trees—but they held the celebration in a grove of ancient redwoods and ended it by deliberately trespassing on Pacific Lumber's property to plant a number of redwood seedlings.

Maxxam did not have these Jewish celebrants arrested as it had done with hundreds of others who had trespassed in the same space to protest the logging plans. Was this gleam of light a sign of deeper change?

As the Maxxam shareholders meeting approached, environmentalists among the shareholders proposed to add two non-management trustees, both environmentally conscious, and to commit the company to become a "willing seller" of 60,000 acres of redwood forest to buyers that would protect the forest.

Letters went out to all the shareholders from a multi-partner coalition headed by the Rose Foundation of San Francisco, including an inter-religious committee on socially responsible investment headed by a Catholic nun, and including also representatives of the California Teachers Retirement Fund. Proxies began to flow in.

People in the Jewish community began to mobilize as well. When the shareholders met in Houston in May, a letter from thirty-eight rabbis was waiting for Hurwitz. For the first time, a group of Houston Jews braved the wrath of the wealthy Hurwitz family to speak out: the Houston Reconstructionist Havurah publicly advertised a meeting critical of Maxxam for endangering the redwood forest.

(When the pre-Yom Kippur ad had appeared in the Houston Jewish newspaper, the *Herald-Voice*, Hurwitz's sister had visited the editor and publisher to complain and hint of possible consequences. Her visit simply stiffened the newspaper's resolve and independence. After the stockholders meeting, they ran a long article exploring the entire issue.)

By the day of the stockholders meeting, proxies for the pro-environment position added up to 9 percent on one of the items and more than 6 percent on the other—prodigious figures for such a challenge in its first year.

Since Hurwitz seemed especially sensitive to the Redwood Rabbis and other Jewish criticism, the pro-environment stockholders made sure that Jewish wisdom and ethics were brought to bear on the issue along with Christian and secular-ecological ethics.

How to make clear that logging the Headwaters forest would not only damage the earth but also damage Maxxam—a concern probably closer to the hearts of many stockholders and ultimately the argument best calculated to win over Hurwitz himself?

The rabbi's letter was put forward as evidence that Maxxam was in danger of bringing upon itself pariah status in our society, in which consumers might boycott it and lenders refuse to lend to it—a situation that would surely damage the shareholders.

One strong Jewish archetype of the self-destructiveness of arrogant power was put forward as well: According to biblical tradition, the Pharaoh of the Exodus—by hardening his heart against appeals to compassion and good sense—had brought upon his country a series of ecological disasters that finally shattered his own household and himself. The analogy also reminded the company's management that it could still avert disaster by turning toward opening, rather than hardening, its heart.

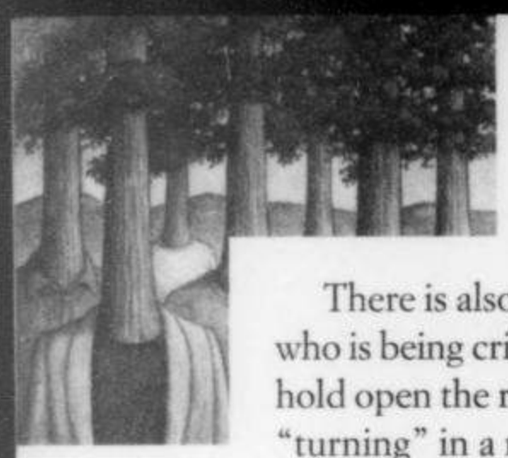
Although Maxxam has entered negotiations with the Federal and California governments toward possible sale of part of the forest, it remains determined to log old-growth redwoods when possible. The struggle will heat up again this fall when regulations run out that prevent logging till the end of the murrelet nesting season. Environmentalists are already planning protests if Maxxam tries to resume logging. What will the Jewish community do?

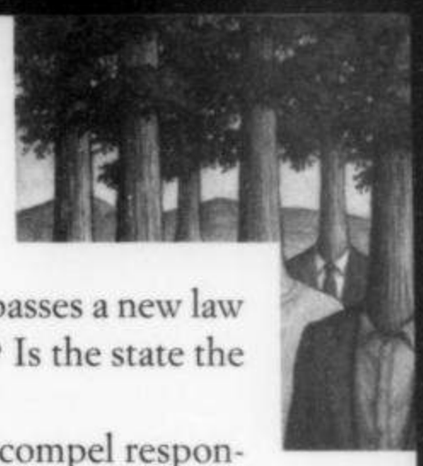
From both the Hurwitz and Tisch cases, we see emerging a broader question: In American society, can the Jewish community hold its members ethically responsible and accountable in Jewish terms?

In the Middle Ages, autonomous and ghettoized Jewish communities could and did enforce their standards on all their members. But now, in voluntary American Jewish communities the *beit din* (rabbinical court) is irrelevant unless both parties to a dispute agree to obey it.

Shall we give up on any notion at all of communal Jewish ethics? Or create new ways of making clear what our ethical standards are?

We certainly run some ethical risks in seeking to apply communal ethics in public space. First, there is a danger that criticism could degenerate into the *lashon hara* ("evil tongue") that Jewish tradition abhors. One way of minimizing this danger is for those who are most concerned to seek first, as Jewish tradition teaches, a private encounter to present their views, ask for change, hear the other party, and be prepared to change their own ideas without abandoning their basic ethical imperatives.





There is also a danger of demonizing the businessperson who is being criticized. A serious Jewish critique must always hold open the real possibility and expectation of *teshuvah*—"turning" in a new direction. It must try to open space not for shaming the wrong-doer but for ennobling the act of self-transformation.

There is a third danger—that latent anti-Semitism may be heightened by holding up a Jewish businessperson to public critique for behavior that non-Jewish businesspersons also pursue. But there is an obverse danger that if the Jewish community keeps silent, it may seem to condone illegitimate behavior by a leading Jewish businessperson that it would condemn if done by someone else. One way of avoiding these dangers is for the Jewish community to make clear that it is criticizing the behavior of non-Jews and Jews alike when their behavior violates Jewish ethics—and that it urges other religious communities to hold their adherents also to high ethical standards.

Some Jews have suggested that the correct address for protests like the ones against Maxxam's or Lorillard Tobacco's management is state and federal governments, not the companies or their owners. If it is such a bad idea to log the ancient redwoods or sell cigarettes, why not get the logging or the cigarettes outlawed?

This makes good sense. It makes even more sense to say even more broadly, as Michael Lerner and the Foundation for Ethics and Meaning have proposed, that corporations should be legally required to undergo a periodic "ethical impact" assessment to see how all the different aspects of their business are affecting the earth and human society. But these processes are not yet in place, and Jewish community activity aimed at publicly critiquing and pressuring Jewish business people to be more socially responsible could be part of the process of developing a new public consciousness of these issues.

Indeed, we know that the path to enshrining a newly understood ethic in the law often runs through way stations of marches, sit-ins, boycotts, letter-writing campaigns, and other nonviolent protests.

Moreover, why should stockholders of a publicly held company not be free—indeed, obligated—to bring their own ethical concerns and their worries about the future of the company to a stockholders meeting? Why should members of a religious community wait till the State passes a new law before they can act on their ethical beliefs? Is the state the *only* repository of social responsibility?

The assumption that only the State can compel responsibility is rooted in the belief that business is a zero-sum game. If the redwoods win, must Maxxam lose? Most of the world's religious traditions teach just the opposite. Most of them—certainly including Judaism—teach that the Universe is a web of interconnection; that a blow aimed at one strand of the web shakes and shreds other strands of the web. "Love your neighbor as yourself" is rooted ultimately in the sense that God is One—that the "other" *is* your self, that if I damage you I have hurt myself and that if I heal you I have healed myself.

At the Redwoods Seder on the Trees' New Year of Tu B' Shvat, a rabbinical student—Naomi Mara Hyman—looked up at these tallest living beings on the planet—250 feet tall and more—and said: "What would a Torah Scroll be like, that had these *eytzim* (trees) for its *eytzim* (the wooden poles that hold the spiraling Torah scroll)? How grand, how tall would such a Torah be!" Then, looking at the crowd who had come to celebrate the Seder, she said: "Each of us would be just the right size to be one letter in such a Torah Scroll!"

And that is what we are, of course: each one of us a letter in God's great Torah Scroll of all life on the planet. Yet being a letter is not enough. Nowhere in the Torah does a single letter stand alone to bear some meaning. In English, the word "I" is but a single letter, standing alone; but in Hebrew, even the word for "I" has several letters. No one, not even "I," can stand alone.

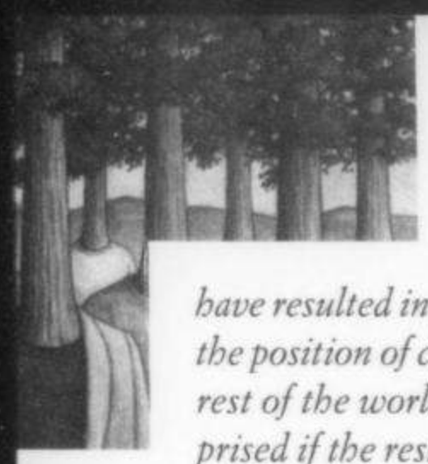
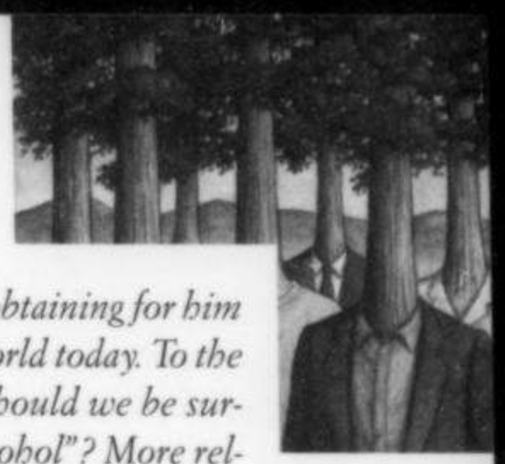
When one person, one corporation, thinks it is a single letter that can stand alone, that single letter turns to flame and the great Torah Scroll, the earth and the society in which we live, begins to burn.

If the Jewish community and other communities of Spirit and of Faith are to be more than islands of private piety and personal calm, if they are to be communities of ethical responsibility, they must bring together the single lonely letters of each individual person to form living words, sentences, chapters, whole books of wisdom with each other. Living books to be embodied in public, challenging wrong-doers. ❑

TIKKUN's Questions on Jewish Social Responsibility

As we face the High Holy Day season we are interested in our communal responsibility for Jews who are acting in ethically or environmentally destructive ways in their business lives.

Do we as a community have a responsibility to confront or publicly challenge this behavior? Does it matter whether they are actively affiliated with the Jewish community or not? Should we use a higher standard of responsibility if these people are donors to the Jewish community? What if they have used the money earned in businesses which are acting in ethically questionable ways to purchase positions of influence in the Jewish world—by becoming the indispensable benefactors of Jewish institutions? For example, we have the case this past year of Edgar Bronfman's Seagram's liquor company announcing that it is going to break the decades-old policy of liquor companies voluntarily refraining from buying advertising on television to influence teenagers to drink hard liquor. As it turned out, the television companies refused to sell the advertising time, but the intent was clear, and arguably would

have resulted in more automobile accidents and more alcohol abuse. Yet Edgar Bronfman's money was decisive in obtaining for him the position of chair of the World Jewish Congress, and he is one of the most widely quoted leaders in the Jewish world today. To the rest of the world, Bronfman's actions are seen as quintessential expressions of what the Jewish world does, so should we be surprised if the rest of the world responds by believing that "the Jews are trying to spread more involvement with alcohol"? More relevant, do we as Jews have an even greater responsibility for the business practices of those who are speaking in our name, shaping our communal life, or in other ways acting as our representatives? Does the issue change if part of the monies earned in unethical businesses is then donated to our community for use in ethical ways? Suppose, for example, that the tobacco company executive donates part of his profits to supporting a lung-cancer clinic? Or Bronfman supports a detox program for alcoholics? Or the Jewish community uses the monies donated for some other good purpose?

What are the boundaries of this responsibility? For example, some might argue that we have responsibility for what our leaders or representatives are doing in their public lives in the economy or in politics but not for their private lives (e.g. whether they are having extramarital affairs). If we do take responsibility for other Jews or for Jewish leaders, and feel the right to confront them, what are the dimensions or limits of that responsibility?

EDITH AND HENRY EVERETT
New York-based philanthropists

There is no such thing as Business Ethics, Legal Ethics, etc. There is just ETHICS. A human being is, basically, ethical or not ethical. This outlook dominates every activity in which he or she is involved.

Too, we witness that most people regard ethics as relative; they discuss ethics as negotiable, flexible, and malleable.

We also note with frustration the almost universal equation of what is legal with what is moral. It is almost impossible to dispel this notion. This is particularly true of those who wish to rationalize the appointment of tobacco tycoons to presidencies and chairmen of charitable organizations. Slavery, Jim Crow, and other societal disasters have been (and are) legal. One recent example is the appointment of James Tish to the presidency of the Jewish Federation of New York. Tish is also president and CEO of the Loews Corporation which owns the Lorilland tobacco company.

We have actively criticized varieties of religious and charitable organizations for honoring those who prey upon society. We oppose those who elevate polluters, slumlords, and owners of substandard nursing homes, as examples. As a paradigm, we have paid the most attention to the genuflection of these organizations to the celebrity, power, and money of tobacco industry executives.

It has been established beyond a shadow of a doubt that cigarettes are poisonous and destroy human bodies. Merely smoking in the presence of others is injurious to them.

Most people who start smoking are children. Ninety percent of all adult smokers start before the age of 18; fifty percent before the age of 15. By definition, then, executives of tobacco companies prey on our children and grandchildren—yours and mine included—during their most suggestible and vulnerable years. Tobacco executives employ every means to lure our youth to begin an addictive, repulsive and, eventually, lethal habit.

Tobacco is the only legal product that if used as directed will kill you. All Jewish federations and community centers fully recognized the damage smoking causes when they banned the use of tobacco in their buildings years ago. Tobacco addiction kills 430,000 humans in the United States each year; 3,000,000 worldwide. How many have been killed in the last decade?

Morality, ethics, Jewish law against self-destruction, and common sense mandate that it would be repugnant for a tobacco executive (i.e. pusher) to be cast as the president, spokesperson, and role model of any Jewish organization. "With tobacco you have all the right on one side and all the money on the other."

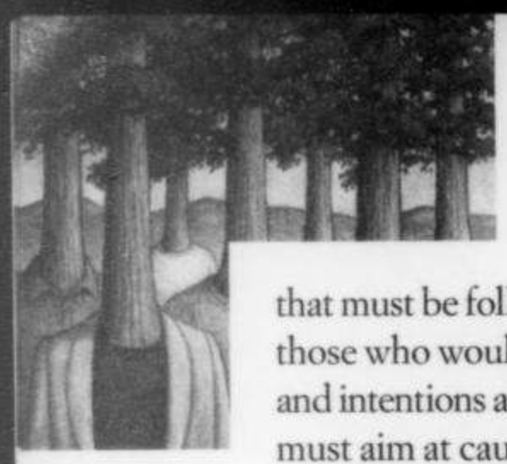
The Talmud says to us, "Those who have the capacity to eliminate a wrong and do not do so, bear the responsibility for its consequences." We fail to grasp why our religious leaders stand aloof and say nothing.

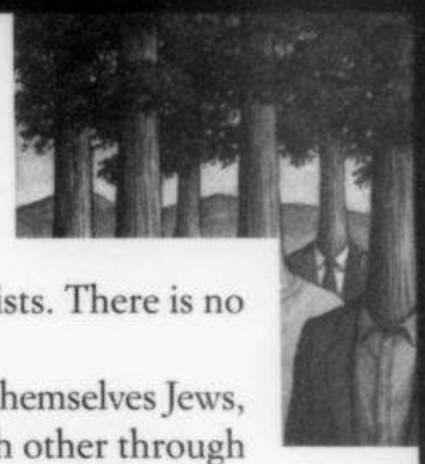
DAVID ELLENSON
I.H. and Anna Grancell professor of Jewish Religious Thought at HUC-JIR, Los Angeles

Ours is an ethical and prophetic tradition. When King David conspired to have Uriah the Hittite slain so that David could take possession of Batsheva, Nathan did not hesitate to rebuke David for his heinous crime and Nathan compelled David to account for his actions. Nathan constitutes a powerful role model for us today. He is a reminder that the Jew is called upon at moments of moral trespass—like those mentioned in the questions placed before us—to proclaim truth to power.

This type of biblical precedent finds expression throughout the tradition and rabbinic writings reinforce the notion that Jews have a moral obligation not to remain silent in the face of wrongdoing—especially when that wrongdoing is the work of a fellow Jew. After all, the well-known Jewish principle of *areivut* asserts that all Jews are mutually responsible for one another and the Talmud states (Arakhin 16b), "How do we know if one sees something unseemly in his neighbor, he is obliged to reprove him? Because it is said (Leviticus 19:17), 'You shall surely rebuke.' " Therefore, Sanhedrin 24b rules that the community has the right to deny communal responsibilities and honors to persons who are "not concerned with the welfare of the world—*ein'oskin bi-shu-vo shel olam.*" The mandate of Jewish tradition on the issues raised here is clear—the Jewish community must hold its members ethically accountable in Jewish terms.

At the same time, our tradition prescribes the method





that must be followed if censure is forthcoming and calls upon those who would offer rebuke to examine what their motives and intentions are when they offer such admonitions. Criticism must aim at causing the transgressor, as Maimonides phrases it, "to return to the good" (*Mishneh Torah,* Hilchot De'ot 6:7). One must speak "calmly and gently" when admonishing another, and it must initially be done privately so as to avoid a public shaming of the criticized party. In short, Jewish tradition demands that public rebuke be offered only as a last resort, and even then in a cautious and constructive manner. One who would rebuke must ponder the challenge posed by Rabbi Eleazar ben Azariah, when he observed, "I wonder if there is one in this generation who knows how to reprove," (Arakhin 16b).

During the Days of Awe, we should recall the rabbinic assertion that whenever God displays divine judgment (*mishpato*) by calling wrongdoers to account, God also recalls for those persons the good deeds (*pa'a-lo*) they have performed. In this way, those who transgress are more likely to repent and the possibility is increased that atonement and reconciliation might be achieved. In offering rebuke, we, who aspire to imitate the Divine, should strive for no less.

RABBI JAMES MIREL
Temple B'nai Torah, Seattle, Washington
President, Pacific Association of Reform Rabbis

It is appropriate, even mandatory, for one Jew to criticize another, both in order to stop the unethical/inappropriate behavior and also to save that individual from the divine opprobrium, in the larger context. But there are, of course, limits, as in all things.

For the gravest sins, virtually any form of opposition would be countenanced with all the concomitant risks. But for the kind of behaviors under discussion here, serious as they are, not all actions are justified.

As a pulpit rabbi, my general rule of thumb is to focus on the behavior and not on the individual when I speak or write publicly—and this applies equally to Jews and to people in the larger community. This is especially the case when it is clear that the individual is one of many. For example, the debacle of Welfare Reform was the work of many misguided hands and minds. However, when it becomes clear that another Jew is engaged in actions that, after careful reflection, I consider harmful to others or to the environment, a personal letter or visit (in my role as rabbi) is mandated by the tradition. In my devotional life, I try to follow the admonition of the wise Beruriah: pray for the death of the sins, not the death of the sinners. Sometimes, it is difficult.

RABBI RAMI M. SHAPIRO
author, Minyan, Ten Principles for Living Life with Integrity *(Bell Tower, 1997)*

Any discussion of our communal responsibility to confront unethical or environmentally destructive behavior by leaders of the Jewish community rests on the false notion that the Jewish community even exists. There is no such a thing as the Jewish Community.

Certainly there are individuals who call themselves Jews, many of whom choose to affiliate with each other through synagogues, community centers, philanthropic foundations, schools, and political organizations. These organizations are modeled after private clubs with their own rules, dues, obligations, staff, and elected officials. Within the boundaries of any given club, leaders can be expected to comport themselves in a certain way, and failure to do so can result in loss of office and removal from the club. Outside of such private organizations, however, can we find any evidence of *kehillah*/Jewish community?

I don't think so. There are only competing Jewish organizations with independent agendas, budgets, and fund raising campaigns. World Jewry cannot even define who is world Jewry, let alone who should be its representative. It is delusional to imagine that the leaders of any Jewish organization speak for all Jews. If unity was ever a hallmark of the Jewish past, it is so no longer.

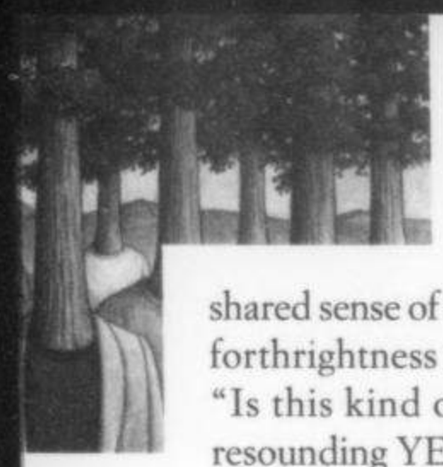
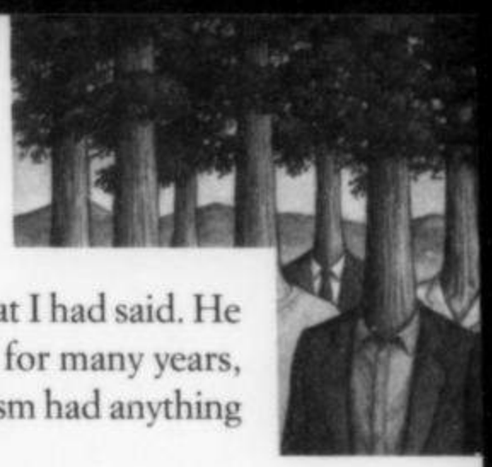
To be quite concrete: Edgar Bronfman, leader of the World Jewish Congress, in no way represents me or my understanding of Judaism and the Jewish future. Neither does the World Jewish Congress. Am I bound by his pronouncements or the organization's policies? Am I tainted by his actions or the actions of his company? Of course not. While wealthy people may have the ear of governmental policy makers, it is their wealth that provides access, not their status as Jewish representatives.

Does this mean that Jews who take Judaism seriously have no voice with which to challenge destructive acts and policies? Not at all. They have their own voice. And they have the right to form organizations of like-minded Jews to make that voice louder. But let us do this without the sanctimonious notion of protecting the Jewish community from immoral leaders.

We have no community. We have no leaders. We have wealthy (and not so wealthy) men and women with private agendas who seek to implement them. Challenge them in the name of *kedusha*/holiness, if you like, but do not pretend to guard the *kehilla*/community.

LAWRENCE BUSH
author of American Torah Toons *(Jason Aronson, 1997) and co-author of* Jews, Money and Social Responsibility *(The Shefa Fund, 1993).*

Arthur's article serves as a *shofar* blast of creative thinking. Certainly the use of Jewish teachings and communal pressure to influence corporate sharks is a legitimate tactic, and he explores its nuances sensitively. His fear of anti-Semitism gives me pause—yet silence about our no-goodniks neither shields them from view nor lessens stereotypes about "Jewish power," wealth, or chicanery. Among our allies, Jewish outspokenness about our own ethically-impaired citizens might increase the honesty in our relationships, broaden our

shared sense of what constitutes injustice, and inspire similar forthrightness in other groups. Even the amoral question, "Is this kind of protest good for the Jews?" warrants a resounding YES!

I am nevertheless doubtful that we will soon see our organizations confronting corporate malfeasance head-on. Even at the height of the anti-apartheid movement, when churches, labor unions, and whole cities were divesting their financial portfolios of South Africa holdings, the Jewish community was unable to rise to the occasion. As late as 1989, the National Jewish Community Relations Council could not adopt a unanimous position, as several constituents—including the American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League, and Hadassah—supported the South African Jewish community's argument that divestment was hurtful to South African workers, not rulers.

The overarching reality in Jewish life is that our institutions are oligarchical (notwithstanding some democratizing trends). Leaders do indulge in what the Midrash calls "whoring for apples to give them to the poor." Organizations are further muzzled by Israel's enthrallment to military-industrial power, and are generally more interested in having clean hands than in rolling up their sleeves on issues of economic justice. Happily, though, our Torah is still on the side of the prophets (among whom I count Reb Waskow) and if its teachings can move even oligarchs to reconcile the demands of the "bottom line" with the demands of the "Most High," then three cheers for Judaism.

Or, barring that kind of *t'shuvah*, let's boycott!

RABBI TOBA SPITZER
Reconstructionist Congregation Dorshei Tzedek, Newton, Massachusetts

Here are two stories about two Jews. The first was a political advisor and popular preacher who lived over 2,500 years ago. One fast-day, he said to his fellow Jews: "You want to know why God has not responded to your prayers? Because on your fast-day you pursue your business; you fast to promote conflict and do evil. Did God call on you to bow your head, to put on sackcloth and ashes? No, *this* is the fast that God calls for: to undo wickedness, to loosen the bands of oppression and let the oppressed go free; to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the cast-out poor into your home." According to these words of the prophet Isaiah, Judaism does not recognize a distinction between piety and ethics: one cannot call oneself an upright Jew while pursuing harmful business or failing to deal justly with the poor. We read these words every year on our major fast day, Yom Kippur.

The other story concerns a Jew whom I met a year ago at a congregation in Delaware. On the Friday evening following President Clinton's signing of the welfare reform law, I spoke about Judaism and economic justice, about those aspects of our tradition which directly challenge what the President and Congress had just done. After the service a man approached me and thanked me for what I had said. He told me that he had worked on these issues for many years, and until that evening had no idea that Judaism had anything to say on the matter.

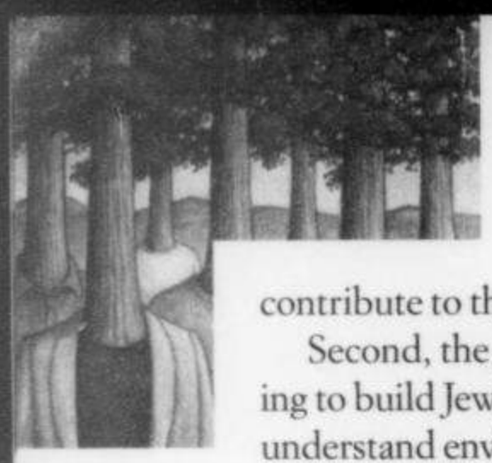
The pressing issue is not whether or not we as Jews have communal responsibility for one another's actions, or whether the organized Jewish community should have ethical standards for its leaders. The organized community *does* have standards, but they are not the only ones, nor often the correct ones. Could a person who made his millions selling arms to Iraq become president of the New York Jewish Federation? Could a prominent, outspoken lesbian? We may read Isaiah every year, but the truth is that we as a community have lost sight of the fact that issues of economic and social justice are at the core of who we are and why we are here. Further, these are not only issues for wealthy and powerful Jews, but for all of us. How we make our money and how we spend it, how we treat our employees, how we invest our money and how we give it away—these are all profoundly Jewish issues. The tradition gives us guidance, not easy answers—our responsibility is to enter into that discussion.

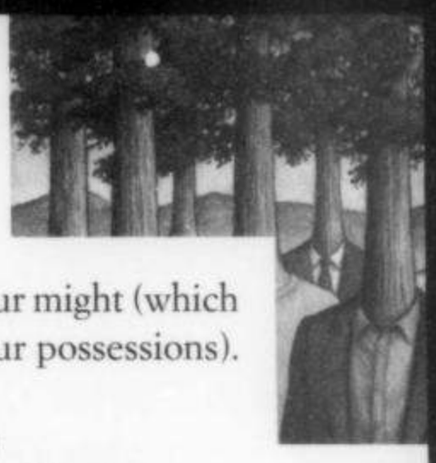
MARK X. JACOBS
Director of the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life

Given unlimited energy, Jewish organizers should indeed protest unethical corporate behavior associated with Jewish leaders: if we have a special avenue to affect positive outcomes, we should use it. And all Jews should be concerned about the images and messages these leaders project to the society as Jewish leaders. However, we must carefully assess chances for success using this strategy and weigh them against other options for effecting change—particularly political reform to control corporate influence of politics. (The predominant Jewish institutional opposition to or agnosticism concerning campaign finance reform, driven by a desire to maintain Jewish power achieved through political contributions, is a significant impediment to an effective political strategy.)

Protecting the Headwaters forest through pressure on Charles Hurwitz is an instructive case concerning the involvement of the organized Jewish community in corporate responsibility activism. The Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL)—a coalition of 26 national Jewish organizations including all denominations and most Jewish public affairs agencies—succeeded in conveying to Mr. Hurwitz the organized Jewish community's concern about protecting endangered ecosystems through a private appeal by some leading Jewish individuals (rabbis, social action leaders, artists) and a meeting with Pacific Lumber officials, arranged with the help of Mr. Hurwitz's rabbi.

However, a number of structural and cultural barriers prevented further action. First, Jewish public affairs agencies are set up to work via legislative and governmental strategies. Few agencies have principles and processes in place regarding corporate accountability. Perhaps this symposium will





contribute to the development of principles for such action.

Second, the ghetto mentality survives. We are still working to build Jewish community and institutional cultures that understand environment and public health as central to Jewish life, values, and well-being. Only the participation of socially-committed Jews in communal life will break down this mentality.

Third, the complexity of specific cases can impede action. In his article, Arthur Waskow does not mention the myriad federal and state laws, debates over the fifth amendment to the U.S. Constitution ("takings" issue), or the complex negotiated agreement between Hurwitz, the U.S. Department of Interior and the State of California that are critical components of the case. For example, a key issue is whether we should support a deal to exchange $380 million of taxpayer money for redwoods which the courts have largely declared off-limits to logging. Perhaps the most significant aspect of the Headwaters case is the precedent set for future habitat protection on private and other corporate acts to preserve the common good. This has largely been ignored by activists working on the issue. Taking appropriate and prudent action on cases of corporate misdeed often requires a great deal of knowledge—far beyond what most people accustomed to taking public action on issues have time to learn.

Fourth, energy dedicated to political action is a valuable currency to be used carefully by organizers. When faced with decisions concerning how to focus committees' and activists' attention, COEJL chose the battle over the federal Endangered Species Act—which affects thousands of endangered ecosystems—rather than the Headwaters forest.

Finally, Jewish organizational culture engages current and potential givers by building a Jewish identity which affirms the primacy of giving to the Jewish community to the exclusion of many other values. To address this, we must engage those who court Jewish businesspeople as philanthropic leaders in a broad moral vision of the Jewish community. This is a dual mission: high level diplomacy among the elite, and grassroots pressure through protest to make issues visible and provide some heat.

In the long run, the only effective Jewish corporate responsibility strategy may be to create a moral climate within Jewish organizations that focuses on putting personal and communal wealth and power to sacred ends across the board. When responsible investing becomes an observed Jewish practice, leadership, both lay and professional, will pay attention. In conjunction, rabbis, other moral leaders, and especially corporate superstars who themselves have undergone an ethical conversion experience must actively provide the guidance and spiritual support corporate leaders need to develop and implement a moral vision in collaboration with stockholders and staff.

In pursuit of a sacred and just economy, all of us can, in our own circles and beyond, support in each other the spiritual transformation necessary to pursue justice and goodness with all of our hearts, all of our souls, and all of our might (which the Mishnah, by the way, interprets as all our possessions).

CAROL LEVY
Executive Director
DAVID WASKOW
Regional Program Director
American Jewish Congress, Pacific Southwest Region

When for nearly a century both Jews and Jewish ethics have been involved, there is no question that our community should confront irresponsible business behavior.

Such is the case with garment manufacturing, where many disturbing reports of sweatshop factories have recently come to light. It is imperative that our community address the reality of working conditions in an industry that 80 years ago was filled with Jewish workers and in which Jewishly owned companies today represent about half of the largest manufacturers.

This year in Los Angeles, several Jewish organizations have created the Los Angeles Jewish Commission on Sweatshops, a group of rabbinic and organizational leaders who will examine garment industry conditions and recommend how our community can best combat worker exploitation.

Recognizing that conditions vary from manufacturer to manufacturer, we do not intend to blame all garment producers or all Jewish garment producers. But we do intend to generate an open conversation about our responsibility as a community to address the ethical violations in this industry.

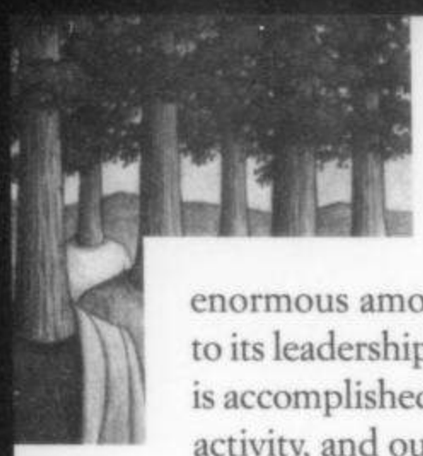
It would be *chutzpadik* and even absurd to hold our first conversations with non-Jewish garment manufacturers. Commitment to our own community requires that our first step be dialogue—even, if necessary, public and challenging dialogue—with fellow Jews, especially individuals with deep and long-standing ties to the community.

Will this lead to anti-Semitic attacks? We cannot always cower in fear of this possibility as though we lived in the 1930s instead of the 1990s. Indeed, what is there to fear in our community acting ethically? We hope that many Jewish manufacturers will join our efforts to improve working conditions. With such a large presence in this single industry, our community can have a major impact.

Will this dialogue lead to confronting some manufacturers who may be Jewish communal leaders? Very possibly. Those who have committed themselves to serious involvement in our community's affairs should also be ready to be held accountable according to the community's values and ethical standards.

DAVID A. TEUTSCH
President of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

The organized Jewish community in North America accomplishes a great deal of good both in providing specifically Jewish resources and in accomplishing social welfare tasks. It is able to accomplish this only because of the cooperative activity of hundreds of thousands of American Jews. And of course much of the funding comes from a much smaller number of Jews who provide not only considerable financial support for the community but also devote an



enormous amount of time and energy to its leadership. Much of the good that is accomplished is a direct result of that activity, and our leaders need our willing support if they are to continue this good work.

It is also true that American Jewish communal leaders, by their example, teach other Jews and the general public about what it is the Jewish community stands for. We need them to uphold high moral standards in what they say, in what they do and, of course, in the policies and practices that they support in Jewish organizations. There are enormous tensions between these two broad categories: the financial and personal leadership of the community and our desire to have Jewish leaders who are moral exemplars. While encouraging the latter, we must be conscious of not losing too much of the former. These trade-offs raise difficult moral dilemmas for organizations.

Those who commit immoral acts within an organization should be removed from positions where they can commit such acts. Those who are committing immoral actions in other parts of their lives, but have tasks within the organization that do not require highly visible public roles or sensitive moral judgment, may well be in a situation where they do more good than harm by remaining active in the organization. After all, there is no one without sin according to our tradition.

The difficulty arises when people have done powerfully objectionable things in their personal or professional lives yet the community is ill-disposed to accept the consequences of their leaving the organization. I believe that in situations where there is agreement about the problem, we have an obligation to first privately do *tokhekha*—warn those who are doing something we believe to be wrong—and then eventually to initiate public discussion and take action if our warnings go unheeded. It is true that we may risk some money in doing so. It is also true that integrity is worth an enormous amount if we want the American Jewish community to

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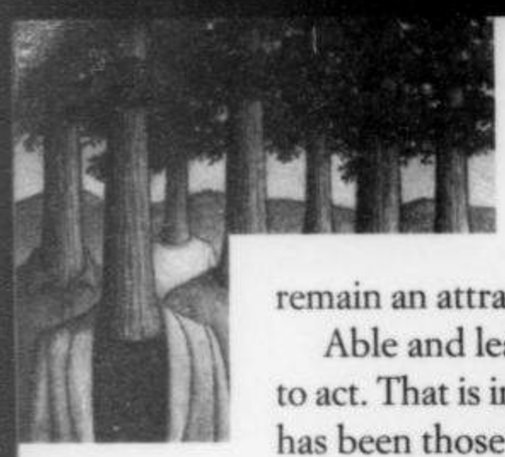
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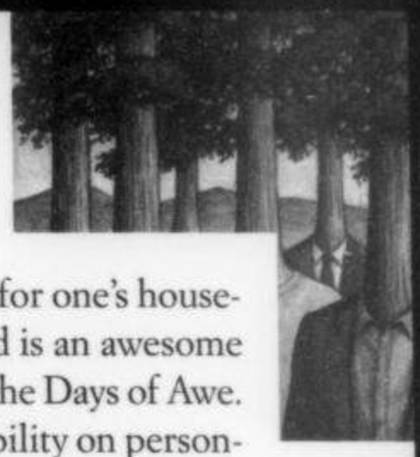
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remain an attractive and vibrant place.

Able and learned people will differ sharply about when to act. That is inevitable. One recent example of controversy has been those who maintain large holdings in the tobacco industry. When such issues arise, it is critical that we have clear debate that is limited to the issues and does not sink to mudslinging or attacks on personalities. When there are these kinds of moral issues, organizations in the American Jewish community tend to want to discuss them only behind closed doors or to sweep them under the rug. A full and clear airing of the issues and a public statement of policy would go a long way to helping to right the opinion of some that we are not facing these moral challenges squarely. This is a course that every organization ought to freely take.

EVELY LASER SHLENSKY
Chair, Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism;
Co-Chair of the L.A. Jewish Commission on Sweatshops

Rav, R. Hanina, and R. Jochanan taught the following: Whoever can protest and prevent his household from committing a sin and does not, is accountable for the sins of his household; if he could protest and prevent his fellow citizens, he is accountable for the sins of his fellow citizens; if the whole world, he is accountable for the whole world (Shabbat 54b).

The accountability demanded by these sages causes the soul to shudder. Personal responsibility for one's household, one's community, and the larger world is an awesome task, at no time more daunting than during the Days of Awe.

I suspect that many Jews focus accountability on personal acts of commission and omission. That is certainly the case for me. At times we assume some responsibility for those nearest and dearest, at least insofar as we confer with, teach, and rebuke our intimates. Yet I conclude from the above Talmudic passage that the private focus alone is too self-indulgent to fully acknowledge our complicity in egregious conduct that doesn't involve ourselves or loved ones.

We are directed to start with our household but to move beyond it, taking responsibility for those with whom we are in community (I'm reading "fellow citizens" as fellow Jews, those among whom Jews were likely to have resided in Talmudic times). In these concentric circles of accountability, implication in the misdeeds of one's own community members precedes complicity in world offenses.

The obligation to prevent and protest misconduct coupled with the wisdom of starting among our own have driven a group of us in the Los Angeles area to form a Jewish Coalition Against Sweatshops. By dint of our economic circumstance and geography, we live comfortably, but uncomfortably close to the Los Angeles garment district, rife with sweatshops. By dint of our history and religious tradition, we feel obliged to decry oppression of workers.

Many of the largest clothing manufacturers are Jewish. We want to be certain that those manufacturers carefully monitor the working conditions of factories with which they contract to sew their garments. Some do, some say they do. We are in the process of establishng a Jewish commission that will meet with Jewish manufacturers, garment workers, and government agencies charged with enforcement of labor laws. We propose to explore the working conditions in the Jewish-owned segment of the industry with the aim of ensuring that workers' rights are served while manufacturers' needs are acknowledged.

This is the form we are giving to our obligation to be accountable for the behavior of members of our community and, of course, to be accountable to God. I hope that in this season of reckoning, our behavioral accounts will record a concern for our personal conduct, for the conduct of fellow Jews, and for the redemption of the world through justice and mercy.

NAOMI STEINBERG
student Rabbi, B'nai Ha-Aretz

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(continued on page 72)

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Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson

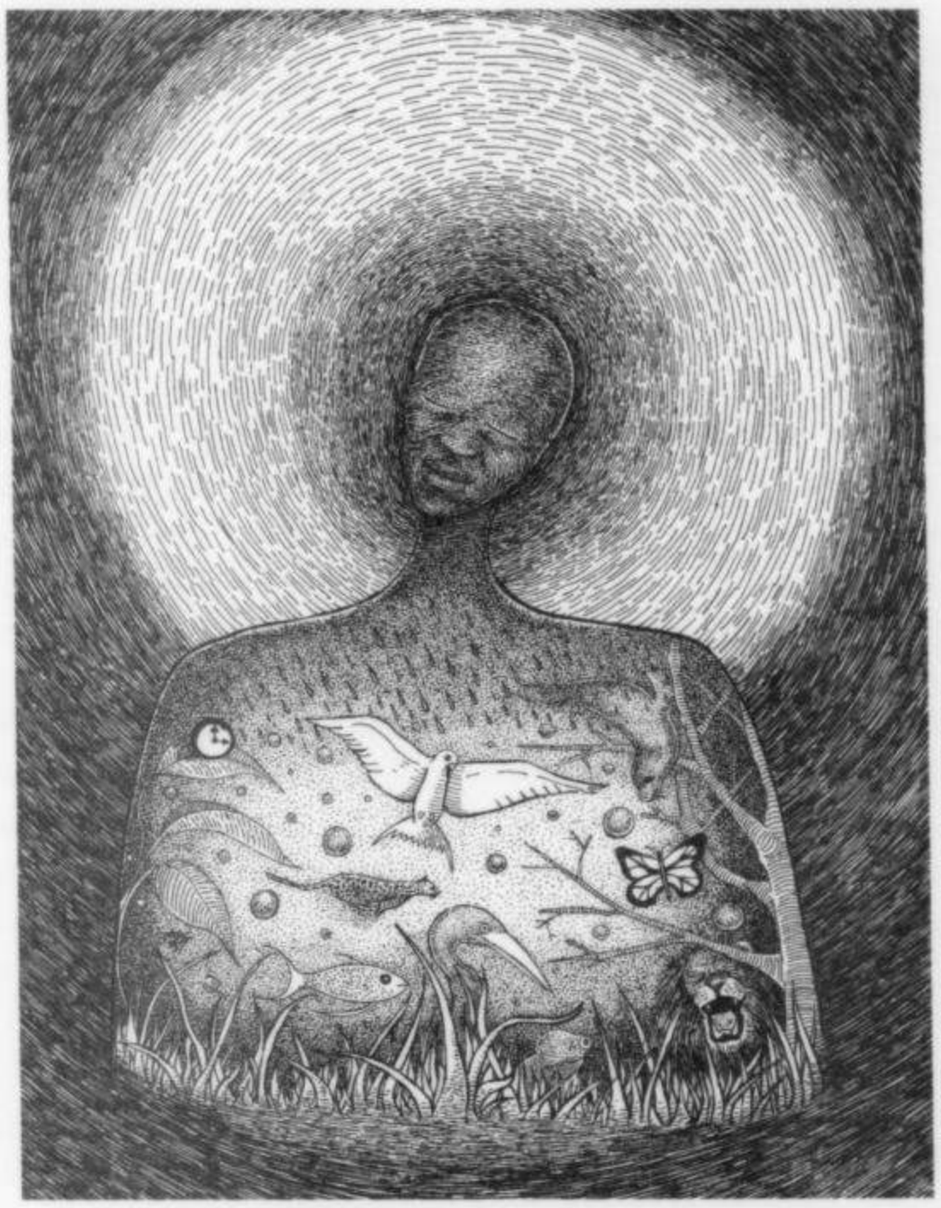
Of all that the Holy Blessed One created in the world, God created nothing without a purpose. —The Talmud

The wondrous variety of living things is under assault. Precious ecosystems, including 50 percent of the wetlands in the continental United States and 90 percent of the lowland coniferous forests in the Pacific Northwest, are already gone. Species, too, are suffering unprecedented loss: Scientists estimate that from 5 to 20 percent of the tropical forest species will become extinct in the next 30 years. Stuart Pimm notes in the journal *Science* that current extinction rates are 100 to 1,000 times their pre-human levels.

Since everything is dependent on the continuing vitality of the biosphere, this threat to biological diversity not only threatens the human species but also diminishes the vast splendor of creation.

Biodiversity: The Balance That Sustains Life

A meaningful explanation of biodiversity is offered in *The Encyclopedia of the Environment* by Ruth and William Eblen: "Life reveals a marvelous propensity to increase its diversity with the passage of time. This diversity is responsible for a range of global functions necessary for human survival, such as the biochemical flows of energy (through photosynthesis), water, carbon, nitrogen, and phosphorus, as well as providing a pool of genetic resources. Biodiversity offers other less utilitarian benefits as well—aesthetic (the beauty of so many living forms and their interaction) and intellectual (constituting a library of facts and relationships)."



ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAC MCGILL

We humans are finally becoming aware of the complex ways in which living things interact to maintain the delicate balance that sustains life itself. We know that even a little rupture in this complex interaction can create unforeseen and harmful consequences elsewhere in the system. Our assault on the ozone layer, tropical coral reefs, and the Amazonian rain forest are but a few prominent examples. Hence, we are simultaneously agents and objects of our own newly-found (and little-comprehended) powers.

The matter of preserving biodiversity is of pressing Jewish concern. Since Judaism understands nature as God's creation, our religious experience at its foundation cultivates marvel at the teeming abundance of life and the diverse array of living things. Indeed, the experience of holiness through nature has inspired most of the world's religious traditions. Each faith tradition has responded to the wonder of the world in its own way; in Judaism, the preeminent response has been to see humanity as God's stewards, responsible to "guard and tend" creation (Gen. 2:15). As the psalmist reminds us, "the heavens belong to God, but the Earth was given to humanity," (Ps. 115:16). We have a special obligation to assure the continuing viability of creation, to maintain the Earth's bounteous ability to nurture life. Because Judaism recognizes humanity as God's stewards, our commitment to sustain diversity is nothing short of a religious mandate: a mitzvah.

Yet Judaism understands that people are both a part of creation and apart from it; we are little higher than the

Bradley Shavit Artson serves as the Rabbi of Congregation Eilat, Mission Viejo, Calif. He is the author of It's A Mitzvah! Step-By-Step to Jewish Living *(Behrman House & The Rabbinical Assembly).*



beasts, and "little lower than the angels," (Ps. 8:6). As unique creatures within creation, we can legitimately use the rest of creation to meet our needs as a species (just as all other animals do). As reflections of God's image in the world, however, we must also consider how well we are managing the world on behalf of its Creator.

While Judaism certainly allows people to use the resources of the world to sustain human development and well-being—permitting the taking of animals' lives for human nutrition and the harvesting of plants for human civilization—the Jewish balancing act that was established from the beginning requires us to "guard and tend" the garden in which we live, but do not own.

Biodiversity in Jewish Narrative

To understand biodiversity within the world of Torah, one must look to biblical/rabbinic tradition and to its grand, sweeping stories of what creation means. Consider for example the story of the Flood and Noah's ark. "The earth had gone to ruin before God, the earth was filled with wrongdoing. God saw the earth, and here: it had gone to ruin, for all flesh had ruined its way upon the earth," (Gen. 6:11-12). Here the Torah deliberately updates itself: God's act of creation is very good, but the chaotic abuse by humanity has ruined it! Our actions have ruined the earth not only for ourselves, but also have imposed unwanted consequences on all living creatures: "all the residents of the world are governed by one and the same destiny," (Tanna deVei Eliahu Rabbah 2). In an attempt to restore creation, God resolves to send a flood, and instructs Noah, "a righteous, wholehearted man" to construct an ark: "From all [ritually] pure animals you are to take seven and seven [each], a male and his mate, and from all the animals that are not pure, two [each], a male and his mate, and also from the fowl of the heavens, seven and seven [each], male and female, to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth," (Gen. 7:2-3). Such a command can only make sense if the survival of each and every species matters.

Indeed, rabbinic tradition expresses this same message through a midrash in which the dove chastises Noah for endangering the survival of doves as a species: "You must hate me, for you did not choose from the species of which there are seven [in the ark], but from the species of which there are only two. If the power of the sun or the power of cold overwhelmed me, would not the world be lacking a species?" (Sanhedrin 108b). The story of Noah's ark powerfully affirms the value of each existent species, and highlights the role of humanity as God's partner in the preservation of biodiversity as it points to our ability to threaten that same variety.

Biodiversity in Halacha

The value of biodiversity finds repeated expression in the application of Halacha (Jewish law). Consider the following:

Kilayim: This category of Jewish law prohibits mixing diverse species together. It covers six kinds of mixed species: mixed seeds, grafting trees, seeds in a vineyard, cross-breeding animals, pulling cattle, and mixing linen and wool in garments (*shatnez*). Kilayim is prohibited by Halacha as an unwarranted tampering with the categories established by God's creation. In a similar vein, the Jerusalem Talmud understands the biblical verse "My statutes you shall keep," (Lev. 19:19) as referring to "the statutes I have engraved in the world," (Yerushalmi Kilayim 1:7). In other words, the laws of nature. Creation comes from God, which implies that the alteration of a natural law or the modification of a species constitutes an impermissible violation of creation. Ramban, the great medieval philosopher and sage, explains that "God has created in the world various species among all living things, both plants and moving creatures, and God gave them the power of reproduction, enabling them to exist forever as long as the Blessed God will desire the existence of the world," (Ramban referring to Lev 19:19). The prohibition of kilayim is, therefore, an affirmation of species and diversity as they currently exist.

Sending the Mother Bird Away: The Torah records the insistence that one who gathers eggs from a nest must first shoo the mother away (Deut. 22:6). While the Torah doesn't reveal a reason for this practice, medieval rabbis were emphatic in linking this mitzvah to the preservation of species: In the Sefer Ha-Hinnukh, we are told that "God's desire is for the endurance of God's species…for under the watchful care of the One who lives and endures forever…it [every species] will find enduring existence through God," (*Sefer Ha-Hinnukh,* #515 of the 613 Mitzvot). Ramban speculates that "it may be that Scripture does not permit us to destroy a species altogether, although it permits slaughter [for food] within that group. Now, one who kills the dam and the young in one day, or takes them when they are free to fly, it is as though he cut off that species," (Ramban, to Deut. 22:6). Both of these authoritative rabbis understand this mitzvah as demonstrating the importance of maintaining each species of plant and animal. Jewish conduct must support the divine intention that each species thrives.

Slaughtering the Animal and its Young: Leviticus 22:28 prohibits slaughtering the mother ox or sheep and her young on the same day. As with the rule about releasing the mother bird, this law was understood in terms of assuring the continuation of existent species. In this area, Jewish thinkers articulate an explicit notion that providence extends over

entire species. Just as environmental ethics values the species over the individual member of the species, Jewish thought insists that each species of animal has a "right" to exist that comes from, and is protected by, God. In the words of the *Sefer Ha-Hinnukh*, "One should reflect that the watchful care of the Blessed God extends to all the species of living creatures generally, and with God's providential concern for them they will endure permanently."

Kashrut (Dietary Laws): While the dietary laws don't speak directly to the issue of biodiversity, they do express the Biblical emphasis on species as categories deserving attention and respect. In Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14, the Torah delineates categories of animals which may and may not be eaten. One thoughtful scholar has suggested that the categories of *tahor* (pure) and *tamei* (impure) actually tell us what part of creation is available for our use (what we call "pure") and what part not authorized for human benefit (what we call "impure"). This remarkable observation highlights the fact that Judaism sees much of creation as existing for the satisfaction and self-expression of God, not humanity. Jews are not allowed to eat most animal species, and designating them as *tamei* reminds the observant Jew that the purpose of the world is not to please humans. As the midrash notes, "It is not thanks to you that rain falls, or that the sun shines—it is thanks to the animals," (Bereshit Rabbah 33:1).

Each of these mitzvot direct Jews to demonstrate their reverence for creation as it is. Taken together, they form an essay on the subject of deeds that serve the Creator by maintaining the creation as we find it. If God made all these species deliberately, we can do no less than assist in their continuing vitality. If God's loving care extends over the range of living things, our love must be sufficiently strong to keep them alive—as a tribute to our Creator, as the best defense for our own survival, and as an abiding expression of our love of life.

The Jewish Role as Steward

The beginning of Jewish values is the Beginning. Recognizing God as Creator, the Torah asserts that the world is not haphazard, coincidental, or meaningless. Rather, the expression of divine exuberance, as the embodiment and recipient of God's bounty, creation is saturated with meaning and value. The world's merit does not result merely from its usefulness to people, but from its status as God's creation. Each new species inspires the divine judgment "it is good" because the goodness of creation is enhanced by the addition of each new group. Consequently, each species has a vital role to play in the unfolding pageant that is life. We impoverish that drama each time we reduce the cast of characters. We literally diminish the greatness of God when we diminish the greatness of God's sovereignty.

In our role as stewards, we humans can preserve the diversity of living creatures. Embodied in forms ever more intricate and diverse, life becomes a polyphonic symphony in praise of its Source. The more the types of instruments, the more intriguing the melody; the more the number of species, the more resplendent the creation.

The Kabbalists saw biodiversity not in terms of a symphony at work, but of a congregation at prayer. In the words of Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav, "every blade of grass sings poetry to God," (Likkutei MoHaRaN, 306). Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook affirmed that "everything that grows says something, every stone whispers some secret, all creation sings." For creation to function as a congregation, we must train ourselves to identify with all creatures and with all creation. We must discipline our desires and work for the well-being of the whole.

For the Jew, God's unity pervades creation: all are connected to each, and each to all. The unity of what God has created envelopes us, providing us with context and with goals. The diversity of all living things constitutes yet another context, a rainbow in which each species' distinctiveness adds to the resplendence of the totality, and in which any group's extinction impoverishes and endangers the rest.

At present, the oneness of all living things is hidden, masked by our species' self-regard and seeming self-reliance. But the illusion of humanity's dominion, maintained by our selfishness and delusions of power, will one day give way before the unification of God and God's name. After all, this vision of unity, of a time in which God, humanity, and creation live together in reverent balance is both as contemporary as environmental ethics and as ancient as Scripture. Our covenant, as Jews and as God's stewards, impels us to assure the flourishing of the diversity that God created. Our calling, as Jews and as caretakers of God's creatures, is to exert our best effort to protect all of life, and to fortify our faith in the bounteous flowering of life in which the Psalms rejoice:

"Praise God, sun and moon,
praise God, all bright
stars. . . !
Praise Adonai, all who are
on the earth,
all sea monsters and
ocean depths, . . .
All mountains and hills,
all fruit trees and cedars,
all wild and tamed beasts,
creeping things and
winged birds, all monarchs
and peoples of the earth!"
—Psalm 148:1-11 ❑

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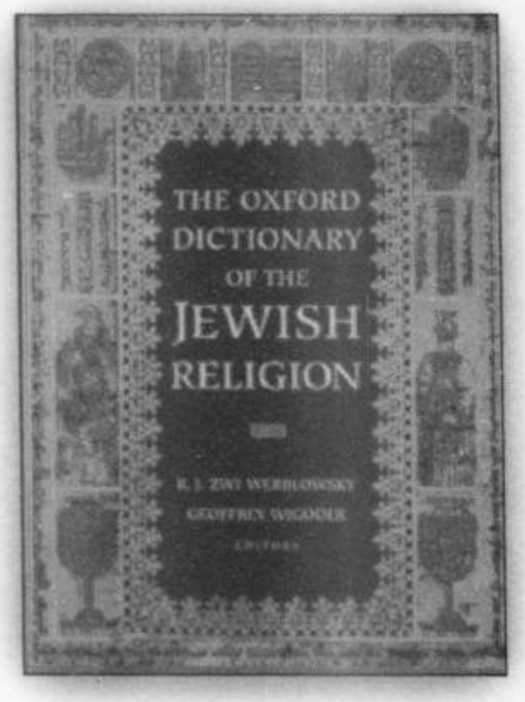
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DETACH AND SAVE

בְּרֹאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה יִכָּתֵבוּן. וּבְיוֹם צוֹם כִּפּוּר יֵחָתֵמוּן.

Taking Spiritual Transformation Seriously

High Holiday Supplement 5758

Jewish Renewal and Chasidic synagogues emphasize joy and celebration on the High Holy Days. We are celebrating a central message of Judaism that comes into focus on the High Holy Days: that God is the force of transformation in the universe, and that all the ways that our society and our individual lives are "not o.k." can be changed. The ten day period that begins with Rosh HaShanah and ends with Yom Kippur can be used as a profound psycho-spiritual transformative process—a time for each of us and all of our community institutions to become involved in introspection and transformation.

We at TIKKUN have developed this workbook as an aid in the process of *T'shuvah* (repentence or return to our highest selves). Please bring it with you to synagogue, or work on it during this ten day period.

In many synagogues, the High Holiday services are not particularly conducive to this inner spiritual work. In some synagogues, the energy is primarily social (look who is here, let's catch up on what is happening in each other's lives, etc.). In other synagogues, an obsessive focus on saying every prayer in the book often leads to spiritual indigestion. Saying all the prayers can become a substitute for actually engaging in the process of inner introspection and transformation that is the real point of the holidays. Particularly if the rest of your holiday is filled with family and friends, and the intervening days between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur are filled with normal work activities, the holiday season becomes a frenetic experience that has little to do with spiritual tranformation or repentance.

So, if you don't belong to a Jewish Renewal synagogue which gives time to this t'shuvah process during the services, we recommend that you bring this workbook with you, begin to think about it during the services, and then in the days after Rosh HaShanah go through this workbook systematically—and bring it with you to review on Yom Kippur.

Even better: find someone who wants to go through this process with you. Below we explain how to use the t'shuvah partner to make this process deeper. You may also benefit from reading relevant parts from Arthur Waskow's *Seasons of Our Joy,* Michael Lerner's *Jewish Renewal: A Path to Healing and Transformation* (particularly chapters 2 and 15), Rami Shapiro's *Minyan: Ten Principles for Living a Life of Integrity,* and David Cooper's *God is a Verb.* Beware not to make instructive spiritual reading a substitute for actually doing the inner transformation outlined below.

Spiritual Transformation: The T'shuvah Process

The following are elaborations on themes developed by Michael Lerner in his book, Jewish Renewal

Now, in each case, write down what part of the problem might have been generated by you, and what about the way you are in that relationship might have been a part (not the entirety) of the problem. And what part of that, about how you are, is something you might consider working on in this T'shuvah period?

PROBLEM	WHAT YOU CONTRIBUTE TO IT
Father	
1.	
2.	
Mother	
1.	
2.	
Spouse, Lover, or Potentials	
1.	
2.	
Friends and Children	
1.	
2.	

DETACH AND SAVE

World of Work

What have been the problems you've faced here? Have you had good relationships with co-workers? Have you felt fulfilled in your work? Have you been involved in collective efforts to change the workplace, or the union, or tried to organize, or have you felt powerless and unable to envision changing anything? If you were in a supervisory position, did you treat your supervisees with the respect that they deserve? If you were unemployed, what efforts did you make to change that, or were you feeling more defeated than necessary? Did you stay in a job or remain unemployed because you felt that you didn't deserve something better, or did you make serious efforts to find more fulfilling work? Or, if you recognized that such work was unavailable, did you join with others to challenge the economic realities that make work unfulfilling, or did that seem too overwhelming? If your work is unfulfilling, did you blame yourself inappropriately, or involve yourself in struggles to change the workplace? Did you discharge anger from work by punishing yourself (e.g., through alcohol or drugs) or by dumping on friends or lovers, or did you express that anger at the appropriate targets, or through collective action? What could have been different?

PROBLEM	WHAT YOU CONTRIBUTE TO IT
Relationship to Co-Workers?	
Relationship to Supervisors or Supervisees	
How healthy were your coping mechanisms with stress at work?	
Did you inappropriately blame yourself, or dump anger inappropriately on others?	
What kind of political action did you take in relationship to work?	

Respect for Your Body

Did you care for your body in a good way this past year? If not, what didn't you do that you should have done?

Eating

Exercise

Vacations

Clothing and Appearance

Self-Presentation

Quiet Time or Meditation

Respect for Your Soul

Did you care for your soul in a good way this past year? If not, what didn't you do that you should have done?

In what ways did you care for your soul this past year?

In what ways did you neglect your soul?

Did it give you any messages that you ignored? What were they?

Did you take time to read the books that would have expanded your awareness of spiritual life? If not, what do you want to read this next year?

DETACH AND SAVE

אִמֵּינוּ רַחֲמֵנוּ חָנֵּנוּ וְעַנֵּנוּ כִּי אֵין בָּנוּ מַעֲשִׂים

Did you take the time to read other books that would have given you pleasure and joy? If not, what do you want to read this next year?

What courses (evening schools in liberal arts or a new profession, art programs, Hebrew, Jewish studies, studying a new musical instrument, learning a martial art, learning about another culture or philosophical tradition) did you want to take to expand your horizons? What would you like to take this next year?

What pleasures did you give to yourself this year? Which do you want to expand or initiate this coming year? Did you allow yourself to go to art exhibits, plays, musical concerts, poetry readings, discussion groups, community political action activities, or other things that would have given you pleasure? What do you want to do in this regard in the next year?

Tikkun Olam: Healing and Repairing the World

In what ways is the political, economic, and social world functioning that are destructive, harmful, or hurtful to people in other countries, to people in the U.S., or to you personally?

Consider, for example, Bosnia, Haiti, China, Rwanda, Israel, Palestine, domestic poverty, homelessness.

What concrete steps have you taken to be involved in or to form some group that would address any of these?

If you haven't been involved, what were the reasons you gave yourself? Which of those reasons presupposed a "surplus powerlessness" (a way in which you were actually assuming yourself less able to initiate things or take leadership than is "objectively" true)?

If you tried to be involved, and had hassles or disappointments with other people in the process, what were those and what part did you have in making or sustaining them? What did you do to confront the problems directly? If you tried to confront the problems and failed, did you give up or did you attempt to form another group addressing the same problems, but this time under your own leadership and direction? If not, what could you have done in this direction?

In what ways did you buy the message that "they will never listen," or "I can never get things to happen," or "I'm not powerful enough to start something so I'll wait for someone else to do it," or "Other people are too untogether or too immoral or too passive, so there's no point in me trying to mobilize them," or other similar messages?

Judaism and the Jewish World

In what ways did you explore your relationship with God this past year, or in what ways did you ignore that dimension of life? Did you read any books or attend lectures or courses or dedicate time to exploring the spiritual dimension of your life?

How much did you seek to deepen your knowledge of Judaism, Jewish history, Jewish texts, or the culture of the Jewish people or of Israel? What opportunities were there and what were the reasons you gave yourself for why this year wasn't the right time?

Did you allow yourself to take 25 hours out of your busy schedule to observe Shabbat in a traditional way? If not, what part of Shabbat did you observe? How fulfilling or spiritually deep did you allow it to be? If it wasn't, what explanations did you give yourself for why it wasn't working? What would you have wished it to be?

Did you allow others to convince you to separate the religious from the social/political transformative aspects of Judaism? How did that happen in your life?

Did you involve yourself in activity, or help financially support TIKKUN, *New Israel Fund, Peace Now, or some other Jewish group in which you believed? What held you back?*

After Netanyahu's electoral victory, new Israeli settlement activity in East Jerusalem, and the resulting Hamas terrorism, did you renew your commitment to peace and reconciliation between Israel and the Palestinians, or did you distance yourself and imagine that you weren't really involved?

Did you challenge aspects of the Jewish world that you don't like or that are too conservative, conformist or spiritually dead? Did you give support to those who do challenge?

Personal Traits

Do you find yourself sometimes exhibiting behaviors or traits that you wish were not there? Check which of these apply to you, and when, during the past year, it played a hurtful role in your life:

1. *Fear that others won't or don't like you*
2. *Self-denigration or lack of self-respect*
3. *Inability to express anger*
4. *Self-punishing or self-blame*
5. *Excessive criticalness toward others*
6. *Rejection of others' caring or love for you*
7. *Coldness or insensitivity to others*
8. *Paranoia*
9. *Depression*
10. *Excessive controlling of others*
11. *Confusion*
12. *Tardiness*
13. *Disorganization*
14. *Excessive focus on details or petty issues*
15. *Lying*
16. *Manipulating others*
17. *Disrespect toward others, subtly or overtly*
18. *Inability to let go*
19. _____
20. _____

Now, go over the lists of issues that have come up for you during this past year, and dedicate one or two days to each area during the coming **T'shuvah** period. Make a copy of this page for each area, so that you can fill in a separate one for each problem issue. Then, do the following:

A. *Imagine if you don't change some important aspect of this area. Now list some of the bad consequences* (ro'a ha'g'zeyra) *that might come to pass in the next few years if things stay the same as they have been.*

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

B. *The tradition says that* "t'shuvah, t'fillah u tzedakah ma' avirin et ro'a ha'g'zeyra" *(yearning, caring and turning can temper the harshness of the decree). So, compose a prayer asking for God's help in dealing with this issue and what kind of help you want.*

C. *Now, decide which part of this area you can work on in this coming year.*

D. *Who is already doing the good work and is your ally in this matter? Write out the name or names of those currently struggling with this issue. Write out a resolution to help, through donating time or money, to this person's/organization's work, and ways that you will allow yourself to learn from them or participate with them, or get therapy from them, or work with them.*

E. *What specific plan will you follow this coming year, and what specific steps will you take to change your behavior? (Use a blank piece of paper to write a detailed plan.)*

F. *What first steps could you take within the limited ten-day period of t'shuvah that address this issue in some real or symbolic way? What specific help do you need to take them?*

DETACH AND SAVE

DETACH AND SAVE

וְעַל כֻּלָּם אֱלוֹהַ סְלִיחוֹת, סְלַח לָנוּ, מְחַל לָנוּ, כַּפֶּר לָנוּ.

T'shuvah "Partner" or Support Group

It's hard enough to be sufficiently honest with oneself to list the issues. But when it comes to figuring out what to do, this is often blocked for many of us. So, we take on a "partner" or a support group that will assist us in thinking about first steps and a plan to change things. This is particularly important in dealing with the issues where you feel most blocked, where you simply can't imagine how to take the first step to change the dynamics of a bad relationship or a troubling internal trait.

The goal of the partner, however, is not to make concrete suggestions. Rather, the partner's goal is to encourage you to verbally explore every possibility, and to ask you if you have explored avenues that may occur to the partner or support-group person that haven't occurred to you. Then, switch, and you play that role for the partner, asking them the relevant questions. There is a thin line here, because sometimes asking about possibilities is really a subtle way of trying to suggest a course of action. Don't do that! You are not a therapist and this is not a therapy group, and you have not been commissioned to solve someone else's problems. So be sure not to convey the sense that you know that a particular road to go is the right one. Instead, keep asking about a wide variety of options, and help the person consider those options through asking, whenever a roadblock appears, whether that person can think of any ways to get around the roadblock. After Yom Kippur, consider checking in with each other once a month this year.

Partner's name or names of people in the support group:
(Use a separate piece of paper if necessary)

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

CHECKING IN WITH EACH OTHER

During the week, arrange to talk to your partner or at least one member of the support group every day (yes, every day). The phone call can be as short as, "Did you get to work on your t'shuvah *work today? If not, do you want to do it now on the phone? If not now, is there some time later today we can discuss it?" On Shabbat and Yom Tov, arrange for a time to get together (one hour, half of which goes to one person, half to the other, to explore their issues and the steps they are taking).*

CONFIDENTIALITY

You keep this. It's your promise from your partner or members of your group that they will keep whatever you discuss totally confidential. So have them sign the pledge.

"I promise to keep any information I learn from (print your name here) _____ *totally confidential, to not share it with others in any way, and to not refer to it in any public or private way in future dealings I have with this person or with anyone else, except as explicitly agreed to by the person listed above."*

T'shuvah partner or group members sign here:

_____

For Our Sins

A Supplement to the High Holiday Prayerbook

We invite you to use the following along with the traditional confessional prayer, "**Al Cheyt**," recited on Yom Kippur. Members of your community might spend time together before or during the services to discuss this supplement and add to it your own ideas and concerns. The "sins" need not be those of you or your friends. The idea of a collective confessional is that we are inextricably linked and hence must take responsibility for the entire community involved. Please discuss this version of the **Al Cheyt**, or write your own. If you use this prayer and T'shuvah workbook, you can ensure that the spiritually powerful experience of the High Holidays does not get lost in a rote recitation of prayers that feel remote, expressing the sensibilities of another time and place.

FOR OUR SINS

On the Jewish High Holy Days we take collective responsibility for our lives and for the activities of the community of which we are a part.

Although we realize that we did not create the world into which we are born, we nevertheless have responsibility for what it is like as long as we participate in it.

While the struggle to change ourselves and our world may be long and painful, it is our struggle. No one else can do it for us. To the extent that we have failed to do all that we could to make ourselves or our community all that we ought to be, we ask God and each other for forgiveness—and we now commit ourselves to acting differently this coming year.

Ve-al kulam, Eloha selichot, selach lanu, mechal lanu, kaper lanu. **For all our sins, may the force that makes forgiveness possible forgive us, pardon us, and make atonement possible.**

For the sins we have committed before you and in our communities by being so preoccupied with ourselves that we ignore the larger problems of the world in which we live;

And for the sins we have committed by being so directed toward outward realities that we have ignored our spiritual development;

For the sins of accepting the current distribution of wealth and power as unchangeable;

And for the sins of giving up on social change and focusing exclusively on personal advancement and success;

For the sins of feeling so powerless when we hear about oppression that we finally close our ears;

And for the sins of dulling our outrage at the continuation of poverty, oppression, and violence in this world;

And for the sins we have committed by allowing our food and our air to be poisoned;

For the sins of not doing enough to save the environment;

DETACH AND SAVE

And for the sins of not doing enough to challenge sexist institutions and practices;

For the sins of turning our backs on—or participating in—the oppression of gays and lesbians;

For the sins of not doing enough to alleviate homelessness, poverty, and world hunger;

For the sins of not recognizing the deprivation of meaning—and the systematic frustration of our need for mutual recognition, love, and spiritual nourishment—as the source of so much frustration and pain in our society.

For the sins of cynicism and passivity about social change;

And for the sins of expecting that our leaders and activists must be perfect, or far more together than the rest of us;

For the sin of accepting a world in which the "bottom line" is money and power, and not fighting for a new bottom line of love and caring;

And for the sin of being cynical about the possibility of building a world based on love;

For the sin of spreading negative stories about people we know; and for the sin of listening and allowing others to spread negative stories;

For the sin of not publicly defending our leaders when they are unfairly attacked, and for the sin of not giving our leaders and activists the emotional and material support they need to continue to do the work that we depend on them to do;

For these sins we ask God and each other to give us the strength to forgive ourselves and each other.

For the sins we have committed by not forgiving our parents for the wrongs they committed when we were children;

And for the sins of having too little compassion or too little respect for our parents or for our children;

For the sins of cooperating with self-destructive behavior in others or in ourselves;

And for the sins of not supporting each other as we attempt to change;

For the sins of not seeing the spark of divinity within each person we encounter or within ourselves;

And for the sins of not learning from and giving adequate respect and care to our elders and to our teachers;

For the sins of being jealous and trying to possess and control those whom we love;

And for the sins of being judgmental of others and ourselves;

For the sins of withholding love and support;

And for the sins of doubting our ability to love and get love from others;

For the sins of insisting that everything we do have a payoff;

For the sins of not recognizing the beauty within ourselves;

And for the sins of not recognizing the beauty that surrounds us;

For the sins of not allowing ourselves to play;

And for the sins of being manipulative or hurting others to protect our own egos;

Ve-al kulam, Eloha
selichot, selach lanu,
mechal lanu, kaper lanu

For the sins we have committed by not publicly supporting the Jewish people and Israel when they are being treated or criticized unfairly;

And for the sins we have committed by not publicly criticizing Israel or the Jewish people when they are acting in opposition to the highest principles of the Jewish tradition;

For the sins of not recognizing the humanity and suffering of the Palestinian people and the injustice they face living under the unwanted Occupation;

And for the sins of punishing the entire Palestinian people for the terrorist acts of a small number;

For the sins of allowing conservative or insensitive leaders to speak on behalf of all American Jews; and allowing our institutions to be governed by those with the most money rather than those with the most spiritual and ethical sensitivity;

And for the sins of not supporting those institutions and leaders that have attempted to provide an alternative voice;

For the sins of being critical of Jewish life from a distance rather than from a personal involvement or commitment;

And for the sins of not spending more time engaged in learning the Jewish tradition and studying Jewish history, literature, and holy texts;

For the sins of giving up on Judaism because it didn't satisfy our highest spiritual and ethical values, rather than engaging in the process of building a Jewish renewal movement;

And for the sins of being insensitive or insulting to non-Jews;

For the sin of not recognizing and treating with respect the diversity of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, including Sephardic, Mizrachi, Ethiopian, Ashkenazic and Black Jews, the diversity of class backgrounds, the diversity of sexual orientation, and the diversity of ways that we address the spiritual truths of the universe;

For the sins of not having compassion for one another;

And for not taking care of one another;

For the sins of not sharing responsibility for childbearing;

And for the sins of self-absorption, allowing us to be insulated from the loneliness and need of people around us;

For the sins of focusing only on our sins and not our strengths and beauties;

And for the sins of not adequately rejoicing and celebrating the beauty and grandeur of God's creation;

Ve-al kulam, Eloha
selichot, selach lanu,
mechal lanu, kaper lanu

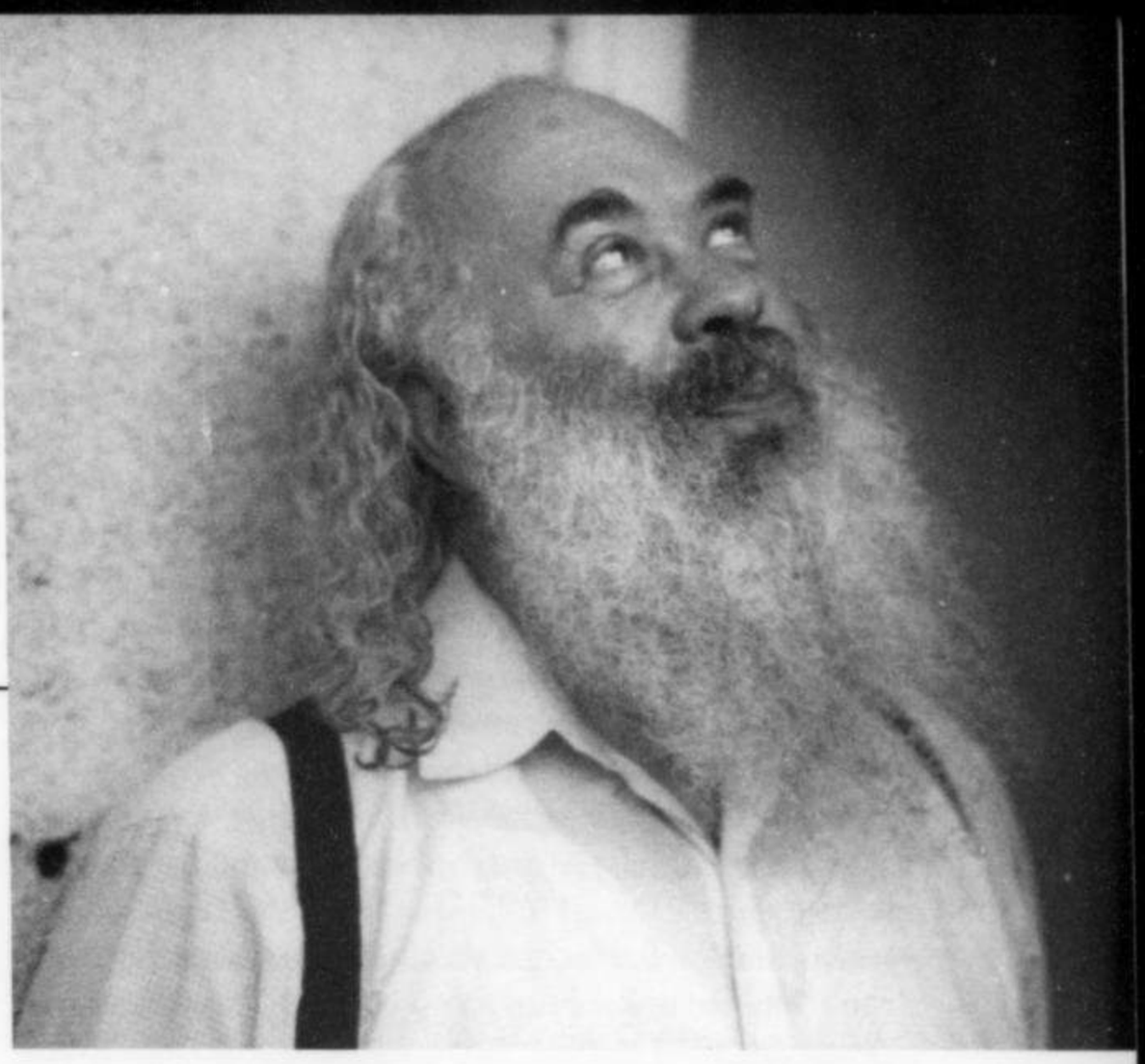
For all these, Lord of Forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, grant us atonement.

In some congregations the service stops after this is read, and people divide into small groups of four to five and discuss what particular aspects of this prayer make most sense to them, what they are going to do differently in the coming year; what support they need from others to help make changes in their lives, and what they are going to do to secure that support.

Composed by Michael Lerner, editor, TIKKUN *magazine, for Yom Kippur, 5758; October 1997. Make copies of these prayers and workbook—send them to friends and family. And urge them to help* TIKKUN *by subscribing: (send a check for $31 to* TIKKUN, *26 Fell Street, San Francisco, CA 94102).*

INTERVIEW

Practical Wisdom from Shlomo Carlebach



TIKKUN: You are one of America's most famous and most loved Orthodox rabbis. Your music has become so widely accepted in all branches of Judaism that many people believe it to be the eternal melodies used by our ancestors, unaware of you and your creativity. Could you tell us something about your family background?

SHLOMO CARLEBACH: Carlebach is an old rabbinic dynasty. In 1840, my great grandfather left the city of Ishbeter in Poland and became a rabbi in Germany, and my grandfather became a rabbi in Rybeck, near Hamburg. He had eight sons and four daughters (five sons became rabbis, and three of the four daughters married rabbis). My father went to Berlin and later to America, and he was always pumping into me and my brother that "you have to be good rabbis." To give an example of how important it was in our family: my father used to tell me that I had to keep my yarmulke on my head, otherwise I couldn't become a rabbi. One day I threw off the yarmulke and my brother started to cry and kept crying for hours, and he was crying because "my brother will never be a rabbi." My dream was to be the greatest Talmud scholar in the world. So I was learning day and night. I was learning 48 hours a day. I didn't want to be disturbed by what was going on in the world. I spent a few years at the *yeshiva* [an academy of advanced Jewish studies] in Lakewood, N.J., and I didn't even look at the headlines of the newspapers—I didn't want to have anything to do with the world.

While we were in Vienna, when I was a kid, the old Lubavitcher rabbi came to our house and he took me and my brother aside and said, "I bless you that you will some day be Chassidishe Yidden [Chassidic Jews], and don't be German little boys." This was around 1931, and I was about six.

TIKKUN: So your father wasn't a Chassid?

CARLEBACH: My father was a real German Orthodox rabbi. He loved every Jew. And he had his heart open for the whole world. He was very good friends with the Cardinal of Vienna [Ritzinger]. In my father's house, I met the absolutely greatest rabbis of the world. My father was also a man of the world.

Since I was five years old I always had private teachers, a young man living in our house so that we could learn day and night. When I was six, seven, eight we also had secular teachers who came to teach secular knowledge—all private teachers; we didn't go to school. According to good German education, children at a certain time must go to bed so that they can be alert the next day. But I had a deal with my teacher, who was a young man living on the third floor, that after I was supposed to be asleep I would sneak out of my room and study with him, studying day and night. It doesn't mean I wasn't playing football like crazy or that I didn't have a bike. I even thought if I didn't become a rabbi I'd become a bicycle racer (there were races in our city, and I entered and always won).

Then we faced the rise of fascism, and all of a sudden all those kids who we thought were our best friends turned on us and started to hate us. Unbelievable. So we came to America and eventually I went to Lakewood Yeshiva.

I was very much into learning, but eventually I went to the Lubavitcher Rebbe and he told me that the world needed more rabbis who could talk to people. I told him that I loved learning, but he told me that I should stop thinking just about what I personally loved to do, and focus more on what the world needed. So I started doing that: talking to people about Judaism.

From 1951 to 1955 I was, *mamash* [really], the Rebbe's right-hand man. Today, Lubavitcher sends out messengers all over the world, but then it wasn't yet organized and I was one of the first, actually Zalman [Schachter-Shalomi] and I were the first messengers of the Lubavitcher Rebbe. Zalman and I were his representatives, teaching his message to the world.

So I did outreach. But I had some problems and I told the Rebbe about it. "Last night," I told the Rebbe one day, "I had one hundred people come to learn with me and sing with me." But in those days the Rebbe had the position that women couldn't sing with men [*kol ishah*—women's voices would sexually arouse men according to some Orthodox

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Until his death in 1994, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, rabbi of Kihillat Jacob in Manhattan, was America's most popular Chassidic songwriter. This interview was conducted a year before his death and is being printed now for the first time to remind our community of the voices of tolerance in the Orthodox world.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOAN ROTH

traditions]. So I told the Rebbe, "When I told them that we had to sit separately men from women, I lost 90 people, and when I told them that women couldn't sing, I lost nine more, and the one person who remained was the biggest idiot. So instead of spending two hours with people who wanted to know something about *Yiddishkeit*, I wasted my time on one idiot. Let's assume that it's very important that men and women shouldn't sit together. Still, this is like a manicure for Judaism, making it super-beautiful, but if the person is having a heart attack you don't give him a manicure. So I can't do outreach this way."

So the Rebbe said to me, "I cannot tell you to do it your way. But I can't tell you *not* to do it your way. So if you want to do it on your own, God be with you." So I split. If I had stayed, and the Rebbe had gone with what I was saying, he could have been Rebbe of the world, not just Rebbe of the Chassidim.

Take Woodstock. Why should Swami Satchananda go there—why not the Lubavitcher Rebbe? It would have been a *gevalt*—it would have changed a whole generation. But the Rebbe chose to be the Rebbe of the Chassidim. You know, a few years after the Rebbe became chosen to be the Lubavitcher Rebbe, he wrote a letter to his Chassidim and said, "I have so many unbelievable dreams, but I can't do them because your heads are so small."

So then, let's assume I was a little bit homeless. I was not with Lubavitch, I was not in Lakewood, and for two or three years I managed. Then I saw someone playing guitar, and I started learning. I got a teacher, and one day while she was on the phone I started making up a melody and she heard it, said it sounded beautiful, and she wrote it down. Then she said, "Whenever you have a new song, call me and I'll write it down." So a few days later I had a new melody, for the wedding song "Od Yeeshamah," and I called her up and she wrote it down. And that's how my career began.

And so I began to sing my songs, and in between one song and another I realized I could talk to people about Judaism, because when they sing their hearts are open. I made a living singing.

In fact, the first time I did a concert at a shul, I arrived late.

TIKKUN: How completely out of character for you…*[laughter, because Shlomo became famous for always coming late]*.

CARLEBACH: So the president of the synagogue gets up when I arrive and he says, "We will not be paying Rabbi Carlebach for this concert because he is late." And so I said, "Dear friend, you think you are paying for my singing? I sing for free." And so I did the concert anyway.

In 1959 I came out with my first record, and with the money I made from that I bought myself a ticket and went to Israel. I started singing there. I didn't think anyone would pay attention to me, so I was just sitting on street corners singing and slowly, slowly.... And my first concert in Jerusalem that summer, thousands of people attended, it was *gevalt*. And then I managed to spend half of each year in Israel and half in America.

Then, in 1966, the greatest thing happened to me. I was invited to the Berkeley Folk Festival. There I saw all these thousands of young people who the world condemned as being dope addicts and I realized that they were yearning for something holy, and their souls were so pure, awesome! The festival began on Thursday morning. On Friday morning I announced that tonight I'm going to the synagogue and anyone who might want should join me. I thought maybe ten or fifteen people would show up, but over two thousand came to the small synagogue.

I thought that the people at the synagogue would be so happy that they came, but the president called me up and said, "It was the most disgusting thing that ever happened." We had people staying and celebrating Shabbat till four in the morning, studying and singing, and then the way that the synagogue responded was a shame. So I realized I had to have my own place. So we created in San Francisco the House of Love and Prayer and until 1976 they were there and then many of the best people there went to the *moshav* in Modi'in in Israel.

TIKKUN: What was it about the Jewish world that turned off these young people from Judaism, people whom you saw as "pure souls?"

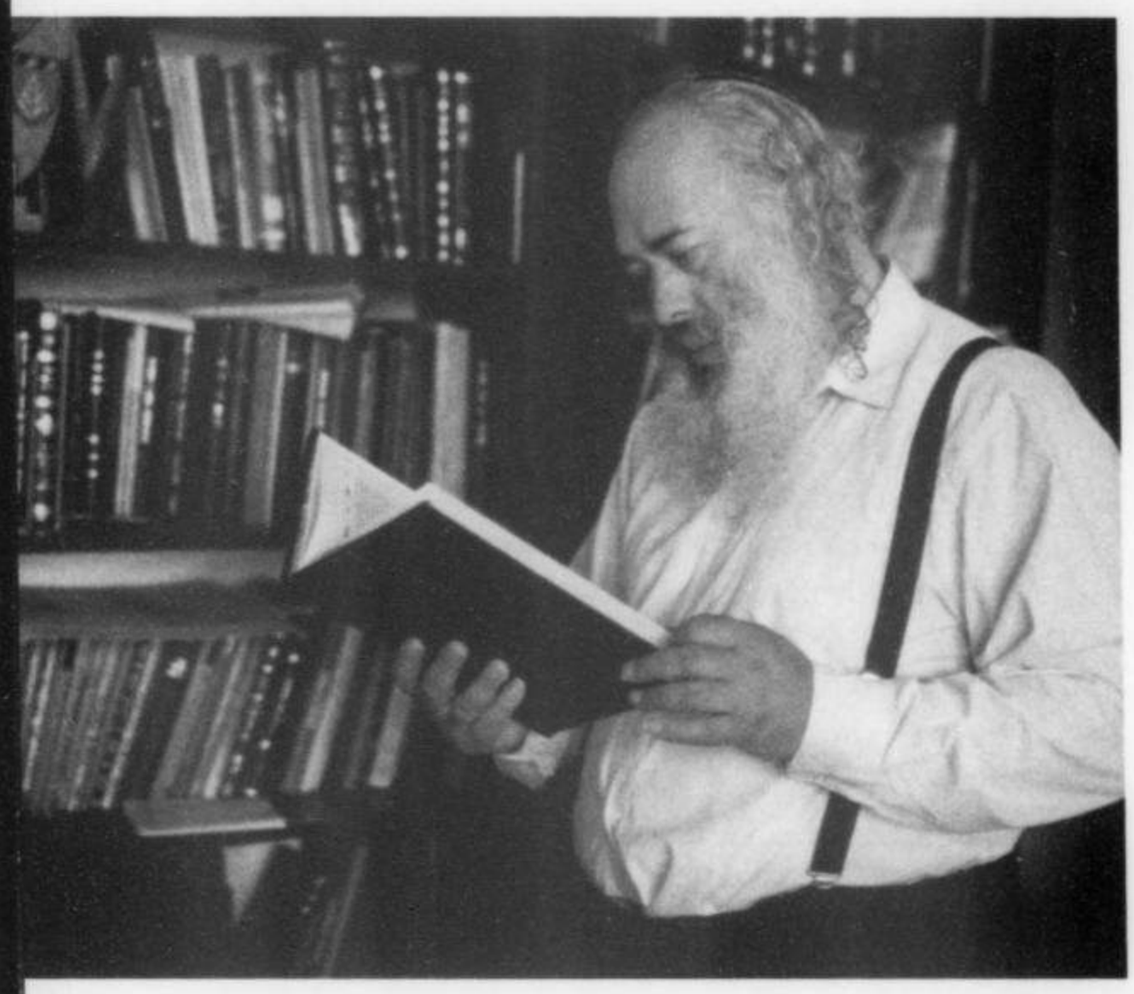
CARLEBACH: Let me quote Rav Kook, one of our greatest prophets. He says the world always thinks that religious people are the ones who are close to religion, and non-religious ones don't care about religion. But it is often the case that the non-religious people are yearning for something so deep and they look at the religious people and they don't find that there. People who are announcing themselves as messengers of God are often very mediocre people and they don't even sense the yearning of those unbelieving people. I see it all the time in Israel. All those secular soldiers in the Israeli army want something deeper than what they see among the religious. I once went to visit our Israeli troops in Lebanon during the Lebanese War, and I met the IDF chaplain and asked him, "How is everything?" And he responded, "Fine. The meat is kosher." So I said, "If I want good salami, I wouldn't come to Lebanon for it. How are the soldiers doing? Are you talking to them?" He said, "Oh, they aren't religious, they aren't interested." So I said to him, "I'll bet you ten dollars that if you offer to teach these soldiers something deep, like Rav Kook, that they'll respond." So I went out to the unit, and walked up to the most coarse-looking soldier, and you could see on his face that he ate on Yom Kippur not three times but five times just to show you, and I walked up to him and I said, "Would you like to study Rav Kook, something for your soul?" His eyes lit up. He didn't even know that Jewish people talk about the soul. He thought all we talk about is kosher meat and a yarmulke and other religious rituals. Unbelievable.

TIKKUN: What could be done in the organized Jewish world so that the people who present Judaism could have this kind of approach?

CARLEBACH: Listen, Michael [Rabbi Michael Lerner conducted the interview], if everyone would have your vision, the messiah would be here already. The sad truth is that the people who teach Judaism think that when someone approaches them to learn about Judaism, the teachers think that they must teach them what to do and especially what not to do. I once met a homeopath and he told me the difference between conventional medicine and homeopathy is that medicine works from outside to inside, homeopathy works from inside to outside. That's the whole thing—religion has to work from inside to outside.

TIKKUN: In the past thirty years there is a movement called the *ba'al teshuvah* [master of repentance] movement, but it turns out that overall many more people are leaving Judaism than have come back. Do you have a strategy to create more people who can speak on the level of going from the inside to the outside, who will speak to the heart?

CARLEBACH: I started the House of Love and Prayer in San Francisco, and every Friday night hundreds of people would come. There was an opening so that we might have a whole generation. We could have taken over....There were



thousands of kids who were interested. I hate the name *ba'al teshuvah*, because it implies that these young people were doing wrong and now they are repenting. I said to the Jewish establishment, "We have to do teshuvah, we must have done so much wrong that these kids left us." They are the real *tzadikkim* [righteous ones]. They came back to Orthodox Judaism, and the first time they were told that up until now you were a sinner. No. Every religion is a flashlight. We in Judaism have a psychedelic light, but there is no need to knock any other religion. I love a girl and want to marry her, I don't have to say that every other girl is ugly.

At the beginning of the House of Love and Prayer, there was a man who came to services on Friday night and at the end of the service he pulled out an instrument and started to play. Of course, that is not what we do in an Orthodox shul on a Shabbat, but I said nothing, because he was coming on Shabbat and I was glad he was there. He did it again the next week, and the week after that, and then he came to me and said, "Thank you for not saying anything to me. I was testing your patience, and I now see that you really would accept me here." Now, he is a doctor and president of the PTA of an Orthodox yeshiva. I never, never tell people what to do.

God taught us one time on Mount Sinai. Imagine if God would be sending thunder and lightning every Friday and saying, "You Jews, you'd better keep Shabbos, otherwise I'll tear you out." But God doesn't do that. The holy Rebbe Sanzer called in his children after they were bar mitzvahed and he said to them, "From now on, I just want to be your best friend." That trust gave those children self-confidence.

But we pushed away 90 percent of the kids who wanted to come back. When they came to the Orthodox circles, they didn't find the real fire souls. We have a few million Jews, but we only have a few thousand *ba'al teshuvahs*. It's a joke.

TIKKUN: So do you have a strategy for how to change this? Your own shul attracts a few hundred wonderful people, but that isn't really doing the outreach on the level that you are talking. The only group that seems to have a strategy is the Lubavitch movement, and they seem to repeat the very errors you are talking about.

CARLEBACH: The most we can do is keep our hearts open, and when people come and want to learn, we can tell them where to learn. I have to tell people to go to yeshiva to learn, and unfortunately after a few weeks either they leave the yeshiva or you don't recognize them anymore because the spark is gone from their eyes and they don't care for the world anymore.

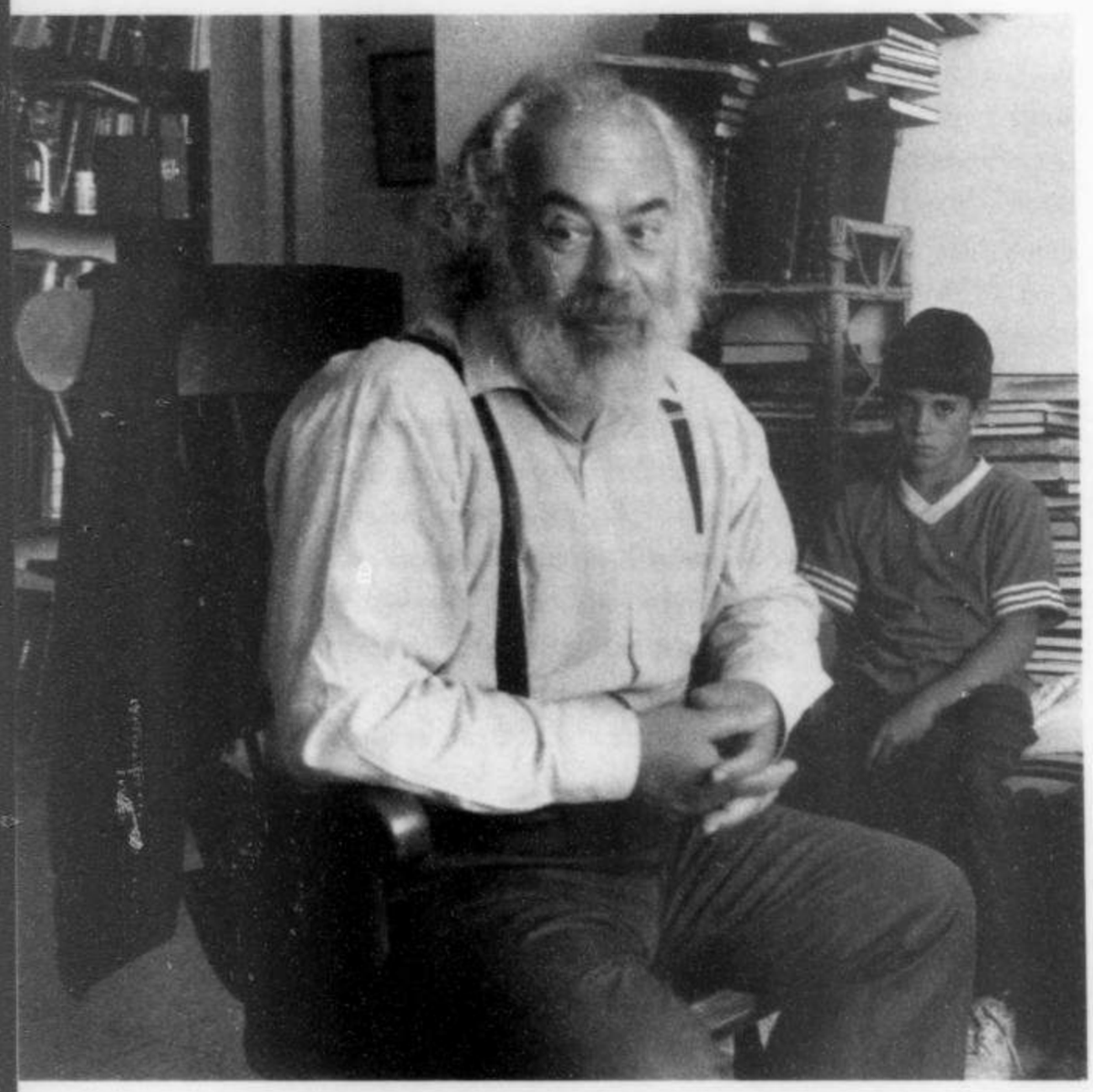
TIKKUN: You've said in the past that we don't have the right yeshiva. So what is the right yeshiva?

CARLEBACH: The right yeshiva is a place where there is so much love that it's awesome. God gave us Torah with so much love, so if I want to give over the Torah to my children it has to be done in that same way. Rabbi Nachman says that each time you learn you are bringing the Torah down from heaven. If you teach the Torah with anger, and tell them: "You have to, you have to, you have to"— No. It has to be so deep that they want to. The spiritual depths of the Torah have to be presented.

TIKKUN: It would be wonderful if our TIKKUN constituency could really learn from you. But I see two barriers. One is the issue of the relationship to women, the way that the tradition does not give enough space to women.

CARLEBACH: I know it's a bad scene on that question.

TIKKUN: The second issue is our relationship to "the other" in general, and to Palestinians in particular. The Jews jumped from the burning buildings of Europe and we landed on the backs of Palestinians. We were jumping for our



lives, and it wasn't our fault that we hurt others in the process. But we have to be sensitive that we did hurt others.... I remember this past Pesach when I saw you bringing your own daughter up to the bimah and her head was resting on your shoulders as you davened the Kedusha, so I know that you are struggling with this as best you can within the context of Orthodoxy, but the context of Halacha places real limits.

CARLEBACH: With Halacha I could manage. It's not Halacha, but the smallness of the heads of most people. In the House of Love and Prayer I didn't have a *mechitza* [separation between women and men].

After the Six Days War, I was one of the first people to walk into the Old City and I walked up to every Arab and kissed them, our cousins. I went to the top people in Israel, and I said, "If we want to live in peace with the Arabs, as much as we need an army to make war, we need an army to make peace. The army to make peace—give me five thousand free tickets to bring holy hippies from Los Angeles and San Francisco, to bring them here, and we will go to every Arab house in the country and bring them flowers and tell them that we want to be brothers with them. We will bring musicians and we will play at every Arab wedding and we want them to bring their bands to play at our weddings. We have to live together." So everyone was crying with the suggestions, but in the end they said, "Don't call us, we'll call you."

TIKKUN: We managed to turn a population into our enemies. The Palestinians, remember, did not fight in 1967. The Jordanians fought, but the Palestinians did not fight.

CARLEBACH: The heartbreaking thing is that until a few years ago we might have reversed things.

TIKKUN: To switch to another topic, what is your advice to people who find themselves in synagogues on the High Holy Days where there is very little happening spiritually? How do they change the situation?

CARLEBACH: They need to get themselves a better rabbi and a better cantor. Let me tell you a story.

Once I was invited to lead a Shabbat service for the Young Leadership of the UJA. So, people came and then the director of this particular group comes to me and says, "Rabbi, would you please do the davening in a hurry so that we can get people to eat in a short while." So, I said, "No, get yourself another rabbi if you want someone who is hurrying." I davened, and we went through the prayers with full intensity, and many of these people who thought that their entire relationship with Judaism was to sign a check had a very different kind of experience.

The next day these people held a session about the future of Judaism and some of the people were saying that their children were asking, "Why should we be Jewish?" And they didn't know what to say. They asked me, and I told them this: "If they are asking why, it's because they didn't experience anything that adequately turned them on, and that is our fault not theirs." And I told them, if you want to save Judaism, you have to shut all the synagogues and all the Hebrew Schools for one day, and then we have to reopen them with different rabbis and different cantors and different teachers. Because we are standing by while the current leadership is ruining a whole generation, and we don't say a word! We need new synagogues all over the United States. So they told me, "This is not reality."

TIKKUN: You seem to be having the same experience with the Jewish establishment that we at TIKKUN have had.

CARLEBACH: The establishment is bankrupt in the worst way.

TIKKUN: Perhaps you could help our readers learn something about the way that Judaism suggests to develop a personal spiritual practice. I know that it's often not easy to find in existing synagogues. I think of my experience saying Kaddish for my mother when I davened each morning at [the Orthodox synagogue in New York called] Oheb Zedek. It was a no-nonsense davening, everybody getting through the prayers as quickly as possible so that they could get down to Wall Street in the morning to be there for the opening bell. But not much seemed to be happening spiritually.

CARLEBACH: There was no time to get into saying "Good morning, God." Well, even if it may be hard for some people to find a synagogue in which to find genuine spiritual encounters, there are still many books to read that give people a way in. There is Buber, Heschel, Aryeh Kaplan. There are millions of things that are available if you are open to developing your spiritual life as a Jew and really open to seriously pursuing it. ❑

EXCERPT

God Is A Verb

Rabbi David A. Cooper

The Divine Kiss

Although we cannot cross the barrier between us and that which lies beyond infinity, we can experience in the depth of our being the realization that for each step we take, the Divine steps with us; each breath we draw is connected with the breath of the universe; and that lover, beloved, and the essence of love itself *all are reflections of exactly the same thing*. In each of these moments we "know" the presence of the Divine and there is no separation.

One of the great Jewish mystics of the thirteenth century, Abraham Abulafia, said about one who has achieved this level of spiritual awareness: "Now we are no longer separated from our source, and behold we are the source and the source is us. We are so intimately united with It, we cannot by any means be separated from It, for we are It."

There is a lovely Sufi story of a man who constantly cried out to God, but received no response. After a while the devil whispered to this man, "How long will you wait for God to respond 'Here I am' to all of your entreaties?" This broke the man's spirit and he stopped calling out to God. In a dream, however, he envisioned an image of the Divine who asked him why he had stopped. The man said that God had never answered his call. The wise dream-image, representing God, then said, "Did you not realize that every calling of yours IS itself my response?"



The urge to call out to God is always answered simultaneously as it is spoken, for ultimately there is no difference between the caller and that to which it calls.

The Kotzker Rebbe, Menahem Mendel, a famous Chasidic teacher in the nineteenth century who lived his last twenty years in voluntary seclusion, asked one of his students, "Where does God dwell?" As the student stumbled in his attempt to respond, the Kotzker Rebbe answered his own question, "God resides wherever we let God in!"

Mystics throughout time, in all traditions, have said the same thing. We do not have to search for God because the presence of the Divine permeates all things. If there is a search at all, it is God searching for Itself, so to speak.

God Is A Verb

The closest we can come to thinking about God is as a process rather than a being. We can think of it as "be-ing," as verb rather than noun. Perhaps it would help us understand this better if we renamed God. We might call it God-ing, as a process, rather than God, which suggests a noun.

This idea was developed by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, who goes further and explains that the kind of verb that represents God-ing is different from the ones we have in our ordinary language. Most of our verbs are considered transitive, which require a direct object, or intransitive, those that do not. He suggests that God-ing is a mutually interactive verb, one which entails an interdependency between two subjects, each being the object for the other.

For example, "communicating" could be such a verb. If I were speaking to an audience, I might not be communicating. I would be engaged in the act of communication, but if the audience were not attentive and were thinking about other things, I would not be communicating no matter how much I talked. My verbal communication is dependent upon a listener; it cannot be a one-way street. Other obvious verbs that fit into this category are loving, sharing, dancing, kissing, hugging, and so forth.

We can relate to God as an interactive verb. It is God-ing. Moreover, from this perspective, creation should not be treated as a noun. It too is an interactive verb; it is constantly

ILLUSTRATIONS BY OENONE TERRELL

Rabbi David A. Cooper is the author of The Heart of Stillness *(Bell Tower) and of the best-selling audio-tape series* The Mystical Kabbalah *(Sounds True). We print here a section from* God is A Verb: Kabbalah and the Practice of Mystical Judaism *forthcoming in the fall of 1997 from Riverhead/Putnam.*

creation-ing. And, dear reader, you should not treat yourself as a noun—as Joan, or Bill, or Barbara, or John. With regard to God as an interactive verb, you are also verbs; you are Joan-ing, Bill-ing, Barbara-ing, or John-ing in relation to God-ing, just as I am David-ing.

Each part in the universe is in dynamic relationship with every other part. In human interactions, such as marriage, one partner is husband-ing while the other is wife-ing. The two, in this sense, are one. We normally experience relationships in terms of their component parts; we are mistaken, however, when we assume the parts are separate.

"What would I be without God?"

Consider this from your inner awareness. Not you the noun, the person you may think you are, but you the verb, the process of being in full relationship, continuously, with its creator. When a question arises within you, who is asking the question and to whom is the question addressed? Assume that there is no "me" to ask the question and there is no God out there to answer it. The question is part of the process of David-ing and God-ing in a mutual unfolding.

Try to do this in a way that melts all barriers of separation. No subject and no object. Simply an ever-opening process. No past, no future; only now. Each moment is a fresh opening. Each breath we draw, each move we make is only Now. This is my dance with God-ing. It is an awesome experience.



The *Zohar* says: "Before shape and form were created, It [*Ein Sof*] was without form or appearance. Therefore, it is forbidden to perceive It in any way, not even by the letters of Its holy name or by any symbol. However, had Its brightness and glory not been radiated over the whole of creation, how could It have been discerned, even by the wise? Therefore, It descended on a [mystical] chariot to be known by the letters Y-H-V-H, in order that It could be inferred, and for this reason It allows Itself to be called by various names, such as *El*, *Elohim*, *Shaddai*, *Zevaoth*, and *Y-H-V-H* [among others, such as God], each being a symbol of divine attributes. However, woe to anyone who presumes to compare *Ein Sof* with any attributes. For it is limitless, and there are no means to comprehend It." Another zoharic teaching says: "That which is within the thought [of *Ein Sof*] is inconceivable. Much less can anyone know about *Ein Sof*, of which no trace can be found, and which cannot be reached by any means of thought. Yet, from the midst of this impenetrable mystery, the first descent of *Ein Sof* [whatever gives us insight regarding It] glimmers like a faint, undiscernible light just like the point of a needle, a hidden recess of thought which is not knowable until a light extends from it where there is an imprint of letters."

The Unknowable can be discerned. Beginning at an indefinable point as sharp as a needle, it radiates in various ways which can be perceived. This only occurs in the context of process and interaction. We are not an audience watching the God-ing process on stage. We are on stage, ourselves. We mysteriously begin to get a glimmer of God-ing when we succeed in merging with the continuous process of unfolding creation.

Our own experience of God-ing is not like anything we read about. It is a different kind of revelation than that described by ancient prophets. Perhaps some people still are able to hear a voice that booms out of the heavens. But this is rare, indeed, and even the Talmud has serious questions about its veracity.

However, we do not have to be prophets to experience God-ing. It is everywhere around us and an aspect of everything we do. It arises when we repeatedly encounter the magical quality of life, the incredible blend and variety of experience, the exquisite unfolding of nature, the intricacies of our minds, and more than anything, the awe, the profound awe we experience when we sense the enormity of this universe. Somehow the awe itself, ineffably, draws us into the center of creation. At some point we merge with it.

As long as we relate to God as Father and we as children, we sustain the dysfunctional paternalistic model in which Father knows best. We not only remain alienated with a sense of abandonment, we relinquish our personal sense of responsibility. We think Father will take care of everything.

According to Kabbalah, the linchpin of our relationship with God is founded on the belief that human beings have creative capability to intervene in the "normal" course of events. One word, one gesture, or even one thought can change the direction of the creative process. This being so, we are led to conclude that human beings play a co-creative role.

Constantly Perfecting Creation

Kabbalists say that *Ein Sof* is perfect, by definition, and this universe is constantly in the process of perfecting itself. Indeed, Judaism says that the very purpose of existence is the continuous perfecting of the universe.

Imagine an advanced computer program in an "intelligent" computer that is designed to learn as it goes. Each time it does a function, it learns by its mistakes and does the function more efficiently the next time. As long as it is learning, constantly improving, it is fulfilling its purpose.

However, if the computer functions in a way that it ceases to improve itself, it is programed to self-destruct. Why? Because its purpose is to continuously perfect itself. If it achieves perfection, it no longer has anything to do. Thus

it enters a stalemate with no place to go.

God represents perfection. This universe represents the potential for perfecting. Can we ever expect to make the universe perfect? The kabbalistic answer is no. Because our purpose is to continuously perfect ourselves and the universe. If we achieve perfection, we are finished and the universe would cease to exist.

Perfection is an absurd goal for the Kabbalist because an essential aspect of God's perfection is the creation. You see, perfection cannot be perfect without the potential for perfecting! The Baal Shem Tov has said, "The book of the *Zohar* has, each and every day, a different meaning." This is a crucial understanding.

Some teachings say that everything is perfect, everyone is perfect, everything happens as it is supposed to and there are no accidents. The only reason that we do not appreciate this perfection is due to our limited perspective. They say that once we become more enlightened, we will see that everything is perfect.

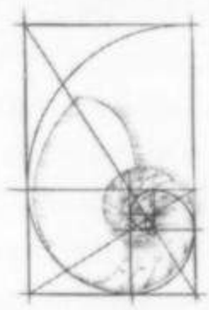
This may be true from a different point of reference, but from where we stand life is the process of being constantly urged this way and that; we are never satisfied with what is. We rarely attain a sense of perfection, and if we ever do it only lasts for a moment. We live in paradox. We rarely want what we can have, and we often desire what is out of our reach. Because the nature of duality is imperfect, we never meet the perfect friend, the perfect spouse, or the perfect teacher. And if we follow the belief that perfection is within our reach, we assuredly will become frustrated, unhappy, and unfulfilled, or even worse, bored, constantly tired, and indifferent.

The view of our continuous perfecting is of great importance. Once we fully appreciate that our purpose is not to achieve some transcendental level, but to deal with the imperfect world as a partner in creation, we gain the very thing we turn away from. That is to say, once we surrender to the fact that we will constantly be repairing our own souls and those around us, we gain a new sense of the fullness of each moment.

The myth of perfection is one in which we constantly are dissatisfied with what is currently happening. We are never here because we are always trying to be "there;" wherever that is. But understand this important teaching: *When we accept each moment as a new opportunity for fulfilling our purpose, we are always present, always succeeding, always changing the world for the better. And, we are always 'here.'*

When we fully realize that life is here, right now, we do not fall asleep and we don't get bored. We don't seek the perfect mate or the perfect teacher. We make the best choices we can and work with what we have. With perfecting as our model, we do not need to look beyond what we have.

The Jewish sages asked, "Who is rich?" The answer, "One who is happy with his or her lot." And, "This person is praiseworthy in this world and all will be well in the world to come." May we all be blessed to find comfort in being less than perfect, and to find peace in the eternal chaos of life. Remember, we are always here. ❑



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JUDAISM

Mikveh

Adrienne Ross



When my menses returned, it was as healing as a spring flower blooming, a blessing of blood to mark the passage of time. I wanted to celebrate the occasion and instinctively turned to the ritual mikveh bath which traditional Judaism requires a woman to take seven days after the end of each menses. In the Jewish tradition, the menses are viewed as a time so charged that the mikveh ritual is needed as a gateway back to ordinary life. I was 38 and had never before used a mikveh. As I stood before the mikveh building's locked door, breathing in night air, soft and sweet with the early spring's scents of azalea and rhododendron, it was ordinary life that I wanted after a temporary and too early menopause.

Six months earlier, just a few days before the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah, the New Year, and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, I had undergone surgery for endometriosis, a disease of the reproductive tract. Already destroyed were my left ovary and fallopian tube. To restore my one remaining ovary meant embarking on a six-month regimen of artificial hormones that would suppress all estrogen production: a temporary menopause.

After morning services on Yom Kippur, the day when we face our sins and prepare for the year to come, I received my first hormone shot. Although my menstrual period had started a few days earlier, it disappeared before nightfall arrived to end the traditional fast. It would not return until just a few weeks before Passover marked the ancient journey from *Mitzrayim*—the narrow place of constraint—to freedom.

The winter between Yom Kippur and Passover was a gestation of painful and unwanted changes: I discarded jobs and lost lovers; I traveled across an ocean and came home again; I cried my way through questions that followed me like hungry ghosts. How could I have been so sick for so long and not have known it? What other secrets don't I know about myself? During those six months, I jumped ahead ten or so years to glimpse the woman I was to become.

I needed a gateway, a transition ritual at once womanly and Jewish, to help me find out who I was. I had heard of mikvehs during the long journey from my parents' half-hearted Orthodox Judaism to my own eclectic exploration of my religion. After almost two decades of participating in non-sexist liturgy and helping to create progressive seders and other services, I naively thought that the mikveh ritual, too, could be transformed to meet my needs.

I had forgotten, though, that rituals have their own power. I wanted the mikveh to help move me into a new springtime of my life, but instead, the mikveh returned me to a past I had left long ago.

My call to the local mikveh was my first inkling that all would not go as I wanted. The regular mikveh lady was visiting Israel, so a team of volunteers were filling in for her. A woman named Rivka gave me a long and daunting list of preparations: clip my toenails and fingernails, removing any dirt that remained under them; brush and floss my teeth; clean the wax out of my ears and the lint out of my belly button; finish it all with a shower and shampoo or, preferably, a 45-minute bath. No makeup, Rivka had warned. No contact lenses, either. I had to be completely naked in the water, and the lenses would cover my eyes.

Rivka made a sudden pause after reciting the long list. She cleared her throat, nervousness crackling over the phone line. Finally, she said, "You do know that you must wait seven days until after. . .after. . ."

Her voice faded into a series of coughs and stammers. Perhaps cruelly, I said: "Until after the last drop of blood?"

"Yes." Another throat clearing. "Yes. That."

Why is she being so oblique, I wondered. It was absurd for two grown women to be so reticent. Concern pushed past my annoyance, and I said: "I've never been to a mikveh. It's important that this be a meaningful experience."

"It is." Rivka's voice was confident, clear, even serene in some heartfelt wisdom. "It's a very moving, deeply spiritual experience."

Rivka believed that. There was no doubt. Out of faith and

ILLUSTRATIONS BY OENONE TERRELL

Adrienne Ross is a freelance writer living in Seattle, Washington.

trust, she was opening the gate for me to experience something that nourished her. We set a time, and a week later, I found myself ringing the doorbell of the mikveh.

As I waited for Rivka to unbolt the door, I thought that it felt right for night time, moon time, to be the traditional time for a woman to use the mikveh. Moonlight and menstruation had an ancient, even evolutionary, connection. Still, I knew the other reason for night time usage had to do with a concern for modesty. The mikveh was housed in a squat, unobtrusive building reached only by driving behind a local synagogue to the far corner of a parking lot. Impossible to view from the street, the building seemed nonetheless designed to avoid notice. Painted a dull brown, faint rims of light shone out from behind its dark shades.

The door opened, and I saw a woman as thin as a rail, her hair neatly hidden beneath a turquoise madras scarf with silver threads. Her frail body seemed swallowed up by an ankle-length jeans skirt and a pink chamois shirt. Even her brown eyes seemed concealed beneath her thick glasses. The Orthodox stress modesty in dress, and this woman was so well covered it took a moment to realize she was my age.

Rivka introduced herself and stared for a brief moment at my jeans. She didn't say a word, but I sensed instantly that pants were a mistake. Too late I realized I was in a different culture and should have dressed accordingly.

I sank into a deep, slow shock as Rikva locked the door and led me back to a changing room. A different culture? Aren't we both Jewish? Yet there it was: a feeling of not belonging. It was a feeling I had not experienced since my girlhood, when Orthodox Judaism seemed a religion not of heart but of rules which no one seemed to understand, yet which were to be obeyed. As a girl I had sat in the women's section of the synagogue, my Hebrew education ignored because girls would never be called to read from the Torah. I had watched as the men prayed, davening back and forth in their white *tallit* shrouds, seeming ghostly and ancient in the light filtering through the stained glass windows. Engraved on those windows were Abraham and the Patriarchs, Moses and Daniel. In the siddur books were prayers to God our Father, Our Lord, He and Him. It wasn't until decades later, when I saw women wrapped in *tallits* and reading from the Torah, that I realized God could be female, too.

Yet by entering the mikveh building, I was unexpectedly returning to a tradition I'd gladly left long ago.

"You'll need to shower before using the mikveh," Rivka told me at the door to the changing room.

"But I already have."

Rivka was polite but firm. A second shower was needed. She told me to ring for her when I was finished and left me alone. The changing room was a fully-equipped bathroom complete with makeup remover, nail files, several kinds of soaps and shampoos, and even contact-lense solution.

As I stood in the shower for the second time in less than an hour, I could feel my body tensing. Intellectually, I knew that all the preparatory cleaning was to stress the spiritual cleansing that comes from using a mikveh. Jewish religious laws specifically view menstruation as an altered state but not an impure or dirty one. Instead, mikvehs are used to mark a transition from one form of existence to another, be it menstruation, conversion, or marriage. Under certain conditions, men are also required to use a mikveh. Yet I was using the mikveh within the context of American culture that views menstruation as, at best, a recurring nuisance. Behind this allegedly enlightened view are all the unacknowledged taboos stemming from centuries of misogyny when menstruation was viewed as dirty, disabling, and a punishment to women.



Once again checking my toes and belly button for lint, I felt a rising paranoia. My body, so porous and receptive to the world, with its dead skin and dirt in odd cracks and crevices, would never be clean enough. Nor was it meant to be. Drying off in the tiny bathroom, surrounded by Q-tips, nail polish remover and tweezers, I wanted to hide my body for being inherently, stubbornly dirty, all too physical and never spiritual enough.

Yet, if the last six months had taught me anything, it was that spirit could not be so arbitrarily split from body. Through the discovery of a hidden yet chronic illness, I had first learned the extent of secrets I keep from myself. Through the loss of my fertility, I had realized that the redemption of my life would rest solely on my own actions: there would be no comfort of second chances occurring through my offspring's lives. As for my ancestors, their ghosts were in my genes, and their lives would end with me. To make my way through these and other unwanted illuminations, I had to trust the chaos was occurring for a reason. A rationalization, perhaps, but it seemed as if a divine yet seemingly arbitrary hand was guiding me towards an unknown destination. God was no longer an abstract and distant Force, but a close presence causing me to bring to light all the questions I'd buried beneath my certainties. My body's all too physical nature had launched me on this spiritual journey. Having carried me so far during the last six months, my body deserved better than this incessant washing.

As I took off my earrings, my fingers lingered over the

yin/yang stud and the Star of David in my right ear. I had worn those earrings every day for the last three months since the midpoint of my journey from Yom Kippur to Passover, when a New Zealand healer had given me a bodywork session. Her touch had opened doors of grief I thought I had forced closed. When she finished, my body was tingling, charged with its own power. As I looked at myself in the mirror after our session, I first saw the yin/yang stud, the black and white curves co-mingling as two bodies. I reeled slightly in shock, understanding suddenly that my body was like that now. One ovary gone, only darkness in its place; the other damaged but slowly healing. My body was split in two, light and dark; divided parts, life and death within me.



But which one to choose, to follow? And then, as I saw the Star of David in my ear, I heard the words I'd heard so often in synagogue, words I had only dimly understood: *...I call heaven and earth to witness before you today: life and death have I set before you, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, so that you and your children may live.*

What did the words mean? How was I to choose life? I hadn't known and so had worn the earrings every day to keep the question always before me. Sadly, I put the earrings on the counter, wrapped my naked body in a pink towel, and rang the bell for Rivka.

The door separating the changing room from the mikveh opened, and Rivka was there. Her serene face receded into near-sighted fuzziness as she took away my glasses. She checked my damp hair to make sure it wasn't matted. She asked me to spread my fingers so she could check my nails for dirt and then wiped the soles of my feet with a bit of tissue.

"Did you brush your teeth?"

I nodded. No part of me can be blocked before I entered the water, but how could I clean away the nagging questions of how to turn the extraordinary experiences of the last few months into a daily wisdom? Looking at Rivka's calm, dark eyes, her polite smile, I wanted to talk with her. Why was she here? What did this mean to her? My stammered questions sounded mundane—you're volunteering here? The regular mikveh lady is in Israel? Rivka's face, so joyous and yet so distant, left me feeling that I was being kept at arms length. She never asked me why, so late in life, I had chosen to use a mikveh. There was something paradoxically matter of fact and yet deeply spiritual about this ritual for her. She would not share it with me, and I did not know how to ask.

Gently, Rivka unwrapped the fluffy towel covering my body, careful to avert her eyes as she lifted it high. I knew she was trying to protect my modesty, yet the gesture annoyed me. Below the landing was a small square pool of water rather like a hot tub but without the benches or air jets. Not until I walked down the blue tile steps and immersed myself in the shoulder high water did Rivka look toward me. The water was warm enough for my body to accept it without cold shivers of rejection, yet cool enough that I could not sink into its soft, caressing embrace.

Dimly I saw Rivka gesture toward a laminated sign on the wall. I would have to read it aloud, she explained, and in Hebrew. She would help me with the words if necessary.

I stumbled over the transliterated Hebrew, confident with some words, awkward with others. Long ago, I'd decided my embarrassing lack of Hebrew could be put to good use since it forced me to check the English translation before reciting any prayers. That way, I wouldn't find myself reciting words that contradicted my own experience of God.

Yet there was no time to read the English first. Rivka's unspoken hurry was plain. From the other side of the wall I could hear voices and the splashing of water. Startled, I realized that there must be several small mikveh baths in the building.

The prayer haltingly stammered out, I walked to the center of the small pool. Under Rivka's soft-voiced direction, I immersed myself three times, my fingers spread wide, my heels kicked up with each dip. In and out, I rose above the water, my mouth gulping air, and then immersed myself again, my body suspended in the water's embrace. I felt held between worlds, like a child playing in the waters of a square womb. Our life begins in water; our first world where we float in the currents of birth and growth. I was a woman and a child at once, going in and out of the waters of birth. I was naked at last, open and accepting of any contact. Illness and my far harsher recovery had been a gestation of its own: Coming now to life was an essential but still unknown self.

All too soon, it was over.

"That's all," Rivka said. "You can come up now."

"Wait. I want to read what the prayer said."

I sloshed back toward the wall, my eyes squinting at the black letters. My heart sank as I read a prayer to the God of our Fathers calling for a rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem. I should have expected it, of course, and yet I hadn't. I had wanted with me the God of Sarah, Rachel and Leah, of our too long ignored mothers and grandmothers, of Miriam and Dina. Worse than a slap in the face, the prayer was irrelevant to the peace I found in the waters.

But that moment was past. I walked up the stairs to

(continued on page 72)

Public Exposure

Jyl Lynn Felman



My mother's wheelchair is ancient. Big, bulky, the heavy metal kind that came out with the polio epidemic in the fifties. The wheels turn and the spikes shine. I see my own reflection going round and round. I am dizzy. My mother is the lucky, blessed, sacred symptom bearer who is chosen to absorb the entire neurological disorder and disintegration of the planet Earth in her one small, très petite female body. This apocalyptic, very Jewish vision came to me last week as I stared into a bowl of Rain Forest Crunch mixed with General Mills' Cheerios, toasted almond bits, and sun-dried California raisins. She has Parkinson's; the rest of us have the shakes. Her vocal chords have tightened up. She's living in an alternative, meditative state, conversing privately with the One On High *Baruch Ha Shem, Blessed Be The Holy One*. She stopped speaking years ago. "Scream," I want to say every time I look at her. "Just open your mouth and scream." My mother's eyes are big and brown. Even when I bend down low at the waist, eye contact is almost impossible to sustain.

My mother is unreachable. It's all that heavy metal. The wheels of her chair go round and round, slipping and sliding in between the cracks in the pavement. We used to hold hands, sitting in the front row of the avant-garde theatre in Yellow Springs. Afterwards we always shared a bottle of French chardonnay, lifting long-stemmed, gold-rimmed, hand-blown goblets and bending our heads together—forward as if in love—in that special girlish way. But now her hands are knots, her fingers do not bend. She doesn't like to be touched. When the L-dopa wears off, her whole body goes rigid. There is no such thing as relief. Or emancipation.

My father tells me that when they're on vacation, he leaves her in the car to get some milk. Her chair is too G-ddamn heavy to lift out of the trunk. He's only gone ten minutes. By mistake he locks his keys inside. She cannot open the car door to let him in. Her hands are in a palsied fist; she cannot bend her fingers. She is trapped inside, with the motor running and the air conditioning on. He will have to break into the car before she suffocates. The hot Florida sun reflecting through the window makes my mother sleepy. She cannot hear her husband rapping on the window with his wedding band. As she starts to doze her head jerks up and down. She has her seat belt on. For protection.

In a panic he starts pounding on the glass. Her head falls to the left. She is asleep. He is screaming, way too loud in the middle of the Boynton Beach parking lot, *Edith, open up! Open Up!* My father is hysterical. He doesn't want his wife to suffocate. I am holding my breath as he tells me the story. My father never asks for help.

In the background, a siren wails. A navy blue police car comes to a screeching halt. The cops start to arrest him. That's when I know we are living in the middle of a fast-paced TV docudrama. With his hands above his head, they pat him down. He says *Officer, this is a mistake, this woman is*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY OENONE TERRELL

Jyl Lynn Felman is an accomplished writer, performance artist, attorney and assistant professor of Women's Studies at Brandeis University. "Public Exposure" is excerpted from her forthcoming memoir Cravings *(Beacon, September 1997).*

my wife. She's too sick to open the door. My father is sweating; his face has lost its ruddy color. I can see this on HBO, in bright Technicolor. It would be great on Wednesday night. For almost thirty minutes she is locked in the car. *I need a coat hanger.* My father pleads with the officers. For the entire time she is sick, I never talk about my mother. What is there to say? I am the best supporting actress in a made-for-TV movie. About the family car. He has childproofed the doors. This is much too much to bear. For a single individual. At least my mother had her chair.



The exposure is complete. There are no more secrets. This is what I think when I take her to a public bathroom. Which is never accessible in spite of the picture-perfect mini-black wheelchair stenciled in the middle of the white swinging door that says *push.* When I "push" through the door I imagine that we become an instant Barbara Walter's TV special on "Contemporary Mothers and Daughters." And as we roll into the restroom Barbara wants to know how I feel. She comes along for the ride. Only the stall is too small. For my mother's chair. I can't close the door or turn the chair around. The camera stops rolling. This isn't the story they came to shoot. But this is the true story of how I take my mother to the bathroom. In public.



With the door open, all the mothers and their children see right inside the stall. I wave to the crowd, flapping my mother's rigid arms up and down. The people stare back. I lift my mother out of her chair. She cannot hold onto me and her entire body falls against my chest. I can't believe how heavy this small woman is. *You weigh a ton,* I whisper in her ear. Then Barbara Walters tells me that she has a daughter too, with brown hair just like mine. Only they were never this close. Winking at my mother, whose eyes are almost closed, I say *You have to work at it. It doesn't come naturally, this mother-daughter thing.* Barbara nods in understanding while I try to pull my mother's stretchpants down. I am panting, almost out of breath. The camera rolls again as I roll down my mother's underwear and push her onto the toilet seat.

When she's done, I flush the toilet with my left foot and wonder how I'm ever going to pick her up again and put her back in her chair. I am hungry now. *Can you wipe yourself?* I say way too loud so that all the ladies in waiting and their preadolescent sons are sure to hear. I know she can't reach between her legs. Right this minute, a hot fudge mocha sundae would taste great with roasted pecans, finely chopped red and green maraschino cherries on top of melted miniature white buttered marshmallow puffs. The ice cream has to be from Friendly's. That's what I see in the air in front of me when I bend down to lift her up. And wipe her clean, spreading her buttocks gently as I wipe from the front to the back the way she always wiped me when I was a little girl. *You'll get sick the other way,* she used to say, wiping me away. Sometimes she misses the toilet seat. I remember the four-by-six-inch file card she taped above the light blue toilet seat at home. In black magic marker without smearing a word she had carefully printed: *If you sprinkle when you tinkle, then please be neat and wipe the seat.* I always wiped the seat. Before and afterwards.

When we got older she replaced the file card with a more professional hand-painted sign. In florid pink nail polish—right on the toilet seat—in bold capital letters she spelled out Flush! Whenever the pink paint cracked off, she repolished the seat herself, trying out darker reds and bright oranges to see if they had the same effect. It was Judy, my oldest sister, who never flushed on purpose. Nobody offers to help. They can see the perspiration on the back of my neck. Barbara Walters doesn't say a word. There isn't room to bend down and wipe off the seat. I leave it wet, wishing I had a pen and paper so I could leave a note for the next in line. I feel the women watching; their eyes are big behind my back.

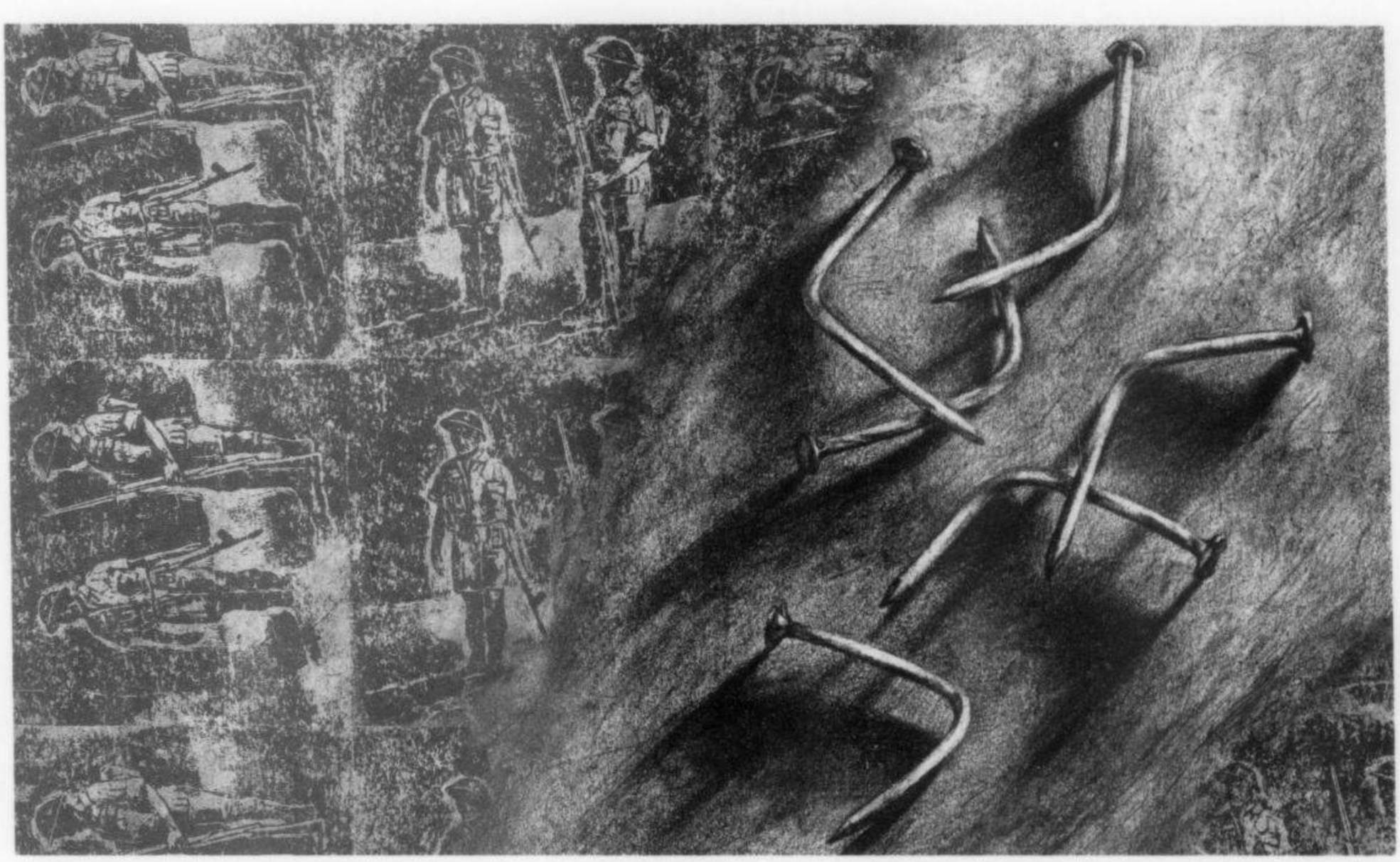


Will they actually put this segment on the air? All I have to do is pull up her pants and underwear at the same time and then we can roll right out. Backwards, we have to roll backwards. We can't turn around in here. I've never been fond of public bathrooms. They smell yellow and I never know whom I'll meet in there. The shiny metal wheels make me dizzy. We are rolling backwards. ❑

FICTION

Panther in the Basement

Amos Oz



This is how I remember Jerusalem in that last summer of British rule. A stone city sprawling over hilly slopes. Not so much a city as isolated neighborhoods separated by fields of thistles and rocks. British armored cars sometimes stood at the street corners with their slits almost closed, like eyes dazzled by the light. And their machine guns sticking out in front like pointing fingers: You there!

At dawn the boys would go around sticking up posters from the Underground on walls and lampposts. On Saturday afternoons, in our backyard there were arguments with guests and a procession of glasses of scalding tea and biscuits that my mother made (and I would help her by printing star and flower shapes on the soft dough). In the course of these arguments both the guests and my parents would use words like "persecution," "extermination," "salvation," "intelligence," "heritage," "clandestine immigration," "siege," "demonstrations," "Haj Amin," "extremists," "kibbutzim," "the White Paper," "the Hagganah," "self-restraint," "settlements," "gangs," "the conscience of the world," "riots," "protests," "clandestine immigrants." Occasionally one of the guests would get carried away; often it would be one of the quiet ones, a skinny, pale-faced man with a cigarette trembling between his fingers and a shirt buttoned up to the neck, whose pockets were stuffed with notebooks and slips of paper, and he would explode with polite anger and shout expressions such as "like sheep to the slaughter," "Protected Jews," and then he would hurriedly add, as though in an attempt to correct the bad impression, "But we must on no account allow ourselves to be split, heaven forbid, we are all in the same boat."

The empty laundry room on the roof was fitted up with a washbasin and electric light, and Mr. Lazarus, a tailor from Berlin, moved in. He was a small man, who blinked and nod-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ERIC FIELD

Amos Oz is the author of numerous novels, essay collections, and children's books. He has received several awards, including the Prix Femina and the Frankfurt Peace Prize. This story is excerpted from the novel, Panther in the Basement, *which will be published this fall by Harcourt Brace.*

ded, and despite the heat of the summer he was always dressed in a shabby grey jacket and a waistcoat. And he always carried a green tape measure around his neck, like a necklace. His wife and daughters, people said, had been murdered by Hitler. How had Mr. Lazarus himself managed to survive? There were various rumors. Uncertainties. I had my doubts: What did *they* know? After all, Mr. Lazarus himself never said a word about what had happened. He put up a card in the entrance hall, half in German that I could not understand and half in Hebrew that he asked my mother to write for him: "Expert tailor and cutter from Berlin. Commissions of all sorts undertaken. Alterations to order. Latest fashions. Reasonable prices. Credit available." After a day or two somebody tore off the German half: we would not tolerate the language of the murderers here.

My father found an old woolen cardigan at the back of the wardrobe and sent me up to the roof to ask Mr. Lazarus to be good enough to change the buttons and strengthen the seams. "Yes indeed, it's only an old rag, possibly unwearable," Father said, "but he seems to be hungry for bread up there, and charity is offensive. So let's send it up to him. He can change the buttons. Earn a few piasters. Make him feel he's appreciated."

My mother said:

"All right. New buttons. But why send the boy? Go yourself, talk to him, ask him in for a glass of tea."

"Definitely," said Father, sheepishly, and a moment later he added decisively: "Yes indeed. We must definitely invite him."

Mr. Lazarus fenced in the far corner of the roof with old bedsteads, reinforced with wire, and made a kind of coop or cage, spread out some straw from an old mattress, bought half a dozen hens, and asked Mother to add in Hebrew on the remaining half of his notice: "And fresh eggs for sale." But he would never sell one of his hens to be killed and eaten, even for a feast day. On the contrary, they said Mr. Lazarus had given each hen a name, and that he used to go out onto the roof at night to check that they were sleeping soundly. One day Chita Reznik and I hid among the water tanks and heard Mr. Lazarus arguing with his hens. In German. Declaring, insisting, explaining, even humming them a tune. Sometimes I took up some dry bread crumbs or a jar of reject lentils that my mother told me to pick out. When I was feeding the hens, Mr. Lazarus would sometimes come and touch me suddenly on the shoulder with his fingertips, then he would shake his fingers as though he had burned himself. We had lots of people who talked to thin air. Or to someone who wasn't there.

On the roof, behind Mr. Lazarus's chicken run, I installed a lookout post from which I had an excellent view of the other roofs; I could even squint into the British army camp. I used to stand there, concealed among the water tanks, spying on their evening roll call, noting down particulars in a notebook, and then I aimed a sniper's rifle at them and wiped them all out with a single economical, precise salvo.

From my lookout post on the roof I also had a view of faraway Arab villages scattered on the slopes of the hills, and the Mount of Olives and Mount Scopus, beyond the tops of which the desert abruptly began, while far away to the southeast lurked the Hill of Evil Counsel, on which stood Government House, the British High Commissioner's residence. I was working that summer on the last details of a plan to take it by storm, from three directions at once; I had even prepared a summary of the things I would say without any hesitation to the High Commissioner once he was caught and was being interrogated in my lookout post here on the roof.

I knew by heart all the neighborhoods, villages, hills, and towers that were visible from my lookout post. In the Sinopsky Brothers grocery, in the queue at the clinic, on the Dorzions' balcony opposite, in front of the Shibboleth newsstand, people would stand and argue about the borders of the future Hebrew State. Would they include Jerusalem? Would they include the British naval base at Haifa? And what about Galilee? And the desert? Some hoped that the forces of the civilized world would come and protect us from being murdered by bloodthirsty Arabs. (Every nation had a fixed epithet, like a first name and a surname: perfidious Albion, tainted Germany, faraway China, Soviet Russia, rich America. Down on the coast there was bustling Tel Aviv. Far away from us, in Galilee, in the valleys, was the laboring Land of Israel. The Arabs were labeled bloodthirsty. Even the world had several epithets, depending on the atmosphere and the situation: civilized, free, wide, hypocritical. Sometimes people said: "The world that knew and said nothing." Sometimes they said: "The world will not stay silent about this.")

In the meantime, until the British pulled out and the Hebrew State finally emerged, the grocer's and the greengrocer's opened at seven in the morning and closed at six in the evening in time for the curfew. The neighbors—the Dorzions, Dr. Gryphius, ourselves, Ben Hur and his parents—gathered at Dr. Buster's because he had a radio. We listened in gloomy silence to the news on the Voice of Jerusalem. Sometimes, after dark, very softly, we listened to the clandestine broadcast of the Voice of Fighting Zion. Sometimes we stayed on after the news to listen to the appeals for missing relatives, in case they suddenly mentioned a relative murdered in Europe who turned out to have survived after all and had managed to make his way to the Land of Israel or at least to one of the DP camps that the British had set up in Cyprus.

There was silence in the room during the broadcast, like a curtain stirring in the breeze in the dark. But as soon as the radio was turned off, everyone started talking. They talked incessantly. What had happened, what was going to happen, what might or could or should be done, what chances we had left: they talked as though they were afraid that something terrible would happen. If



a moment's silence peered over the shoulder of the discussion and arguments, they silenced it immediately.

Besides Mr. Lazarus, there were other refugees in the neighborhood, from Poland, Romania, Germany, Hungary, Russia. Most of the residents were not called "refugees," nor were they termed "pioneers" or "citizens": they were described as "the organized community," which was located more or less in the middle, beneath the pioneers and above the refugees, in opposition to the British and the Arabs but also opposed to the militants. But how could you tell the difference? Almost all of them, pioneers and refugees and militants, spoke with throaty *r*s and liquid *l*s, except for the Orientals, who spoke with trilled *r*s and harsh guttural sounds. The parents hoped that we children would grow up to be a new kind of Jew, improved, broad-shouldered, fighters and tillers of the soil, which was why they stuffed us full of liver, chicken, and fruit, so that when the time came we would stand up, bold and suntanned, and not let the enemy lead us like sheep to the slaughter again. Sometimes they would feel nostalgic for the places they had come here from: they would sing songs in languages we didn't know, and they would give us rough translations, so that we, too, would know that once upon a time there had been rivers and meadows, forests and fields, thatched roofs and bells ringing in the mist. Because here in Jerusalem the waste plots stood parched in the summer sun and the buildings were made of stone and corrugated iron, and the sun scorched everything as though the war was here already. The dazzling light preyed on itself from morn to evening.

Occasionally someone would say: "What's going to happen?" and somebody else would answer: "We must hope for the best," or "We've just got to carry on." My mother would sometimes sit bent over a box of photos and mementos for five or ten minutes, and I knew that I had to pretend not to see. Her parents and her sister Tanya had been murdered by Hitler in the Ukraine, along with all the Jews who had not managed to get here in time. Father once said:

"It's incomprehensible. Simply unbelievable. And the whole world said nothing."

He, too, grieved sometimes for his parents and his sisters, but not with tears: he would stand for half an hour or so, in the rather sour, angular pose of a man who is stubbornly in the right, and peer closely at the maps that were pinned up on the wall in the hallway. Like a general in his HQ: staring and saying nothing. His view was that we must drive out the British occupier and set up a Hebrew State here that all persecuted Jews all over the world could come to. He said, "It must evidently set a model of justice to the world, even toward the Arabs if they choose to stay and live here among us. Yes, despite everything the Arabs are doing to us, because of the people who are inciting them and egging them on, we will treat them with exemplary generosity, but definitely not out of weakness. When the free Hebrew State is finally established, no villain in the world will ever again dare to murder or humiliate Jews. If he does, we will smite him, because when the time comes we will have a very long arm indeed."

"But what have we done," I once asked over supper, "to make everyone hate us so?"

My mother said:

"It's because we have always been in the right. They can't forgive us that we've never hurt a fly."

I thought, though I didn't say it: It follows that it is definitely not worth being in the right.

And also: It explains Ben Hur's attitude. I am in the right, and I don't hurt a fly either. But from now on a new age will start: the age of the panther.

Father said:

"It is a sad and obscure question. In Poland, for example, they hated us because we were different, because we were strange, because we talked and dressed and ate differently from those around us. But a few miles away, across the border in Germany, they hated us for the opposite reason: in Germany we talked and ate and dressed and behaved exactly like everybody else. So the anti-Semites said: 'Look at them insinuating themselves, yes indeed, you can no longer tell who is a Jew and who isn't.' That is our fate: the excuses for hatred change but the hatred itself continues forever. And what is the conclusion?"

"That we should try not to hate," said my mother.

But Father, whose blue eyes blinked rapidly behind his glasses, said: "We must not be weak. To be weak is a sin."

"But what have we done?" I asked. "How have we made them so angry?"

"That question," Father said, "you should put to our persecutors, not to us. And now would Your Highness please pick up your sandals from under the chair and put them where they belong. No, not there. Not there either. Where they belong."

At night we could hear shots and explosions in the distance: the Underground was coming out of its secret bases and attacking the centers of the British government. By seven o'clock we would have closed the doors and shutters and shut ourselves in till the morning. There was a night curfew in the city. A clear breeze blew in the abandoned streets, along in the alleys and up the winding stone steps. Sometimes we would jump at the sound of a trash-can lid knocked off by an alley cat in the dark. Jerusalem stood still and waited. Inside our apartment there was silence most of the evening. Father sat with his back to us, separated from us in the ring of light cast by his desk lamp, dug in among his books and index cards, his fountain pen scratching at the silence, stopping, hesitating, then scratching again, as though it was digging a tunnel. Father was checking, comparing, perhaps pinning down a stray detail in the notes he was gathering for his great book



on the history of the Jews in Poland. My mother would sit on the other side of the room, in her rocking chair, reading or, with her open book face down on her lap, listening attentively to some sound I could not hear. At her feet on the rug I would finish reading the paper and start to sketch out the battle plan for the lightning raid by the Underground on the key government points in Jerusalem. Even in my dreams I defeated enemies, and I continued dreaming of wars for several years after that summer.

The FOD Organization that summer consisted of only three fighters: Ben Hur, the commander-in-chief and also head of the Department of Internal Security and Interrogation. I was his second-in-command. Chita Reznik was a private and a leading contender for promotion when the organization expanded. Apart from being second in command, I was also regarded as the brains: it was I who founded the organization, at the beginning of the summer holidays and gave it its name, FOD (short for "Freedom Or Death"). It was my idea to collect nails, bend them, and scatter them on the approach road to the army camp so as to puncture the British tires. And I composed the slogans that Chita was ordered to paint in thick black letters on the walls of neighboring houses: "Brits, you're in the wrong—go back where you belong!," "With blood, fire, and sweat our freedom we'll get!," "Perfidious Albion, hands off Zion!" (I learned the expression "perfidious Albion" from Father.) Our plan for the summer was to finish building our secret rocket. In a derelict hut on the edge of the wadi, behind Chita's backyard, we already had the electric motor from an old refrigerator, some parts from a motorbike, and several dozen yards of electric wire, fuses, a battery, bulbs, and six bottles of nail varnish, from which we planned to extract the acetone to make explosives. By the end of the summer the rocket would be finished and aimed precisely at the facade of Buckingham Palace, where King George of England lived, and then we were going to send him a proud, firm letter: You have till the Day of Atonement to get out of our country, and if you don't, then our Day of Judgment will become your Day of Reckoning.

What would the British have replied to this letter if we had only had another two or three weeks and managed to finish making our rocket? Perhaps they would have seen sense and cleared out, thus sparing themselves and us a good deal of blood and suffering. It's hard to know. But in the middle of the summer my secret relationship with Sergeant Dunlop was discovered. I had hoped it would last forever and never be found out. And because it was discovered, the writing appeared on the wall and I received the order to appear that evening at the edge of the Tel Arza Woods, to face a court-martial on a charge of treason.

The fact is I knew in advance that the trial would make no difference. No explanations or excuses would help me. As in all clandestine movements everywhere and at all times, anyone who is branded a traitor is a traitor and that's that. It's pointless to try to defend yourself. ❑

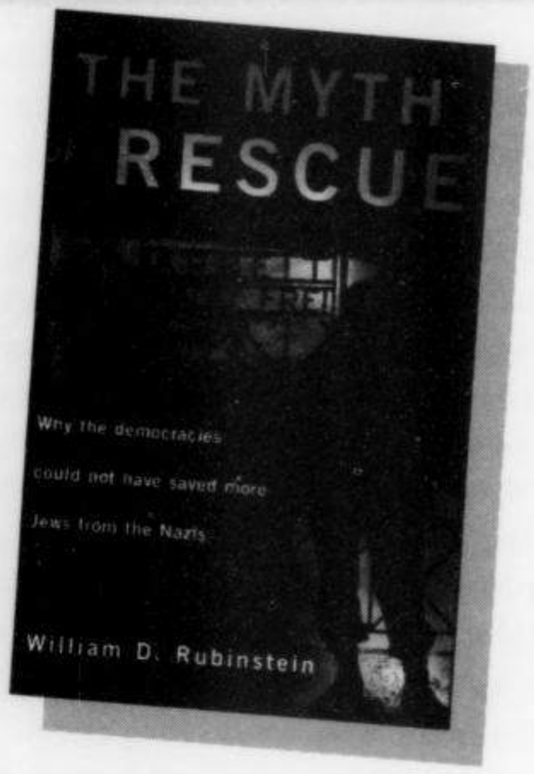
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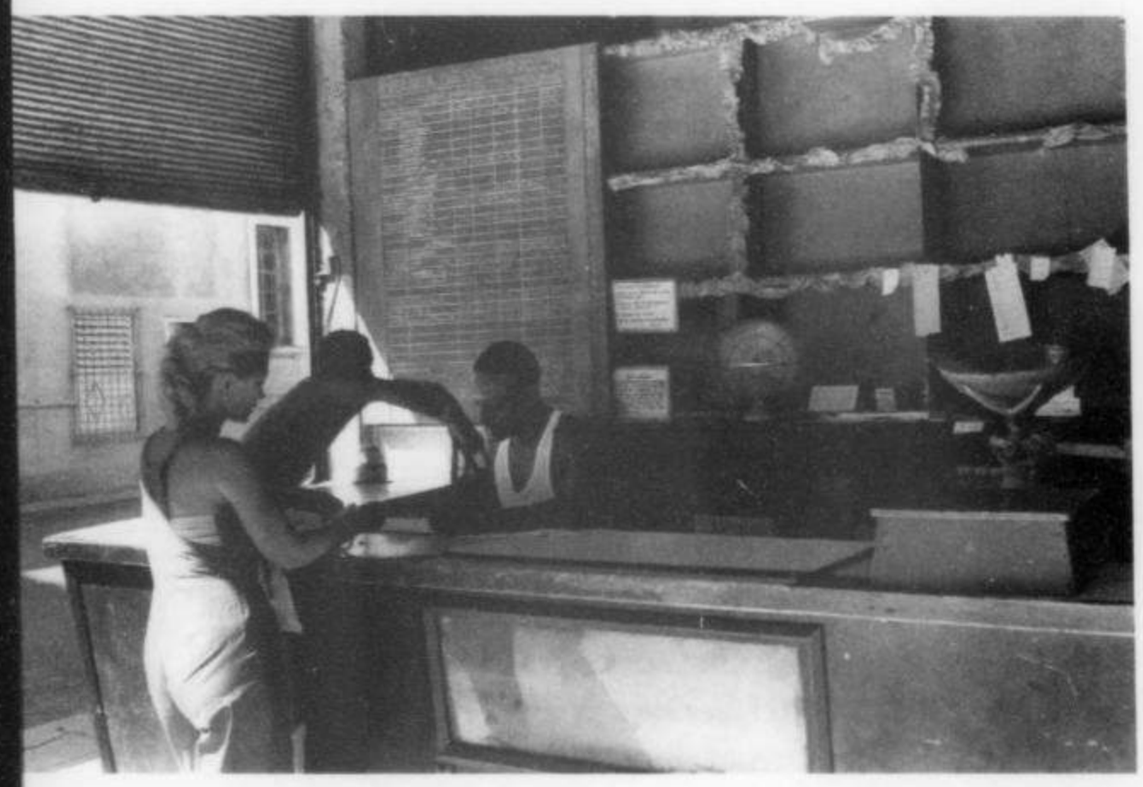
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ROUTLEDGE

POLITICS

My Cuban Problem—and Ours

Steve Weissman



A Cuban food distribution center—without much food to distribute.

"Can we see Cuba yet?" I asked. "Nope," laughed Capt. Joe. "The waves are too high." I'd been sleeping in the front cabin of Joe Toro's 43-foot sailboat when my turn came to stand watch. Slowly I climbed into the open cockpit, squinted into the tropical sun, and braced myself against the pounding of the Gulf Stream.

What was I doing here, I asked myself. Why was I going to Cuba?

Along with some 600 other boaters, I was sailing on last May's Havana Cup Regatta, a 276-mile jaunt from Tampa Bay on Florida's west coast to the Marina Hemingway, just west of Havana.

The "why" is what gave me trouble. Earlier in May, fourteen Cubans left their homeland on a 20-foot sailboat. Three of them—a man and two little girls—died on tiny Dog Rocks in the Bahamas. Two others disappeared on a makeshift raft. Battered by the same ugly seas, I understood how badly they wanted to leave. Why was I so keen to go?

For nearly 60 years, Cuba had played with my mind. I was born at Tampa's Centro Asturiano, a hospital and mutual aid society started at the turn of the century by anarchist and socialist cigar workers from Spain and Cuba. My father had his business in the historic Cuban quarter, Ybor City, as did many of the older Romanian Jews, who felt at home speaking Spanish.

Our next-door neighbor Armando made Cuban cigars in one of the town's many red-brick factories. He and his wife Carmen let me hang my Christmas stockings at their house. Being Jewish, I didn't think Santa would come to ours.

Growing up, I ate black beans and rice, drank *café con leche*, and chased after the street peddlers with their bicycle carts to buy chocolate-covered *helado de coco*, a kind of Cuban Eskimo pie. Out of respect to Rabbi Lerner, I won't mention my addiction to Cuban Sandwiches—foot-long chunks of hot, crispy baguette stuffed with cheese, chicken, and that other white meat.

While at our local college, I went to the Cuban Club to hear the hottest bands from Havana, and spent the first night of the Bay of Pigs at anti-Castro headquarters listening to the invasion splutter away on short-wave radio. In graduate school at the University of Michigan, I wrote my masters thesis on the Soviet Union's early relations with Castro, and rushed off to Washington to protest Kennedy and Khrushchev's insane brinkmanship in the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis.

Politically and academically, I remained fascinated with Cuba, with Castro, with Che—and with Washington's not-so-secret war against them. But as actively as I wrote, spoke, and organized against American foreign policy, I never took a movement trip to Cuba, never worked with the Venceremos Brigades, never made a creed of solidarity. I always backed away. Why? A radical distrust of governments, even those trying to make a social revolution.

Call me an "infantile leftist," as my Leninist comrades liked to put it. Or credit early inoculation by some anarchistic nurse at the Centro Asturiano. But I'd still rather support rebels in the mountains than revolutionaries in the Presidential Palace.

In the case of Cuba, my instincts hit the mark. Nearly 40 years after coming down from the Sierra Maestra, Fidel has never held a democratic national election, jails even nonviolent opponents, and refuses to allow free speech, press, or political association.

Wait, I hear old friends calling, what about the CIA's attempts to assasinate Fidel? Or its sabotage of Cuban crops? Or America's present-day financing of Cuban dissidents?

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVEN FISH/IMPACT VISUALS

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All vital parts of the story, I agree, and the stuff that arouses my muckraking instincts. But American intervention does not justify Cuba's abuse of basic human rights, not any more than Pearl Harbor justified our country's internment of Japanese Americans. Basic rights are just that—fundamental. And no liberal, progressive, or unreconstructed radical should try to explain them away.

So why would I go to Cuba now with a flotilla of—judging by the cost of their boats—mostly Republican *yatistas*?

Nothing more than the call of the wild, I suppose. The two or three-day sail had just enough blue-water risk to entice a white-bearded vagabond, and the forbidden island was an exotic place to step ashore.

Even better, the regatta organizers had koshered the horse. American law permits us to go to Cuba, but not to spend any money there. So, the organizers—all local sailors—encouraged the Cubans to waive visa, customs, and marina fees, and convinced American officials that our boats carried enough food and drink for the five days we would stay.

What a magic formula! Washington avoided knocking heads with well-to-do boaters, while Havana could expect us to ignore the law and spend, spend, spend.

Naturally, the anti-Castro exiles made threats and tried to pressure federal authorities to harass us. For all the *cubanos* in Tampa, they fell flat on their face. As we raced away from the starting line, two small boats appeared, their lone drivers yelling in Spanglish, "No Castro, No Problem."

I almost felt sorry for them.

Tourism Booms

The largest island in the Caribbean, Cuba is about the size of England. My fellow-boaters and I saw only a small patch around Havana, and for only five days. What we found was sad and exciting, strange and unnerving.

Marina Hemingway looks like a mammoth real estate development, a gated community with four wide canals, where we docked. Along the canals stand Mediterranean-style houses, bungalows and apartments, well-stocked shops, assorted bars and restaurants. The landscaping, where finished, looks lush. In much of the area, builders are still pouring, hammering, and sawing.

The Old Man and The Sea, a large resort hotel, stands at one edge of the property overlooking the Straits of Florida. It has a huge pool with swim-up bar. Papa's, a party-hearty disco, stands at the development's other edge. Both pool and disco have hordes of *jiniteras*, engaging young ladies trolling for sugar daddies.

Viva Hemingway!

Viva the Revolution that ended prostitution.

Contrary to Republican expectations, a state-owned company, Grupo Cubanacan, runs the entire complex, and does it professionally. They also run 50 other hotels, an airline, tourist health centers, rental cars, and taxis. In all, they handle nearly half of Cuba's foreign tourists, which makes them a money machine—and a target for anti-Castro Cubans.

Three weeks before the regatta, terrorist bombs damaged the Cubanacan office in Mexico City and the disco of their five-star Melia Cohiba in Havana. According to news reports, Cuban police deactivated a second device at the hotel. They also arrested four dissidents and a Cuban-born woman from South Florida. Police reportedly found traces of C-4 explosive on one of her bags.

The Cubans deactivated another bomb at a hotel in Varadero, a popular resort for European tourists.

After we left, explosions rocked the lobbies of two more Havana hotels, the Nacional and Capri. CNN reported at least three people injured. Another small explosion reportedly hit the Melia Cohiba again and at the Havantour Travel agency in Nassau, Bahamas. So far the bombings have done only minor damage, but they have produced a world of spin.

Hoping to reassure any potential tourists, Cuban officials have played down the incidents. They also claim to have evidence that those responsible for the hotel bombings, as well as the explosive materials, came from the United States. One official specifically blamed "groups linked to the Cuban-American community in Florida."

For their part, the "Miami Cubans" barely hid their delight. "We lament any injuries sustained by innocent Cubans," said Jorge Mas Canosa, head of the powerful Cuban American National Foundation. "But the blame must be placed directly on Fidel Castro, who is personally responsible for creating the environment that has produced these violent incidents." (*Miami Herald,* July 13, 1997).

Fidel goes, or anything goes.

Others speculated—without much evidence—that clandestine groups within the Cuban military or security services were turning against Fidel.

Fortunately for us, our regatta missed the action, but on future trips I won't dismiss the sign I found at the marina office. It's addressed "Attention Comrade Workers." If you hear the air raid siren, it says, report to your assigned stations to defend against enemy air attacks.

Tough Times

From the many Customs, Immigration and other officials to casual encounters on the street, the Cubans we met were friendly and eager to help. They seemed to like *americanos*, and were fascinated that we'd come. In welcome contrast to other countries south of the border, none of the uniforms put his hand out for a *mordida*.

None of the *cubanos* hid how hard their life has become, a dramatic decline caused by the collapse of the Soviet Union and its subsidies—and by the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, which cut off food shipments that Cuba used to buy through subsidiaries of U.S. corporations. From the estimates we heard most often, the average Cuban reportedly earns only $10-$20 a month.

Waiters, bartenders, and prostitutes at tourist spots make

far more, a disparity that draws many highly trained professionals away from their former fields. Among my half-dozen drivers, one was a medical photographer, another a retired colonel who had fought against Batista and twice with Cuban forces in Africa.

Because of shortages, the government rations food and gasoline, while lack of money threatens the revolution's proudest achievements, free education and medical care.

In response, Fidel has opened the gates to foreign capital, and permits individual Cubans to open their homes as small restaurants, rent rooms to tourists, and use private cars as taxis. The new petty capitalists have to get licenses and pay hefty taxes to the state. Many don't.

One of my drivers looked skittish about entering Marina Hemingway, which has guards at the gate much like a condo community anywhere in North America. "If they see me too many times, they'll take down my number," he explained. Like the gypsy cabs in New York, he had no license to pick up passengers. He couldn't afford to pay $75 a month, he said.

Another day, my crewmates and I walked through *La Habana Vieja*, Old Havana. How splendid! How sad! Here sits a great capital, once a tropical Paris with tree-lined boulevards and elegant colonial buildings from as early as the 16th century. Now most of the buildings show years of neglect. Many are falling down, especially on the ocean-front *Malecon*. With help from UNESCO, the Cubans are fixing up some of the old jewels, but they might have started too late.

We walk through areas where the buildings have no indoor plumbing; tank trunks deliver water. Local stores have little on their shelves to sell. A few timid old ladies beg money, while a flock of unemployed young people stands around hustling tourists, hawking private restaurants, and selling counterfeit Cohiba cigars.

For all the seediness, I revel in the absence of neon signs and Golden Arches, while Capt. Joe wonders why all the Cubans have such great teeth. Must be free dental care, he concludes.

Later, I returned by car to the old town and searched out one of the more run-down sections. It looked slightly better than South Bronx. On the streets, a few people were walking around. They all had very dark skin. My driver, who did not, suggested we leave.

"Is there much discrimination?" I asked with feigned innocence. "No, not in Cuba," he assured me. "Fidel promotes many blacks." He paused and looked me in the eye. "Too many," he said.

One afternoon at the marina, I met a Cuban journalist, a friend of an old friend from SDS. He mentioned that his wife was suffering from *Giardia*, a parasite that gave her severe dysentery. She'd had it for several months. Doctors had diagnosed the problem, tried various medicines, and finally prescribed a powerful drug called Gabbroral. But Cuba had none, and she grew sicker and more depressed.

Happily, a doctor I know in London found the drug, which a Swedish firm called Pharmacia made in Italy. A minimum batch large enough for several patients cost less than $70. The doctor had it shipped to Cuba, and at last report, the journalist's wife was getting better.

Why didn't the Cubans have the medicine? Because of the American embargo.

In 1995, Pharmacia merged with Upjohn, a household name from Michigan. The combined firm has headquarters in England and shareholders all over the world. But it's legally an American corporation, which cannot sell to Cuba.

Congress is now deciding whether to change the embargo to permit the sale of food and medicine.

Ping-Pong?

"We're all part of history," gushed Capt. John Glass, a British-born sailor now living in Florida. Historians will see us as a step in normalizing relations between Cuba and the United States, he explained. Like ping-pong with the Chinese.

I bit my tongue. Why dampen his enthusiasm?

Caught up in new friendships with our Cuban hosts, other boaters shared the inflated sense of our importance. If we could get along so well, why couldn't our governments? A writer for a sailing magazine predicted that Washington would soon drop its 35-year embargo. An insurance man from Indiana seemed convinced we could change American policy by talking to friends—or was it relatives?—in Congress.

I remembered the bracing naiveté. I hadn't felt it in years. I dimly recalled the surprise and outrage that our own government would tell us lies.

Don't get me wrong: my boating buddies did not back Fidel, defend the revolution, or "stand in solidarity with the heroic people of Cuba." They just asked the gut questions: Who gave Washington and "the Miami Cubans" the right to tell Cuba what it should do? Or tell us where we could and could not go?

I think they got it. It seems I sailed all the way to Cuba to rediscover what it means to be an American.

Early this year, Congressman José Serrano of New York introduced the Freedom of Travel Act of 1997 (HR-286). It overrides the restrictions in the Helms-Burton law and allows for spending money to travel.

"The President shall not restrict United States citizens or legal residents from traveling abroad, except to countries with which the United States is at war, where armed hostilities are in progress, or where there is imminent danger to the public health or physical safety of United States travelers."

Congressman Serrano has introduced several related bills, including one to repeal both Helms-Burton and the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992.

Born in Puerto Rico, Serrano is an outspoken Democrat from the Bronx. If only he'd been a Midwest conservative. As it stands, his Freedom of Travel Act is languishing in the House Subcommittee on International Economic Policy and Trade. Only a humongous show of support can move it

through the Republican Congress.

For years, liberals, radicals, and progressives have fought one travel ban after another. Many of the old warhorses look whipped. They know the ropes, but lack the spark.

Maybe it's time to find fresh blood, to reach out to tourists and teamsters, sportsmen and smokers, scholars and shoppers: to anyone who agrees that, as Americans, we have the right to go where we want, see for ourselves, and make up our own minds.

Defending our right to travel won't save Cuba's faltering revolution, or even her tourist economy, especially if the bombings turn deadly. But it can score a victory against the embargo. And the more middle-of-the-road or even conservative Americans who see Cuba for themselves, the faster we can rein in "the Miami Cubans," stop the bombing, end the embargo, and let the Cubans in Cuba shape their own destiny.

Forget Fidel. Let's talk to our fellow travelers. ❑

(Continued from page 42)

to Mr. Hurwitz as a fellow Jew; Mr. Hurwitz worships in Houston, we worship in the redwoods—yet we revere the same Torah and ethical teachings. The past two years have seen an outpouring of Jewish activism in the form of tochecha, offering reproof. In Torah the biblical God reproves the straying Israelites; in the post-biblical era we must offer reproof to one another.

Jewish tradition requires private communication before public criticism. And Talmud teaches that both individuals and the community at large are responsible for giving reproof lest we accrue the guilt of those whom we might have reformed. American Jews enjoy affluence and safety perhaps unprecedented in Jewish history. We can afford to address communal ethics. If not now, when?

Those who offer *tochecha* should undertake a rigorous process, researching facts, examining their own motives, and weighing the seriousness of the issue. And we must observe Hillel's Golden Rule: Don't do to others that which is hateful to you. Communication between Mr. Hurwitz and the Jewish religious leaders of rural southern Oregon and northern California has been impassioned, yet cordial. Thoughtful, respectful *tochecha* can be a process of loving engagement, and bring clarity and holiness to our communal life.

We sincerely hope our efforts will help Mr. Hurwitz recognize the consequences of his actions. We hope the loving reproof we offer will inspire him to eschew destructive forest practices and embrace our vision of a restored redwood forest, which could serve as a powerful model for the restoration—the *tikkun*—of the damaged eco-systems of the world.

At High Holy Days we are especially moved to offer *tochecha*. At *yontiff* we want every Jewish heart to long for transformation and forgiveness. Are we foolish to hope that Mr. Hurwitz might yet see his errors? Should we dismiss him as a person who cannot change? Heaven forbid! The gates of *teshuvah* are never closed; we are all capable of change. ❑

(Continued from page 62)

where Rivka was once again holding the towel high, her gaze averted from my naked body. Don't be afraid to look at me, I wanted to say. There's nothing wrong with my body.

She said nothing as I wrapped the towel around myself. I, too, was silent. Rivka and I were women but not sisters, Jews but not of the same tribe. Within moments, the acceptance I had felt in the mikveh slid off my skin with the drops of water falling at my feet.

"Does it always happen so quickly," I asked lamely.

Rivka smiled, a wall of courtesy between us. "Oh, yes. It's a very simple ceremony."

With that, she opened the door to the changing room and walked off.

I dressed quickly, careful to put my earrings on first. Once outside in the soft air, my flesh felt newborn and silky. The purity went only skin deep. Beneath that was a sense of something newly wounded. The yearning for healing remained.

The feeling stayed until my birthday a week later. This year I decided I would celebrate not just my birth but the opening into new life that my menses signaled.

I baked a chocolate cake and woman friends hung red bunting from the pillars and ceiling crossbeams. Between dinner and opening presents, we told stories: the first time one of us saw a hair in her armpits; a schoolgirl crush on another girl, never forgotten for some 60 years; the life growing in a first pregnancy; the mother who followed the old Jewish customs and slapped one of our faces when learning of that first period so long ago; the mother who was never told when her daughter started to menstruate.

After dinner we gathered in a circle of women and turned out the lights. We each had a white candle shaped like an egg. One by one, we lit our candles in honor of another woman: a battered woman still in jail for murdering her husband in self defense; a mother-in-law recently dead of cancer; a sister poet; the grandmothers we never knew; the friends we have not seen in decades; the women we have never forgotten.

Finally, only one candle was left. One of the women lit it, saying: "For all the women who aren't here."

Unexpectedly, I thought of Rivka. She was not here. Yet she was part of our circle, too. Rivka had been my guide through the mikveh, and without her help, I would never have found this night's blessings. We were so very different, yet at least once our lives had brought us to the same waters. Perhaps one day, there will be mikveh rituals that celebrate how our bodies guide us through life. Until then, we will need to keep creating these small circles of women telling stories.

Candlelight shown in the darkness. I looked at the faces around the circle and gently touched my own. Body: my spirit's second skin. Body is where the world touches us, and it is in this world that our spirits live. I had found the ritual I needed. ❑

The Living Che

Stew Albert



▪ *Che Guevara—A Revolutionary Life,* by Jon Lee Anderson. Grove Press, 1997.

Ernesto "Che" Guevara is re-entering our consciousness. This semi-forgotten 1960s guerrilla fighter, statesman and Marxist intellectual whose luster seemed to be fading with the countless defeats suffered by revolutionary insurgents, has re-emerged in the late 90s as pop-art handsome and suitable for exploitation.

Why is Che back with us? Why does a British company distribute "Che" beer? And what about the Che wristwatch, books and the upcoming Mick Jagger-produced feature film spectacular?

Jon Lee Anderson's massive *Che Guevara—A Revolutionary Life* easily provides the answer. Che Guevara was a hero of larger-than-anybody's life proportions. Anderson benefits from unprecedented access to Che's closest comrades, his second wife Aleida, his body-guards and members of Cuban and Russian intelligence. The biographer also met with Bolivian Rangers and the CIA agent who hunted down and murdered Guevara.

Anderson studied previously unrevealed documents including an uncensored look at Che's many diaries, his yet unpublished political essays as well as East German intelligence files. Anderson went very native—he lived in Cuba for three years and even employed the same nanny who helped raise Che Guevara's children.

Blessedly, Jon Lee Anderson did not let the big one get away. His abundantly detailed description of Che's life from cradle to grave and the aftermath strongly resurrects not only the legendary revolutionary, but also the spirit of the times in which he lived. And this biography makes clear beyond question, Guevara not only contributed to that rebellious geist, he was its absolute and limitlessly heroic embodiment.

Ernesto Guevara is lionized or excoriated as a quintessential political revolutionary guerrilla fighter. In the 60s he quite literally wrote the book on revolutionary warfare; his treatise on the subject was read from Berkeley to the Pentagon. But Anderson introduces us to the young, early 50s Guevara as a rebel without a cause. A declassé Argentine bohemian who went on the Andean road via motorcycle just because he craved adventure. A young medical student from a down-at-the-heels aristocratic yet progressive family, Che read Freud and Sartre and wanted to discover authenticity and identity before making tough career choices.

Anderson puts significant stress on Guevara's severe asthma. From early youth, the Argentinean was in a constant state of war with his body. Guevara had to keep proving to himself that he could transcend the limitation of pain and disability. From an early age he took chances, lived wild, joined gangs, played rugby and all this in an environment of kindly, intelligent but quarreling, emotionally and physically distant parents. Touring South America was part of Che's effort to discount the limitations of a failing body.

Guevara's journey through Argentina, Peru, Columbia, Bolivia, and Miami, on a cycle until it broke down and then by hitching, recalls Kerouac's adventures but with an important difference. The young Ernesto certainly resorts to all the opportunistic gambits required "on the road" and his diary demonstrates a penchant for myth, romance, and irony, but unlike most of the Beats, this rebel takes note of the wretched proletarians he encounters in the cities and countryside.

Perhaps his personal familiarity with pain and limitation opened him to these feelings? He doesn't as yet have an answer to social exploitation and misery and at this stage of his quest the young Guevara isn't at all sure he will take personal responsibility for the lamentable situation. Like a true liberal aristocrat he believes those in power must soon take some measures, whatever they are, to alleviate great agony. If they don't do this, Guevara predicts: There will be trouble. He doesn't predict that he will be the major trouble maker.

In 1953, Che's second road trip brought him to Guatemala, a Central American country whose newly elected left-wing government was in rebellion against being

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Stew Albert is a 60s Yippie and a 90s Politics of Meaning activist.

owned by the United Fruit Company. The government of Jacobo Arbenz was introducing a moderate land reform program that, if successful, would reduce the degree of foreign control over the Guatemalan economy and bring a measure of social justice to the impoverished Indian nation.

The State Department and the CIA, controlled respectively by John Foster and Allan Dulles, was collaborating with United Fruit in an on-going attempt to overthrow Arbenz.

It was in Guatemala that Ernesto Guevara discovered his life's purpose. It was in that "banana republic" that he turned from a strong sympathy for "the wretched of the earth" to a ferocious revolutionary commitment, what he would later call "a great feeling of love." All the rage and frustration he had acquired over a lifetime of physical pain and emotional denial would be released and sublimated in the proletarian cause.

He cherished the new sense of community he was experiencing. Guevara's ideology would now mix Sartrian existentialism with Leninist class struggle. But he still didn't do very much. Che spent most of his time in Guatemala trying unsuccessfully to get a doctor's job working for a government program. But he ran up against bureaucratic suspicion. He was a foreigner and possibly a Communist agent. The Arbenz government had a working alliance with the Communists but this had hardly seeped down into that nation's impenetrable bureaucracy. And the local Communists were loath to help him because the still individualistic Guevara refused to join their ranks just to get a job.

A CIA-directed coup put the brake on human progress in Guatemala. United Fruit returned to absolute power and a very bloody thirty year civil war ensued. Che loudly lamented the reformist government's failure to arm the people. After holing up in the Argentine embassy, he and other exiles, against the wishes of the American Secretary of State, were allowed to leave the country.

Mexico City was the next step on his journey. By now Ernesto Guevara, M.D., was a committed revolutionary and the CIA's overthrow of the reformist Arbenz government rid his mind of any hope for peaceful change. A tight moral logician and chess aficionado, Che felt he had no move to make other than his embracing revolutionary warfare.

As fate would have it, Cuban exile and leader of the 26th of July Movement, Fidel Castro, was living in Mexico City at this time and planning to "invade" his native country and overthrow its brutal dictator.

After military training in Mexico under direction of a Spanish Civil War veteran, Castro, Guevara, and a handful of men headed for Cuba in a yacht. Poor planning and a lack of coordination almost led to complete defeat. But 12 members of the band, including a wounded Che, survived and the battle against the corrupt Mafia dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista had begun.

In Sierra Maestro and the Escambray Mountains of Cuba, Che Guevara would prove himself an almost faultless soldier and leader. He inspired his men and women not only with words—and Anderson recalls how these could be cold, harsh, stingingly ironic, and even cruel—but by his deeds. Did any human being ever come closer than Che to practicing what he preached? Any danger, discomfort, or sacrifice he required of his soldiers, he applied to his asthma-suffering self in triplicate. He was the very incarnation of "body on the line" authenticity.

Even Fidel Castro, Anderson tells us, gave in to his gourmet proclivities and had a private chef in his mountain headquarters. Tasteless and rotting food drove Castro to distraction and depression but, according to Anderson, Guevara thrived on green, rotten meat. And it was this stoic ferocity which inspired his brigade into winning great victories against terrible odds and into adoring their daring *Comandante*.

Anderson shows that Castro's guerrillas were not an army of plaster saints. Their ranks included the expected radical intellectuals and landless peasants, but the original band was trained in hand-to-hand fighting by two Mexican professional wrestlers, and the rebel army grew to include bandit warlords and marijuana growers. (The "*marijuaneros*" were not the most reliable fighters since they would occasionally leave camp to steal each other's crops.)

The "upset" victory of the revolutionary guerrillas and their early years in power are a source of endless debate among historians, journalists, and members of the Intelligence communities. Just what was the process by which the "liberal democratic" *Fidelistas* of the "26th of July Movement" turned into "dictatorship of the proletariat" Marxist-Leninists? Was it a preplanned Castro-Guevara conspiracy, or did the reactionary policies of the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations force the young bold idealists into an extremist mold?

Anderson provides much new material on the subject, but alas, it only serves to further confuse matters. If you're looking for early secret contacts between the KGB and East German Intelligence and the Castro regime, they did indeed take place. But, surprise, the *Fidelistas* also received funding from the CIA when they were fighting in the Sierra Maestra. And while Fidel's brother Raul and Che were Leninists by the time the victorious Fidelista army triumphantly marched into Havana on January 1, 1959, neither of them were Communist Party members. The majority of the 26th of July Movement's high command, as well as various Cuban allies were militantly anti-Communist. As for Fidel Castro, he seems to have been in the middle of the political spectrum, wanting to introduce radical reforms into Cuban society but cautiously fearing that by doing this he would alienate the more moderate members of his coalition.

Anderson provides evidence of an early secret alliance between Castro's government and the Cuban Communist Party. But the Communists initially opposed Fidel Castro's guerrilla strategy as "adventuristic," and Che Guevara considered the Cuban Communists to be suffering from a severe case of "dogmatism." It's also true that while secretly courting the Communists, Castro was also trying to make a deal with Cuba's business community. And after a short honeymoon, Che Guevara became decidedly disillusioned with both the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China.



Was a principled rapprochement between the U.S. and Cuba possible? The answer does not come easily. But in sorting through the maze of Cuban, Soviet, and American initiatives, I can't but believe, based on the moral emphasis of Castro and Guevara's brand of socialism, that the situation was fluid, and that if America were ruled by a "politics of meaning" president rather than a Republican, the Cuban revolution would not have located itself in the Moscow sphere of influence.

Guevara was the chief spokesperson for those who had higher expectations than the cash nexus for building socialism and what they called "the new man." Che based his arguments for "moral incentives" on a belief that buying labor from workers only fostered alienation and reenforced the system of domination and exploitation. Citing the philosophic writings of the young Karl Marx, Che argued that the human essence sought creativity, community, giving, play, and transcendence, and that the relationships of production which were taking shape in Cuba should reflect these humanistic needs.

To reduce the work experience to one of forcing workers to give up their deepest emotional needs in exchange for money was to reproduce the capitalist system under a different name. Indeed Guevara speculated that bureaucratic "socialist" governments might one day topple because of this enforced alienation. Che's long standing passion for personal authenticity had survived a brief flirtation with Soviet Stalinism. For Che, no amount of statistics, quotas and mathematical formulas could substitute for actual human experience. Life in a socialist factory had to be meaningful and transformative, otherwise it was a fake.

The early years of the Cuban revolution were dominated by a fierce struggle between the Guevarists and the cadre from the Partido Socialista Popular (PSP), Cuba's old pro-Soviet Communist party. And besides economic and philosophic issues, arguments developed over culture and art, with the old-Communists pushing "Socialist Realism" and censorship. Anderson cities incidents where Guevara protected abused poets and found work for them in the industries he controlled. In these battles Fidel Castro played a typically centrist role. By and large he agreed with Che's humanistic views but he knew Cuba was too dependent on Soviet support to completely ignore their preferences.

At a certain point in the mid-60s, Ernesto Che Guevara came to a dramatic conclusion. He could not win his battle for a morally-based socialism if Cuba remained isolated in the American hemisphere and dependent on Soviet economic aid and its attendant advisors. Revolutionaries could not wait for "objective conditions" supporting armed struggle to develop; by daring, aggressive, and violent actions they would *create* the circumstances. The goal was nothing less than declaring a second "Vietnam" war in the American hemisphere.

In an almost unprecedented act he voluntarily removed himself from power and privilege. The "bureaucrat" behind a desk (do you remember a similar scene in Brando's *Viva Zapata*?) would once again return to the Third World's jungles and mountains as a revolutionary guerrilla fighter. The effort appears even more amazing in light of Che's unimproved asthma. The years that had passed since his Sierra Maestra days had not been kind to his health.

Che's abandonment of power and his complete disappearance from public life was the source of ceaseless rumor and speculation. I remember being told by some members of a Maoist group that Che had been murdered by Castro at the behest of Russia. Trotskyists floated comparisons between the Stalin–Trotsky feud and feared the worst. Anderson documents that there was no Che–Fidel falling out.

Both leaders came to a common political understanding: Cuba should support, finance, train and guide the spread of revolutionary warfare in the Americas. If this tactic was successful, both the "peaceful coexistence" Russians and the Chinese "dogmatists" would enter a bidding contest to court favor with a new guerrilla leadership. Che and Fidel had a very audacious goal. It was nothing less than altering the world's balance of political power in favor of genuine revolution.

It was at this morally and politically splendid moment in Che Guevara's life that all his great dreams and plans began falling apart. Initially, Guevara was going home to Argentina to begin the war for continental liberation. Soldiers were trained and an advance team was sent ahead to create a base area and to await Che's arrival. The expedition was a fiasco. From the beginning it was marred by an absence of intelligent decision making. Additionally, its tactical leader became mentally unbalanced and this former Peronista may also have been an anti-Semite. He had a knack for persecuting Jewish members of his group.

Cuban intelligence had a new plan and Bolivia was at its center. Che's army would join with Bolivian revolutionaries and establish a foothold in Bolivia while new efforts were being made to create an armed revolutionary presence in Argentina. At the appropriate moment Che and his soldiers would cross over into his homeland and the Bolivians would fight on under their own command. Tactical support would be provided by Cuba.

The Bolivians and the Cubans trained along with Che in Cuba. Among their ranks was a leading Bolivian Communist,

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF AP/ WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

Mario Molina Monje. Anderson's investigation of Monje's duplicitous role is worthy of a detective novel. Monje appears to have been opposed to the Bolivian campaign from the very beginning. But he pretended otherwise because he wanted to know what Guevara was up to. In order to ingratiate himself, he promised full support from the Bolivian Communist Party. Monje would regularly report to Soviet Intelligence which was also not too happy about Cuba's foreign policy. Much against KGB wishes Guevara was opening his ranks to New Leftists, Maoists, and Trotskyists.

Che and his brave comrades would go down to defeat and death in Bolivia. The local Communists withheld support. And the Guevarist band's presence was discovered early. Military fighting began before the rebels had sufficient strength. When the CIA discovered Che Guevara was involved they entered the fray with full force.

Che Guevara's last days are detailed in his own words in his diary. They evoke a sense of stoical unreality and a fierce determination to continue fighting unto the end. Wounded and captured in battle, Guevara would not beg. It seems that Felix Rodriguez, the CIA agent on hand, wanted to keep Che alive for a trial. But he did not press his point. Guevara was murdered by the Bolivian Rangers. His hands were cut off for purposes of identification and he was buried in an unmarked grave.

In an interview with Anderson, Rodriguez stated that up to his capturing, Che he had enjoyed good health. Since the murder of Guevara, Rodriguez has been suffering from, of all things, asthma.

Death ended Che's string of bad luck. He became an instant saint. Peasants in the Bolivian village where he was murdered described the Marxist revolutionary as "Christ-like." And to the young radicals of North and South America, like myself, he became a magnetic exemplar, a perfected model of revolutionary behavior.

Che's photo was carried by thousands of admirers at the enormous 1967 Pentagon sit-in which took place shortly after his demise. Peruvian truck drivers pasted

A true revolutionary must be guided by a great feeling of love.

decals of Guevara to their vehicles. A statue of Che Guevara was unveiled in Santiago, Chile. And across the continent armed revolutionaries wreaked havoc on the ruling elite's desire for imperturbable domination. Cuban-supported groups like the MIR in Chile, the Tupamaros in Uruguay, and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua took up Che's weapons and his cause. The revolutionaries met with varying degrees of success: gruesome defeat in Argentina and transitory victory in Nicaragua; but the spirit of Che's martyrdom drove them to follow his path to victory or death.

Che's current popularity is held suspect by some. They fear his handsome and heroic image is being turned into an exploitable product. Since global capitalism will probably find a way to exploit *moshiach* when s/he finally stops tarrying, I'm sure there is some fraudulence in the Che market. But the indigenous Zapatistas of Mexico with their Che-like leader "*Subcomandante* Marcos" and the recent free election of a socialist as mayor of Mexico City indicate that the issues that Guevara staked his life on are still very much at hand, as are "the wretched of the earth," only now they exist in much greater numbers.

The Soviet Union and their East European allies are gone but the absolute impoverishment of body and soul brought on by bureaucratic corruption, the cash nexus, drugs, and capitalism are still very current.

Back in the mid-60s, Che Guevara once told a group of visiting North American leftists, including the late Jerry Rubin, that he envied them. They, as Americans, had the chance to make the most important revolution of all. But what of today? Guevara's views were shaped in a time when the Third World and some countries in Europe were ruled by colonialism and *caudillos*, foreign domination and strong-man dictators. Today, under the guise of democracy, global capitalism is becoming an equal opportunity abstract exploiter. And psychological oppression is joining forces with economic misery. What can we find in Che's life and ideas that speaks to our contemporary need and desire for personal and political transformation?

The inspiration of Che's courage endures. He suffered from serious asthma which could have curtailed his life and aspirations. But Guevara would not be overwhelmed with a sense of powerlessness. He had the will to discover his real as opposed to imagined limitations. And Che's courage and willingness to take risks went beyond both the rugby and battlefields. He once wrote, "at the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love." He discovered a sense of community and belonging in the company of revolutionaries. Che knew that we need something more than money and consumer products. We must love and be loved. His efforts to turn the Cuban economy into an extended and transcendent community of practical love may have been, given the circumstances of under-development, utopian. But for those seeking compassion, friendship, and creative work, they remain an outstanding inspiration.

We minimize the memory of Che Guevara by just siting on the sidelines and rooting for Third World guerrillas while belittling the importance of our own oppression. Guevara was not about organizing cheering squads. We must find appropriate ways to transform our own personal and social circumstances in the direction of deeper and wider love and

compassion. And we must be willing to take risks and endure cynical put-downs.

The Che consumer product will be highly unreliable. It's bound to become an audacious trouble maker. Ernesto Guevara was not without fault, but in an era when spin-control opportunism has replaced genuine personality, and almost all our leaders are as hollow as dum-dum bullets, his biography remains an inspiration. If a person's life reflects not only what they did but also their influence, then Jon Lee Anderson's mighty effort may turn out to be just a highly successful preliminary sketch.

Bruno Bettelheim—Blaming the Victim

Helene Goldberg

- *Bettelheim: Life and Legacy,* by Nina Sutton. Basic Books, 1996.

- *The Creation of Dr. B: A Biography of Bruno Bettelheim,* by Richard Pollak. Simon & Schuster, 1997.

On May 12, 1938 Bruno Bettelheim stood silent as around him crowds greeted the Nazi troops marching into Vienna with shouts of "Death to the Jews." On that day, exactly fifty-two years later, he took his own life. Within weeks of his suicide, disturbing accounts of the man who had come to represent psychoanalysis itself in America began to surface. Accusations and controversy followed.

This year two new biographies begin to unravel the truth beneath the facade: Nina Sutton, *Bettelheim: Life and Legacy* and Richard Pollak, *The Creation of Dr. B.* Both authors begin with an admission of their bias. Sutton makes a valiant though ultimately inadequate attempt to defend Bettelheim's reputation, while Pollak opens his book with an explanation of the personal harm his family suffered at the hands of Bruno Bettelheim. Pollak's younger brother was in treatment at Bettelheim's Orthogenic School (a treatment center for disturbed children) when the child fell to his death while on vacation with his family. Bettelheim insisted to Pollak that the accident was in reality a suicide and blamed



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Pollak's mother for the family tragedy (as Bettelheim had blamed all mothers for causing childhood autism). Pollak is definitely a biographer with an ax to grind, and yet he is a skilled reporter and determined researcher. With no regret, Pollak lays open the unflattering truth about the esteemed Dr. B.

It is telling that although the authors begin with quite disparate aims, their conclusions are much the same: that Bettelheim was an inveterate liar, a fraud, and an arrogant brute. Sutton struggles hard to salvage Bettelheim's reputation by lauding his accomplishments, but her appeals falter in the face of his rampant deceit. In the end, her portrait is no less damning than Pollak's, though neither as robust nor as well researched. Both biographers dog the trail of inconsistencies between the history Bettelheim claimed for himself and the actual evidence, but Pollak shows the greater facility and tenacity for the job. Where Sutton is often stymied by dead ends and lost records, Pollak pushes ahead to get the interviews and expose the lies. Though Pollak was digging for muck, his excavations were thorough and he hit pay dirt. But, regardless of their original biases, both biographies portray Bettelheim as a damaged human being who constructed his life on a foundation of lies: a life riddled with profound dishonesty, cruelty, and bigotry.

There is no longer much doubt that when Bettelheim arrived in America in the early forties he fabricated a dossier of credentials that allowed him to step into an academic life he could only covet in Vienna. Pollak shows convincingly that almost none of what Bettelheim claimed on his curriculum vitae was true. Bettelheim had no training or connections to the Psychoanalytic Institute in Vienna, no degree in psychology (let alone Summa cum Laude). He had not been active in the resistance to Hitler, nor was he rescued from the Nazis by Eleanor Roosevelt herself. Before he came to America, Bruno Bettelheim was an upper middle-class lumber merchant; he had no direct experience teaching autistic children; and he used his wife's connections and his own wealth to bribe his way out of Buchenwald.

These deceptions would be of only passing significance if Bettelheim had not parlayed his false credentials into a position of extraordinary influence in the academic and intellectual circles of the United States, and if his questionable assertions about the psychology of holocaust victims had not lent substance to some of the most regressive political ideas of our time.

Capitalizing on America's growing disinclination for empathy toward the

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helpless in the 1950s, Bettelheim introduced and popularized a perversion of the psychoanalytic method that pathologizes the victim and confounds suffering with the oppression that causes it. His analysis of the behavior he termed "ghetto mentality" of concentration camp prisoners provided a blueprint for today's rationalized indifference to the plight of single mothers, the disabled, and immigrants; and it offers a peculiar justification for turning our attention away from what we should do to help the needy, toward a debate about the pathology of the helpless.

Bettelheim's depiction of his eleven months as a prisoner in Dachau and Buchenwald was widely embraced by the American intellectual elite not only because his account was among the first published, but because Bettelheim cloaked his personal experiences in the mantle of psychoanalytic research. By disingenuously claiming the authority of psychoanalytic training he published his work not merely as a personal narration of suffering and injustice but as a scientific analysis of behavior in the camps. But Bettelheim's object of study was not the Nazi evil but rather the psychological reactions of their victims. Perversely, this warped analysis of the behavior of concentration camp inmates determined the tenor of much of the subsequent discussion of the holocaust and its victims.

In his description of his experience in the camps, Bettelheim held himself apart from other internees. Where most concentration camp survivors credit the generosity and aid of fellow prisoners, their own profound spirituality, or just plain luck for their lives, Bettelheim took personal credit and attributed his survival to his own psychological acumen and training.

In *The Informed Heart* (1960), Bettelheim explicitly blamed the death of Anne Frank on her father's self-indulgent choice of "business as usual" over the safety of his family. He held up Otto Frank as a prime example of "ghetto mentality" for hiding passively instead of procuring a gun to kill the soldiers who came for the family in the last months of the war. Without any regard for the facts, Bettelheim professed that "most Jews in Poland who did not believe in business as usual survived the Second World War."

Bettelheim despised European Jews for going passively "like sheep to the slaughter." But his own personal shame at being a victim himself blinded him to the extraordinary courage and opposition that persisted even in the camps. Inmates were regularly tortured, humiliated, starved and worked to death, and yet, though many of them had already lost everything they cherished and that had given their life meaning, even their own health—they organized and helped each other. There was a resistance movement in every camp. The crematoria at Dachau were continually sabotaged and still stand unfinished—an albeit small monument to the power of resistance within the larger monument of its defeat. What Bettelheim failed to see was that survival itself was an act of resistance to the Nazi's aim of extermination and therefore a moral act.

Part of Bettelheim's need to deny his own shame about having been a victim expressed itself in his disdain for those who resisted less dramatically than the Warsaw fighters. Maybe it is easier for most of us to savor the brave struggle in Warsaw against the German army than picture the mother comforting her child on the way to the gas chamber, far more appealing to make a popular film about a German rescuer like Schindler than about a starving prisoner in Auschwitz. We yearn for heroes, even after Nurenburg. But Bettelheim struggled more than most to idealize heroes at the cost of the victims. Unfortunately, the experience of the Jews wasn't about courage in battle, and certainly not about triumph. After all, the Jews were defeated. Germany may have lost World War II, but the war Hitler waged against the Jews was a stunning victory. Hitler eradicated the Jewish European culture he so despised. Bettelheim insisted that the Jews should have revolted or fled into the countryside in order to resist or escape their murderers. The enormity of the powers waged against them, the indifference of the rest of the world, and their own belief in reason and negotiation made these alternatives unrealistic. In fact, some Jews did escape and fought back—but not every Goliath can be downed with a sling.

In his *The Informed Heart*, Bettelheim goes so far as to accuse the Jews of taking on the values of their oppressors in order to survive. Which values? Racial supremacy? Glorification of death?

One reason Bettelheim's absurd allegations aroused so little outrage among American intellectuals is that the power of survivor guilt undermined the victims' ability to defend themselves against this kind of accusation. If you read many Holocaust memoirs you are struck by a recurrent chord of self-condemnation, disillusionment, and despair. The authors are dogged by thoughts that they might have done more to save themselves or others. The survivors were tormented by the very fact that they lived while others died, as if they lived *because* others died. They were anguished at outliving their parents, spouses or children. In the face of so much slaughter, how to explain that they were spared? But this is evidence of survivor guilt, not confirmation of Bettelheim's

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accusation that the survivors of the camps "took on many of the values of the guards." It may well have been that in warding off his own unacknowledged guilt, Bettelheim shifted it to those most vulnerable to taking it on.

Survivors were prey to "victim guilt" as well as survivor guilt. Victim guilt rests on the pathogenic belief that all suffering must have some meaning, that stigma signifies fault, that pain implies punishment and hence crime. Not that "victim guilt" is limited to holocaust victims; it is common in abused children, AIDS and cancer patients, and rape victims (to name but a few). Cancer patients may even find an iota of comfort or control in taking responsibility for their disease; as if the cells invading and destroying their body were not *so* alien; and that somehow, either through will or diet, the patient might have prevented their misfortune. It has been repeatedly noted that abused children feel guilty for their mistreatment; they live out their lives in an effort at placation. For some children a portion of guilt may be adaptive—a better choice than the despair in believing that their parents, on whom they are totally dependent and who are representatives for the rest of the world, might be malevolent. To paraphrase the psychologist Fairbairn, it is far better to live as a devil in a world of angels, than an angel in a world of devils.

One powerful motive for the victim to take on the blame for his own suffering is that it allows him to believe that there is an underlying justice, that virtue prevails, and that evil will finally falter in the face of innocence—it's often easier for the victim to believe that he deserves whatever befalls him than that he suffers for no reason. In a sense, victim guilt bears within it a sacrificial or restorative act. By accepting guilt for acts over which he had no part, the victim preserves and affirms the goodness of his universe at the cost of personal pain and great psychological suffering. But the alternatives, cynicism and paranoia, may be more destructive than pain.

As a therapist myself, I find it rare that patients (here I choose the word patient rather than client for the richness of its original Latin connotation of both suffering and passion) are free from this added burden of undeserved guilt. Popular psychologists on radio and television capitalize on victim guilt; too many people come to therapy painfully ready to accept an unrealistic degree of responsibility for their suffering. This self-blame actually interferes with their ability to understand the real causes of their troubles and stops them from living fulfilling lives. People who have survived childhoods of unspeakable chaos and cruelty are regularly directed to look for "their part" in their suffering. Pop therapists like "Dr." Laura are direct descendants of this "blame the victim" tradition of psychoanalysis that Bettelheim introduced—a kind of misguided oversimplification of psychoanalytic determinism that encourages people to understand how "they have only themselves to blame" for whatever is done to them.

Despite his flaws, Bettelheim made real contributions to the treatment of children. The success and fame Bettelheim gained in the United States grew out of his ability to adapt the progressive ideas he had been exposed to in Vienna for use in new venues. The Orthogenic School that Bettelheim directed became a model in applying psychoanalytic principles in residential treatment for disturbed children. Bettelheim was able to combine what he gleaned of Freudian psychoanalytic technique with theories of milieu treatment for children and the child psychology of August Aichhorn and Fritz Redl to introduce a great advance in the treatment of troubled children. Bettelheim promoted the cause of an enlightened and humane treatment for autistic children in America and introduced psychoanalytically informed residential therapy as a way to work with children who previously had been warehoused rather than treated. Because of his prodigious writing talent, Bettelheim was able to excite and inform a generation of young parents about applying the principles of psychology to raising their children.

But though Bettelheim was eloquent in the cause of the suffering of autistic children, he always needed someone to blame. The most vulnerable targets at hand were the frantic mothers who came to him for help. He saw in their distress evidence of pathology and pointed to them as the cause of their child's autism. Blinded by arrogance and charmed by the power of his own eloquence, Bettelheim falsely claimed to have discovered in "refrigerator mothers" the etiology and, in psychoanalysis, the cure for autism, and blatantly lied to the Ford Foundation, NIMH, and the public about his results in claiming a cure rate of 85 percent of the children.

By the end of the sixties, Bettelheim's authoritarian leanings moved him clearly toward the right. In an apparent turnaround from his romanticization of resistance to Nazi oppression, Bettelheim used psychoanalytic jargon to denounce the student protesters in Chicago. He accused the demonstrators of being "spoiled by indulgent parents" and described their behavior as "an extreme defensive maneuver to avoid a total, a complete break with reality" (in other words, verging on psychotic). By the seventies his leanings put him solidly on the wrong side. He defended the Vietnam war, excoriated the protesters, defended Richard Nixon, and was outraged by the Watergate investigation and the threatened impeachment. By the time he took his own life seventeen years later, Bettelheim's thoughts had become a staple for the political writers and academics who despaired of social change and attempted to prove the fundamental unworthiness of the oppressed.

My point is not to reproach Bettelheim for his personal imperfections, or even to begin to recount the numerous scandals and lies that pepper the two biographies. What I condemn is the toxic legacy of Bettelheim's thought: a legacy that continues to enthrall the cynics and all those who view humane values as a thin veneer, gives substance to those who deny suffering along with the evil that causes it, and lends a sham validation to those who disallow the possibility of innocence or truth. So it is extremely important to recognize these ideas when they surface in the editorial pages and columns of those who preach a vulgarized form of Bettelheimism and the discourse of blaming the victim, and to recognize that what Bettelheim brought to his analysis of human behavior was a cracked mirror rather than a psychoanalytic lens. ❑

Bi As I Wanna Be (with apologies to Dennis Rodman)

Meredith Maran

A couple of years ago I decided to make some friends who weren't white. Why? The same reasons most progressive white people would like to have some friends who aren't white. My world was sweet and safe; easy to move through, but monocultural, like a forest full of one kind of tree. My politics situated me on the 'solution' side of the racial divide, but my segregated social life made me feel like part of the problem.

Thanks to my ten years of living and raising children in Oakland, and my activist network, my mission was fairly easily accomplished. It wasn't so much a matter of meeting new people as selectively cultivating relationships with folks I already knew. Instead of calling only the (white) people I was closest to when I wanted a date for a movie or a demonstration, I made a point of calling someone I wanted to be close to instead. When I threw a party I expanded the guest list beyond the usual (mostly white) suspects. When I went to a party I sought out conversations with people (of color) I didn't yet know.

I was running my own little affirmative action campaign, and I was learning the same lesson law schools and corporations have learned: no sacrifice, no lowering of standards was required. Quite the contrary. As my life became populated with people who were culturally different from me, it became much richer, much more interesting.

And much less comfortable.

I'd expected that growing close to people of color would bring me face-to-face with the prejudices and intolerance that arose along the way: mine toward them, and possibly, theirs toward me. What I wasn't prepared for was the profound intolerance I discovered in myself—toward myself.

With my white friends I never questioned the language I used; the amount of money I made or how I spent it; my Sixties-style, loosey-goosey child-rearing practices. I was only mildly embarrassed about the Mexican woman who cleaned my house; the $300 a month I spent on therapy; my funky but fabulous country cabin. But when I was talking to my new friend Michael, an East Oakland basketball coach; or Leticia, a junior college jobs counselor; or Brenda, an African-American writer, everything I was saying suddenly seemed horribly middle-class. Horribly privileged. Horribly…white. I found myself—normally the world's biggest talker—afraid to speak. Afraid to reveal myself as the boring, bourgeois, black wanna-be, (and oh yes, did I mention?) bisexual I am.

In the early days of my new friendships I disclosed fragments of my life and my self bit by bit. If the cabin seemed acceptable, I'd mention the therapy. If the big fat book contract didn't end the friendship, I'd risk an encounter with my (undisciplined, big-mouthed) kids. Gradually I stopped trying to sound and act like my black and Latina friends, and started sounding and acting like my white, Jewish self. Gradually I stopped seeing my new friends' ethnicity—and my own—as the most significant thing about them, and me, and our relationship.

But still I dodged the final frontier: the bisexuality barrier. Until the day Michael told me he'd run across, and bought, and read, my first book—the one that described, in great and glowing detail, my twelve-year relationship with a woman. "You've been holding out on me," he said, and I knew he wasn't hurt only because I'd never mentioned publishing a book. "Did you think I'd judge you if I knew the whole story?"

"Yes" was the truth, and that was what I finally gave Michael, who went right on being my son's coach and my good friend. And that's what I finally gave Leticia, who hugged me and told me about her favorite gay uncle in Amarillo. And that's what I finally gave Brenda, who turned out to have a rather active bisexual streak herself.

Big surprise: stereotypes notwithstanding, my ethnic minority friends accepted me as a sexual minority as gracefully as most of my white friends did—more gracefully than some. Big surprise: the more I revealed myself to Michael and Leticia and Brenda, the closer I got to them, and to myself.

When my sons were in junior high, the age of mimicry, they suddenly started talking like the black kids they'd been friends with all their lives. They'd call me on the phone and I'd have to ask who I was talking to—that's how unlike themselves they sounded. When they got to high school they still had black friends, but they started sounding like Peter and Jesse again. I was greatly relieved; proud of them for being proud of themselves.

My sons tell me that growing up as minorities among people of color, learning to like themselves despite being members of the least-liked ethnic group, has made them stronger, more aware of themselves and other people. Like my children, I've waged my sharpest struggle for self-definition in my relationships with people of color. Like my children, I've learned that the hardest thing—and the greatest thing—about embracing people who aren't exactly like me is that it forces me to face, and embrace, what makes each of us exactly who we are. ❑

Meredith Maran is the author of Notes From An Incomplete Revolution: Real Life Since Feminism *(Bantam, 1997) and* What It's Like To Live Now *(Bantam, 1995).*

Sikkum

■ *Ben and Jerry's Double-Dip* by Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield (Simon & Schuster, 1997)

There's more to Ben & Jerry than their legendary generosity in giving away ice cream at community service-oriented public events. Their engaging new book makes a convincing case for the notion that capitalist firms can take substantial steps toward social responsibility, and that paying attention to values can enhance profits. If your paradigm for "what is realistic" is what works in the business world, read this book to see how a politics of meaning can work.

■ *Master of Dreams* by Dvorah Telushkin (William Morrow, 1997)

You'll learn the often bizarre twistings and turnings of the mind of a great writer in this personal memoir of Isaac Bashevis Singer. It's sometimes shocking, often touching, and almost always moving.

■ *Heretic's Heart: A Journey Through Spirit and Revolution* by Margot Adler (Beacon Press, 1997)

A fun-filled roller-coaster ride through the movements of the 1960s from the New York bureau chief for National Public Radio whose irreverent and life-affirming energy fills the pages of this spirited book.

■ *Reworking Authority* by Larry Hirschhorn (MIT Press, 1997

Larry Hirschhorn applies his background in psychoanalysis to the dynamics of the post-modern workplace, and demonstrates how the psychodynamics of authority, resentment and gratitude are decisive in shaping how a workplace will function.

■ *Contesting Earth's Future: Radical Ecology and Postmodernity* by Michael E. Zimmerman (University of California Press, 1997)

A powerful critique of many trends within the environmental movement that do not adequately confront the spiritual and meaning dimension of reality. Willing to acknowledge that there is purpose to the unfolding infinite complexity of the universe, Zimmerman shows us environmental philosopy at its best.

■ *Conscious Community* by Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira, translated by Andrea Cohen-Keiner (Jason Aronson, 1996)

Before he died in the Holocaust, a Kabbalah-inspired rebbe wrote this guide to inner spiritual work that provides a marvelous introduction to the depth and the limitations of spiritual work within the Hasidic paradigm.

■ *Masks, Mandalas and Meditations* by Morty Breier (Inner Journeys, 73-4548 Mahi St., Kailua-Kona, Hawaii)

A beautiful little book that points the way to the planetary evolution of consciousness. This very short but very deep reading is truly inspired.

■ *The Zig Zag Kid* by David Grossman (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997)

One of Israel's most creative writers gives us a fanciful tale of a child kidnapped by his grandparents the week before his Bar Mitzvah, and its fun from top to bottom. Though much ado about nothing, Grossman's novel is constantly engaging and gives great pleasure.

■ *Change of Partners* by David Margolis (The Permanent Press, Sag Harbor, N.Y., 1997)

A steamy and sweet memory of life on a rural commune in Oregon in the 1960s, capturing the intensity and reflecting the lack of sophistication that often made it hard for people involved to fully understand the potential holiness of their venture. David Margolis now lives in Jerusalem, sharing another flawed but holy utopia.

■ *An Open Heart: The Mystic Path of Loving People* by Ytizhak Buxbaum, (The Jewish Spirit Booklet Series, 144–39 Sanford Ave, Apt. 6D–1 Flushing, N.Y. 11355)

Jewish Renewal maggid Yitzhak Buxbaum explores the holy texts of Hasidism and the Musar movement, and discovers a "mystic humanism" that could guide Jewish orthodoxy toward greater loving. Would that the religious world would meditate on this text day and night.

Recommended Fall Reading

■ *Conversations with God* (volumes I and II), by Neale Donald Walsch. Don't be fooled by the fact that these books have both been on the New York Times bestseller list for months—there are substantial and serious ideas here well worth your time.

■ *Minyan: Ten Principles for Living a Life of Integrity,* by Rabbi Rami Shapiro (Bell Tower)—excerpted in the July/August issue of TIKKUN.

■ *Pandemonium,* by Leslie Epstein. TIKKUN Editorial Board Epstein's latest novel captures the narcissism, craziness, and allure of early Hollywood movie making.

תיקון

Tikkun (te-kün) ...to heal, repair and transform the world. All the rest is commentary

Happy New Year, 5758



ARTWORK BY LYNNE FELDMAN

For a year of social justice, peace, tikkun, love, playfulness, humor, joy, pleasure, wisdom, spiritual transformation and inner healing!